

ISSSD AGM

ITI 6th December 7:30pm

Present:

Liam Doona	LD
Alan Farquharson	AF
Sarah Jane Shiels	SJS
Deirdre Dwyer	DD
Peter Power	PP
Katie Davenport	KD
Catherine Fay	CF
Niall Rea	NR
Kevin Smith	KS
Joe Vanek	JV
Ciara Murnane	CM
Ger Clancy	GC

Apologies:

Eimer Murphy, Moggie Douglas

Chairpersons report. Please see appendix 1

National and PQ has been our main focus this year.

We had a good response to call out for the National Exhibition.

At the request of our membership's concerns over the effect the Abbey's programme was having on the work of Irish Designers, we contacted the directors and board of the Abbey Theatre. They took several months to respond, but we got a response last week.

LD reads letter to directors and board of the Abbey Theatre. Please see appendix 1.2

At LD and Rachel West's meeting in the Arts Council, ISSSD's letter had been quite instrumental in conversations between the Arts Council and the Abbey.

*Response from the Abbey to be available to all members. ***Embargo on items related to February 2019. Please see appendix 1.3*

Members present at AGM's response to the Abbey's letter:

JV: 1st paragraph inconsistent. There are 4 - 5 bought in productions that are attached to other production companies. Not supporting new work in theatre. With Patrick Mason, there were 7 - 8 new productions, in house productions a year. There are now a huge amount of revivals. Work being pulled from existing theatre. Lets look at the amount of brand new shows. [Companies] doing great work upstairs in the pub, now in the Peacock theatre. Great for them, but there is a small company doing great work being brought down to the Peacock. Work continually being pulled from here and there. No new work happening. Lets look at the amount of new shows created by Irish based artists. The next six months is the same as the last.

KS: Speaking from Maree Kearns behalf also, only one set designer has been employed for the new programme. As a lighting designer, I've had three shows in the Peacock, not one of them was funded by the Abbey, but from independent theatre companies. This relates to a bigger problem on how they are approaching making their programme, we all have an opinion on that is impacting the sector, but we specifically have a right to talk about how it is effecting designers. They have to been seen to be supporting Irish designers, and it's not enough to say they have 24 - 26 designers in the programme.

CF: We thrashed all this out before sending the letter, we talked about all figures, the reason we didn't put them in was because they could have been manipulated in this way.

JV: It would be easy enough to go through last year and look at figures in detail.

DD: It would be useful to do that.

LD: It's a pity it's taken so long to get this response from them, because we could be a lot further along this road now. The first thing is to get them into conversation.

JV: Its a terrific response that opens up a host of other questions.

LD: The first objective has been achieved, which was to get the response. Next step, how to use these opportunities. What's the next step? Arts Council recognised that they wanted to see more work being made at the Abbey. It is their intention to see a lot more produced pieces.

JV: If you look at the next 6 months, that hasn't tricked down. More of the same, more than ever. Whats happening all Summer? Another revival, another piece blocking up 6/7 weeks of the Summer.

PP: We did go through the numbers, and we were quite conscious of the fact that there was only one new piece produced by the Abbey and the rest were co-productions, we realized the scale of the problem, is that every venue in Ireland will need to have a chat to the funding bodies about how they are putting on work, what their responsibilities are for putting on new work, not just the Abbey. We have started with the Abbey, I'm really shocked it took 6 months to get that back. Its great that we got a response, but the first paragraph is not true.

DD: When we hold a meeting with them at the end of January, we should have our stats ready.

JV: Every production, who the production teams were, design and creative teams, and where the production came from. 4/5 has already been funded by the Arts Council. Druid have been at the Abbey for 4/5 weeks with Richard III, actors paid by Druid Theatre Company below Abbey rates. The Abbey weren't paying the salaries of anybody.

CF: Landmark are the same.

PP: Why are they (Abbey) doing (Programming like) this?

KS: Stats, turnover, bums on seats. In a lot of ways it's wonderful, more diverse programme available. But it's having such a major impact on the sector. I don't think people realise. I don't remember the last time I did a show in Project for example.

JV: All Project shows are in the Peacock. All this Spring is all Project based stuff in the Peacock.

KS: Those shows would still happen without being an Abbey co-production. There is less work being produced. They give €10,000 to every show, and with that €10,000,

JV: Eg. Class (Isuelt Golden and David Horan in association with the Abbey Theatre and Bush Theatre), fantastic it's going to the Bush, started in Civic, now it's Abbey production. Just saw it and bought it in. Didn't set it up at the top of it's life.

KS: More recent example was a Fishamble show which was a co-production with Abbey, but had nothing to do with the Abbey, no Abbey staff on it. Appeared to be a co-production by giving a magical amount of money and putting a capital A on it.

LD: This is a conversation for a different place. We'll take up the offer to meet. We need to decide who is going along, and what the objective of the meeting should be?

DD: We shouldn't sacrifice our invitation, but this seems to be a bigger conversation on the ecology of Irish Theatre. Is there another organisation who we could be talking to? Society of Directors? Who could similarly be exercised by this information.

LD: Who do we want to share this information with? We will blunt ourselves as an organisation if we don't stay ruthlessly on the design track. Two things to say as a committee, who we would like to share this information with as part of a larger ecosystem of Irish Theatre, and the other thing is, people who would like to identify themselves to come along to that meeting with the directors in January with Liam. Meeting in January should be objective driven.

COM: Call another meeting for the membership to be aware?

LD: Call an EGM at the beginning of Jan?

DD: Coincide with the opening of the Exhibition?

LD: Set up a meeting where Members can come and vent. Use meeting to set up objectives for the following meeting, which we will try and set up towards the end of January.

JV: In relation to "paid assistant designer roles" (Quote from Abbey's letter of response); shows are coming in fully formed. Certain members of staff have been giving permission to work outside the Abbey, specifically on Aida. JV looking after the work experience designer from Abbey on AIDA as there was nothing for them to do. Nothing for assistant designers to do in the Abbey. They should be having

shows created in the organisation for people to come in and work on them and see how they are put together and not just sit there as they come out of a truck.

LD: One of the things that is absolutely reasonable for us to talk to the Abbey about is a need for Craft infrastructure.

JV: A learning process for anybody.

KS: It sounds like there is going to be a cull. If they are bringing in an increasing amounts of outside shows, and people don't have enough work to do, are people going to loose there jobs? They are becoming a receiving house.

Secretary's report. Please see appendix 2

Matters arising from report:

PP to follow up on Sound Design issue relating to ITTA

SJS to push a statement to the ITTA to update its approach to the awards and allocation of categories.

JV: it might be worth pointing out the amount of productions now that use movement directors and AV designers. Outline a few productions with the creative team listed.

PP: Should we be getting into conversations with them about what they're looking for? The few sound designers who got back to me said they feel the people viewing the work just don't understand what it is, I feel the same about AV, and movement director vs choreographer, what that is? We had started a work flow document, definitions of exactly what the roles were

LD: Why don't we write to the Irish Times, and offer them as part of the run up, we offer them a series of articles that really deal with what each design discipline can offer.

SJS: Comes down to finances from ITTA.

JV: Shouldn't be Irish Times Theatre Awards if Opera's in it, should be Performance Awards.

DD: How do we tackle that, with a letter?

LD: I think you tackle that by making a relationship with the people who are informing that thinking at the time.

DD: Who recruits the judges? We need to find out who to write to.

PP: I would be interested to see that selection process and what their criteria are. What are they basing their critique on

DD: I think it's very subjective, and informed by seeing a lot of things. But Irish Times could respond more officially to that.

LD: Will find out who to write to.

DD: And we'll write a letter and say we'd love to talk to them.

LD: What I think they would be interested in is doing a few profile pieces, companion pieces, which wouldn't do anyone any kind of harm.

DD: I imagine this is a conversation which will look to the awards in 2020, as everything is done for 2018/9.

LD: You would be surprised how late these things get done actually.

DD: We need to be mindful that it's not a given, that the Irish Times could also take away this award, Tile Style support it, is it better to not have it? Do we want it to disappear altogether?

PP: We don't want it to disappear, but it has to be relevant to the industry it's critiquing. If not there's no point in it. Other than a party, which is great!

LD: I think the Irish Times would be interested to know there's an actual exhibition in January. There would be a number of pieces they could get out about it, which would be a lovely prep for the awards. They're looking for contact the way everyone is.

DD: So a letter?

LD: Will find out who to write to.

PP: Is DRAFF involved in the National Exhibition?

DD: Jo is having conversations with them. It's very hard to see how they would fit in. There is a conversation a foot, but I don't know what that link is.

PP: They seem ideal in my head, but that's in my head.

DD: Have a chat to Jo.

PP: I will

SJS: Need to confirm that we can use DCCOI Funding in 2019. Has this been drawn down? No reply from DCCOI from last correspondence.

JV: Reminded us that David McLoughlin from the Opera House offered to meet the Wexford County Council with ISSSD to look at funding for the National Exhibit.

LD to follow up Wexford for County Council Funding.

Addition to Secretary's report; In Focus, design talk in the Everyman Theatre with the Designers of Asking For It, the Abbey and Landmark Production, which was on as part of the Cork Midsummers Festival 2018. 5 Designers speaking to a small gathering.

Treasurer Report: Please see Appendix 3

Matters arriving from report:

Limited funds for activities in 2019. Look for further funding? Portion out €500 from membership fees for running of the company. Jo and Triona have control over the money we know we have.

SJS: To renew DCCOI membership. €100.

DD: Abbey said they would host some of PQ Talks for free. But they don't mention that they would be free of charge, so would be reluctant in accepting that at face value. It is fantastic to have that relationship, but I would be reluctant accept this year because we can't afford it.

PP: What impact will Culture Ireland funding be?

DD: We hope we have €40,000. We've applied for €56,000 from Culture Ireland. You can only spend Culture Ireland funds on Travelling and per diems. So the fees we have committed to are our Producer, our Curator. A very small fee for our marketing Manager only for the National Exhibition. Apart from that Triona has taken over the management of that budget, although she will consult with me as Treasurer,

I'm not going to have any control and power over that now, so we've handed that mandate over, so they will be spending the rest of that €30,000 on the making of the National Exhibition, then the making of the exhibition for Prague. None of the money that we get from Culture Ireland can be spent on that anyway. The money we applied for from Culture Ireland will include travel expenses for members of the committee to go, and if members of the committee or others go and are paid for (From Culture Ireland funding) they will have to work for their money and be invigilators at the event. This isn't a capacity for us to have any free travel, sadly. If we're not successful in Culture Ireland, Jo is going to have to re think the exhibition to make it for €25,000. We are in a bit of a catch 22 because the conditional award from the Arts Council, which is our biggest chunk, is very much to pay for the National Exhibition. They are not interested, and it's not in their remit to support us going to another country, so while we are going to use some of the funds to do that, we need to be very clear that we are supporting the National Exhibition, so the enlivenment of that with talks and engagement will be really brilliant. We're in a situation that we've got to spend the money that we have clever and within the conditions we have been given it.

KS: Is all of the funding that has been risen, is that specifically for the National Exhibition and PQ?

DD: Yes, all of the applications have been for that.

KS: Ideologically, should there still be money left in the society, so the exhibitions are not the sole goal of the society?

DD: Which is exactly what Alan was suggesting.

KS: Because it's important that this society still exists as a representative for designers.

DD: It does, but we don't have much costs in that except for events.

KS: But ideologically, that needs to be maintained, the focus is that it's not simply just for PQ

DD: Absolutely, it shouldn't change the focus of our activities but its the funnelling of our funds. But if you as a member have a problem with that?

KS: No, I don't. Once PQ is finished, it's important that the society still stays in existence.

DD: Absolutely, and we have an approximate €1000 coming in every year from fees. And we hope that would bubble when we've gone to Prague and designers see that we're worth being involved in. But until June 2019, thats where we've decided to commit our money, but if you have an idealogical problem with that as a member certainly we could talk. We are going to carve back a bit of the money allocated to the Exhibitions as a contingency for the society should we need an every or should we have some cost that we haven't anticipated.

SJS: We'll also keep looking for funding applications.

DD: If we want to pursue these Abbey talks, we could apply to DCC in the next round.

JV: Does the committee feel they have raised enough money? How much will the National Exhibition cost? Is there enough for it?

DD: There is certainly enough for the National Exhibition. It will be about what is left over for Prague then, whether that is sufficient, that is much more the question, because all of the money we have gotten will pay for the National Exhibition. It will be a question of creative thinking if we are unsuccessful in getting our Culture Ireland funding.

DD: Will be going to the bank in the morning to hand over to Triona.

PQ Sub committee report 2019 update:

NR: Has more questions than answers at the moment. The rest of the committee have been meeting Jo, and know a lot more than I do about Jo and her plans. I am more the voice from Sligo and Belfast in terms of the National exhibition that I am, but my request would be, what do we want the role of the PQ sub committee to be going forward and can we have a Dublin based member as part of the committee. Maybe Jo and I should meet more often? I just feel that Kata was concentrating on Cork and I was concentrating on Sligo and Belfast. And PQ and the National kind of seemed to meld.

DD: Probably should outline that to general members, I'm not sure if general members were aware that there was in theory a smaller PQ sub committee, but certainly it got consumed into the general committee,

NR: It did, so I don't really think I can offer a report from a PQ perspective cause I haven't really been involved in dealings with Jo and Triona. One thing that did come up with Jo Mangan on the 30th November, I suggested that there was two or three designers from the North, who just simply had not been included, and I asked for permission to chase them, and I did chase them, and they have said yes they will, and I ask the committee can we allow three well established designers who did not get in on time?

AF: PQ is not necessarily confined to who has been in the National Exhibition, because there will be more productions between now and then anyway. So there will be an opportunity to submit directly to PQ

DD: But are you talking in the National Exhibition?

NR: I feel they would be sorely missed from the exhibition in Belfast cause they are three well established designers.

AF: I certainly have no problem with that.

LD: Are they members?

NR: One of them is, two I am badgering in to joining. There will be a noticeable absence, to the theatre community in the North.

DD: Anyone else we feel we missed? Jo was going to communicate with Macnas.

NR: Jo herself said she was going to communicate with them.

DD: We are still open to those conversations, in as much as anybody's interested, but I don't think they are biting.

PP: I don't think it's interest, we'd love more people to be involved. Most of us feel spent in pursuing that right now, and now its more about putting the exhibit on. No one would be adverse to anyone coming in late, we'd all make some way to accommodate them. As long as they're a member.

NR: Meeting everyone from Belfast in the Lyric tomorrow with the Lyric staff. I don't have a budget for that, I have more questions about budget, is this the right time to talk about it?

DD: We covered that in the meeting earlier, we might leave it till the end.

NR: There will be an ancillary event in Sligo. Blue Raincoat Theatre company have their Winter Theatre Academy, and for the first time ever they have invited a designer, Jamie Vartan, to hold a weekend workshop. Can that be advertised to the membership? NR to send details of the to AF to put on the website. You do have to

pay to go to it. I'm negotiating a student discount rate for that at the moment. But obviously we'd like to get as many people as possible up to Sligo.

Now that 2019 is upon us, what do the committee want the PQ subcommittee to do? Perhaps we could have one more member from Dublin? Skyping from Cork or Skyping from Belfast that it all happens from the main committee.

AF: Bulk of the labour is done. We have a curator, we have a producer, we have funding, hopefully we'll get some more. The notion of a PQ subcommittee, originally was to pursue these goals, it didn't quite work out.

NR: It ended up being regional satellites, which were good.

AF: But a functioning PQ subcommittee should have allowed the general committee to get on with the business of running the society, and possibly events, and whatever.

JV: The personnel that are on board now, no need for a committee any more. Its the outside group that are going to make the choices for what PQ is.

NR: Would it be more helpful to have an Ulster, Leinster, Munster, Connaught subcommittee?

DD: I think we mismanaged the PQ subcommittee, partly due to our inexperience in organising this event. We should make a constitutional change, because we will be rolling as a committee, that maybe we need to make a PQ subcommittee that has a stronger agenda and doesn't need to consult with the committee as much? Because we weren't sure what we were when we founded, it was very PQ focused, and then other events and interests became apparent, so maybe we need to entire that in the constitution, that there is.

NR: It shifted quite radically when the idea can up to spread the exhibition around the Island. That was a natural shift and I think it's working really well.

PP: I think that's what happened to PQ, the PQ subcommittee dissolved into the National Exhibition subcommittee.

DD: But for future proofing both the general society, which is really important as KS commented on earlier, if we can split the labour, because certainly as a committee member I've felt it arduous to be worrying about both things and I think if one was worrying about one or the other it would be less commitment. So maybe a PQ subcommittee can be formed in 2020 to look after PQ 2023

AF: It should be formed at 2019 AGM when this PQ is done

KS: With earlier deadlines, way earlier deadlines.

CF: Would that committee have a treasurer, secretary etc?

DD: I don't think so, they just need to be worrying about PQ and coming back to the committee.

CF: Worrying about what aspects? It's mainly a financial concern

AF: It's financial in the sense of funding opportunities,

CF: But it's the managing of that.

AF: The managing of that would be as it is now with looking at funding opportunities, the appointing of a Producer, appointing a curator. And reporting back to the general committee.

DD: What we're anxious to do is future proof all of this, so any of this progress does not get lost. But I'm not sure how we best do that.

AF: I think we need a separate meeting about how we might structure it.

DD: We shouldn't put anything in as a constitutional change while we have everybody?

AF: Doesn't require a constitutional change, nothing stopping us creating a sub committee, with a certain remit that report back to the general committee.

AF: We'll know better how to structure that committee after we've done one PQ

PP: We'll know better after we've gotten there.

JV: What is the point of a PQ sub committee? What we're looking at is a theme for the National Exhibition, PQ has it's own theme, you have a group of people who are administering it together, curating it and all that, well them themselves are going to make the selection on what the next PQ is, so what are they going to do?

AF: The general committee can get on with running the society, which has been on hold whilst PQ has been going on. Not losing sight of the fact that we are a society representing designers, and PQ is part of that, but it has a huge burden all round, so to relieve some of that was the general reason for establishing a PQ subcommittee in the first place.

DD: It could be a change in direction. The next PQ committee could decide to do whatever they want to decide to do with it

PP: We attempted to set up a PQ committee with the remit of doing what we all ended up doing due to the National Exhibit being added in, and what we need to do is work out what we need to do to get PQ to happen, and set up a committee based on that remit.

AF: I actually think the National Exhibition is part of PQ.

PP: Which is what it took to get this to happen, which we didn't know when we started this.

AF: Formalise a document for that committee.

DD: Formalise a document post PQ and pre AGM.

AF: Perhaps a committee that has specific officers.

NR: Should it be an exhibition committee, that runs exhibitions including PQ?

JV: 9 months ago I produced an 8 page document, but no response, in which I proposed to help raise money. I even said I would go to John and Moya (Second names?) and see if I could get a lump sum from them, and at no point did anyone get back to me. I'm not interested in pursuing this anymore because I produced it 9 months ago and no-body took it up. But I think that's what the PQ sub committee needs to do, they need to be hired for the big organisations to say, now we've got this all together, lets fundraise serious money. Where's the split between the money being spent on the National Exhibit and what's going to be spent on PQ? How is it going to be designed, it is going to be a lot of disparate elements that we all around the country pull together, and then present it.

DD: To respond to your legitimate comment, you did put together a great presentation that did cross our tables, I think part of the problem is doing anything by committee is disparate and slow. I imagine it was momentum that got lost. We were excited about the fundraising prospects, I think that's one of the difficulties with committee decision making.

JV: I'm just making the point that I'm no longer interested in doing it, I was prepared when I produced all the material, I'd written about pieces of work for it and then

nothing happened. I think the committee needs to put something like that together and really go for the money.

DD: We need to put a list of things to do for next time. We have failed in that development planning this time in our enthusiasm in getting here which is great but we also haven't done it in the best way possible, and we need to learn from that.

LD: Most important thing about any society is that it continues. And by continuing, you improve. You drop fewer balls and you achieve more things, the whole idea of putting a society together, was to stop PQ's from becoming one off's.

KS: For me, the society is bigger than PQ. More important that designers are represent.

LD: It's all about stamina, it's about keeping going.

PP: Update on Jo's vision for PQ as I have been working with her on VR for the week.

Please see appendix 4 - Jo's statement

PP: She had always come into this with the idea that virtual reality is fair, and trying to pivot on the fact that the budget is tight, so her suggestion is that it will be a pavilion set up in a sphere, 5 seats around that sphere, each seat connected to a 360 degree film, about 7 minutes long, presented in 360, on a VR headset that would be mutually experienced, so that would be launched together and not as an individual. That the films will be made up of the designers who stand out, through interview and presentation of their design in 360, interaction, so that you will be able to look closely at things, and listen to dialogue, and sound and music, and will be done in a 5 to 7 minute 360 experience.

DD: and she is hoping for a globe in the centre on which will be projected what is being seen on the headsets, so that people walking past will not just see 5 people on headsets.

KS: Is this for PQ?

PP: PQ

DD: Thats her vision.

JV: So that means nothing physical, everything will be filmed here.

DD: Yes.

PP: for a lot of reasons. Jo feels quite strongly about the idea, but also about the physical manifestation of objects, transport, so she's stripping it back to something that can be dealt with on the ground here and brought over with pre existing equipment. She has connections to the kind of people that can make it, because of the research she has been doing over the last few months. It feels a lot more achievable now. The majority of next year will be spent collating the highest quality of footage for that, in dialogue with the particular designers.

DD: That she will curate, and she will be visiting all of the exhibition centres, viewing the work there and trying to access what is translatable and what interests her and what is her vision for how Irish theatre should be represented in this one instance.

PP: In dialogue with the designers being presented.

NR: So what is projected onto the sphere from the inside?

PP: Will be what the people are seeing.

NR: Will it be exactly what the people are seeing?

PP: Well it will be seen in a fish eye way, as you can't see 360 unless you're inside, so its actually strange but kind of beautiful.

NR: But it will still be a better experience to have the head set on?

PP: Oh yeah, of course.

AF: The point of the headset too is that you have certain autonomy in what you want to look at. You're in this immersive environment, and you can look around it.

PP: What I imagine it to be, is if you map 360 images into a sphere, it will be one of those mappings presented in a half sphere underneath, so it will be the same images that are running, shot into a half sphere image, so there won't be movement in it but it will still be a 360 environment.

NR: Would you have the ability as a sound designer to (gesture)

PP: Yep, so thats what I was up there looking at with Jo.

AF: had experience yesterday of VR as I'm looking at a job thats going to be pre visualised for some specific reasons, but what it gives you is scale. So you can computer model and all the rest and look at screens from all angles, but the first time I ever wore a headset into a virtual theatre, it was an extraordinary experience. Implications are huge. For the actual design process of the future.

PP: The little I did with them up there, you can take, for any designers that work in modelling anyway, you can potentially import your models directly into that world, so that you can walk around. This model is 3 degrees of freedom, not 6, all you can move is your head, so there's no forward or backward motion, thats why you're sitting, so the experience will be rollercoaster, you'll be guided along, which you'll

see everything through multidirectional, but it's not something you can walk around in. But it's still quite beautiful, and if you've got modelled maps of your work, they can be interacted with in a very curated way, you can draw the trails of the camera work around it and you can be very specific about where they are brought. And that again, can be done in dialogue with the designers which I think is quite exciting.

DD: Jo's also interested the physical objects and the costumes as well, so that can also be captured in 360 degrees.

CF: And she's going to have interviews as well, interviews with designers.

KS: The only think you'll be missing will be costume texture. From a lighting point of view, deadly, your work well represented in that 2D vision,

NR: Will there be sound around the exhibit?

PP: No, most of the sound for PQ has to be kept at a certain DB, which is why most of the work ends up headphone based, but once that happens, you're into binaural sound anyway, so you might as well put it into the VR experience, there's no real benefit to having propagated sound.. I had the same reaction until I sat down and heard people talk about it, there would be in a grander experience, 6 degrees of freedom if you were in a sealed room, then it would be brilliant to do it like that.

AF: I presume the sphere is something of a mesmeriser for catching people walking past and hang on to.

NR: What scale will the dome be? Will it be a hire or custom made?

DD: Hire is the current idea. 2m x 2m dome. That's the scale that Jo is imaging, but she has no idea about costs yet.

NR: Dome in replay theatre but it can only be seen from the inside.

PP: This is more of an outside dome television. But it could be something that you walk into.

DD: Jo hasn't secured one yet, so if there was a pre-existing cost saving measure, great, but then we'd have to transport that so that might be a cost implication.

NR: It collapses down into a couple of bags. NR will write to Jo about the dome.

GC: How many audience?

PP: 5 at a time.

GC: VR can create quite a big queue.

CM: That would be the type of thing that would put me off, if I saw more than 5 people in a queue I'd be gone. If you have it on for every single hour that place is open, you're still only hitting a very small amount of audience compared to the overall amount of people attending the event.

PP: A sacrifice, unfortunately, I don't see a solution to it.

GC: Maybe a console where people can log in.

PP: you could flatten the image and show it as a film.

GC: I think it's a big gamble to put it down into 5 screens.

LD: There is always an access thing at Prague. Countries end up with a footprint.

DD: 360 people per day. 10 day festival. 3,600 if there is someone there full time. Will pass concerns on to Jo.

LD: It's also something that has a life beyond Prague.

DD: Design and Preserve!

Nominations of Elections.

AF: I propose a 4 year cycle. LD. Second.

Put to a vote. Passed.

Chairperson:

AF: Liam Doona

NR: 2nd

Put to a vote. Passed.

Vice-Chairperson:

DD: Alan Farquharsan

CF: 2nd

Put to a vote. Passed.

Secretary:

DD: Sarah Jane Shiels

AF: 2nd

Put to a vote. Passed.

Treasurer:

SJS: Deirdre Dwyer

LD: 2nd

Put to a vote. Passed.

Education Officer:

CF: Niall Rea

LD: 2nd

Put to a vote. Passed. Handover document to be provided by Moggie Douglas. LD to get in touch with MD

Outreach Officer:

AF: Peter Power

DD: 2nd

Put to a vote. Passed.

General Committee:

SJS: Katie Davenport

AF: 2nd

Put to a vote. Passed.

General Committee:

NR: Catherine Fay

PP: 2nd

Put to a vote. Passed.

General Committee:

NR: Ciara Murnane

LD: 2nd

Put to a vote. Passed.

DD: Interested in the great turnout from the Costume Collective, they had around 45 vocal people. How can we make the society more appealing? Thank you to the 5 members who showed up at our AGM, how do we make it more vibrant or is this just a bad time of year?

LD: We should have run a social.

SJS: I think we need to be more visible as a society. Organising more events, organising talks in relation to shows, but its down to the fact that we're so busy trying to do the National Exhibit and PQ, it has us completely swamped.

DD: Why did ye come to the AGM, because you're interested in the society in general?

KS: Yes

JV: Of course

PP: Part of what you've described to is people coming together under their art form, which is another really strong thing to do, something I need to do myself to reach out to more sound designers, this is what is available.

AF: Several aspects of practice that we could get expertise in to talk to us about.

DD: Because it's about how its valuable for the members, we need to give you value for your 50 bucks. How could we become more valuable?

KS: Timing of tonights meeting might be an issue. Daytime is better.

JV: 7:30 is tricky, 5:30/6pm would be better.

COM: I propose an informal gathering. A space for a get together. ITI or some other organisation. A coffee morning. COM to take this on outside of committee. Similar to Fringe Festival, come and have a chat.

JV: Is the national exhibit a staggered opening? NR's one is.

JV: Whats the format for Wexford?

LD: We haven't decided yet, that's tomorrow's job.

Issue of Copywrite

PP: Are saying there is copyright missing from these contracts?

SJS: In this instance there was an issue getting copyright written into a contract.

KS: Simple solution, the society comes up with a template, a standard thing that we put in as designers, maybe there will need to be several across various disciplines. Copyright contract.

DD: Does the theatre forum standard contract have it in it?

AF: Several years ago, the IDI organised a talk by an expert on copyright. Unless you sell it, it's yours. Anything you create you own the copyright too. No matter whether someone is paying you to create it. You have to separately buy your copyright. They do have to buy it, even if it is for some cent, it's legal that they now own the copyright, money has to exchange hands. So technically it's unnecessary, you own the copyright. Put a copy of your drawings into an envelope and mail it to yourself, in case you ended up in court and you could open it

PP: I have a small bit of experience in this, I got into a number of serious issues a few years ago around copyright, and ended up having to go through legal channels to get some advice around it. All the above is true, the problem is that as soon as that becomes widely known, companies are beginning to force you to sell your copyright of your work and they put the 1 cent purchase buyout into your standard contract. Once you say no to that they will pause the production itself and blame you individually for that. There is a huge amount of extortion and pressure put on designers, particularly musicians and sound designers around relinquishing control over that in order to fall in line with the standards. So you're right in saying part of it is about expressing an intent around what we believe the right way contracts are

worded in order to protect our members. I also think that is an area we need to get legal representation in. A lot of discrepancy from company to company as the templates are generally borrowed from one art form and put on another art form. When you ask questions about contracts, the general response is never positive.

LD: There are a lot of great contracts around, the question is whether the employer is willing to sign that kind of contract.

PP: A lot of people don't realise the contracts they are being sent out are quite wooly, "In good faith" etc. Its on the individual to either know, or to put themselves in the fire to protect themselves and their work, it is difficult and you become seen as a difficult maker. out society should put out standards about contractual engagement, which I think is really important.

AF: There's a lot of them that have never heard of VAT Either.

KS: I think thats another issue we should address.

AF: Insurance is another issue.

KS: 4 - 5 years ago, a group of people tried to put into our contracts LD's should not have public liability insurance. KS found 2 years later a slew of contract coming back at him saying it was his responsibility, and it seemed to be as a direct result of the fact that we had asked the question.

JV: Agent rewrote copyright and liability section of contract, will send it into us as template and put on file.

PP: If we share this information, we have to explicitly state that we are not legally liable.

JV: Bullet points, an agent comes in, says this is the contract, top ten things for a designer to look at, to negotiate contracts.

AF: We should have a seminar on this.

KS: Most theatre companies buy the rights of a design for a 12month contract, but some buy it for a 24 month contract. Designers should have a standard contract.

DD: Does this sound like a legal seminar and a contract seminar or are the both the same thing?

AF: There are several aspects, copyright issue, insurance and liability,

DD: An event in August? September?

PP: It will take that long to organise. The other thing is that there are some clauses in contracts that say you're not allowed to disclose them.

JV said he would do something over the weekend and send it to us, but I can't catch what it is...

SJS: To chat to Emer Foley.

PP: Most musicians understand they're rights around copyright, as you move into design suggestions and sound design its way more confusing.

DD: It's much more collaborative. Less divisible.

CF: It's also about coming together.

PP: It's all its ever been. It took the music community coming together to change the conditions. It's about people saying you can't sign a contract like this because

you are signing away your right to licensing. Right now most contracts are so vague around licensing, if you sign it there's nothing you can do.

KS: VAT in this county is a poverty trap. We are capped at €37,000, and you get to a point in October where you can't take on any more work. We're such a tiny sector, we fall between two stools, the only way it's going to change is through political pressure.

JV: The other problem is once you've gone over €37,000 and you've been registered, that's it for life.

KS: This is a political issue. Lobby on the issue. Seminar on the issue. A number of solutions. Designers like Composers, be VAT Exempt. Register Theatre Companies as Charities and let VAT filter away the way it is meant to.

DD: Peter Daly. Hire to give a seminar/talking planning session.

LD: There are 3/4 professional development seminars for next year.

DD: Invite KS in to a meeting in March to action. Plan a talking shop. Invite Peter in? Committee to deal with at the next meeting.

GAP days.

Initiative led by Lian Bell, funded through the Arts Council and facilitated by Mermaid Arts Centre, and they offer Professional Freelance theatre practitioners across Ireland paid time to, think, dream and plan. Available to directors, makers, designers, production managers, creative producers, anyone whose prime creative role is making work. SJS to send out email.

Arts Council - Project Proposals from Designers

LD: Rachel West wants us apply for design led proposals.

KS: For project funding.

LD: If you have an idea for a gig

PP: Just wright to them directly?

DD: It think its bursaries also.

LD: What Rachel is saying is that all the oppotunities for funding are available for theatre designers also.

CF: Thats not clear at all.

LD: She was very clear at the conference day about it.

PP: Through what strand?

DD: Theatre.

There seemed to be general confusion about how designers could access the funding, but it was quite late by now, so I suggest we take this up at our next committee meeting.

Appendix 1 - Chairperson's Report

Appendix 2 - Secretary's Report

Secretary's report:

LEGAL STATUS

In December 2016 DD and AK researched the best option for the legal status of the ISSSD. The choice was between remaining a friendly society, or to incorporate officially. Incorporation would allow the society per se to enter into legal agreements and would protect individual members from losses accrued by the society.

Having taken the advice of tax accountant Peter Daly, and company law barrister Michael McCormack, the most sensible option was to remain an unincorporated society for the foreseeable future and to apply for any funding through individual members of the committee on any given year.

More formal incorporated entities cost money to set up, cost money to maintain, and cost money to dissolve. Until ISSSD needs to invest in a large asset or apply for a loan (note, not an arts council grant but a bank loan), there is little need to incorporate. Furthermore, there are no plans to enter into any large monetary transactions that would expose the society to potential losses. Any large scale work (such as PQ) is conditional upon receipt of funding from the Arts Council or other funding bodies and we plan to operate within the budget that we receive.

If and when we do choose to incorporate, it would be important for at least one board member to have legal and/or business experience.- We don't need to register with the Revenue as an entity yet because we expect no income and have no employees. This can, and should, be reviewed annually.

Activities in 2018:

- Presentation of Costume Process from the Irish Costume Collective, Catherine Fay, Joan O'Cleary, Sinead Cuthbert and Niamh Lunny. Costume Collective held a very successful meeting in Cork in April addressing concerns from those working in the costume department.
- We also questioned the change to the Irish Times Theatre Awards from sound design to soundscape. Proposed working on a combined statement, with little response from sound designers and composers no statement was made.

- ISSSD publicly supported Save Tungsten Campaign.
- ISSSD were part of ITI's application to the Arts Council, to fund designers to go to PQ2019.
- Appointed Jo Mangan as curator for Irelands Exhibit in PQ2019
- Appointed Triona NíDubhar as producer.
- Francis O'Connor's Waiting for Godot Tree was accepted as part of PQ's Fragments.
- Met in Belfast in February with a view to decentralising meetings from Dublin
- Met with Development Office from the Abbey, and became a member of Business to Arts.
- Held In Focus, design talk in the Everyman Theatre with the Designers of Asking For It, the Abbey and Landmark Production, which was on as part of the Cork Midsummers Festival 2018. 5 Designers speaking to a small gathering.
- Received €4000 from DCCOI for National Exhibit.
- Received €30,000 from Arts Council. Arts Grants award.
- Received €2000 from Sligo Creative Ireland Arts Office.
- Received €4000 from Cork Arts Office.
- Have applied to Culture Ireland for further funding for PQ2019. Decision pending.

- Thank you to ITI for their continued support of the society.

Appendix 3 - Treasurer's Report

ISSSD Treasurer's Actions re Financial Matters 2018 AGM

Jan 2018 – We have a starting bank balance of €398.06

Dec 2018 – Over the year we took in €870 in Membership fees,

December 2018 - we were awarded €4000 and have received this sum from Creative Ireland's Cork Committee to support the Cork leg of the national exhibition, Jan 2019.

Our expenses this year were Bank charges, teas and coffees for Focus the Cork Asking For Event and the train fair for Aisling totalling €67.74.

For the national exhibition and PQ 2019 the committee were also successful in securing: €2000 from Sligo's Creative Ireland fund. (To be delivered)
€4,000 from the Design and Craft Council of Ireland (pending revision, because we have changed dates into 2019.)
€30,000 from the Arts Council. We expect the first tranche of €10,000 before Christmas.

On November 27th DD transferred management of the accounts to Triona Ni Dhuibhir, PQ2019 producer, the main financial activity for 2019 will be the producing of a National exhibition of Design and the Sending of a National exhibition to Prague for PQ 2019.

At the AGM on 6th December the general membership approved the motion to add Triona to the mandate.

The known expenses that will go through the bank account, separate to form PQ2019 are:

DCCI membership

Bank Charges

Alan Farquharson web hosting costs

Possible hosting of two talking shops/seminars on Tax and the Vat rate and

Copyright issues in Contracting.

We had a balance of €5,373.32 on December 6th 2018.