



## PYA England Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 27 April 2021 @ Zoom

### Environment

<b>Present (15)</b>
Wendy Harris, tutti frutti productions
Mosa Mpetha, tutti frutti productions
Trina Haldar, Spark Arts
Esther Rennae Half Moon Theatre
Emma Killick, tutti frutti
Bethan Screen, Todos Teatro
Cat Moore, NIE
Danny Braverman
Annabel, Todos Teatro
Flossie, Oily Cart
Michelle Perez, Theatr Iolo
Tina Williams
Oli Savage, The Greenhouse
Chipo Kureya, Freelancer/Producer
Rebecca O'Brien
<b>Apologies</b>
Mandy Smith, Pilot Theatre

#### **a) Wendy Harris Chair PYA England Introduction & Zoom Protocol**

Welcome to International PYA England Coffee Meeting! A bit of protocol:

- Turn your screen off if you want to
- Keep your sound on mute whilst others are talking
- This is a friendly, open and sharing space. Please feel comfortable to contribute and share.
- Use the chat to feedback on what is being said or share thoughts.
- Zoom provides live captioning which you can turn on at the bottom of the screen
- We aren't resourced to facilitate access requirements every meeting, but do contact us if you need something and we can see what we can do

#### **b) What is PYA England? (Wendy)**

PYA England (Performance for Young Audiences) is the England sub group of [ASSITEJ UK](#), which is part of a global network, [ASSITEJ International](#). The PYA England sub group welcomes its Irish, Welsh and Scottish colleagues to the zoom café's. ASSITEJ UK is a membership organisation and we would be delighted if any people new to this network want to become members. We are doing a special deal at the moment because of the extraordinary circumstances with COVID and people's lack of income or funding. *[Information at the end of the minutes]*



We have a PR subgroup and a Lobbying sub group. There is also a PYA England steering group. Let us know if you would like to get involved with anything. Everything that we do happens because you are a part of it. Get in touch! [wendy@tutti-frutti.org.uk](mailto:wendy@tutti-frutti.org.uk)

**c) Bethan Screen Introduction**

Bethan is the Artistic Director of Todos Teatro with Annabel. They make work to inspire positive change. Their first show was 'Turtles don't like plastic' for 3-6 year olds.

<https://www.todosteatro.com/>

**d) Oli Savage from The Greenhouse Theatre (the UK's first zero-waste theatre)**

Oli Savage is the Artistic Director of Greenhouse Theatre, the first zero-waste theatre. They make human entertainment made in a sustainable way. They harness their medium to create a warm, friendly and sustainable answer. They works with people age 16 – 25 years old as they believe young people are the future. They are about to launch a carbon literacy course specifically for theatres.

<https://www.thegreenhousetheatre.com/>

Timothy Morton has a philosophical theory call hyperobjects in which he says humans are not good at connecting with big numbers. They are difficult to understand. The disconnect between knowledge and action is because the climate crisis is too big to comprehend, it is becomes intangible – someone else's problem.

We need art and theatre to comprehend. We have the power to help people to want to make change. It takes more muscles to frown than to smile. People like to be part of the narrative – we try to be good at this. Our provocations:

1. Creative Practise – How can we use our creative output (implicitly/explicitly) to empower young people to connect with the climate crises and make change?
2. Logistics and Operations – How does the practice inspire action? At what point in the creative/ administrative process does sustainability come in?
3. Engagement with Young People – How does work go beyond raising awareness?

**e) Feedback**

Group 1 Cat, Esther, Michelle, Rebecca

We talked about the conflicts in your strategies trying to balance environmental issues with our other goals. We talked about mainly practical issues around touring, electric, solar power, travel etc. We also talked about the creative process is not always explicit but comes out in the work naturally especially when working with children in the creative process. Difficulty of recycling set if you have other shows going on.

Group 2 Chip, Danny, Emma, Flossie

Environmental Injustice and how it links with Black Lives Matter and anti-racism. We discussed how people of the global south and global majority are disproportionately effected by climate change but have less impact of the cause of climate change.

The theatre green book is a guide for theatres to see how to produce work more sustainability.

There are three areas and three levels.

Talked about the disadvantages of those who are disabled and intersectionality. Danny is doing a project trying to get equipment to ivory coast and mutual learning between children un UK and Ivory



coast to learn more about the environment. We are more privileged in terms of resources, sustainability should be about redistributions. ASSITEJ is a great network for connecting with the wider international community.

We can't fix a global climate problem without involving everyone. The way to empower and encourage people were they are at.

Different countries want to reach net zero at different points, but that is disproportionate. UK does not produce but it consumes.

Climate change cannot be approached without looking at capitalism and racism.

### Group 3 Bethan, Tina, Trina, Wendy

At what point in the creative/ administrative process does sustainability come in?

Becoming more of a question about when the sustainability comes in. Historically was later in the process, trying to shift it earlier. Want to bring suitability into the content and design of our work, but less into the administrative process. Tina is about to go on tour with a show about the environment, audience are excited to get back to live theatre, but Tina is concerned the novelty of the attending live theatre might overshadow the themes of the work.

How to make touring sustainable? Thinking more locally? Electric vehicles are not quite ready yet – not as many charging points. What we would like to do and what is available to us is not always a match.

International touring has a big question mark, how can we make it sustainable.

Re-using design – do our audiences know if we use all new designs? How important is it to us as artists.

Trina talked about the creative challenge of reusing and recycling.

Wendy explained premier inn is one of the more sustainable hotel chains.

Some organisations in Leeds get free space from warehouses.

Oli - building a sustainability touring ecology is complicated. We have really struggled with this. Short of purchasing an electric van there is little we can do that is zero – carbon. The problem is offsetting is a marketing solution. There are other orgs in Scotland that are looking for a sustainable solution. Staging change has a sustainable rider.

Intersectionality of the climate debate is very important, we are working with YP and others from under represented backgrounds to get them into decision making spaces. Create powerful positions for those people to hold.

Wendy – What is a zero waste organisation?

Oli – There are no official definitions. All the materials we use have had a life before us, after we have used them, all materials have life afterwards.

It is very important to try not get overwhelmed, it is a huge topic, but anything you do is better than doing nothing. We do not need to aim to be perfect.

Four small things you can do:

- Reduce one impact
- Support one organisation
- Write one letter
- Start one conversation

Pig Foot have a great breakdown of being a carbon neutral theatre on their website.

<https://www.pigfoottheatre.com/carbon-neutral-theatre>



Other resources:

- <https://homemcr.org/about/sustainability/carbon-literacy/>
- <https://wearesail.org/>
- <https://theatregreenbook.com/>
- <https://www.intersectionalenvironmentalist.com/>
- BSA survey with some numbers about young people and the climate crisis:  
[https://www.bsa.natcen.ac.uk/media/39251/bsa35\\_climate\\_change.pdf](https://www.bsa.natcen.ac.uk/media/39251/bsa35_climate_change.pdf)
- [https://open.spotify.com/show/1KzrasExlM5dgMYwgFHns6?si=9ZQDF5iUSi2Up5BqXpClfg&utm\\_source=copy-link](https://open.spotify.com/show/1KzrasExlM5dgMYwgFHns6?si=9ZQDF5iUSi2Up5BqXpClfg&utm_source=copy-link)
- Carbon Literacy Trust: <https://carbonliteracy.com> oli@thegreenhousetheatre.com
- <https://juliesbicycle.com/news/the-colour-green-lab/>
- <https://www.thendobetter.com/thinking-bigly>
- Arundhati Roy in Financial Times on the pandemic - <https://www.ft.com/content/10d8f5e8-74eb-11ea-95fe-fcd274e920ca>

**f) Any Other Business**

This is a 10 minute questionnaire for people who are ethnically and culturally diverse, who experience racism in our society, and who work in the performing arts for children (PYA) sector in the UK. Please amongst your networks and colleagues.

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdfGBCSSJ\\_ucBaCIFA59n3HD-wd5VxKY-lifPO\\_6gGI0E2OLg/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdfGBCSSJ_ucBaCIFA59n3HD-wd5VxKY-lifPO_6gGI0E2OLg/viewform?usp=sf_link)

In this instance, we will use the term 'global majority' for the respondents of this this survey. We would like to use the findings of this survey to find out how the sector is doing, what we need to do to make it safer and kinder, plus how we can better connect with each other.

**g) Date of next meeting**

Date of next meeting is Thursday 27 May 1pm – 2.15pm Anti-Racism

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83199217248?pwd=Z2FWVWN5dTBDVhMUTFWU21rcWx1QT09>

Meeting ID: 831 9921 7248

Passcode: 135937

If you are receiving these minutes by email, then you are already on the newsletter list. If you would like to invite others to join these meetings. Please ask them to sign up to the ASSITEJ UK newsletter or join the network [here](#).

Future meetings: June (Tues 29 June 10.30am – 11.45am) **Graduates, those new into the sector - Filskit Theatre (Sarah, Vic, Katy Costigan)**

**h) Zoom Chat**

From Emma - tutti frutti to Everyone: 11:13 AM



There are more electric charging points in the UK than petrol forecourts.

Rates incentive to landlords

From Me to Everyone: 11:36 AM

With regards to climate justice & intersectionality - I did this training with Julies Bicycle called The Colour Green. Chipu you may be interested... <https://juliesbicycle.com/news/the-colour-green-lab/>

Also a podcasts <https://juliesbicycle.com/podcast-the-colour-green/>

From Emma - tutti frutti to Everyone: 11:37 AM

Doing something is better than doing nothing.

From Me to Everyone: 11:40 AM

@FehintiBalogun has a show coming out with Complicite which is about climate activism from a black perspective - it's amazing.

From wendy harris to Everyone: 11:42 AM

appoint a green champion on your board (if you have one)

From tinawilliams to Everyone: 11:52 AM

Bethen, this was great session, really thought provoking. Thank you. Tina, Pied Piper Theatre

From Danny Braverman (he/him) to Everyone: 11:53 AM

Arundhati Roy in Financial Times on the pandemic

I think everyone is so busy planning to wgo live again!

From Danny Braverman (he/him) to Everyone: 11:55 AM

Thanks Mosa.

From Me to Everyone: 11:56 AM

It costs more to shop sustainably! And it takes more time!

From Michelle - Theatr lolo to Everyone: 11:57 AM

very good point Esther

From Chipu Kureya to Everyone: 11:59 AM

This has really been fantastic x Thank you all and can't wait to implement some of these changes xxx

From Bethan Screen - Todos Teatro (she/her) to Everyone: 12:01 PM

Thanks so much for coming everyone! I'm really energised by these conversations. Anyone who wants to chat more get in touch with me [todosteatro@outlook.com](mailto:todosteatro@outlook.com)



From Trina @ The Spark (she/her) to Everyone: 12:01 PM

Thank you all

From Danny Braverman (he/him) to Everyone: 12:01 PM

I have to go now, so wanted to thank everyone for a very stimulating session - such great links to innovative work and ideas. Please do contact me if you want a connection to Goldsmiths Theatre & Performance Department. We have amazing students that are very passionate about sustainability. Particularly, if you want students on work placement, then contact me on [d.braverman@gold.ac.uk](mailto:d.braverman@gold.ac.uk).

From Me to Everyone: 12:02 PM

Thanks Danny

From Bethan Screen - Todos Teatro (she/her) to Everyone: 12:02 PM

Thanks Mosa, I will share with my network

From Michelle - Theatr Iolo to Everyone: 12:02 PM

Sorry I have got to head off, thanks all,

From Me to Everyone: 12:02 PM

Thursday 27 May 1pm – 2.15pm Anti-Racism

From Esther Rennae - Half Moon to Everyone: 12:02 PM

Thank you for facilitating this and thank you all for your great contribution- learnt so much!

From Me to Everyone: 12:03 PM

Thanks for coming everyone!

From Cat Moore - NIE to Everyone: 12:03 PM

Thanks for a great session - was really useful and thought provoking!

From Flossie, Oily Cart (she/they) to Everyone: 12:03 PM

Really great session, thanks so much

### **ASSITEJ UK Membership**

This may seem like a weird time to be parting with cash, but please do read on....

Without support from our members, the PYA/TYA sector could have been cut adrift from one another and from our international colleagues. We may also have lost sight of our commitment and passion for high quality live performance for young audiences as being our sole and single-minded concern. On the Edge, Quality of Difference, Assitej regional showcases and countless opportunities for members to participate in Assitej International events would not have been made possible.

At a time when arts organisations are making tough choices and freelancers are facing an uncertain future. We understand how a membership fee is not going to be a number one spending priority. And yet, since lockdown began at the end of March, here are some of the things the **Assitej UK** network has achieved:

- Welcomed 15 new paying members.
- PYA England has reconstituted, recruited a new, diverse steering group, set out a marketing campaign, and hosted 3 coffee mornings, to which more than 30 people have attended each time.
- Members across the UK have contributed to articles in national newspapers, such as the recent article by Lyn Gardner in The Stage
- Members have lobbied their respective Arts Councils regarding the special case for young audiences.
- We have secured £555 funding from Action for Children's Arts Emergency fund.
- Submitted two bespoke PYA letters to Oliver Dowden, Culture Secretary.

Meanwhile, **Assitej International**, of which all Assitej UK members are by default a member, has hosted a raft of global coffee mornings, at which there has been representation from all continents. This is something you could not safely say about international festivals that are largely populated by delegates from wealthier countries and organisations.

It is quite possible that Corona Virus and Zoom have changed our idea of what is possible as a networking organisation, and our capacity to both celebrate our unique characteristics as individuals whilst staying well connected is looking rosier than it ever did! Could you consider joining the network at this time: for solidarity, a future facing approach, seizing the moment and making the next decade that of the child?

Covid-19 has hit our industry hard, therefore in 2021 if you are unable to pay your annual standard subscription of £70 for an Organisation or £25 for individual members, we are offering you the option to pay £25 as an Organisation and £5 as an individual member for the year.

- [Organisation Subscription Covid-19 Discounted Rate: £25](#)
- [Organisation Subscription Standard Rate: £70](#)
- [Individual Member Covid-19 Discounted Rate: £5](#)
- [Individual Member Standard Rate: £25](#)

Alternatively, please contact us by emailing [info@tya-uk.org](mailto:info@tya-uk.org) if:

- the cost of membership is too much for you at this time but you wish to make a one-off donation in lieu of your membership fee
- you would like to take a payment holiday for one year
- If you require an invoice

We very much hope that you will recognise the benefits of membership, and thank you in advance.