

Minutes of the Cosmopolitan Players AGM held at the Carriageworks Theatre on Thursday 9th September 2021

Meeting attendees:

Rachel Bickerdike (chair)

Gillian Myers (treasurer)

Carolyn Craven (press & publicity officer)

Leah Hamilton (committee)

Jan Morrell (committee)

Steve Morrell

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Lee Sharratt, Brian Hollingsworth, Reasha Hollingsworth, Elaine Jackson, Louise Bullock, Diane McHale-Fannon, Richard Hunt, Paul Myers, Bryan Craven, Barry Unwin, Shirley Hoyland, Lara Woodhouse and Louise Blackburn.

2. REVIEW OF 2020 AGM MINUTES

The minutes were agreed.

Proposed: Jan Morrell

Seconded: Leah Hamilton

3. CHAIR'S REPORT

By Rachel Bickerdike

Well, what a year! When I took over the position of Chair last year we were already well into the pandemic, but following the success of the Agatha Crusty production in February 2019, we had the next show lined up - another Agatha - which had been cast virtually on Zoom. I was hopeful that we would be able to perform in the near future but unfortunately we had to make the difficult decision to continue to postpone the performance. This was disappointing to all of us who were desperate to get back on the stage, although we knew it was for the right reasons. Thankfully, we do have a confirmed date at The Carriageworks now, and I would like to invite you all to attend between 23rd and 26th February 2022. I would like to thank Jan Morrell for her hard work preparing for this show as director, and keeping the cast enthused with the constant reminder that "this will be the first show that Cos put on, when we can!". Rehearsals started via Zoom, and were paused when the date was delayed again, but now will resume in person which we are very grateful for. Whilst it is good to get to know lines, there are definite benefits to the physicality of performing and moving around the performance area as you get into character!

As you know, we also continued with Zoom quizzes and play readings for a good chunk of the year, and my thanks again to Bryan and Carolyn for organising those, and to all who hosted a Tuesday night event for Cos. I'm so proud of us as a society for doing what we do best - connecting with each other and being a friendly and welcoming bunch of people - our theatre family. We managed to also hold our now annual Christmas party, on Zoom, where we honoured Carolyn for her hard work and commitment to the society by making her a life member. You may have also seen the Cos committee performing a 12 days of Christmas version, which we had a lot of fun putting together. We also had the Easter social online, as well as a Summer picnic in Roundhay Park, and my thanks go to Lee Sharratt for his commitment to arranging a series of social events, even in the difficult circumstances. We are sadly losing Lee from the committee this year, who has done a fantastic job planning a social calendar of events for the past few years with the support of the sub-committee. This year we also see Miranda Foxton and our secretary Louise Blackburn stepping down from the committee, so my thanks to them. Thanks especially to Louise for her efficient circulation of minutes and managing correspondence. This does leave vacancies on the committee, so I would like to invite you to put yourself forward to support your society and help keep us moving in a positive direction. Without you we don't have a society!

This leads me on to considering the year ahead, and a vision for the future of Cos. We do a lot of things well, and lots of new members find Cos to be very welcoming. Lee has done a great job increasing the social activities available to members and the lockdown quizzes also maintained that sense of family. We also have developed a reputation for doing comedy which has served us well, and not something I plan to steer us away from. However, there are always improvements we can make, and I would like us to increase our professionalism so we can encourage new members and offer more to current members. It would be great to have more socials, and more performances - perhaps in different ways. Committee have worked hard to get in a good place to look ahead, thanks to Jan, but we can do more to be prepared for the year and have a good idea of future productions in the pipeline. We also need to remain financially viable and look at different ways to increase our income, which requires all of us! Quick reminder to pay your membership fees for next year!

Over the last year we also discussed some fundraising ideas that we weren't able to put into action, so look out for events coming up. It has been suggested we go back to doing green room performances, which would be a great opportunity for more people to perform and possibly raise some funds. We also launched our YouTube channel this year, which I hope you have heard about. The idea behind it was to celebrate the skills and talent we have in the society and showcase that throughout the year, which also serves as a publicity tool to build our reputation and visibility. If you are a writer, director or actor and want to share something, please get in touch with us! Monologues talking to camera are an easy way to do something, and we can furnish you with licence-free scripts if you'd like to try something. I suppose the last thing I want to say is that this is your society, so if you want to do more (or less) of something, please let us know. I'd be happy to chat to anyone if you want to try something new, and let us know what you have enjoyed. Cosmopolitan Players is 65 years old and we want to maintain a great legacy as well as continuing to move

forward and appeal to new members and new audiences. We have some great productions coming up this year so I hope to see you all at a social event, committee meeting or performance very soon!

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

The accounts were presented and explained by Gillian Myers as treasurer.

We have no productions this year, so no income or outgoings linked to that. The royalties for the next show were paid before this financial year. Gillian thanked those who paid membership over the last year, which has been our main source of income and has enabled us to cover the costs we have still had over the last year. We have had new members as well, mainly from Tuesday virtual socials, which is great. LCA didn't charge membership this year due to minimal outgoings for them, although we are still members. We also didn't pay any Croyden House payments this year. The Cos website changed last year and we got a deal which covers 2 years, so although there was a large fee this year, there will be no payment next year. Gillian noted we are in a good position to cover one show and it would be lovely to see that built up again. Committee have chosen to use the Upstairs space at the Carriageworks which is more financially viable, so we should be able to cover costs and hopefully make a profit with upcoming productions.

See attached accounts sheets which have been audited and were agreed at the meeting.

Action: Chair to send thanks to Carole Holmes, our non-charging independent accounts examiner.

5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS & COMMITTEE

Current officers and general committee members who remain in post are listed below. There were no new nominations which leaves vacancies for the position of secretary and two general members.

Chair: Rachel Bickerdike

Vice chair: Lara Woodhouse

Secretary: (vacant)

Press & publicity officer: Carolyn Craven

General committee:

Emma McGrath

Jan Morrell

Lean Hamilton

Elaine Jackson

AGM MEETING MINUTES Prepared by: Rachel Bickerdike 10.09.21

Minutes of Cosmopolitan Players' Open Forum 9th September 2021

The Chair invited comments and questions from those present; no other contributions were received in advance.

The vacant position of secretary was discussed and it was confirmed that following the AGM any vacant positions can be filled with co-opted members who retain voting rights. It was suggested that someone with secretarial skills, not necessarily connected to theatre, could take up the position.

Action: Publicity Officer to promote vacancies on social media and an additional plea for co-opted committee members to be sent out with AGM minutes.

Carolyn noted that Cos has paid NODA membership this year, which allowed Cos members to take advantage of drama workshops free of charge. She noted they were excellent and thanked Cos for that opportunity. Carolyn shared that they were a good opportunity to network, including finding other possible rehearsal venues. St Chad's in Headingley have availability which we could explore. We have also had the offer of using Dunelm coffee shop in Holbeck for free to use for rehearsals which we are taking advantage of this year.

Carolyn noted as Publicity Officer that the website members area password will change tonight at midnight. Life members will be sent the new password and new members will receive this when membership is paid. Anyone with any articles of interest, please contact Carolyn Craven. New members have come through the website. Someone has also contacted Bryan Craven as a relation of a previous member who had old programmes to share with us.

Steve suggested contacting those who haven't performed with us for a while. JM confirmed there is an extended mailing list of non-members in line with GDPR.