



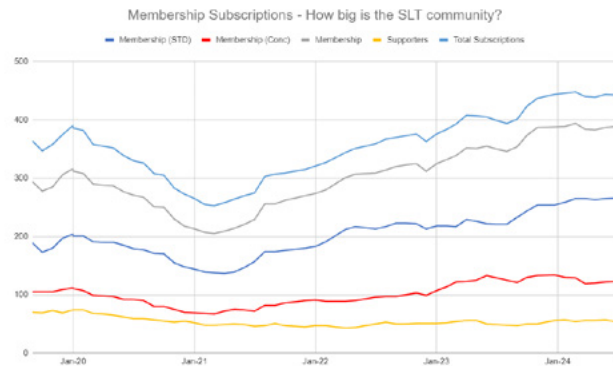
South London Theatre Centre Ltd. ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Annual Report for the year ending 31 December 2023

Well, it's been another fantastic year, really cementing our recovery from the Covid years. Over 20 brilliant productions, our Youth theatre going from strength to strength, and audiences and membership on the up. Our productions have covered all sorts of subjects and genres, with plenty of comedy, brand new writing and drama that didn't pull any punches; a season we can all be proud of. Remind yourself of the highlights in our Theatre Committee's review of the year.



As you can see, our membership continues to grow, and we are seeing more and more people coming through our doors. Auditions are becoming extremely popular - to the point that, sometimes, we have had to limit the number of people who can sign up to audition

for a production. This isn't something we like doing, but practically there is a limit to the number of people a director can see. We do try to make sure that current members know about auditions first, so my advice is that if you are interested in auditioning for a show, don't wait too long - put your name down straight away.

We are also beginning to see more volunteers putting their names forward to help with front of house and backstage, which is great news. But we can always do with more help - so, if you haven't already, come on down to one of our Open Evenings that happen every month. It's a great chance to meet other people and find out what's going on.

Over the past couple of years, like all theatres, we have been faced with the challenge of dealing with rising costs. The huge increases we have seen, particularly in the cost of utilities meant we had no choice but to put up our

ticket prices. However, we made sure we introduced an Early Bird discount to encourage people to book early, and kept our £5 Wednesdays, so no-one would feel that they couldn't afford to keep coming to our theatre. And we have seen the success of that with bigger audiences and a solid income from ticket sales. Overall our financial position is good, as our Finance Director explains in his report, but it must be seen in the context of the whole of our organisation.

Our organisation has developed into quite a complex beast, and we are now putting in place some changes to make managing it a little simpler. We are bringing together what are currently two different parts of the organisation that look after the theatre and our brilliant building. To that end, we'll be electing a new Board of Trustees across the whole organisation at our AGM in September. You will see very little difference in our day-to-day operations, but it should make SLT stronger, more straightforward and fit for the future.

At this point, sadly, I must tell you about some losses the theatre has suffered. Since our last annual report, we have said goodbye to three well-loved members. Lionel Monks, Jenny Gammon and Marian Buss were all stalwarts of South London Theatre and brought so much to this place over their many years of membership. We remember them with huge fondness and wish their friends and families well. You can read more about their times with the theatre on our [archive pages](#).

Finally, a big thank-you to all the volunteers who make this place the most wonderful theatre to be a part of. In particular to those who have sat on the General Council and Building Preservation Trust boards, as we dissolve those to be replaced by the brand new Board of Trustees - thank you for all the work you put in to make sure this place runs as smoothly as it does. But also to everyone who gives up their free time to work backstage, as front of house, in the tech gallery or the Wardrobe or the Props Department, in the box office and raffle teams, and of course, the bar. Thank you to you all.

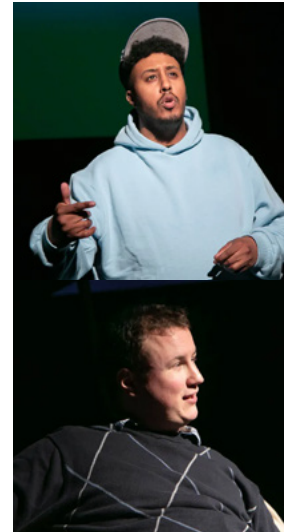
Simon Gleisner
Chairman
South London Theatre.

THE YEAR IN OUR THEATRE

A report from your Theatre Committee: Jo Boniface, Han Evans and Eddie Coleman

2023 had some big bumper shows, some new writing and a special Members Mix! What a year!

We started with **Chaos** by our wonderful Youth Theatre - a series of dislocated yet interconnected scenes where characters search for meaning in a complicated and unstable world. We saw wonderful individual performances as well as excellent chorus work from our SLT Youth - congratulations to cast and the Youth Team.



Mike Barlett's **An Intervention** directed by Stephen Hayward saw two actors tackle a chilling and hard hitting comedy two-hander about what happens when you don't see eye to eye. It was great to see these two new members take to the stage and perform this play from one of theatre's powerhouse writers.



Members Mix was born out of an idea to see what new things we could put on our stage and in our building. We asked what YOU wanted to see at your club. We had a Film Making Course, Improv Night, a One Woman Show, Dungeons and Dragons Live events and learning games, Musical Theatre singalong in the bar, a Live Radio Play, Play readings, Play workshops and we topped the two week period off with a Cèilidh in the theatre with our friends the Conquering Heroes! Phew!



The Elephant Man came next with its circus tent vibes. The cast took on telling the story of John Merrick, AKA The Elephant Man. Directed by Barry Hooper we flocked to the circus to witness his life as the star attraction in Victorian Freak Shows.



FEBRUARY

MARCH

The Venetian Twins was a full cast Italian extravaganza, showcasing old and new members and entertaining audiences with quick wit and farcical plot lines. A classic!



Spider was a new writing offering from Jude Benning. Since its debut at SLT it has gone on to have further life at other theatres across London. It tells the story of a flawed acting school teacher whose out-of-date and unethical practices land him in deep trouble with his students. Jude is definitely one to watch!



We moved stateside next with Sam Shepard's **True West** directed by Janine Wunsche. Two brothers navigated conflicting life styles. Arguably one of Shepard's signature plays we watch sibling rivalry and complex masculinity play out on our small stage.



Our own Chairman Simon Gleisner took up the directing mantle next with **Beginning** by David Eldridge. Another deftly performed two hander, set in real time where Danny is the last straggler at Laura's party. Funny and moving performed by two amazing new comers to SLT, we were invited into Laura's messy flat to watch.



APRIL

MAY

Next we went to the **AfterLife**. Directed by Mark Reson - we were challenged to think about if you had to pick a memory to repeat over and over in the after life what would it be? Adapted from Hirokazu Kore-eda's award-winning film, and written by Jack Thorne - It was a haunting meditation on what it is to live – and to die.



From Nazi Germany to the Island of Iona off the west coast of Scotland for **Shimmer**. Petal, Missy and Hen were searching for a miracle. Surrounded by rain, rivers, lochs and floods, the six strong cast ebbed and flowed through this lyrical play about memory and loss. Directed by Bex Law, and special mention here for seeing the wonderful Jenny Gammon on our stage where her spirit and joy will always be remembered.



MAY/JUNE

Lisa Thomas directed **Gabriel** by Moira Buffini next. A dramatic tale of loss and the dangers of family under German occupation. It was a powerful wartime drama that kept us on the edge of our seats.



Girl on the Train was next where we joined Rachel in her voyeuristic journey watching a seemingly perfect couple, until it all unravels when the woman goes missing. Directed by Will Howells with clever floor projections to aid us on our train journey.



JUNE/JULY



From one train to another now with Tom Melly's **The Railway Children** as our summer show. Classic story we all know and love brought to life with the usual Melly enthusiasm, including some clever magic tricks and props!
A wonderful show for all the family.

We hosted our annual **Shorts** again this year and the theme was 'Sporty'. Ten new writing pieces submitted and worked on in the run up showcased by a range of actors and directors. Always a popular evening curated by Peter Steves, Mark Vinson and Guy Jones, this years winner was Mr Tuesday by Charlotte Benstead and has since gone on to have further life at the Bread and Roses Theatre in Clapham.



Back to the 1950's for **Home I'm Darling** or so it seemed! Kornelia Adelajda directed this powerhouse of a show with a very impressive full 1950's house set! We joined Judy and Johnny living the 1950's dream, until it fell apart and the reality of living the dream crumbled.



From the 1950's to the 1980's now with **The History Boys** directed by Siobhan Campbell. Following the boys pursuit of university places, whilst navigating staff room rivalries and coming of age problems. Arguably one of Alan Bennett's most loved plays and great to see on our stage.





Back in time again to 1910, and the first ever script to be performed at the Old Fire Station, **Tilly of Bloomsbury** was a fast, quirky, bonkers comedy with lots of silliness and fun, directed by Bob Callendar that delighted audiences almost 100 years on from its first outing in our building.



The Same Deep Water as Me was next, directed by Guy Jones and we joined Andrew and Barry at Scorpion Claims. A sharp social comedy about the culture of lying fostered by no-win-no-fee deals with excellent one liners.



Apologia next for a disastrous family reunion for Kristen's big birthday, where her newly released memoir comes under fire from her sons where they reveal what they feel about their upbringing. A cast led by Director Jess Osorio Kristin must face up to what her commitment to her passions has done to her family.



Chioma Anyanwu directed Debbie Tucker Green's - **a profoundly affectionate, passionate devotion to someone (-noun)**. Three couples showed us, what might be, what once was and what could have been, we were invited into the three couples love stories and the rocky rollercoaster of what it is to love someone.



From love to the end of the world now with Cal Beckett directing **You Stupid Darkness!** A play set as the world burns where volunteers help in a call centre to provide optimism and support in a world of chaos. Their hopes and fears became entangled as they tried, desperately, to connect with the callers and with each other.



And we finished the year with a Christmas show as we always do. This year it was Katie Mitchell and Lucy Kirkwood's - **Beauty and the Beast** where The Man In Pink was the puppet master in charge of the not-so-traditional story, a machine snatched our thoughts and a happy ending was not always guaranteed for Beauty and her Beast.



SLT WARDROBE

A report from your Heads of Wardrobe:

Jenny Bennett and Jess Osorio

We continued to open every week to hirers.

Hires

We welcomed over 65 visitors during the 12 months of regular opening. 43 hires generated over £6600 of income.

As usual, hirers included regular freelance designers, local amateur groups and students, schools and event organisers and attendees. We have seen an increase in the number of students and hirers doing film or photo or fashion projects. Word of mouth has increased footfall.

We have also hired out props and Carole and Kay supported in sourcing props.

Resources

The Collection

The Sewing Bee has been making great progress in maintenance and running repairs.

We have continued to showcase costumes on a theme in the foyer in each month.

Staff

The staff during 2023 comprised of Jess Osorio, Jenny Bennett and Lorraine Spencely. Lynsey Davies joined the team towards the end of the year.

Plans for 2024

Market research into other hirers' rates. We plan to increase hire fees, but hirers have constrained budgets.

Dispose of the excess fur collection to PETA.

Rationalise some of the collection. Eg sort out military uniforms

SLT YOUTH THEATRE

A report from your Youth Theatre Manager: Teresa Donoghue

Class sizes/Waiting lists

The Youth Drama classes continue to be very popular and most classes had waiting lists throughout the year. Most of our parents hear about us through word of mouth and personal recommendations.

Staffing

We have a small, dedicated team of drama teachers and assistants and a pool of staff to cover absence and sickness. It is always a challenge making sure we have a full staff team for 130 plus youngsters per week. They are all experienced drama specialists and some are also qualified teachers.

We also offer young people an opportunity to volunteer as part of their Duke of Edinburgh awards. We are unfortunately unable to offer work experience placements.

Finances

Prices for classes have remained at 2021 rate of £6 per hour. The classes for younger children are 1.5 hours long and for 10 year olds and up the classes are two hours long.

We continue to offer concession places at a 50% reduction. During this year 20 youngsters have benefitted from concession places.

Curriculum

Over the last year, the youngsters have explored a range of different drama techniques including improvisation, characterisation, voice work and staging and stage fighting.

They studied scripts as diverse as **The Secret Garden**, **Peter Pan**, **the Krampas** and **Urban Myths**. The younger children worked on making and using puppets in drama. We had bi annual showcases for the Junior and Intermediate classes so parents could see what the children had been learning.

We ran several holiday courses to enable youngsters to take part in drama activities during the school holidays including those who can't attend term time classes. This is also an opportunity for new children to try out SLT. Courses included **Folktales**, **Diversity and Drama** and **Phantasmal Festivities**.

We also introduced 'Behaviour Agreements' so children and parents were clear about the behaviour expected at SLT Youth Theatre.

Youth Production

The annual Youth Drama production took place in February. There were two casts of young people, the Youth group aged 13 to 15 and the Young Adults group aged 16 to 18. A total of six performances took place over five days. All of them were sold out and front of house volunteers were extremely helpful squeezing in as many as possible. Box office takings were £3,875.48. And only spent £133.78 in materials

The feedback from the audience was wonderful. One audience member said *"I was completely blown away by the professional performances of the young people"*.

This was followed up by two special performances of **Chaos** in West Norwood Cemetery Chapel, in partnership with the cemetery activities and events coordinator. We were able to secure £200 towards the event and alongside ticket sales we made a small profit which can be used for youth drama resources. As always the success of the performance is all down to the dedication of the Drama Staff who give an enormous amount of their own time.

Chaperones and Children and Young People in productions

The drama teachers are qualified to act as chaperones when children and young people are part of SLT productions. This year youngsters had opportunities to be involved in 'The Looked After Kid', the Railway Children and the Xmas family production of Beauty and the Beast.

Feedback from parents

'My son really enjoys the lessons. At the beginning he was a little bit nervous and sometimes not confident. But I believe these courses help him to gain more confidence and express himself well.'

'... has made so many new friends at SLT, she really looks forward to Saturdays.'

".... has had some issues with anxiety and misses a lot of school. But she never misses SLT Youth drama. We cannot thank you enough for providing a place where she feels safe to be herself."

FINANCIAL REPORT 2023

A report from your Finance Director:

Chris Stooke

The audited accounts of SLT have now been completed. We have prepared some summaries of the accounts which, in particular, focus on the results from our theatre activities during the 2023 year and analyses the figures to reflect our main activities.

2023 saw an increased level of income in SLT and we were able to achieve the benefit of activities which were largely back to normal following the pandemic period. In particular ticket sales increased by 26% and membership income by 21%. However, we had to react to increased costs, particularly utility and other costs recharged from the BPT, and there were some ticket price increases during the year in response to this.

There was a mis allocation of costs and salaries relating to the youth theatre classes which overstated the contribution in 2022 and understated the equivalent in 2023; for the future the successful and popular youth theatre is expected to contribute a small profit to SLT overall – neither 2022 nor 2023 are properly representative.

The accounts of SLT and BPT reflect a reallocation of costs to ensure that each entity bears, as far as possible, the true cost of its activities. This meant that some salary costs, previously borne by BPT, were allocated or reallocated to SLT and the donation of £18,918 from SLT to the BPT was part of this (the donation in 2022 related to the rusty beam fund). In order to think about the overall financial health of SLT, it is helpful to consider SLT and the BPT together.

Combined, there has been an increase in the overall net income amounting to around £38,000 as shown in the next table:

	2023	2022
	£	£
SLT net income/(expenditure)	(28,855)	(8,813)
BPT net income/(expenditure)	69,271	10,748
Overall net income/(expenditure)	40,416	1,935

Looking at the balance sheet and net assets, there has been a growth in unrestricted funds of around £19,000 (13%). The restricted items in BPT relate to specific donations and long term funding loans, all SLT funds are unrestricted.

	2023	2022
	£	£
SLT unrestricted funds	76,563	105,418
BPT unrestricted funds	87,038	38,716
Total unrestricted funds	163,601	144,134
BPT restricted funds	(211,303)	(232,252)
Net overall	(47,702)	(88,118)

Although our net overall position remains negative, the largest individual liability is our loan from London Borough of Lambeth which is not finally repayable until 2043. Nonetheless we must make sure that our main activities, theatre productions, youth theatre, membership, costume hire and room rental to outside hirers (in BPT), continue to contribute such that we can service and ultimately repay this liability.

I expect the 2024 year to be similar to 2023 but with less of a mismatch between SLT and BPT Following the planned changes to our governance, we can introduce more consolidated reporting to members.

OUR 2023 PRODUCTIONS IN NUMBERS

Ticket sales, costs and profit from our productions in 2023

Production	Ticket Sales	Royalties	Other	Total Costs	Net Profit
	£	£	£	£	£
Angela Barnes	317	-	-	-	317
Chaos	3,845	(680)	(228)	(908)	2,937
Member Mix	1,159	(50)	(222)	(272)	887
An Intervention	1,848	(425)	(52)	(477)	1,371
The Elephant Man	3,112	(420)	(205)	(625)	2,487
The Venetian Twins	2,820	(500)	(177)	(677)	2,143
Spider	3,103	(325)	(224)	(549)	2,554
True West	2,793	(333)	(191)	(524)	2,269
Beginning	1,682	(425)	(204)	(629)	1,053
After Life	2,963	(425)	(157)	(582)	2,381
Gabriel	2,808	(375)	(225)	(600)	2,208
Old Gits	400	-	-	-	400
Shimmer	1,593	(425)	(133)	(558)	1,035
Girl on the Train	3,747	(425)	(277)	(702)	3,045
The Railway Children	4,483	(935)	(618)	(1,553)	2,930
SLT Shorts	3,079	-	(116)	(116)	2,963
Home I'm Darling	2,895	(425)	(417)	(842)	2,053
The History Boys	4,097	(425)	(649)	(1,074)	3,023
Tilly of Bloomsbury	2,320	-	(171)	(171)	2,149
The Same Deep Water As Me	2,722	(345)	(250)	(595)	2,127
Apologia	2,628	(425)	(184)	(609)	2,019
a profoundly affectionate...	3,696	(425)	(84)	(509)	3187
You Stupid Darkness	2,758	(425)	(101)	(526)	2,232
Beauty & the Beast	6,174	(850)	(1,131)	(1,981)	4,193
Previous productions			(195)	(195)	(195)
TOTAL	67,042	(9,063)	(6,211)	(15,274)	51,768
TOTAL 2022	53,277	(4,565)	(4,278)	(8,843)	44,434

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT

For the year ended 31 December 2023

		2023	2022
	£	£	£
TICKET SALES		67,042	53,277
Less: Production costs		15,274	8,843
		51,768	44,434
Less: General Theatre Expenses		1,849	2,769
GROSS PROFIT FROM THEATRES		49,919	41,665
Add: OTHER OPERATING INCOME			
Membership	14,799		12,252
Donations	1,370		3,230
Costume hire	4,444		6,237
Fund-raising	8,535		7,817
Training classes	(3,174)		14,008
Other income	1,362		1,375
Bank interest	1,003		104
		28,339	45,023
		78,258	86,688
Less: OVERHEAD EXPENSES			
Rent	36,000		36,000
Share of overheads	32,204		29,230
Depreciation	4,195		4,069
Office	3,376		1,813
Website	1,600		3,750
Publicity	5,777		7,551
Audit	4,000		3,750
Bank charges	1,043		903
		88,195	87,066
NET PROFIT FOR THE YEAR		(9,937)	(378)
Donation to BPT		(18,918)	(8,500)
REPORTED PROFIT		(28,855)	(8,878)

NOTES TO THE PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNTS

Income

	2023	2022
	£	£
DONATIONS		
Individual donations and legacies	-	2,000
Ticketsource donations	730	843
Other donations	640	213
Gift aid recovered	-	174
TOTAL	1370	3,230
FUND-RAISING		
SLTC 200 club	3282	2,782
Programme donations	2574	2,194
Raffles	2330	2,678
Just Giving	591	342
Easy Fundraising	21	0
Sundry income	66	1
Sundry expenses	(329)	(180)
TOTAL	8535	7,817
OTHER INCOME		
Ice cream sales	2721	2,054
Ice cream costs	(1735)	(784)
Merchandise sales	91	105
Other	285	-
TOTAL	1362	1,375

NOTES TO THE PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNTS

Expenses

	2023	2022
	£	£
GENERAL THEATRE EXPENSES		
Lighting, sound and stage maintenance	1011	1,591
Equipment	388	1,178
Yard clearance	450	-
TOTAL	1849	2,769
OFFICE		
Payroll and tax	2231	793
Zoom costs	413	328
Accounting system	342	318
Other	390	374
TOTAL	3376	1,813

FIVE YEARS REVIEW

Profit and Loss Accounts

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
	£	£	£	£	£
TICKET SALES	67,042	53,277	21,203	16,352	59,502
Less: <i>Production costs</i>	15,274	8,843	5,702	4,453	13,596
<i>General theatre expenses</i>	1,849	2,769	421	1,343	3,509
	17,123	11,612	6,123	5,796	17,105
CONTRIBUTION TO OVERHEADS	49,919	41,665	15,080	10,556	42,397
Add: OTHER INCOME					
<i>Membership</i>	14,799	12,252	10,011	9,720	15,777
<i>Donations</i>	1,370	3,230	3,913	1,356	1,394
<i>Costume hire</i>	4,444	6,237	4,999	1,925	5,705
<i>Fund-raising</i>	8,535	7,817	2,981	23,451	9,835
<i>Training classes</i>	(3,174)	14,008	(3,374)	5,503	10,804
<i>Other income</i>	1,362	1,375	260	721	282
<i>Bank interest</i>	1,003	104	6	37	43
	28,339	45,023	18,796	42,713	43,840
Less: OVERHEADS	88,195	87,066	25,539	42,256	79,067
OPERATING PROFIT/(LOSS)	(9,937)	(378)	8,337	11,013	7,170
Funding to/from SLTBPT	(18,918)	(8,500)	29,669	-	-
NET PROFIT/(LOSS)	(28,855)	(8,878)	38,006	11,013	7,170

FIVE YEARS REVIEW

Balance Sheets

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets	17,813	22,007	24,697	28,754	31,790
Debtors	6,987	23,952	14,648	5,089	3,673
Cash at bank	79,921	98,729	87,090	70,103	46,722
Total assets	104,721	144,688	126,435	103,946	82,185
Less: Current liabilities	(28,157)	(39,335)	(12,203)	(40,876)	(30,128)
TOTAL NET ASSETS	76,564	105,353	114,232	63,070	52,057
TOTAL FUNDS	76,564	105,353	114,232	63,070	52,057

CONTACTS

General enquiries – info@southlondontheatre.co.uk

Box Office – boxoffice@southlondontheatre.co.uk

Website enquiries - website@southlondontheatre.co.uk

Theatre Committee – theatrecommittee@southlondontheatre.co.uk

Youth Theatre – youth@southlondontheatre.co.uk

General training enquiries – training@southlondontheatre.co.uk

Wardrobe enquiries – wardrobe@southlondontheatre.co.uk

Chairman – chairman@southlondontheatre.co.uk

Finance enquiries – treasurer@southlondontheatre.co.uk

Safeguarding – dso@southlondontheatre.co.uk