

Amended Minutes of Committee Meeting 5 May 2024

Present: Hannah Bradley Croall

Darran Cosgrove

Martin Foreman

James Scott

Kate Stephenson

Claire Wood

Robert Wylie

Non-Committee Minute Taker: Alma Forsyth

1. Apologies: Siobhan McGovern; Claire Morand
2. Approval Minutes of 17 March: Hannah proposed and Robert seconded.
3. **The Fastest Clock:** update – Production manager, Claire W, reported that rehearsals were proceeding well and everything else was in hand. In keeping with the party theme of the play, director Abby Eva with her assistants, Emma C and Ross H, proposes distributing party bags (including a programme) as spectators arrive. Claire W will ask Abby if she requires additional FoH volunteers. Hannah expressed concern at sluggish ticket sales and hoped a pre-show article by Thom Dibdin would stimulate demand. Although not yet approached by Abby, Kate was ready to take rehearsal photos for Abby to post on EGTG social media channels to which she has access. Regarding van hire, Claire W will ascertain if this has been done. Martin asked if the Assembly Roxy venue can process the EGTG members' discount for tickets bought on the door as this had not been possible on a previous occasion, in spite of information to that effect. Claire W will check and confirm.
4. **Fringe 24:** update – To cover her absence, production manager Claire M, had submitted a written report: a) good turn out to auditions and both shows fully cast; b) eight tickets already sold from Fringe website; c) detailed research into third-party box office solutions - she preferred Ticket Source and asked the Committee for its opinion (see below). Robert reported how impressed he had been by the quality of auditionees for The Ruffian on the Stair. He was, however, unsure whether registering to audition was useful as only 40% of those on the list actually turned up. Martin agreed. Hannah announced that tickets were now on sale from the Fringe Society. She added that Claire M had been researching a third-party box office system which would allow EGTG to sell some of its Fringe tickets with a members' discount. An important feature was that it should be easy to set up via EGTG email. Taking into account various factors such as booking fees, fees charged for the service and speed of ticket income to EGTG, Ticket Source had emerged as the most promising. As groups participating in the Fringe are, in any case, obliged to give the Fringe Society at least 25% of their tickets to sell, it was decided for a first trial year to give it the majority of EGTG tickets and judge how the Ticket Source arrangement turned out for the rest. To keep track of sales and eventual numbers to sell on the door, Hannah and Darran would engage with Ticket Source while Claire M would follow the Fringe Society. Both Kate and Robert expressed amazement at how favourable the Ticket Source deal appeared. Hannah, echoed by the Committee, voiced her appreciation for Claire M's work on this project. Regarding Fringe publicity, Hannah announced that, at a cost of £40, EGTG had joined Arkle to produce ten posters under the banner, Edinburgh Theatre Makers. They will be displayed in premises near the Royal Scot venue. With reference to show budgets, Hannah was delighted to inform

the Committee that, under the Equals Money scheme, directors would receive a virtual debit card with their show budget uploaded. The Fringe directors, Hilary Spiers and Robert Wylie, would be the first to try the new system. The usual terms and conditions would apply (eg. receipts required and no unauthorised over spend). Martin wondered what would happen if a director did not possess a smart phone and Hannah endeavoured to reassure him by explaining exactly how the system worked and that a physical card could be ordered if necessary. Claire W congratulated Hannah that a long-held dream would finally be trialled. Kate mentioned that she had been in discussion with Hilary S who had been unable to find in Home Street the historically accurate costumes she was anxious to have for *A Singular Deception*. Robert added that an agreement for both productions to share as much of the set as possible does not appear to be materialising. The initial idea to use the same sofa and armchair appeared to have been dropped as Hilary S preferred period chairs. He would get by but was disappointed as the aim had been to reduce transport cost and make the most of limited storage space at the venue. It was generally felt that the set and costumes of the production should be symbolic rather than historically accurate. Hannah suggested consulting production manager, Claire M.

5. **Dangerous Corner:** update – Director Martin reported that a table reading would be held at Buccleuch Place on 29 May, followed by auditions on 9 and 15 June. He hoped to rehearse twice a week in July and August and then three times a week for four hours a session from 25 August to curtain up on 15 October. He was apprehensive as the play is long with demands on the actors who, for much of the time, are all stage. Hannah suggested holding an eight-hour rehearsal on Sundays with a meal break. Martin was also concerned about finding young actors as the cast includes a couple in their 20s and another in their 30s. Despite his concerns, however, Martin was optimistic as it is a fascinating play.
6. **Baba:** update – Writer and co-director Claire W reported that her script had been sent out prior to a reading on 11 May. With a cast of 22, including two children, the script could still be altered to suit whoever might turn up to auditions. She is especially keen to involve former members of the group and had been in touch with one in her 90s. Martin sought reassurance that arrangements would be in place should an elderly member of cast be unable to appear. Claire W replied in the affirmative. After a painstaking search, the Pleasance was confirmed as the venue for the mid-December production. Finding a suitable and affordable venue had been difficult and disappointing, particularly as regards Adam House, ‘traditional’ site of EGTG’s productions starting 70 years ago. Presenting a Platinum Year production there seemed appropriate but the University rejected this proposal.
7. **Membership:** update – Martin was in the process of handing over the reins to new Membership Secretary, Kate. There was no change to report. Referring to the Constitution, Hannah will remind Fringe production manager, Claire M, that casts for Fringe productions must become members of EGTG.
8. **Treasury:** update – On 15 May Hannah will meet Darran to complete his induction to the role of Treasurer. Martin asked if Darran would, therefore, be joining him and Hannah as an official signatory and Hannah agreed that this would be the case. Other Treasury business included the new virtual debit cards for directors and continuing negotiations with Scottish Power to obtain repayment of £150 which had been taken via direct debit at the time when EGTG was changing both bank and power supplier (no longer SP).
9. **Home Street:** update – Kate reported that the area above the door contained standing water. A pipe is blocked and the roof cannot be fixed until the water has gone. It had turned out to be a complicated procedure to unblock the pipe and it was proving difficult to track down a company capable of carrying out the repair without knocking a hole in a shared wall. Hannah

wondered if it would constitute a shared expense and if EGTG's insurance would cover it. Kate was optimistic that it would. In the meantime, she will contact the shared repairs department at Edinburgh Council to see what help and information it could give regarding other owners in the building. It was agreed that the next Home Street clear out would take place after the run of *The Fastest Clock*. Sunday, 2 June at 11h00 was decided upon.

10. **Devising workshops:** update – To cover her absence, Claire M submitted a written report: four enthusiastic participants, most new to EGTG. She was happy with how the workshop was proceeding but would take stock after the session on 13 May to decide on the next step. The availability of Buccleuch Place would also play a part, given the demand for rehearsal space for Fringe productions. Martin wondered if the group would be presenting a devised work to celebrate EGTG's 70th anniversary and sought clarification of its goals. Hannah said that the initial aim had been to explore what it means to be part of a theatre group. Robert felt that, as long as participants were learning, no final product was necessary.
11. **AOB:** Hannah congratulated the *Taiwan* team on its success at the SCDA Eastern Division finals in Killin where it achieved 3rd place.

The next Committee meeting will be held via Zoom at 19h00 on Monday 3 June 2024.