BELARUS FREE THEATRE TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021

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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Trustees M J Attenborough

M F Ball (Appointed 27 April 2020)

J R Bierman

T J Clark

N Kaliada (resigned 24 September 2021) N Khalezin (resigned 24 September 2021)

D M Lan 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

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021

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 2021.

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 in post at any point between 1 February 2020 and the date this report was signed were as follows:

M J Attenborough	D M Lan
M F Ball (appointed 27 April 2020)	D J Law
J R Bierman	M F Miller
T J Clark	A Stanley
N Kaliada (resigned 24 September 2021)	L J Wade
N Khalezin (resigned 24 September 2021)	S West

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.

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.

Review of activities and achievements

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Belarus Free Theatre is an Associate Company of the Young Vic Theatre, London and the UK office is maintained at the Young Vic address.

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 projects 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.

Entering its ninth year as a formally registered UK company and charity, in 2020-21 BFT continued to deliver high-impact programmes in Belarus, the UK, and internationally.

Artistic Activities Promoting Democracy and Social Justice in Belarus

Review of Activities and Achievements for 2020

Despite the myriad challenges that have arisen in 2020, the BFT ensemble in Minsk have continued to work tirelessly to engage with citizens, empower them to stand up to oppression and to activate those who wouldn't otherwise engage with social issues. Amid a global pandemic, a falsified election and numerous arrests of artists and political activists BFT have shown an incredible level of resilience and delivered against the goals and objectives that initially planned for 2020.

We have been recognised by the Sergei Magnitsky Human Rights Award for Courage Under Fire, which was presented by Stephen Fry in November 2020. Stephen said:

"[BFT are] a group for whom I feel an extraordinary affinity. A group of some of the bravest, most passionate and gifted people I have ever come across... In the face of unbelievable danger, oppression and harassment they have continued to send a clear message of hope. I've been utterly inspired by them. I want to congratulate them from the bottom of my heart, to reiterate my deep, deep admiration for everything they do and continue to do, and to hope that their brave, brave commitment soon brings a result."

BFT Performances

Despite these challenges between January 2020 and January 2021 the company presented the following plays:

Dogs of Europe

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Based on the novel by Alhierd Bacharevic, Dogs of Europe is an epic fantasy and political thriller about the dangers of looking away when authoritarianism takes root. It is a fast-paced political thriller that navigates from modern day Europe to an apocalyptic futuristic fantasy and a parable framing the ironies of our current western political arena, characterised by populist disruptors breeding discord and fractured societies as providing fertile conditions for a conscious drift toward the rigid clarity of a totalitarian state.

In February 2020, Dogs of Europe premiered in a secret location in Minsk and has played to over 1000 audience members across 15 performances. It was met with an exceptionally positive reception from audiences, and in response to overwhelming public demand, Dogs of Europe reopened in Minsk to run for an additional seven performances in July to August 2020, strictly adhering to social distancing guidelines. One of the requests particularly struck the company: the person was asking for the show to return because they said it "resonates in the gut and reminds me what we are fighting for", this was before the presidential elections but the pro-democratic movement was already on the rise and a number of BFT audiences said they want to see the show so they had something powerful to think of "when they are stuck in detention centres".

Tsar Tsar

In August 2020, members of the BFT team travelled by river on a hand-built raft to remote communities where there is a severe lack of access to information due to being cut off from the internet and people who live in these communities are forced to rely on the state media. On 15th-27th August 2020, BFT members travelled down the Brazina River to Iskra Village, Svetlogorsk, Gagari village and Gorval village to perform Tsar Tsar and hold post-show discussions.

Tsar Tsar is a fable for our times, telling the story of an evil Tsar and his long-suffering people - a clear parable of the politics of Belarus. Tsar Tsar is an outdoor theatre production that is based on a format created to engage the rural audiences. Based on the popular Russian folk tale of Tsar Maximilian, this is a compelling theatre for all the family, that reminds of the true value of freedom. At every location BFT's art-activists hold informal post-show talks with the audience to create a safe space for debate and dialogue. BFT's personal and professional experience of creative, non-violent civil resistance can prove to be the lifeline for inspiring social action throughout Belarus.

Courtyard Performances

Since the mass protests in Belarus began in the Summer of 2020, BFT have been performing to audiences around the city in residential courtyards. People began to gather in the courtyards around which their blocks of flats are built out of a desire to come together, show each other support and solidarity, to eat and sing songs together during this traumatic time when thousands have been arrested and state brutality is commonplace. Courtyard gathering became a way for people to find solace and strength in each other's company: a beautiful sign of unity in the face of adversity, the courtyard gatherings are a powerful example of direct democracy in action.

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In September of 2020, the BFT ensemble began travelling round to different courtyards and performing extracts from plays and holding post-show discussions, giving people a space to imagine a better society after authoritarianism. The power of art to bring people together and create positive social change is at the heart of our mission and is recognised by the courtyard organisers who invite us to perform.

The content of the courtyard performances aims to resonate deeply with the communities affected by authoritarianism and fighting for freedom in Belarus, as well as to uplift the spirit and provide levity and consolation at the end of the day.

Stories by Kharms

Stories by Kharms directed by Pavel Haradnitski. This is a comedy staging of short stories by Daniil Kharms, who, writing at the height of Stalinist repressions is considered the leading voice of the Russian absurd, pre-dating, but less well known to European audiences than Samuel Beckett. The selected stories highlight irrational bureaucracy, farcical miscommunication, romantic love and human tragedy, revealing relationships between people as a sequence of follies lacking meaning and context. Written as a reflection of the hardships and futility of day-to-day life in Communist Russia, some scenes resonate with contemporary Minsk audiences, while many have more universal philosophical significance. These performances also work very well involving the younger audience members, as the whole family can enjoy the shows and the wrap-around engagement that BFT members brought to the court-yard performances, with games for children and post-show discussions for all.

To date, BFT have performed in 21 different courtyards around the city and one in agro-town (agricultural settlement) outside of Minsk, averaging four performances per week and sometimes performing twice in one day. With a typical audience size of 100-700 people we estimate that around 10,000 people have attended BFT performances during this period (it is impossible to give exact numbers as these events are unticketed). The most recent performance took place on the 6th November 2020. The gatherings and performances have been placed on hold due to severe weather conditions and security risks.

BFT's Courtyard Performances have been covered by Irena Kotelovich for Nasha Niva an independent Belarusian weekly publication and most frequently visited Belarusian website. Kotelovich wrote "It seemed that the most grateful audience tonight were the children. Their laughter filled the whole courtyard on Osipenko street where the latest in the series of BFT's adapted courtyard performances took place."

The piece also featured quotes from several audience members who attended BFT Courtyard Performances:

"It really helps in these difficult times, every evening we get a charge of positive emotions. It's a pity that we didn't organise like this before. Maybe if we didn't stay in our flats, separated from each other, we wouldn't have let our country to get to this state. But now people of different ages, professions and interests have all united. If somebody needs help we know that we can cover each other's backs."

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"At one of the courtyard performances I saw an elderly man observing the children dancing to music, a tear ran down his face as he said 'I look at them and I envy them, they will grow up free."

Discover Love, Time of Women and Rekjavik 74

Since the weather in Minsk has become inhospitable due to the onset of winter, courtyard gatherings have been put on hiatus until the Spring 2021. Additionally, as authorities have become aware of the courtyard gatherings, plain-clothed officers have begun to attend the gatherings and apprehend people gathered.

Whilst courtyard gatherings have been put on hold, the BFT ensemble have begun presenting these three classic BFT shows in rep at LoFi space in Minsk.

Reykjavik 74

Reykjavik '74 authored by contemporary Polish playwright Marta Sakolowska, directed by BFT's ensemble member Yura Divakov, tells of lives destroyed by the criminal justice system. This is not just a story of justice gone wrong, of false conviction and imprisonment, but of people brutalised by a system that is the antithesis of everything it should stand for.

Drawn directly from real-life cases, the production offers an unflinching expose of people aggressively interrogated, tortured and ultimately, killed – each one an innocent victim of a wholly corrupted system.

Discover Love

Discover Love is one of BFT best-loved shows, created by our founders Natalia Kaliada and Nicolai Khalezin and first performed in Minsk in 2008. A love story based on real events from the life of Irina Krasovskaya, whose husband Anatoly was kidnapped and murdered for rendering assistance to the democratic body of Belarus.

Time of Women

A play about women on the forefront of a movement for a democratic Belarus, women with an unflinching and unswerving dedication to the truth. Time of Women was first performed on 19 December 2014, underground in Belarus. The UK premiere took place on 9 November 2015 at the Young Vic as part of Staging a Revolution festival.

In October and November 2020, a total of 1,260 audience members came to see these three reruns.

Audience statistics

Show	Total performances	Total audiences
Dogs of Europe	15	1,050

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Tsar Tsar	4	101
Courtyard performances	25	10,000*
Discover Love	9	540
Time of Women	10	600
Reykjavik 74	2	120
Total	65	12,411

^{*}estimate based on average audience size at unticketed events

Video/Streamed Work

A School for Fools

A School For Fools Premiered on June 1st 2020.

Premiere: Over 100 people watching alongside leading UK and US theatre critics

Total views during June - July run: 1,528

Total numbers at post show discussion: 307

The author of A School For Fools was invited to the premier via his agent and BFT was incredibly pleased that Mr. Sokolov joined the premier with his family members: "Yesterday I saw "School" performed by Belarus Free Theatre. A very decent production even though they've got such challenges these days! Just a few words: inventive, witty, vivid, passionate: I believe them."

Love Over Virus

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, BFT opened up its digital archive to make 21 acclaimed stage productions free to watch online. Every day between 4th April - 14th June we made a new archived production available on our YouTube channel.

Additionally, we launched a series of new videos of prominent actors including Juliet Stevenson, Samuel West and Stephen Fry, as well as members from the BFT ensemble read their favourite fairy tales and folk stories. These stories were enjoyed by families in Belarus, the UK and internationally with new stories added to our YouTube daily from 31st March - 6th June.

Overall, this content was viewed over 31k times and our YouTube presence has increased this year by 230% (based on number of views). BFT Artistic Director and co-founder Natalia said: "At a time of unprecedented insecurity and fear we wanted to create an online space to celebrate and share these enduring stories together."

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Show	Performances	Audiences/views
A School for Fools	10	1,528
Love Over Virus	58	31,990
Total	68	33,518

Evaluation Against Targets

Target live audiences: 5500 (35% new to BFT)

Target streamed audiences: 15,000

Total live audiences: 12,411 (63% new to BFT)

Total streams/views: 33,518

In 2020, BFT's output has exceeded our targets in both live and video-streamed engagement by over double in both cases. We are exceptionally proud of this achievement, especially given the unique circumstances thrown up by the global coronavirus pandemic and the uprisings in Belarus. These achievements would categorically not have been possible without the support we receive from the Open Society Foundation.

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Education

Fortinbras

In March 2020, 16 students enrolled in Fortinbras, BFT's theatre laboratory for art activists. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, classes were moved online and continued remotely. In summer 2020, in-person sessions were reinstated for more physical disciplines whilst voice and elocution continued over zoom.

In BFT's premises, students and their teachers gather on a daily basis to progress in the following modules: Physical Theatre, Documentary Theatre, Visual Theatre and Citizen Journalism. All modules are deeply rooted in BFT's method of developing stories and theatre performances based on journalistic-styles investigations, as well as thorough desk and field research. Thus, the group was heavily involved in following the news, proactively engaging in the pro-democracy movement, and participating in public debate championed by BFT on and offline.

The ability to follow current affairs, discern between real events and fake news, as well as developing critical thinking faculties is kept at the forefront of every subject taught at the Laboratory.

2020 has been unprecedented, but due to the developments in Belarus, BFT's co-founders have been contacted by a number of students who've been expelled from state universities. The former students are hoping to join the laboratory to continue their education with BFT despite the fact that the Fortinbras laboratory has no official certification. The activism component of our Laboratory is especially appealing to the youth as they are seeking new and creative ways to express their dissent and keep pressure on the illegal regime in Belarus. BFT is currently looking for additional funds to be able to expand our capacity and enroll another group of students in 2021.

"Fortinbras has made me more creative, resilient, but most importantly, more brave. It hasn't been easy. Each of the teachers is an individual who I've felt inspired to listen and to hear. They are not just teachers, but masters of their art." (Student Feedback 2020).

Online Activities and Campaigns

I'm With the Banned

I'm with the Banned is Belarus Free Theatre's artist led campaign bringing together people who are free to express themselves, in solidarity with artists and activists banned, censored and imprisoned in Belarus and Russia and wherever freedom of expression and justice are threatened by oppressive regimes.

In 2020, BFT have repurposed this campaign and hashtag #ImWithTheBanned to call for the release of over 1000 protestors who were arrested during the anti-government demonstrations. Svetlana Sugako and Nadia Brodskaya launched the campaign upon their release from prison after being sentenced and incarcerated for defending their right for freedom to vote. A microsite

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was launched to support the campaign resulting in 27,041 pageviews; 7,500 people signing the campaign; and 42 writing postcards to political prisoners.

Stand with Belarus

International venues lit up their exteriors in red and white to symbolise the Republic flag of Belarus in solidarity with pro-democracy protesters:

La Mama	New York
Bozar	Brussels
The Curve	Leicester
Royal Opera house	West End
The Coliseum	West End
The Barbican	East London
The Roundhouse	Camden
Royal Court	Sloane Square
Royal Shakespeare Company	
Shakespeare's Globe	Southwark

People around the globe came out in support of the 100k+ protesters on the streets of Minsk, with Stephen Fry and Dame Harriet Walter lending their voices to the cause. International venues including Shakespeare's Globe, the Royal Opera House, La Mama in New York and Bozar in Brussels lit up their buildings in the red and white stripes of the independent flag of Belarus in solidarity with protesters.

Eva-lution was an artistic stunt that took place in London on July 14th. Viktor Babariko, one of Lukashenko's political rivals was the owner of some of the world's greatest Belarusian artworks that he purposefully bought in the West in order to repatriate the artwork that originated from Belarus. Babariko's collection was seized upon his arrest in May 2020. The painting entitled Eva by the Belarusian-born expressionist painter Chaim Soutine is one of the most expensive paintings in Belarus today. It has become a symbol of protest across Belarus – shared hundreds of thousands of times on social networks, her image has even been printed onto T-shirts. BFT reimagined this iconic image with artistic provocations from BFT ensemble member, Yulia Shauchuk and co-founding Artistic Director, Nicolai Khalezin.

Led by BFT's co-founding Artistic Director, Natalia Kaliada, a dozen Belarusian women now living in the UK brought Eva-lution from the Serpentine Gallery to the Belarusian Embassy in London. Dressed as Eva – first in her prison robes, then in her black dress – they each wore a mask of her unforgettable face; and when they departed all that was left was a pile of discarded prison robes on the steps of the Belarusian Embassy.

The stunt was viewed by more than 500,000 people on three telegram channels and has since been repeated on the ground in Belarus as a form of creative dissent.

Online Following

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Online engagement increased hugely over the course of this year, and in relation to our 2018 baseline following.

Platform	Followers/subscribers Jan 2020	Followers/subscribers Dec 2020
Twitter	5,200	14,100
Instagram	3,561	6,472
Youtube	995	2,250

Our theory of change is that by engaging Belarusian citizens in on-line and off-line discussions on pressing social issues, by offering them a space for reflection and solidarity, we can stimulate their motivation to be more active in demanding social and civic rights, to resist authoritarian policies and be more active in supporting those whose rights are not protected by the system. By exposing audiences to real stories of human suffering, not widely covered by official media, by offering artistic interpretations of daily life we can contribute to changing mind-sets, attitudes and relations between people.

Ministry of Counterculture

The Ministry of Counterculture, BFT's online platform to address the understanding of the role the arts play in social change, featuring unexpected and untold stories of human resilience and creativity. At the helm, Nikolai Khalezin, BFT co-founder and former co-Editor-in-chief of Belarusian national broadsheets Name and News, both shut down by the Belarusian government. He is joined by Ministry of Counterculture's Managing Editor Georgie Weedon, previously the third member of the Al Jazeera English launch team.

Along with daily news stories, informal and insightful blogs from guest contributors, campaigns, global arts reviews and events, the platform plays host to several original film, photography and print feature strands, offering a bold alternative perspective and unique access into the world of arts, free speech, human rights, social justice and everything in between.

In 2020 we met our target for output from the Ministry of Counterculture, publishing 195 news articles and 10 features on the MoC website over the twelve-month period. The content of our output engaged with many major themes and news stories from Belarus, the wider region and internationally, with a focus on stories related to democracy and freedom of expression.

We also recorded and released 52 videos (1 per week) on the MoC YouTube channel (subscribers: 1240) continuing our 'Monologue for Two' series in which we interview persons of note including Belarusian philosopher and methodologist, public and political figure Vladimir Matskevich and democratic leader Pavel Sevyarynets, who has since been imprisoned. One comment on this video reads:

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"Pavel Sevyarynets is a strong personality, as a citizen confident in his righteousness. Therefore, looking at this beautiful externally and internally man, you believe that "when there are such people", not everything is lost with our Belarus."

Documentaries

Alone

Alone tells the story of the political awakening of one of Ukraine's biggest popstars, Andrei Khluvniuk, lead singer of the hip-hop rock supergroup, Boombox. Performing his multi-platinum-selling hits to an ardent fanbase of millions in some of the world's biggest stadiums, Andrei Khluvniuk seems to have it all. But a meeting with the Belarus Free Theatre, awakens something inside him that has long been buried. How to use the spoils of fame and success to make a real difference in the world? How can he get his fans to care about the war in the east of Ukraine, about Ukraine's stolen territories, annexed by the Kremlin, and the scores of political prisoners in Russian jails, including the filmmaker, Oleg Sentsov?

In full knowledge that speaking out against the Kremlin will cost him millions of fans across the Russian-speaking world, Andrei decides to join up with an unlikely international band of dissidents, artists and activists to learn how to use his music to speak truth to power, to challenge dictatorship, propaganda and lies.

Together with BFT, Andrei journeys to Belarus to work with underground artists who risk arrest and persecution on a daily basis. He tours the country to uncover the region's troubled past, witnessing first-hand how the wars of the Soviet Union continue to resonate and divide people. He travels the world to meet other famous activists including Pussy Riot's Maria Alyokhina, before finally deciding to stage a major protest of his own at one of the most sensitive military borders in the world – the illegal separation line created by Russia during the 2014 annexation of Crimea.

Directed by Natalia Kaliada and Nicolai Khalezin, the co-founding Artistic Directors of Belarus Free Theatre, together with the Emmy Award-winning British film-maker Andrew Smith, Alone walks the quixotic path between pop and politics, in an astonishing documentary film that reminds us how music and art really can make a difference.

In 2020, Alone played at Jersey City Theater Center as part of the 2020 Voices International Theatre Festival, and was broadcasted on Ukraine state Cultura channel covering the whole country garnering millions of viewers.

In Spring of 2021, Alone will feature at ArtDocFest, the main Russian-speaking film festival.

Okrestin Sisters

This short documentary captures the first moments upon the release and the immediate witness accounts of three BFT members who were arrested in Minsk on August 9th 2020, following the Presidential Election. BFT's General Managers, Nadia Brodskaya and Svetlana Sugako, along with the BFT actor Dasha Andreyanova were rounded up and detained while peacefully waiting

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for the results of the election at a local polling station. What followed their detention, was a surreal cascade of a Kafkaesque, bureaucratic judiciary system met by brutal, Gestapo-type assault on innocent citizens of Belarus. All happening away from the cameras, behind closed doors, inside authoritarian prisons. The creators of the film want to shed light on what took place in Belarusian prisons during the detentions of the 9th-14th August.

This short film was programmed in a leading international documentary film festival in Amsterdam IDFA, and shown three times, with a European premiere offline in a theatre space and twice online with post-show discussions with the film's producer Natalia Kaliada. The Okrestin Sisters will also feature as part of ArtDocFest in spring 2021 to the Russian speaking audiences.

UK Programmes

In 2019 work began on a new, large-scale show, Dogs of Europe was co-commissioned by the Barbican Centre. Initially scheduled to open at the Barbican in London in May 2020 but delayed by the pandemic and re-scheduled for March 2022. The bulk of the creative work involved in this production was carried out in Minsk, while the London team focused on producing the show 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 previewed the production in Minsk in February 2020 ahead of the planned international premiere which was due to take place in the UK at the Barbican in May 2020 (postponed to March 2022 due Covid-19).

Dogs of Europe has been supported by the Goethe Institute in support of German composer Sergei Newski who composed an original score for the production. BFT also received support towards Dogs of Europe from 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 2022.

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.

International Press coverage

BFT has been at the heart of the pro-democracy campaign in Belarus for over 15 years and it is gratifying to see the fight for democracy gaining such momentum and reaching a pivotal point. However, the birth of a democracy is not without pain and struggle; many of our members have

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also suffered as a result of the events of 2020. Their ordeal was covered by the New Yorker, in <u>"Horror and Hope as Protests in Belarus Continue"</u> a piece by acclaimed journalist and friend of BFT Masha Gessen: 'she felt like Belarus had made a quantum leap while she and Nadezhda were behind bars. "We were locked up in one country and released into another," she said. "We are free, and so is Belarus."

In March of 2020, upon the rise of the coronavirus pandemic, BFT's efforts went into overdrive in response to the pandemic and the need for the art, unity and solace. In April our activities were covered by Natasha Tripney in The Guardian - "Belarus Free Theatre: Britain is in danger of authoritarianism": 'In the last few weeks, BFT has doubled its activities. When the UK went into lockdown they instructed their company in Minsk to self-isolate, though there had been no official guidance in Belarus about doing so.'

Another press highlight from the year has been the recent recognition of our co-founder and Artistic Director Natalia Kaliada as one of the Financial Times' Women of 2020. In her piece for the FT Natalia said: "We've toured the world and received many awards, but the best one we could ask for is playing out now: the awakening of Belarusians as a nation, a newfound awareness of a singular people with a common culture and shared history. The Belarusian people now see that they can demand change. While this movement is clearly far bigger than BFT alone, we have — through our theatre, campaigning and educating — done everything possible to bring this moment closer. As an old popular song called "My Heart" says: "We did not know each other until this summer."

Future Plans

During 2021 we will continue to work on a major new production for international audiences, 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.

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.

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Financial Review

In 2019/20 Belarus Free Theatre spent £646,021 (2020: £480,173), £599,331 (2020: £432,198) of which was spent on its charitable activities. Staff and personnel expenditure, at £350,247 (2020: £306,198) was higher than in previous years and equated to 54% (2020: 64%) of its total general expenditure.

Fundraising was at a much higher level than in previous years with fundraising efforts leading to donations and grants of £771,759 (2020: £530,317), approximately 93% (2020: 90%) 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 £163,017 (2020: £102,058).

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

In March 2020, the World Health Organisation declared COVID-19 a pandemic and the UK government put in place regulations to severely restrict the free movement of individuals and to insist on the closure of all theatres and similar hospitality venues. This impacted the operations of the Charity. However, the charity has benefited from the Cornovirus Job Retention Scheme to mitigate ongoing staff costs, has put in place cost savings and remains in receipt of revenue grants and fundraising income.

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

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is well placed to manage operational and financial risks successfully and has the flexibility to undertake projects only when funding is confirmed for them.

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.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021

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;
- 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

lendan	
M Ball Trustee	
23.12.2021	
 Date	

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF BELARUS FREE THEATRE

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 January 2021.

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 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

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF BELARUS FREE THEATRE

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.

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

Sutington

Saffery Champness LLP Chartered Accountants Statutory Auditors

71 Queen Victoria Street London EC4V 4BE

Date 5 January 2022

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (incorporating an income and expenditure account) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021 Total Funds £	2020 Total Funds £
Income and endowments from					
Donations and legacies Charitable activities	2	387,391 55,034	384,368	771,759 55,034	530,317 60,864
Chantable activities		55,054	-	55,054	00,004
Total		442,425	384,368	826,793	591,181
Expenditure on Raising funds	3	46,569	121	46,690	47,974
Charitable activities	3 4	386,784	212,547	46,690 599,331	432,198
Onamable activities	•	300,704	212,541	333,331	402,100
Total	5	433,353	212,668	646,021	480,173
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		9,072	171,700	180,772	111,009
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year		9,072	171,700	180,772	111,009
Balances brought forward at 31 January 2020		153,945	65,585	219,530	108,521
Balances carried forward at 3 January 2021	11 11	163,017	237,285	400,302	219,530

All of the above results are derived from continuing operations and include all gains and losses recognised in the period. The notes on pages 25 to 33 form part of these financial statements.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 JANUARY 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Current assets			
Debtors	9	9,500	61,005
Cash at bank and in hand		431,614	204,903
		441,114	265,908
Creditors: amounts falling due within year	n one 10	(40,812)	(46,378)
Net Current assets		400,302	219,530
Net assets		400,302	219,530
Funds			
Unrestricted	11	163,017	102,058
Restricted	11	237,285	65,585
		400,302	219,530

For the year ended 31 January 2021 the charitable company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts.

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

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 23 December 2021 and signed on its behalf by

M Ball

Trustee

Belarus Free Theatre - Company Registration No. 7897118 (England and Wales)

The notes on pages 25 to 33 form part of these financial statements.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021

		2021	2020
		£	3
Net cash provided by operating activities		226,711	48,726
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting	g period	226,711	42,653
Cash and cash equivalents at 1st February 2020		204,903	162,249
Cash and cash equivalents at 31st January 2021	-	431,614	204,903
Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash	flow from oper	ating activitie	es
		2021	2020
Nist resources of in founds for the oversetion required		£	£
Net movement in funds for the reporting period Adjustments for:		180,772	111,009
(Increase)/decrease in debtors		51,505	(61,005)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors		(5,566)	(7,450)
(Increase)/decrease in investments		-	100
Net cash provided by operating activities	- -	226,711	48,726
Reconciliation of net debt			
Trootholilation of het door			
	1 February	Net cash	31 January
	2020	flows	2021
	£	£	3
Cash at bank	204,903	226,711	431,614
Borrowings		-	
Net debt	204,903	226,711	431,614

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021

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 18 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.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021

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

I Grant and Donation moonie		
	2021	2020
/	£	£
Unrestricted Income		
Donations	184,306	197,388
Arts Council Cultural Recovery Fund (Round 1)	95,000	-
Arts Council Emergency Response Funding	35,000	-
Grants	48,085	57,498
Gifts in Kind (office space)	25,000	25,000
	,	,
Total	387,391	279,886
Restricted Income		
Open Society Foundations	317,386	114,728
ICFJ (International Centre for Journalism)	8,806	54,250
Norwegian Helsinki Committee	16,578	7,451
London Community Foundation	-	15,000
Maria Bjornsson Memorial Fund	-	40,000
Goethe Institute	1,768	19,002
Ihnatowycz Foundation	25,926	-
German Marshall Fund	13,904	-
Total	384,368	250,431

Included within unrestricted grants above are amounts received from the government in relation to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme of £48,085 (2020 - £nil) and £12,400 from the City of London Central Grants Programme (2020 - £nil).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021

3. Expenditure on raising funds

	2021 Unrestricted Funds	2021 Restricted Funds	2021 Total Funds	2020 Unrestricted Funds	2020 Restricted Funds	2020 Total Funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs Direct	46,035	-	46,035	46,035	-	46,035
costs	534	121	655	854	1,086	1,939
	46,569	121	46,690	46,889	1,086	47,974

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.

	2021 Unrestricted	2021 Restricted	2021 Total	2020 Unrestricted	2020 Restricted	2020 Total
	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
	£	£	£	£	3	£
Staff Costs						
(note 6)	162,965	141,248	304,212	146,700	113,463	260,163
Overhead Costs	41,838	4,052	45,890	35,073	5,371	50,977
Direct						
Production						
Costs	126,166	61,126	165,622	39,629	52,532	92,161
Travel and						
Accommodation						
Costs	22,525	6,104	28,630	12,883	18,527	31,410
Governance						
costs (note 5)	4,034	17	4,051	7,200	331	7,532
Foreign						
exchange /	29,256	-	29,256	-	-	-
	386,784	212,547	599,331	241,975	190,223	432,198

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021

5. Governance Costs						
	2021	2021	2021	2020	2020	2020
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
	£	£	£	3	£	£
Bank Charges Audit and	794	17	811	623	331	955
Accountancy	3,240	-	3,240	6,577	-	6,577
	4,034	17	4,051	7,200	331	7,532
6. Staff costs						
				2	021	2020
					£	£
Salaries				325,	565	287,427
Employers Nationa	al insurance			19,	998	28,962
Pension costs				4,	683	4,137
				350,	247	306,198
Average monthly r	number of emplo	yees during	the year w	as:		
				2021 Num	ber 2020	Number
Admin (UK)					5	5
Admin (Belarus)					4	4
Productions					16	55
	/				25	64

No employees received emoluments as defined for taxation purposes of more than £60,000 in the year (2020: 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; they are responsible for arranging and directing the theatrical performances. Total payments in the year were $\mathfrak{L}96,000$ (2020: 2 Trustees; $\mathfrak{L}96,000$). Following the year end, in September 2021, the two individuals resigned as Trustees but retained their position as Artistic Directors.

Two trustees also received expenses in relation to costs incurred on behalf of the charity totalling £1,395 (2020: £1,321) and were paid subsistence totalling £381 (2020: £2,175).

None of the trustees were reimbursed for travel expenses in the year (2020: £nil).

There were two key management personnel in 2020/2021, defined as those with strategic influence, being two artistic directors. Between them, these two employees received total remuneration packages in 2021 of £96,000 (2020: £96,000).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021

7. Net expenditure

Net expenditure is stated after charging;

	2021	2020
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

J. Debtors	2021 £	2020 £
Prepayments and accrued income	9,500	61,005
	9,500	61,005
10.0		
10. Creditors: amounts falling within one year		
	2021	2020
	£	£
Accruals & other creditors	40,816	46,378
	40,816	46,378

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021

11. Funds **Balance** at **Transfers Balance** at 1 February Incoming Outgoing Between 31 January 2020 Resources Resources **Funds** 2021 £ £ £ £ £ **Restricted Funds** Open Society Foundations (15,278)317,386 (186,078)116,031 Norwegian Helsinki Committee 7,886 24.464 16,578 ICFJ Fund 21,511 8,806 (8,720)21,597 **London Community** Foundation 15,000 15,000 Maria Biornsson Memorial Fund 20.472 20.472 15,993 14,618 Goethe Institute 1,768 (3,143)Ihnatowycz Foundation 25,926 (14,711)11,215 German Marshall 13,904 (17)13,887 Fund 65,585 237,285 **Total Restricted** 384,368 (212,668)**Unrestricted Funds** 153,945 442,425 (433,353)163,017 **Total funds** 219,530 826,793 (646,021)400,302 **Balance** at **Transfers Balance** at 1 February Between 31 January Incoming Outgoing 2019 Resources Resources **Funds** 2020 £ £ £ £ £ **Restricted Funds Open Society** (3,875)114,728 126,131 (15,278)**Foundations** Norwegian Helsinki 3,613 7,451 3,178 7,886 Committee ICFJ Fund 6,725 54,250 39,464 21,511 **London Community** 15,000 15,000 Foundation Maria Bjornsson 40,000 19,528 20,472 Memorial Fund 19,002 3,008 15,993 Goethe Institute **Total Restricted** 6,463 250,431 191,310 65,585 288,864 **Unrestricted Funds** 102,058 340,750 153,945 **Total funds** 108,521 591,181 470,130 219,530

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021

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"

Ihnatowycz Foundation – Funds are given towards the costs of the production "Dogs of Europe"

German Marshall Fund - Funds are given towards organisational and project costs of the charity

12. 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 2021 the total of such guarantees was £13 (2020: £13).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021

13. Analysis of Net Assets between funds						
		2021				
	Unrestricted	Restricted				
	Funds	Funds	Total			
Current assets						
Debtors	9,500	-	9,500			
Cash at bank and in hand	194,329	237,285	431,614			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(40,812)	, -	(40,812)			
Net assets	163,017	237,285	400,302			
Net ussets	100,017	201,200	400,002			
		0000				
		2 020				
	Unrestricted	2020 Restricted				
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted	Total			
Current assets	Unrestricted Funds		Total			
Current assets Debtors	Funds	Restricted				
Debtors	Funds 61,005	Restricted Funds	61,005			
	Funds	Restricted				
Debtors Cash at bank and in hand	Funds 61,005 139,318	Restricted Funds	61,005 204,903			

14. 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.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021

15. Comparative Statement of Financial Activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2020 Total Funds £
Income and endowments from			
Donations and legacies Charitable activities	279,886	250,431	530,317
Other	60,864	-	60,864
Total	340,750	250,431	591,181
Expenditure on			
Raising funds	46,889	1,086	47,974
Charitable activities	241,975	190,223	432,198
Total	288,864	191,309	480,173
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers	51,887	59,122	111,009
Transfers between funds	-	-	-
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year	51,887	59,122	111,009
Balances brought forward at 31 January 2019	102,058	6,463	108,521
Balances carried forward at 31 January 2020	153,945	65,585	219,530