

Edinburgh Graduate Theatre Group
Annual General Meeting Minutes
Monday 31st March, 2025

- 1. Welcome and Apologies**
- 2. Matters Arising From Previous Minutes**
- 3. Reports from Outgoing Officers Covering 2024**
- 4. Election of Office Bearers**
- 5. Election of Committee**
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1. Welcome and Apologies

Hannah opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees. There were apologies from Alma Forsyth, Hilary Spiers, and Claire Wood.

2. Matters Arising From Previous Minutes

- a) Update on Transition to Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (“SCIO”)

Hannah reported that this application has been submitted. We are now in the 100-day waiting period to hear back from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) for permission to proceed.

3. Reports from Outgoing Officers Covering 2024

As Hannah has been performing the roles of both President and Treasurer for the past year, she gave a combined report covering both of these posts, as follows:

Good evening

Thank you for joining us for our Annual General Meeting covering 2024.

2024 was our platinum season, celebrating 70 years of EGTG and we had an appropriately celebratory start to the year with Claire Morand and team having another successful run at the SCDA One Act Festival with Taiwan, written by Martin Foreman. The team were recognised with the highest marks for both acting and production, and took first place going on to the regional round in Killin.

The party didn’t stop there, as Abbye Eva and co threw a decidedly sordid affair with Philip Ridley’s The Fastest Clock in the Universe at Assembly Roxy in May. This was dark and delicious, with some outstanding performances from the cast.

We went on to August and a successful Fringe, with Robert Wylie directing Joe Orton’s The Ruffian on the Stair, and new writing from Hilary Spiers with A Singular Deception, the fascinating true story of Dr James Barry. Both shows were well received with four and five

stars reviews from the press, with A Singular Deception also being shortlisted for Scottish Theatre Awards from The Scottish Arts Club.

Turning our attention to the autumn, Martin Foreman returned to the director's chair with J.B. Priestley's Dangerous Corner, a wonderfully stylish thriller in Roxy Upstairs in October.

Finally we closed the year with Claire Wood's baba, a suitably festive fable with a cast, nay an army of 26 plus a four piece band! Harkening back to the years of panto from the group's formative years.

On to the financials, and revenue was ever so slightly down on the previous year - £14.9K compared to £15k, but with much healthier ticket income - thanks in part to an additional production in the main season. Again, outgoings were much the same - £14.3K compared to £14.5K the previous year, and we made a similar profit of £624 across the year. We finished the year with £13,291 in the bank.

Venue hire continues to be our highest expenditure, with set costs also seeing a sharp rise due to the increasing cost of materials.

While the balance is moving in the right direction, the money in the bank at the start of the year does not cover all our expenses and we rely on ticket income from the first half of the year to cover the remainder of the season.

I mentioned last year the fortunate position we are in with free rehearsal space thanks to the Graduate Association and our connection to the University of Edinburgh. That arrangement is no longer as secure as it has been, and we may find ourselves in a situation in the near future where we need to add rehearsal space to the cost of each production.

To that end, the committee is looking at initiatives to increase our audience share and build the balance to ensure the financial health of the group for the next 70 years.

On a brighter note, we have another full season for you all to enjoy in 2025.

We kicked off the year with a momentous evening at the SCDA One Act Festival where director Paul Arendt and team had a clean sweep of awards and will now go on to the regional round with David Greig's Being Norwegian. If you missed it, I highly recommend catching them at Leslie Town Hall on Saturday 5th April.

Following hot on their heels, Alexander Cook makes his directorial debut for EGTG with Nick Payne's Incognito, a fascinating drama dealing with memory and identity, where the talented cast of six will tell three interweaving stories. Tickets for Incognito are on sale now for performances at Assembly Roxy from Tuesday 29 April to Friday 4 May.

Then in June, Ross Hope is joined by Emma Carter and Abbye Eva to direct Suddenly Last Summer by Tennessee Williams. Look out for tickets for this one soon.

Auditions will take place in April for our two Fringe productions. We're delighted to welcome back Jenny Tamplin and David Grimes who book-ended the pandemic for us, back to direct. Jenny is looking for a cast of seven, four men and three women, for Dario Fo's The Virtuous Burglar for the early evening show. While David will be presenting, surprise surprise, a pitch-black comedy from Lucy Kirkwood, The Children. He is looking for a cast of

three, two women and one man, to play characters 65+. The table read for the Fringe will take place this weekend, 7pm on Sunday 6 April at Buccleuch Place.

We finish the year with the National Theatre stage adaptation of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time*, directed by Jac Wheble. The production will take place Tuesday 25 to Friday 28 November at Roxy Central, with audition details announced later in the year.

All that remains is to thank you all for coming this evening, and I hope you are looking forward to another excellent year of theatre from EGTG.

Hannah Bradley Croall
EGTG President

4. Election of Office Bearers

Nominations for committee posts were offered as follows. There were no objections or alternative nominations from the floor, and the meeting voted unanimously to approve these candidates.

- i) President – Hannah Bradley Croall
- ii) Vice President – Claire Wood
- iii) Secretary – James Gray
- iv) Membership Secretary – Alexander Cook
- v) Treasurer – Claire Morand
- vi) Communications Officer – Adelle Ansara

5. Election of Committee

In addition to the above, two further members were voted in unanimously as ordinary members.

- vii) Martin Foreman
- viii) Kate Stephenson

6. Any Other Business

- a) Following a discussion around the rising costs of presenting a production, the committee have decided that ticket prices for 2025 will remain at £15, not including members' discount (point c below). Booking fees may be added by the venue or box office service.
- b) The committee is committed to increasing income to the group and fortifying its bank reserves. They will explore a number of fundraising activities in 2025 in lieu of raising ticket prices, but note that the discussion will be revisited in future years.
- c) Members will be allowed to purchase up to two (2) tickets per show at a discounted price of £12 per ticket, a reduction of £3 (20%) per ticket. After a successful trial in 2024, tickets will be offered through a third party service to enable the discount to be eligible for Fringe shows.

- d) Regarding future Fringe performance dates, from 2026 on, the following was discussed:

Arkle Theatre are vacating their performance slot in the second week of the Fringe at the Royal Scots Club and have offered the Grads first refusal. The merits and disadvantages of the two time slots was debated. Kate asked if we have statistics comparing Week 1 and Week 2 ticket sales in general; Michael Mulligan noted that, while there used to be an imbalance in favour of greater sales in Week 2, this is no longer the case and the three weeks seem to sell roughly equally. Alex concurred that that has been his experience from his own group's productions. Robert asked about possible advantages/disadvantages regarding reviews. Hannah said that the nationals tend to review the first weekend, before the Grads show would open in either case, and that we are not targeting them anyway. Reviewers from local media are not limited to Week 1, and will cover the productions whichever week they are in. In favour of moving to Week 2 is the fact that Week 1 ticket offers, such as 2-for-1, have passed, lessening the competition for audiences. However, it is noted that some actors may find having to perform in Week 2 a nuisance if wishing to see other shows. Claire noted that schools go back midway through Week 2 which may be a factor as well. Martin voices the opinion Week 1 is better to get it over with. The matter is put to a vote and by a 6-2 margin it is decided to keep the group's current slot in Week 1.

A question was also raised regarding the show timings, noting that 8.30 can be quite late. Hannah explained this is a matter of logistics. We have access to the space from 6, which gives 45 minutes for the first show to set up. Following an hour long show the second show then has another 45 minutes to prepare, hence a starting time of 8.30.

- e) The floor is opened to any other business

A question is raised regarding the recent decision for productions not to include a Saturday performance. It is explained that Saturday performances generally sell the least well, and by only running four nights we cut down on theatre hire cost. If there was a show which was guaranteed to do well, for example one with a large cast, then this policy might be reconsidered for a Saturday matinee.

The issue surrounding a potential loss of rehearsal facilities in Buccleuch Place was raised. The University of Edinburgh is currently undertaking an audit of all its buildings, and the Graduate Association's use of BP may be under review. It is unclear what the potential outcome of this may be, nor the timeframe in which it may take place. Should Buccleuch Place be no longer available, an appeal will be made first to the University for an alternative space: EGTG's Constitution states that its purpose is to support the University in the advancement of drama and art and this could be used as an argument. However, should there be no space offered, a potential idea, once we have SCIO, is to find a new location which could act as both rehearsal and storage space. It is noted that the group's finances are not as healthy as they were pre-COVID so extra fundraising may be necessary to achieve this. It is also noted that, should temporary rehearsal spaces need to be found on a production-by-production basis, this will heavily factor into show budgeting and shorter rehearsal periods may be required as a consequence. However, until the situation with Buccleuch Place is clarified all this is speculative.

Claire offers a formal vote of thanks to Hannah for her work as acting treasurer over the past couple of years, and this is unanimously agreed.

No other business is raised.

7. Close of Meeting

Hannah brings the meeting to a close and thanks everyone for attending. A vote of thanks is offered to her as President.