



THEATRE  
*by the*  
LAKE

KESWICK

**THANK YOU** FOR SO  
GENEROUSLY SUPPORTING  
THEATRE BY THE LAKE AND  
HELPING TO MAKE SUCH  
A DIFFERENCE TO OUR  
WORK DURING 2014/15.  
YOUR SUPPORT IS  
GREATLY APPRECIATED.

**Find out the difference  
your donation has made...**

## OUR YEAR ON STAGE

At the heart of our artistic activity at Theatre by the Lake are the plays we create with our own companies of actors and creative staff. Over 70,000 people saw our ten productions.

Spring saw Brian Friel's masterpiece *Dancing at Lughnasa* in the Main House and there were packed houses in the Studio for *Not About Heroes* by Stephen MacDonald.

Then came summer. In the Main House: Ben Travers' riotous farce *Rookery Nook*, Liz Lochhead's thrilling adaptation of *Dracula* and a joyfully hilarious production of Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors*. In the Studio: Jez Butterworth's enigmatic *The Winterling*, the world première of *Seeing the Lights* by Brendan Murray and Harold Pinter's *Old Times*.

The Studio had one of its best seasons ever and actor Alan Suri was nominated as best supporting actor in the UK Theatre Awards for his performance in *The Winterling*.

Finally Christmas: Friends of Theatre by the Lake made a generous donation that helped Wendy and Peter to fly in *Peter Pan* and hundreds of tiny theatregoers loved *A Present for Santa* in the Studio.



Summer Season Studio: *The Winterling*

"Exhilarating."

★★★★

The Daily Telegraph on *The Winterling*

"Thrilling, sexy, smart theatre from a team at the top of its game."

★★★★★

WhatsOnStage.com on *Dracula*

# 10

Productions

# 436

Performances



Christmas Main House: *Peter Pan*



Spring Main House: *Dancing at Lughnasa*



New writing: *Seeing the Lights*

## NEW WRITING

We aim to commission a new play every year. In 2014 we staged the world première of Brendan Murray's *Seeing the Lights* in the Studio as part of our Summer Season. The play, which told a warm, funny and humane story about a brother and sister who bicker over the care of their elderly mother, quickly became a huge hit with audiences when it opened in June.

## TOURING IN CUMBRIA

We are passionate about reaching as wide an audience as possible. In April, following a three week run in the Studio, our production of *Not About Heroes* played in seven village halls and small arts centres around Cumbria. Stephen MacDonald's play, a riveting account of a meeting between poets Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen in a hospital in 1917, was Theatre by the Lake's contribution to the commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War.

The tour was supported by Lloyds Volvo of Carlisle, who generously provided Theatre by the Lake with its own van.

## Seeing the Lights:

"Exceptional performances... Outstanding."

The Observer

# 49

Performances

# 3,844

Total audience

## Not About Heroes:

# 500+

Total tour audience



On tour: *Not About Heroes*

# YOUTH THEATRE

## STONE SOUP AUTUMN TOUR

With the help of the BBC Performing Arts Fund, 13 members of our Young Actors group created and produced *Stone Soup*, part play, part workshop, for children aged 9-14. It explored themes of isolation and individuality. The group successfully toured *Stone Soup* to 14 schools and community venues across Cumbria and helped to deliver post-show workshops.

## FESTIVAL OF YOUTH

This annual celebration of performance by and for young people was held from 20-22 February at the Kirkgate Centre, Cockermouth. Generously sponsored by Studsvik and supported by Cumbria County Council, the festival showcased the work of Theatre by the Lake's three youth theatre groups. It brought together young people, aged 8-18, from across West Cumbria. Taking 'swings and roundabouts' as the theme, seven new pieces of theatre were created and performed. Nearly 300 people attended these performances.



*Stone Soup* young actors



*Stone Soup* audience members

## Stone Soup Autumn Tour

"All the young actors have developed new skills and grown in confidence."

**Jeff Wallcock, Project Leader**

"Absolutely fabulous - high quality, entertaining and engaging."

**Audience member**

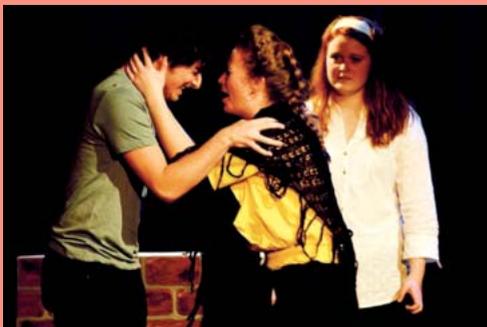
## Festival of Youth:

# 104

**Young people took part**

"Her confidence is a joy to see."

**Parent**



Festival of Youth participants

## PARTICIPATION

### COMMUNITY CHORUS

We aim to offer local people of all ages, the opportunity to develop their performance skills. We recruited 36 young people, aged 10-14, from across Cumbria to perform alongside our professional acting company in *Peter Pan*. Their commitment and professionalism were widely praised.



*Peter Pan* chorus members

### Community chorus:

"It's given me patience and focus and the chance to make new friends."

Community chorus member

"It has given him a life experience that is totally unique."

Parent

# 72

*Peter Pan* performances

# 20,850

*Peter Pan* total audience

### Supporting transition:

"I feel more confident as it almost felt like our fears had been resolved."

Pupil at the workshop

# 764

Pupils took part

## EDUCATION

### THEATRE EXPERIENCES DAY

The day, held in October, was designed to give young people an insight into careers in the theatre. It was themed around our Summer Season production of *The Comedy of Errors*. Over 60 pupils took part in interactive workshops to learn more about the working lives of theatre professionals.

### SUPPORTING TRANSITION

A performance piece that explored the issues of moving from primary to secondary school was toured to seven Workington primary schools and to two youth theatre groups. 764 Year 4-6 pupils saw the performance and then 364 Year 6 pupils participated in workshops designed to support their transition.



Theatre Experiences Day participants

# ENGAGEMENT

## LIVING WELL WITH DEMENTIA

Thanks to funding from the BIG Lottery and Cumbria Community Foundation we have been able to improve our welcome for people living with dementia and their carers.

Our pilot project included delivering weekly *Setting the Scene* creative sessions, both at the theatre and in a local care home. These sessions were designed to enable people living with dementia to engage in the arts in a way that is comfortable for them. We have also joined with other organisations to provide a choice of regular activities, including dance sessions and reading groups. The response has been overwhelming and we hope to secure further funding to continue and extend this work.

## RELAXED PERFORMANCES

Relaxed performances are now a regular feature of Theatre by the Lake's year. They are open to anyone who would benefit from a less formal, more supportive atmosphere in which to enjoy inspiring live theatre.



*Setting the Scene* participants

## Setting the Scene:

"Our first visit to *Setting the Scene* was a great success. The conversation elicited a clear memory of playing a game and [he] was able to describe it in accurate flowing language: the first time he has been as articulate and clear in thoughts for many months."

**Carer**

"This innovative arts programme for people with dementia is a great boost to Keswick and the surrounding area."

**Senior Community Nurse,  
Allerdale Memory Services**

## Relaxed performances:

"The relaxed atmosphere and attention given to access made our visit so much easier. We were made so welcome that we came away feeling like celebrities."

**Teacher, Ullswater Community College**

# 1-90<sup>+</sup> years

**Audience age range**



Relaxed performance



*A Present for Santa*



*A Present for Santa* audience members

## YOUNG PLAYGOERS

Our specially created production of *A Present for Santa* introduced many 2-5 year olds to live theatre for the first time and played to an audience capacity of 86%.

Our Under 26 ticket scheme brought 879 young people to the theatre, individually and in small organised parties from hard to reach groups.

## AND MUCH MORE

Our programme of festivals, locally created amateur work and visiting professional performances offer our audiences a wide range of artistic experiences, including a new partnership with Milapfest to bring outstanding South Asian performers to Keswick. This programme of around 300 performances was seen by almost 50,000 people.

### A Present for Santa:

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"The children have benefitted from the experience of visiting the theatre at such a young age."

Little Monkeys Day Nursery, Braithwaite

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# 16

Performances

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# 1,159

Total audience

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### Under 26 Ticket Scheme:

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"This scheme gives young people access to culture for the first time in their lives"

Mirehouse Residents Group, Whitehaven

# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Our aims have always been simple: to present critically acclaimed productions of classic and modern plays and share them with our audiences; and to provide inspirational opportunities for people of all ages to engage in the arts.

As a registered charity, receiving less than 20% of our annual income from public sources, we need to raise a further £2.75m each year from tickets, donations and other sales. With your support we hope to continue to make a significant difference to the Cumbrian cultural landscape.

Thank you so much for making such a difference. Theatre by the Lake could not exist without your support and generosity.

For more information, or to make a donation, please contact Dr Jenny Benson, Development Manager on 017687 72282 or [jenny.benson@theatrebythelake.com](mailto:jenny.benson@theatrebythelake.com)

Thank you also to the following funders and sponsors:



Theatre by the Lake is a registered arts & education charity (number 516673).