

Company Registration No. 7897118 (England and Wales)
Charity Registration No. 1147372

**BELARUS FREE THEATRE
TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020**

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

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BELARUS FREE THEATRE

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Trustees	M J Attenborough M F Ball (Appointed 27 April 2020) J R Bierman T J Clark N Kaliada N Khalezin D M Lan T Latchford (Resigned 21st October 2019) D J Law M F Miller A Stanley L J Wade S West
Registered Office	C/o Young Vic Theatre 66 The Cut London SE1 8LZ
Company registration number	7897118
Registered charity number	1147372
Independent examiner	Cara Turtington FCA DChA Saffery Champness LLP 71 Queen Victoria Street London EC4V 4BE

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 January 2020.

The company is a registered charity, registered number 1147372, limited by guarantee. The company is incorporated under the Companies Act 2006 and is governed by its Articles and Memorandum of Association dated 4 January 2012.

Structure, Governance and Management

The company was formed on 4 January 2012. The company's principle activity is to advance the arts for the public benefit by the promotion in particular, but not exclusively, of the art of drama. The company was registered as a charity on 22 May 2012.

Trustees are recruited and appointed in accordance with the organisation's governing document and mission statement, and with relevant legislation. Before new trustees are appointed the Board determines what new attributes and knowledge are needed and then compiles a profile.

Trustees

The trustees during the period and to the date this report was signed were:

M J Attenborough	D J Law
M F Ball (appointed 27 April 2020)	M F Miller
J R Bierman	A Stanley
T J Clark	L J Wade
N Kaliada	S West
N Khalezin	
D M Lan	
T Latchford (Resigned 21st October 2019)	

Objectives

Belarus Free Theatre (BFT) is a UK-based international award-winning theatre company founded on the principles of freedom of speech and artistic expression. The charity's objectives, as set down in its articles of associations, are to advance the arts for the public benefit by the promotion in particular, but not exclusively, of the art of drama.

Focused on social justice, taboo subjects, and human rights issues across the globe, BFT's approach is akin to documentary journalism. The company builds ties with people across the globe to immerse theatre-makers in their culture to authentically tell untold stories. This documentary material is the basis for BFT's work along with the company's actors' personal experiences of standing up for human rights and resisting dictatorship.

The company works with both a permanent ensemble of actors based in Belarus and an international ensemble made up of UK and international actors. Working across borders, BFT creates, advocates internationally for human rights, and educates. The company brings a sharp reality to the stage by creating theatre drawn directly from real life experience as well as presenting contemporary deconstructions of classic works.

BFT's transnational initiatives and theatre educational programmes encourage people to find their own voices within society and to develop a deeper engagement with social and political issues.

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Review of activities and achievements

Belarus Free Theatre is an Associate Company of the Young Vic Theatre, London, The Malthouse Theatre (Melbourne, Australia) and, since January 2018 started a 3-year association with Monash University (Victoria, Australia) through its Centre for Theatre and Performance (ended in June 2019). The UK office is maintained at the Young Vic address and benefits from the expertise, support and collaboration with the Young Vic and its staff.

The UK office coordinates all the charitable activities of the company in the UK and around the world, including organizing creative residencies and performances in the UK and international performances and tours, building relations with local and international partners, performance-linked human rights campaigns and fundraising for the company's operations in the UK and Belarus.

The Young Vic Theatre provides in-kind support that consists of office space, support staff, IT and telephone, marketing and operational support. Gifts in kind in the form of donated services from the Young Vic that cannot be quantified with reasonable accuracy are not recognised by the Charity.

The partnership with Monash University allowed the company to use the university's performing arts facilities for residencies, while providing the university with performances and working with their students. This partnership formally ended in June 2019 and may be reexplored in the future should the company work in Australia again.

Entering its eighth year as a formally registered UK company and charity, in 2019 BFT continued to deliver high-impact programmes in Belarus, the UK, and internationally.

Artistic Activities Promoting Democracy and Social Justice in Belarus

- **Performances in Belarus**

Belarus Free Theatre uses theatre performances to engage our audiences in Belarus in issues related to social justice and democratisation. Our devised theatre productions offer urgent responses to the world in which they are created and allow hidden stories to be authentically told for the first time. Between February 19 and January 20, the company presented 110 performances including 6 performances outside Minsk ('Sparrow' in Kuchki village in June-19; and 'Tsar-Tsar' performed in villages Parichi, Chirkovich, Ugly, Lohovschina, July – September 2019). The total audience reached was 5765 (of which 280 outside Minsk). Of these 110 performances, 31 were put on by our recent graduates who remain with the company; 3 were premieres, (more below) and 2 were live-streamed. We also conducted 5 post-show discussions (275 participants). Of the total Minsk audiences surveyed during this period, 42% were new to BFT, which if applied to the total audience over the year would mean that nearly 3000 new audience members attended a BFT show in the past 12 months. 86.5% of audiences are aged between 16 – 35.

A new development in this period was to present two of our well-loved plays, Discover Love and Onyx with subtitles, specifically for deaf audiences reaching 31 audience members with hearing impairments. This is part of our efforts to be more inclusive as a theatre, reach wider audiences and also to raise awareness of disability with non-disabled audiences. Currently we are the first company to address the issue of the inclusion of disabled communities.

Premieres & Artistic Renewal: Two of our premieres from this period have been led by our senior ensemble members, and a third is a collaboration with guest director and Polish playwright. This is

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very encouraging for us as a company as we are witnessing the impact of our earlier work in the renewal of our artistic leadership, having fostered young talent over the years.

“Reykjavik 74” – is a play written by Polish playwright Marta Sakolowska, and this interpretation by Belarus Free Theatre was directed by invited Belarusian director, Yura Divakov with music from BFT’s Pavel Horodnitski. It was performed as part of a festival of Polish culture presented in collaboration with the Adam Mickiewicz Institute. Previewed in November and December 2019, it premiered in January 2020 and by the end of February 2020 had been performed 11 times to 550 audience members. This included one livestream and a post-show discussion. Set in Iceland, it tells the story of 6 young people who were convicted of the murders of two men who died in mysterious circumstances and whose bodies were never found. Initially, the 6 had confessed to the murders, but later revoked their confessions. The play deals with the subject of the human mind and memory, in which fiction and imagery mix with reality.

“A Part of the Rain” - is a new piece based on ‘Waiting for Godot’ by BFT’s Pavel Horodnitski, who also performs. It previewed in March 2019 and premiered in April 2019 and since then has been performed 22 times until end January 2020. This production involves a ‘member of the audience’ unwittingly forced into engaging with the lead actor, while we wait for the ‘other actor’, who has been delayed, to arrive. The action takes place around a ‘tree’ – an overcoat which has been soaked in water – and long pauses in the dialogue invite us to contemplate the musical sounds of drip, dripping. The two performers pass the time by playing games with buckets of water (resulting in considerable spillage) and playing ‘Pozzo & Lucky’, taking turns to dance and philosophise. After some time, the stage manager enters to apologise for making the audience wait, but that unfortunately the performance has been cancelled because the other actor didn’t turn up.

“Tsar-Tsar” – while this production was created and first previewed in a single performance in 2017, we finally managed to get a run of shows in the summer of 2019. As reported in the interim report, Tsar! Tsar! created by ensemble member Andrei Urazau, is based on the folk tale of Tsar Maximilian, performed on and in a river setting to rural audiences who would rarely, if ever, have access to a theatre production otherwise. Tsar! Tsar! is a fairy tale for our times, telling the story of an evil Tsar and his long-suffering people - a clear parable of Belarus under Lukashenko. The play was performed 5 times to 250 audience members, including 2 post-show discussions during the reporting period.

Other productions from our regular portfolio performed in the reporting period:

1. **DerMagenFinDelMöön. Stories** by Kharmis (Premiered in 2018 – BFT member Pavel Horodnitski’s directorial debut based on the absurdist short stories by Daniil Kharmis, performed by the students of Fortinbras). In this period it was performed 16 times to 880 audience members.
2. **“Well-Being”** (Premiered in 2018, based on a script by Mariya Bialkovich and directed by Yulia Shevchuk, both members of the BFT ensemble). In this report was performed 20 times to an audience of 1100.
3. **Onyx** (by Fortinbras students – telling story of youth gangs & organized crime in the ‘90s) - performed 10 times, including once with subtitles for deaf audiences)
4. **House No 5** (by Fortinbras – featuring disabled artists & real stories of disabled persons’ aspirations, including taboo topics of sexuality, independence, freedom) - performed 6 times, including 1 post-show discussion;
5. **The Master Had a Talking Sparrow** (immersive show exploring narratives of heroism and the Germans, Soviets and partisans during the ‘great patriotic war’) - shown 6 times (including once outside Minsk);

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6. **Earth No.2** (by Maxim Dosko) was put on 6 times.
7. **Discover Love** (A BFT classic, first performed in 2008, researched over nine years, based on the true story of Belarusian Irina Krasovskaya and her husband Anatoly, a businessman who supported the Belarus opposition movement and who was kidnapped but his body never found.) Performed 4 times, including once with subtitles for deaf audiences, and one livestream and post-show discussion.
8. **Koan** (Premiered in 2018 – a choreographed piece by one of the BFT ensemble, choreographer, and vocalist Mariya Sazonova in her directing debut).

- **Studio Fortinbras**

Studio Fortinbras is BFT's training and teaching academy in Minsk. The only independent arts school in the country, students in our intensive two-year programme of an average of 18 teaching hours per week receive training on all aspects of BFT's work from civil society management, arts-based activism, theatre and arts production and performance, and citizen journalism.

Training was led by Minsk-based teachers and senior members of BFT's Minsk ensemble, and by our Artistic Directors Natalia Kaliada and Nicolai Khalezin, teaching online via Skype from London.

During this second year of their studies, Fortinbras students focused on performance skills (compared to year 1 when the focus is on citizen journalism and activism, as well as performance). These two performances, devised, rehearsed and performed as part of their studies, were reported on in the interim report.

1. **'Bird Trap'** addresses themes of constraint by social expectations: how being a father, brother, husband, son implies traditional duties and markers of success that can in reality, restrict and undermine personal growth and ambition.
2. **"Room"** is an interactive performance that explores issues faced by Belarusian youth from diverse backgrounds which often go unaddressed, such as mental health and social isolation.

While 'community' and activism was an integral part of the Studio Fortinbras curriculum in the previous year, this year we planned to build on past ad-hoc actions to focus on building a 'community' of LGBTQI activists who are empowered and motivated to campaign on rights, as the LGBTQI community in Belarus is fragmented and weak.

To this purpose, late in 2019 we launched a new initiative of 'LGBTQI cultural tours' around Minsk and the organisation of solidarity events, targeting primarily young LGBTQI people, as a first step towards self-organising and collective advocacy for LGBTQI rights. These tours are intended to diminish ignorance, bigotry and prejudice against the gay and trans community in a region known for its highly traditional and macho values. Members of BFT and Fortinbras students take participants on a walking tour of the city, remembering places and incidents including the first and last Pride march in 1999, that have shaped the culture of homophobia with a mission of changing hearts and minds.

After a lengthy fundraising and planning period, we conducted the first tour as a pilot in November 2019, but postponed the full roll-out until Spring 2020 (and now due to COVID-19 possibly longer), since these are mainly 'walking tours' and are better to conduct in warmer months.

In 2019, we also developed some new social engagement activities for our audiences and the general public, to extend our outreach. We started the BFT 'social club' to deepen our engagement with audiences on issues that matter to them (ensure audiences at the heart of creative & campaigning strategy), and to begin to deepen our audiences' engagement with the issues, release their creativity, help them find their voice and build confidence to take a stand on issues in society. This is work in

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progress and still to be evaluated. Nevertheless, having galvanized a number of regular followers, we continue, even during COVID-19 lockdown to provide some fitness training classes, having shifted them online (via Instagram).

- **Platform Discussions**

Belarus Free Theatre's work seeks to engage the audiences in a deeper conversation about the topics raised by our productions. As our work addresses urgent social topics, human rights issues and societal taboos, we regularly follow performances with a post-show platform discussion which allows the audience to explore in more depth the issues addressed by our work. In 2019 the company held 5 post show discussions throughout the year, involving 275 people after performances of Reykjavik, Discover Love, House No. 5, and Tsar Tsar (x2).

UK Programmes

In the previous year we took a decision not to create any new productions in the UK in 2019, although we would begin producing and the preparation of *Dogs of Europe*, scheduled to open at the Barbican in London in May 2020. The bulk of the creative work involved in this production will be carried out in Minsk, while the London team focus on producing the production for the UK and internationally. In the meantime we have continued to devise new ways of engaging our audiences and reaching out to local communities and citizens.

Dogs of Europe

Dogs of Europe is BFT's next major international production. The company in Minsk have spent several months devising, rehearsing, and finally in February 2020 previewed the production in Minsk ahead of the planned international premiere which was due to take place in the UK at the Barbican in May 2020, but has now been postponed due to Covid-19.

Dogs of Europe is based on a novel of the same name by Belarusian author Alhierd Bacharevic which was hailed by leading literary critics as one of the most outstanding works of prose to come out of Belarus over the past 30 years. The theme is very resonant for our times cautioning us as individuals to be alert to a dystopian drift of western democracies into totalitarian states. The adaptation of the thousand-page, 6-part novel into a script for stage has been a year in the making – a collaboration between BFT's young dramaturg, Mariya Bialkovich and Artistic Director Nicolai Khalezin. Building on the successful partnership with Balaklava Blues with Counting Sheep, the show includes a number of original tracks live onstage bringing regional authenticity to the drama with their unique brand of ethno folk music.

Dogs of Europe has been supported by the Goethe Institute in support of German composer Sergei Newski who is composing an original score for the production and by the Wingate Foundation and London Community Foundation (Cockayne fund).

Theatres de la Ville Luxembourg have also committed to acting as a co-commissioner on the project. Due to the coronavirus situation, presentation of the production is now being examined for 2021.

- **Creative partnerships**

Balaklava Blues tour: During August 2019, BFT produced a month long European tour with Balaklava Blues which reached audiences of over 5,000 playing at festivals and venues across Ukraine, Ireland and the UK, including Kilkenny Arts Festival, Greenbelt and Byline Festival alongside a London performance. Balaklava Blues are Mark & Marichka Marczyk whose incredible story of meeting and falling in love during the Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine became the foundations of the stage show

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Counting Sheep, produced by BFT in January – March 2019. Balaklava Blues style is a unique fusion of Ukrainian Polyphonic blues, trance and electro pop and BFT's collaboration with them continues with a new International production of 'Dogs of Europe'.

- **Coventry 2021**

The company were invited to pitch a proposal for opening ceremony activity surrounding the Coventry 2021 City of Culture Programme. Although highly commended, the proposal was not taken forward.

- **Kitchen Revolution**

We continued with our series of 'Kitchen Revolution' dinner and discussion clubs which we started in 2017, inspired by our work underground in Minsk. The concept of 'Kitchen Revolution' is drawn from the Soviet period when the only 'free' discussions could take place in people's kitchens. The events bring together diverse groups of people to discuss pressing social issues in partnership with community activist groups and aim to find new ways to inspire arts-based civic engagement in the UK and internationally.

In the year up to end January 2020, we held two events, both taking place at Greenbelt Festival, Northamptonshire.

The first was a panel discussion titled; Is protest art just propaganda? or is all art a form of protest? A discussion of whether art is just a reflection of life and the world in which we live, or a lens that can effect change in the world and in the lives it reflects. With Belarus Free Theatre, Michael Leunig, Debbie Lewer and chaired by Ruth Daniel of In Place of War.

The second was a group workshop on the theme "Art vs Fascism", led by Natalia Kaliada and open to the general public to contribute and discuss.

We continue to get requests to use the 'franchise' of Kitchen Revolution by different organisations to discuss issues close to them, in recognition that it is an innovative and effective way of bringing people together and mobilizing them to get involved. We hope to continue these in the future.

International collaboration

- **Education**

In June 2019, Monash University ended the proposed 3 year partnership, after 2 years, due to a change in leadership and funding restrictions at the University. It has been discussed that should the company work in Australia again in the future, a new partnership could be explored.

- **International Touring**

International touring provides important opportunities for audience development, increased public profile, and earned income for the company.

In 2019 several members of the Fortinbras Academy presented the documentary "Acting for Freedom: the story of Belarus Free Theatre" at the Zagare Fringe Festival, Zagare, Lithuania- from the 10th-12th of May. This was followed by a Q&A on life and creating art under oppression, in Belarus.

- **International Networks**

Numerous conferences and gatherings were attended by different members of the company throughout the year. Attendance and contributions at such events are essential to expanding our international networks.

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- Our General Manager & Producer in the UK attended Trans Europe Halles and the European Theatre Convention/Festival, both taking place in Dresden, Germany, in May 2019.
- Our General Manager and Producer in Minsk, attended the Festival d'Avignon 2019, and the ETC conference tied to the festival.
- Our General Manager and Producer in Minsk, attended the Tblisi storytelling festival furthering relationships with festivals and theatre practitioners in Georgia

Events

Continuing our work in inspiring international artists to work for social change, BFT was invited to a number of events and to deliver a number of keynote addresses. Speaking engagements for the company have included:

Directors Natalia Kaliada and Nicolai Khalezin attended a number of speaking events through May, July, August in Ukraine on Oleg Sentsov and Ukrainian prisoners in Russia.

In June, they visited Warsaw, Poland collaborating with partners on how to address creative solutions to overcoming Russian propaganda in the West, along with freedom of expression and Internet

Natalia Kaliada attended and spoke on the political situation in Belarus at a closed dinner during the [Brussels Forum](#) of the German Marshall Fund, in July of 2019.

In August of 2019 Natalia Kaliada and Nicolai Khalezin went to Bratislava and Vienna to speak at private, high profile forums around Russian propaganda media tools.

Natalia Kaliada and Nicolai Khalezin participated in the Magnitsky Award Ceremony, November 2019

In December of 2019, Natalia Kaliada and Nicolai Khalezin were guests at the prize ceremony of the Dutch Royal Family.

In December of 2019 Natalia Kaliada moderated a public discussion with Oleg Sentsov at the Front Line Club produced by PEN Centre.

Digital output

Through this period, Belarus Free Theatre has continued to develop our digital programmes, allowing us to engage larger audiences around the world.

Live streaming of BFT productions from our Minsk underground space: 2 productions were livestreamed this year:

1. Discover Love (September 2019) (reached 4800 views on Facebook).
2. Rejkyavik (November 2019) (3500 views on Facebook, VKontakte & Youtube)

While there were fewer livestreams this past year, we plan to step this up considerably in the coming months. As a response to the global pandemic triggered by COVID-19, and in celebration of our 15th anniversary we have opened our archives and have been broadcasting recordings of 24 of our productions in an online festival "Love Over Virus" taking place between April – June 2020.

- **Ministry of Counterculture**

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We continued to develop our web-platform the Ministry of Counterculture (moc.media), publishing daily news and analysis on arts & human rights, improving our technical capacity and training people to produce new content for the site

This is where BFT's media and artistic mission complement each other. Creating innovative multimedia products, directly addressing issues currently restricted in mainstream and state Belarusian media due to limitations on freedom of expression, provides an antidote to mainstream propaganda, stimulating critical thinking and transforming worldviews.

- **Video Documentary-making**

'Alone'

At almost two-years in the making - this film explores the existential pain of Ukraine - and the hope which art and music can bring - through the eyes of one of Ukraine's most popular rock stars, Andrei Khlyvniuk, lead singer of hip-hop rock outfit "Boombox".

Alone accompanies Andrei, as he struggles with how he, as a public figure, should respond to the crisis his country faces with the war on the eastern front with Russia, the illegal annexation of Crimea and political prisoners detained in Siberian penal colonies. In the company of BFT's Artistic Directors, Natalia Kaliada and Nikolai Khalezin, Andrei learns about protest through art, culminating in him staging a "concert to the stolen land" on a specially constructed stadium in a field near the occupation line with Crimea. His goal - to support the release of Ukrainian political prisoner, Oleg Sentsov, serving 20 years on false charges of terrorism in a Siberian jail.

The film follows Andrii and BFT around the world, from Ukraine, to London, Minsk, Canada, France and the US and Andrii explores how and if his art can or should be used as protest. Scenes were filmed in Minsk with the main company of Belarus Free Theatre, during the period they were creating Burning Doors, which covered in part, the trial of Oleg Sentsov.

Shortly before completion of the documentary, Oleg was unexpectedly released as part of a prisoner exchange between Russia and Ukraine. Although the company does not claim responsibility for the release, we do consider ourselves to have helped to keep international focus on his plight alongside many other human rights organisations and campaigners, and hope that this might assist the other political prisoners who are still incarcerated.

Following Oleg Sentsov's release it was evident that the final scenes of the documentary required significant additional input and resources to reflect the impact of the campaign #FreeSentsov spearheaded by BFT and Andrei Khlyvniuk, and to ensure the enduring relevance of the film and its message - not to give up the fight for human rights and political prisoners. This additional input involved BFT's Artistic Directors, Natalia Kaliada and Nikolai Khalezin, coordinating a trip to Kyiv, where together with Andrei Khlyvniuk and Oleg Sentsov, they could film the incredibly powerful final scenes of the film. As previously reported, the filming of this footage proved to be challenging due to the sudden media interest in Oleg Sentsov, as well as Sentsov's overwhelming emotional and physical state after being released from prison. However, the meeting was successfully filmed, boosting the film's current affairs value and lending the overall documentary a highly poignant closure.

Below is a recap of all the events that Oleg Sentsov partook during his European trip after his story dominated the global news. He has visited London where he toured the city in the company of Natalia Kaliada and Nikolai Khalezin, and attended a number of talks and panel discussions.

- October 1st, 2019: a [high level meeting](#) and a joint news conference in Strasbourg of the French President Emmanuel Macron and Oleg Sentsov, during which Sentsov stressed that:

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"the struggle to counteract [Russian President Vladimir] Putin's regime that wants, in the first place, to enslave Ukraine."

- November 14th, 2019: Sentsov attended a [panel discussion](#) at the Henry Jackson Society presented by MP Andrew Mitchell addressing the importance of upholding the Magnitsky Act. The panel also included an American-British financier and political activist, Bill Browder; an American broadcaster and the daughter of the late U.S. Senator John McCain, Meghan McCain; and Vladimir Kara-Murza Jr., a Russian opposition politician and journalist.
- November 15th, 2019, PEN International's [panel discussion](#), where Oleg Sentsov was interviewed by Natalia Kaliada and responded to a Q&A session from the floor, reported on by Nikolai Khalezin for MOC media, published on 20 November 2019.
- November 15th, 2019: [Sergei Magnitsky Award Ceremony for Human Rights](#), on the same day Sentsov attended the annual ceremony and accepted the prize he had been awarded a year prior but was unable to collect due to his internment. The ceremony was also attended by Natalia Kaliada, Nicolai Khalezin, Bill Browder, Meghan McCain and a Lebanese-British barrister, Amal Clooney.
- November 26th, 2019: [Awards ceremony of the Sakharov Prize for Freedom](#), where Sentsov received the prize that he was awarded in 2018, presented to Sentsov by the European Parliament.

As above, the media attention Sentsov's release has generated, also advanced Oleg Sentsov's profile that will lead to a greater interest in Belarus, particularly in post Soviet states of Ukraine, Belarus and Poland, as well as renewed interest in this region amongst the U.S. institutions.

Pussy Boys

Filming of the documentary Pussy Boys continues in Belarus, although production was stalled for quite some time due to a brutal homophobic assault on our filmmaker, Kolya Kuprich, whilst filming the piece. Extensive physical injuries were sustained including the loss of teeth and fractures to his eye socket and cheek. The company successfully raised funds to support the costs of his medical care, given the incident took place during work for the company.

Future Plans

During 2020 we will continue to work on a major new production for international audiences for premiere in 2021, in addition to 2-3 new productions which will premiere in Belarus. In principle, our activity for 2020 will now be pushed forward by a calendar year, in light of the Coronavirus Pandemic. As a response to the global situation we will look to release digital archive footage of previous productions as well as create digital online work for our audiences to engage with while we see out the pandemic.

We will also continue with our 15th anniversary celebrations in 2020, and continue to develop our community and outreach programmes in the UK in particular, but also seek out international partnerships, in anticipation of securing a performance venue and a home for the company in London in the medium term.

Although the postponement of activity will affect all of our work, due to the position of the Belarusian Government in response to the pandemic, salaries and expenses will continue to be paid there, as no official state support is available to our team. To justify this, we will aim to create digital programmes from home, during the global lockdown period.

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We will continue to develop a new strategy and development of an education programme to develop engagement both internationally and in the United Kingdom. Major elements of this strategy began around Dogs of Europe in May 2020 at the Barbican. We started to develop it in January of 2020 and will continue to develop this show after the Coronavirus Pandemic.

We will continue to seek touring engagements internationally with our existing repertoire, all while delivering our core programmes in performing, raising awareness of human rights issues and teaching in Belarus, welcoming a new intake of Studio Fortinbras students in the academic year 2020/21.

Public Benefit

In planning the activities of the charity the Trustees have given due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The Trustees believe that the activities of the charity in the year confirm its ability to provide current and on-going benefit to the public.

Belarus Free Theatre continues to work across borders, increasing its accessibility to audiences around the world – both through international performing and the development of its digital work.

The company continues to work with international talent in order to raise awareness of global issues through its outstanding, critically acclaimed theatre productions. It continues its unique and exceptional outreach work with young people in the UK, Belarus and around the world.

Financial Review

In 2019/20 Belarus Free Theatre spent £480,173 (2019: £469,292), £432,198 (2019: £421,514) of which was spent on its charitable activities. Staff and personnel expenditure, at £306,198 (2019: £334,140) was as in previous years and equated to 64% (2019: 71%) of its total general expenditure.

Fundraising was at a marginally higher level than in previous years with fundraising efforts leading to donations and grants of £530,317 (2019: £387,562), approximately 90% (2019: 80%) of the total income in the year.

Reserves Policy and Risk Management

The Trustees consider the risks to the charity at each quarterly Board meeting and ensure that systems and procedures are established to mitigate key risks identified. These key risks fall into two broad areas:

- The security of the personnel and property of the charity, due to the nature of its work. These risks are managed through frequent reviews of the security situation in the areas in which it works, and through specific training of all Company members
- That the Charity receives and maintains adequate resources to deliver its charitable objectives, mitigated by diverse fundraising strategies which are regularly reviewed by the Trustees

It is the policy of the Trustees for the charity to hold reserves to enable it to continue to operate for approximately three months in the event of a shortfall in income.

At the balance sheet date, the charity held "free" reserves, defined as unrestricted funds less fixed assets, of £153,945 (2019: £101,958).

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This current level of free reserves is sufficient for the charity to carry on its basic operations and support the company in Belarus for three months, in line with the reserves policy. The trustees have the flexibility on specific projects and will only go ahead with these when confirmed funding is in place.

Going Concern

The Trustees have reviewed the charity's financial position, taking account of the levels of reserves and cash in the charity at the balance sheet date. The Trustees believe that the charity is well placed to manage operational and financial risks successfully and has the flexibility to undertake projects only when funding is confirmed for them.

In light of the Coronavirus pandemic, the Trustees have given consideration to information from budgets and forecasts for income, expenditure and cash-flows. Paying particular attention to the available unrestricted funds and reserves, credit facilities (such as overdrafts), and other forms of financial assistance available to the charity. Due to the payment schedules and information considered as listed above, and with support from the government's furlough scheme and commitment from producing partners carried forward into 2021, the Trustees have found no reasonable concerns in light of the pandemic that would impact the charity long term.

The Trustees acknowledge that there are uncertainties inherent in the timing of receipts from funders but are confident that they have plans in place to manage any delays in receiving funding for specific projects.

Accordingly, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and believe that there are no material uncertainties that call into doubt the Charity's ability to continue. The Trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the annual accounts.

Remuneration

Remuneration policy is decided by the Executive Management team (consisting of the Artistic Directors Natalia Kaliada and Nicolai Khalezin) and reviewed by the Board of Trustees as part of the Financial Review at all Board meetings. The Board is responsible for making recommendations and approving any changes to the Executive team's salaries.

Directors' Responsibilities

The trustees (who are directors of Belarus Free Theatre for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the group and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure, of the charitable group for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles of Charities SORP;
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

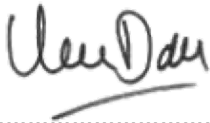
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at the time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and the group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act relating to smaller companies.

Signed on behalf of the board



.....
M Ball
Trustee

17 August 2020

.....
Date

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 January 2020.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of ICAEW, which is one of the listed bodies.

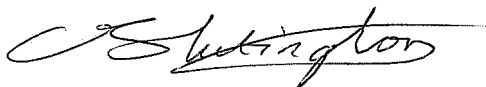
I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities.

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Cara Turtington FCA DChA

Saffery Champness LLP

Chartered Accountants

Statutory Auditors

71 Queen Victoria Street

London EC4V 4BE

Date 18 August 2020

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (incorporating an income and expenditure account) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

		2020	2019
	Notes	Total Funds £	Total Funds £
Income and endowments from			
Donations and legacies	2	279,886	387,562
Charitable activities		60,864	104,660
Other		-	-
Total		340,750	492,222
Expenditure on			
Raising funds	3	46,889	47,778
Charitable activities	4	241,975	421,514
Total	5	288,864	469,292
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		51,887	22,930
Transfers between funds		-	-
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year		51,887	22,930
Balances brought forward at 31 January 2019		102,058	85,591
Balances carried forward at 31 January 2020	11	153,945	108,521

All of the above results are derived from continuing operations and include all gains and losses recognised in the period. The notes on pages 21 to 29 form part of these financial statements.

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 JANUARY 2020

	Notes	2020 £	2019 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets		-	-
Investment in a subsidiary		-	100
Current assets			
Debtors	9	61,005	-
Cash at bank and in hand		204,903	162,249
		265,908	162,249
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	(46,378)	(53,828)
Net Current assets		219,530	108,421
Net assets		219,530	108,521
Funds			
Unrestricted	11	153,945	102,058
Restricted	11	65,585	6,463
		219,530	108,521

For the year ended 31 January 2020 the charitable company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

No members have required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 3 August 2020 and signed on its behalf by



M Ball
Trustee

The notes on pages 21 to 29 form part of these financial statements.

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

	2020	2019
	£	£
Net cash provided by operating activities	42,653	48,726
Net cash provided by investment activities	-	-
Net cash provided by finance activities	-	-
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period	42,653	48,726
Cash and cash equivalents at 1st February 2019	162,249	113,523
Cash and cash equivalents at 31st January 2020	204,903	162,249

Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2020	2019
	£	£
Net movement in funds for the reporting period	111,009	22,930
Adjustments for:		
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(61,005)	1,762
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(7,450)	24,034
(Increase)/decrease in investments	100	-
Net cash provided by operating activities	42,653	48,726

Reconciliation of net debt

	1 February 2019 £	Net cash flows	Non-cash movement in the year £	31 January 2020 £
Cash at bank	162,249	42,653	-	204,903
Borrowings	-	-	-	-
Net debt	162,249	42,653	-	204,903

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

1 Accounting Policies

1.1 Accounting basis

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102), the Companies Act 2006 and the Second edition of the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (Charities SORP (FRS102)).

The charity is a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102 and the functional currency is £ sterling.

The Trustees consideration of going concern is documented on page 14 of their report. In forming their assessment they have made certain judgments concerning the timing of future funding but have concluded there are no material uncertainties regarding the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for at least 12 months from the date of approval of the balance sheet.

1.2 Income

Production income is recognised in line with performance dates.

Grants receivable are recognised in accordance with the terms of the agreements. Donations are accounted for as and when entitlement arises, the amount can be reliably quantified and the economic benefit to the charity is considered probable. All other income is recognised on an accruals basis once the charity is legally entitled to receipt.

Gifted Donated services received from The Young Vic Theatre as an Associate Company cannot be quantified with reasonable accuracy are not recognised by the charity

1.3 Expenditure

Expenditure is included in the Statement of Financial Activities on an accruals basis, inclusive of VAT.

Costs of fundraising are those incurred in attracting voluntary income. Costs incurred directly in relation to the charitable activities are allocated to those activities as they fall due.

Support costs are those incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and are allocated on the basis of time spent.

Governance costs are related to the public accountability of the charity and costs related to statutory requirements.

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

1.4 Restricted income funds

These balances represent voluntary income or grants, which have been received for the purposes set out in Note 11. The application of these funds is restricted by the expressed wishes of the donor or the terms of the grant.

1.5 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, and bank overdrafts.

1.6 Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. The charity has selected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

2. Grant and Donation income

	2020	2019
	£	£
Unrestricted Income		
Donations	197,388	83,349
Grants	57,498	105,939
Gifts in Kind (office space)	25,000	-
Total	279,886	189,288
 Restricted Income		
Open Society Foundations	114,728	112,017
ICFJ (International Centre for Journalism)	54,250	67,829
Norwegian Helsinki Committee	7,451	18,428
London Community Foundation	15,000	-
Maria Bjornsson Memorial Fund	40,000	-
Goethe Institute	19,002	-
Total	250,431	198,274

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

3. Expenditure on raising funds

	2020	2020	2020	2019	2019	2019
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	46,035	-	46,035	46,035	-	46,035
Direct costs	854	1,086	1,939	1,421	322	1,743
	46,889	1,086	47,974	47,456	322	47,778

4. Charitable Activities

The charity has one activity being that of the production and performance of theatrical productions. The costs summarised below are those relating to this activity.

	2020	2020	2020	2019	2019	2019
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff Costs						
(note 6)	146,700	113,463	260,163	98,855	189,250	288,105
Overhead Costs	35,562	5,371	50,977	23,993	3,695	27,688
Direct Production						
Costs	39,629	52,532	92,161	34,509	33,891	68,400
Travel and						
Accommodation						
Costs	12,883	18,527	31,410	14,380	14,599	28,979
Governance costs						
(note 5)	7,200	331	7,532	8,207	135	8,342
	241,975			179,944	241,570	421,514

N.B. Of the above total restricted funds for charitable activities, £155,715 (2019: £138,998) was paid towards activities in Belarus.

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

5. Governance Costs

	2020 Unrestricted Funds £	2020 Restricted Funds £	2020 Total Funds £	2019 Unrestricted Funds £	2019 Restricted Funds £	2019 Total Funds £
Legal & Professional Fees	-	-	-	913	-	913
Bank Charges	623	331	955	554	135	690
Audit and Accountancy	6,577	-	6,577	6,740	-	6,740
	7,200	331	7,532	8,207	135	8,343

6. Staff costs

	2020 £	2019 £
Salaries	287,427	300,320
Employers National insurance	14,633	28,962
Pension costs	4,137	5,755
Termination Costs	-	14,500
	306,198	334,140

Average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2020 Number	2019 Number
Admin (UK)	5	5
Admin (Belarus)	4	4
Productions	55	57
	64	66

No employees received emoluments as defined for taxation purposes of more than £60,000 in the year (2019: none).

Two trustees are remunerated by the charity as permitted by the Articles of Association. These payments are made in respect of their services as Artistic Directors and Associate Director; they are responsible for arranging and directing the theatrical performances. Total payments in the year were £96,000 (2019: 3 Trustees; £119,000)

None of the trustees were reimbursed for travel expenses in the year (2019: £nil).

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

6. Staff costs (continued)

Two trustees also received expenses in relation to costs incurred on behalf of the charity totalling £1,321 (2019: £735) and were paid subsistence totalling £2,175 (2019: £1,610).

There were two key management personnel in 2020, defined as those with strategic influence, being two artistic directors. Between them, these two employees received total remuneration packages in 2020 of £96,000 (2019: £96,000).

7. Net expenditure

Net expenditure is stated after charging;

	2020	2019
	£	£
Auditors'/Independent examiners remuneration		
Independent examination	1,500	1,500

8. Taxation

The company is registered as a charity under the Charities Act (2011) and as such is entitled to the exemptions under Income and Corporation Taxes Act (1988).

9. Debtors

	2020	2019
	£	£
Prepayments and accrued income	61,005	-
	61,005	-

10. Creditors: amounts falling within one year

	2020	2019
	£	£
Accruals & other creditors	46,378	53,828
	46,378	53,828

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

11. Funds

	Movement in resources				
	Balance at 1 February 2019 £	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Transfers Between Funds £	Balance at 31 January 2020 £
Restricted Funds					
Open Society Foundations	(3,875)	114,728	126,131	-	(15,277)
Norwegian Helsinki Committee	3,613	7,451	3,178	-	7,886
ICFJ Fund	6,725	54,250	39,464	-	21,511
London Community Foundation	-	15,000	-	-	15,000
Maria Bjornsson Memorial Fund	-	40,000	19,528	-	20,472
Goethe Institute	-	19,002	3,008	-	15,993
Total Restricted	6,463	250,431	191,310	-	65,584
Unrestricted Funds	102,058	340,750	288,864	-	153,945
Total funds	108,521	591,181	470,130	-	229,572

	Movement in resources				
	Balance at 1 February 2018 £	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Transfers Between Funds £	Balance at 31 January 2019 £
Restricted Funds					
Open Society Foundations	39,779	112,017	(155,671)	-	(3,875)
Norwegian Helsinki Committee	9,204	18,428	(24,019)	-	3,613
ICFJ Fund	-	67,829	(61,107)	-	6,725
German Marshall Fund	1,023	-	(1,098)	75	-
Total Restricted	50,006	198,274	(241,892)	75	6,463
Unrestricted Funds	35,585	293,948	(227,400)	(75)	102,058
Total funds	85,591	492,222	(469,292)	-	108,521

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

11. Funds (continued)

Restricted Funds are to be used to support activities in future years as follows:

Open Society Foundation - Funds are given towards organisational and project costs of the charity

Norwegian Helsinki Committee - Funds are given towards programme costs in Belarus

ICFJ - Funds are given towards programme costs in Belarus and the making of the documentary "Alone"

London Community Foundation - Funds are given in support of the production "Dogs of Europe"

Maria Bjornson Memorial Fund - Funds are given towards the costs of Studio Fortinbras

Goethe Institute - Funds are given towards the costs of the production "Dogs of Europe"

12. Trading Subsidiary

The Charity was 100% shareholder of KSK Productions, which was incorporated on 27th July 2015. KSK Productions was dormant until the point it was dissolved in August 2019.

13. Company Status

The charity is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the Trustees named in the financial statements. In the event of the charity being wound-up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. At 31 January 2020 the total of such guarantees was £13 (2019: £13).

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

14. Analysis of Net Assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds	2020 Restricted Funds	Total
Fixed assets			
Investment in trading subsidiary	-	-	-
Current assets			
Debtors	61,005	-	61,005
Cash at bank and in hand	139,318	65,584	204,903
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(46,378)	-	(46,378)
Net Current assets	153,945	65,584	219,530
Net assets	153,945	65,584	219,630

	Unrestricted Funds	2019 Restricted Funds	Total
Fixed assets			
Investment in trading subsidiary	100	-	100
Current assets			
Debtors	-	-	-
Cash at bank and in hand	155,787	6,463	162,249
	155,787	6,463	162,249
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(53,828)	-	(53,828)
Net Current assets	101,958	6,463	108,421
Net assets	102,058	6,463	108,521

15. Related party transactions

Properly authorised payments to trustees have been disclosed in note 6 to these financial statements. There are no other related party transactions to disclose in these financial statements.

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

16. Comparative Statement of Financial Activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2019 Total Funds £
Income and endowments from			
Donations and legacies	189,288	198,274	387,562
Charitable activities	104,660	-	104,660
Other	-	-	-
Total	293,948	198,274	492,222
Expenditure on			
Raising funds	47,456	322	47,778
Charitable activities	179,944	241,570	421,514
Total	227,400	241,892	469,292
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers	66,548	(43,618)	22,930
Transfers between funds	(75)	75	-
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year	66,473	(43,543)	22,930
Balances brought forward at 31 January 2018	35,585	50,006	85,591
Balances carried forward at 31 January 2019	102,058	6,463	108,521

17 Post balance sheet events

In March 2020 the World Health Organisation declared the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus to be a global pandemic. Theatres in the UK and in many other places globally have been closed since this time. The planned performances globally have been rescheduled but work in Belarus has been able to continue as the impact of the pandemic is limited there currently. The Trustees have reviewed their budgets and forecasts and remodeled operations so as to be confident that the charity remains a going concern whilst continuing to fulfil its charitable objectives.