

Director's Diary

September 2023

Hello and welcome to the Director's Diary - the go-to place for patron's to learn about the goings-on behind-the-scenes here at **Precarious Theatre**. Last time we talked about the rehearsals for *A Theatre Show* and the excitement of building a show. Well, we did it! We built a show and put it on and it was a blast. Across our performances in Manchester and Camden we performed to ~125 people and, I can happily say, the vast majority thoroughly enjoyed our show. We had two great reviews from the British Theatre Guide and the Camden Citizen which was lovely, but it is always the positive engagement of the audience that us theatre types crave and we certainly got that. The energy at every night was palpable and pushed us to be better and better. We are so grateful to have had such wonderful support at all six performances and thank everyone who came out to do so!

However, to use this month's Directors Diary to bathe in the (well deserved) post-show glow would be fairly insincere. It is a somewhat unfortunate but mostly productive fact that as the director, from the moment the final last-night-celebratory-pint is drunk and the closing farewell to cast or crew is uttered, I begin thinking about the future. What next? What lessons can we take from the last year? What can we do better? Will our previous cast want to work with us again? - but a sample of the questions that begin to form in the hours and days after the curtain falls. Of course, such is my excitement (and impatience) that it isn't long till a post-show debrief is called and answers are sought.

Unlike last year where only Marco and I sat on a zoom call pondering decisions and scheming away, this year, with the growing roles of Fran and David within the company, we met as four to reflect and hash out our plans. This 'meeting' (I use inverted commas because it is, in reality, never just one) is often the most challenging of the year as we celebrate our accomplishments, but also face the realities of any shortcomings. The latter aspect can give the whole thing a negative edge which is far from ideal when the ultimate goal is to look forward and build a plan for the future. But, reflecting on the whole gamut of our activity, whether positive or... not optimum, is really the only way to learn, grow, and begin to understand our potential avenues for development.

Additionally, this is the meeting where we review the fundamentals of the company - the 'vision/'mission' that informs our decision making. One aspect that was subject to much heated discussion this year was our orientation towards 'the industry' and,

more specifically, if and how we go about attempting to build interest in our work. Whilst, on the surface, it can appear that the answer to these questions should be fairly simple for a young and aspirational theatre company, this is far from the truth. There are many aspects to be considered from the actual value we place on recognition from established authorities in 'the industry' to the real-world impact that support from 'the industry' could have on us as a company and/or as individuals.

For myself, there is one concern that trumps all. Unfortunately, none of us are in a position to work for **Precarious Theatre** full-time and, as a consequence, the time and effort that we can spend building it, are finite. Therefore, the correct allocation of resources is of significant consequence. We cannot afford to spend our time and energy on things if we aren't confident they will have a positive impact on our company, be that growing its reputation, increasing its reach or, and most importantly, improving our ability to put on productions that leave audiences wanting more precarious theatre. Whilst difficult, this is an exciting challenge! We must aspire to be as lean as marathon runners, efficient as the engines of formula one cars, and clinical as the most precise of surgeons, all in the pursuit of producing that most fleeting but special of experiences: a great show!

And so we come full circle – having rode the waves of post-show elation across the difficult seas of reflection towards the beach of theatrical futures (where, presumably and hopefully, cold beers of accomplishment await us). We are all incredibly excited about the coming year and the new paths we will discover and walk. 2023 was a good year to be a member of **Precarious Theatre** and I've got a feeling that as we march onwards in 2023 and into 2024, it might just get even better.

I think that just about wraps it up for this edition of the Director's Diary - thank you for reading and I look forward to sharing more with you about what we're up to next time!

Liam Grogan

Artistic Director and Producer