



## AGM 2024

### Chairman's Report April 2023 to March 2024 and beyond

This report is for the financial year (FY) up to March 2024, our 11<sup>th</sup> year, having launched in April 2013. We held a lovely 10<sup>th</sup> birthday event in May 2023.

- **Highlights**

I would like to give a big thank you to all those who contributed so positively to those activities we ran during the FY.

Like for many clubs and voluntary groups, participation remains low post-COVID. People are not seeming to come back to club activities generally, nor to volunteer their time to help run them. The Committee have discussed this issue a number of times and have found similar issues with our groups we are aware of. It is unclear what is the best solution - it is likely to be a combination of several things. For example: running the right activities, which means finding what people want, and finding volunteers to organise or run them; and getting the message out that these activities are running in order to attract attendees.

- **Events**

Once again, we held our regularly monthly "Second Tuesday" events. Events are usually run by volunteers, perhaps our members or our friends from show business and beyond, who share their expertise and experience with attendees. Helen, our Events Secretary will present a report later.

We see these regular events as a way of maintaining the STC community throughout the year, and providing an entry point for new members too. They continue to be free to members and £5 for non-members (raised from £3 this year, partly to encourage joining).

- **Productions**

Post-pandemic, we have only managed to produce two shows this FY, though one was performed in the FY 2024-5.

For our first "proper-play" since before COVID, Gabriel Kellett proposed directing 'God of Carnage' and was able to cast it, with a good turnout of auditionees. Unfortunately, a professional version was announced so the performing licence was no longer available.

Gabe was able to find an alternative play using the same cast 'Consuming Passions' which was very successfully staged in June 2023.

'God of Carnage' returned in 2024, after we failed to get a licence for 'The Birthday Party', Gabe's suggestion for 2024! While an artistic and organisational success, audiences were low.

One perennial problem for us is finding an audience for shows. While we make great use of online publicity and free listings to spread the word, our audiences remain primarily those connected with the production, and few hard-core members. Occasionally, others from our mailing list or local people do come along, and enjoy the occasion.

The other problem remains finding local venues to stage shows which are practical, available and affordable. Practical in terms of facilities (like lighting) and capacity; available for get-in, rehearsals and performances; and affordable so that we don't waste money. For 'God of Carnage', we tried a school during half term, allowing us an uninterrupted period in residence, but it was a bit of the beaten track.

- **Members and Friends**

We welcome members from a diverse range of ages and backgrounds - some are completely new to theatre and several have made their stage debut with STC. Others have amateur and professional experience which they share with others through our activities. We keep our annual subscriptions low - still £10 after 11 years - and don't charge participation fees unlike other groups.

New memberships have been fewer recently, some of this due to the fact that we've produced fewer shows, as people often join to take part. Not every participant stays on once their membership expires.

Our online community is kept in touch through our email list, our website, Facebook/Instagram and Twitter.

Terry, our Membership Secretary, will report more shortly.

- **Finances**

We will have a full report from Liz our Treasurer shortly.

As a non-profit organisation we don't plan to make a profit! Any income goes into running our activities, with surplus going into our reserves to support us over any future bad patches.

In an ideal world, subscriptions would cover our fixed costs (like insurance) and income from tickets would cover production costs plus leave some over for events and other activities. In practice there's some "swings and roundabouts" here, but it all works out in the end.

- **Moving on**

We are constantly looking ahead to our future programme of productions, and welcome proposals. While open to any kind of production, we need shows which we can realistically deliver given our constraints in venues, budgets and availability of participants and audiences! We also need directors/producers to drive forward these ideas and turn them into reality.

We would like to stage 2 to 3 productions a year and to maintain a rolling programme for the next few shows, but getting back into rhythm post-COVID has been very slow.

We continue the regular second Tuesday events, which are important to maintain an ongoing community. We are always open to suggestions for events, and for volunteers to run them!

- **Conclusion**

In conclusion, I'd like to express great thanks to everyone who provided support and encouragement from all around Streatham, and all those who have volunteered their time and expertise to stage our shows and run our events programme. Plus of course our committee, members, patrons, followers, and audiences and anyone I've left out.

Finally, a special mention to Ian Freeman who has left the committee having been a founding member - he was presented with a commemorative "plaque", and to Gabe Kellett who is temporarily moving away so stepping down.

Our thanks go to regular volunteers Esh and David who are always willing to help with our activities.

Volunteers for committee and other roles are always welcome!

*You have all continued to help put theatre into Streatham. Thank you*

**David Harvey**

Chairman, AGM 2024