

THEATRE
by the
LAKE

PRESS PACK

THEATRE BY THE LAKE

Theatre by the Lake (TBTL) has been producing theatre in Cumbria since 1999. Named for its unique position near the shores of Derwentwater on the edge of Keswick, the Theatre sits amid the northern fells of the Lake District, a designated World Heritage Site since 2017.

In this unique place TBTL has been a creative hub for its local communities and has been entertaining and inspiring local, national and international audiences for just over 20 years.

Each year we present nearly 700 performances in our two auditoria, creating our own productions in collaboration with some of the country's most exciting theatre-makers. We host festivals of literature, film and the outdoors, welcome visiting theatre, music and dance companies, host performances by local charities and amateur arts organisations and produce rural tours around village halls. Our arts engagement activities are enjoyed by hundreds of people from different backgrounds and experiences from across the county.

VISION

Theatre by the Lake as an exemplary producing theatre with regional and national impact, inspired by the Lake District and its rich cultural heritage.

MISSION

From our unique rural location, we will produce excellent, ambitious, inspiring theatre, providing a creative hub for the communities of Cumbria, whilst attracting visitors to the region.



'Sensational'

The Observer, *Miss Julie*, July 2017



'An unexpected treat of the highest order'

Evening Standard, London transfer of *Miss Julie*, November 2017

ABOUT THEATRE BY THE LAKE

Theatre by the Lake was willed into existence by local enthusiasts seeking a permanent building to replace an ingenious mobile theatre known as the Blue Box. The new Theatre by the Lake opened in August 1999 and the Theatre is loyally supported by over 200 volunteers.

The Friends of Theatre by the Lake have donated more than £500,000 since the Theatre opened. We have been inspired by the support our communities have continued to give us through the pandemic.

In recent years TBTL has produced up to nine of its own productions of classic, contemporary and new plays each year, with six plays being performed in repertoire from May to November by a resident company of actors.

The Spring Programme regularly included a Main House production as well as a Studio production that subsequently toured to community venues in Cumbria. Our 2019 Summer Season was seen by over 45,000 people. The Christmas show has become a firm favourite; 22,892 family members and school children enjoyed the 2019 production of A Christmas Carol. Collectively the 2019 theatre productions were seen by over 75,000 people.

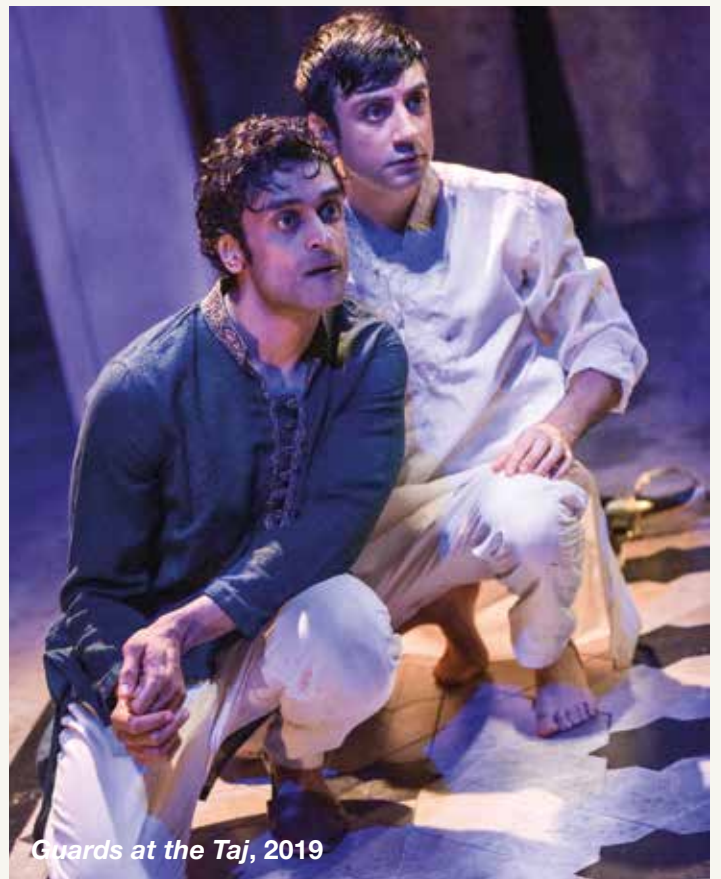
In 2019-20 Theatre by the Lake's engagement programme included weekly workshops for people living with dementia and their carers; weekly young company workshops; free storytelling sessions for Under 5s; workshops with local schools and an over 55s theatre company.

It's our intention to rebuild the organisation to continue to produce and programme vibrant theatre and to play a creative and supportive role in our communities as we all look to a more positive future.

Five World Premieres were programmed for summer 2020, including a co-production of One Side Lies the Sea with the nation's leading rural touring company Pentabus. Our spring production of Malory Towers with Wise Children and David Pugh was due to open in spring before embarking on a national tour. Unfortunately, these productions were cancelled after the theatre closed due to the pandemic.

'Artistically sharp and stunningly situated'

New Statesman



Guards at the Taj, 2019

Since opening in 1999, TBTL has earned over 80% of its annual turnover from trading. The closure of the building in March 2020 has therefore had a significant impact, particularly as we had heavily invested in eight productions against a strong sales forecast. This, together with depleted reserves (following investment in our new-build café) left us with no working capital and cash flow issues.

In July 2020, in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organisation, TBTL had to make significant redundancies to its workforce. It has been an incredibly challenging period for the organisation and for our industry. However, as a result of receiving significant support from the government's Cultural Recovery Fund, Arts Council funding and local support, we are now able to plan for our future. We are taking the opportunity to think about what we do, how we do it and who we do it for, and we are planning for a bright future. A team of 11 staff are currently working on this long-term planning, whilst preparing for re-opening in February 2021.

THEATRE BY THE LAKE IN NUMBERS – 2019/20

Performances

Over **700**
performances,
including:

381
across 10 shows
produced in-house

110
by visiting professional
companies

40
by community groups

PLUS
Festivals of film
and literature

Audiences



110,000
seats filled



67%
of Summer Season bookings
originated outside Cumbria –
that's over 50,000 people



82
schools came to our
Christmas show

Ticket schemes

Over 16,000 children and
young people benefited
from our £10 seats



Over 530 people living in
rural isolation/areas of
deprivation attended live
theatre through a targeted
ticket scheme



Helping those with disabilities

13

**ACCESSIBLE
PERFORMANCES**

5

CAPTIONED

5

AUDIO DESCRIBED

3

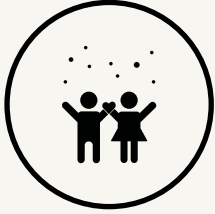
RELAXED

Working with the community



560

toddlers came to storytelling sessions for under 5s



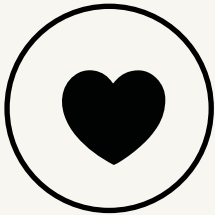
44

members of our weekly Young Company



12

members of our over 55s company



650

people came to workshops for people with dementia and their carers

People

AS WELL AS OUR FULL TIME STAFF, OUR HOME-PRODUCED SHOWS ENGAGED 89 FREELANCE STAFF, INCLUDING:

31

ACTORS

49

CREATIVES
DIRECTORS, AND STAGE,
SOUND AND LIGHTING
DESIGNERS

9

BACKSTAGE
STAFF

Volunteers

227 VOLUNTEERS

who provided over

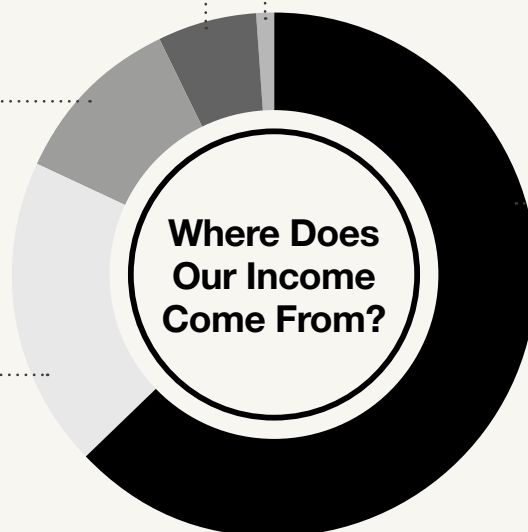
12,500 HOURS

of front-of-house support

6%
Fundraising
and donations

11%
Café, Bars and
other trading

19%
Arts Council
England



1%
Other

63%
Ticket Sales

**£3M TOTAL
INCOME**

CONTACT THE PRESS TEAM

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The Secret Garden, 2017