

## **Vancouver Fringe Theatre Society**

### **Annual General Meeting**

Date: Thursday July 25 6:00pm

Location: CBC Vancouver,

Chair: Sharon Sutherland

Minute Taker: Robyn Kurtz

Attendance: 29 people in attendance, 13 members

#### **1. Call to order @ 18:09**

Sharon acknowledged the traditional lands on which the AGM was held. Quorum was established with 13 voting members present.

#### **2. Approval of Agenda**

MOTION: To accept the agenda as circulated

MOVER: Nancy More

SECONDER: Maria Denholme

Vote: All in Favour, Motion Carried

#### **3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

MOTION: To accept the 2018 AGM minutes as circulated

MOVER: Claudia Sjoberg

SECONDER: Nancy More

Vote: All in Favour, Motion Carried

#### **4. President's Report - Sharon Sutherland**

##### Report Highlights

##### **EDI**

- Several Board members participate in the EDI committee, and the entire Board has been involved in a re-examination of Fringe policies, beginning with areas that touch most closely on ensuring that the Fringe can be a Safe Space for all.
- We created a Code of Conduct which was posted to our website in time for the 2018 Festival, and which is incorporated in all of our relationships.
- We have developed a Participation Policy to ensure that there is clarity around our responses to any behaviours that might be in breach of our Code of Conduct.

## **Strategic Planning**

- The board is in the process of creating its next three-year strategic plan for the Festival. We have identified four areas of particular focus for the next three years:
  - Continuing EDI work
  - Our People Pillar which focuses on how we support our people – starting with staff, but expanded beyond.
  - Finance – Laura touched on shifts in volunteerism broadly, and most of you will be conscious of the overall challenges of not-for-profits like the Fringe to provide sustainable incomes for its people. As such, the Board has identified finance broadly as an area of important strategic focus over the next three years.
  - Policy – Policy rarely sounds exciting, but the work in EDI helped remind us of the importance of enshrining our values in ways that help others to understand who we are. For that reason, we have identified Policy development as the final pillar of our three year plan.

**Thank you to Andrew (past President) and departing Board member Aaron Pinto**

MOTION: To accept president's report as delivered

MOVER: Jennifer O'Leary

SECONDER: Nancy More

Vote: All in Favour, Motion Carried

## **5. Executive Director's Report - Laura Efron**

### Report Highlights

#### **2018 FESTIVAL**

- I am honoured that Georgia Straight readers again voted the Vancouver Fringe Festival as the Best Local Performing Arts Festival (for the 15th time).
- We did unfortunately experience more rain than usual last year which did result in a smaller volume of outdoor activity including lower attendance at the Phillips Fringe Bar and at the Festival Hub and therefore lower beer and raffle sales.
- Attendance at shows however was up by nearly 1000 over the previous year and payouts to artists increased by over 18%.
- Dramatic Works Series at the Cultch's Culture Lab had one of the highest percentage of attendance. We are pleased to be continuing this series and thanks for the ongoing support of Kevin Campbell and the Lochmaddy Foundation which makes the Dramatic Works Series possible.
- While we did successfully recruit and engage around 450 volunteers for last year's festival, we really needed 500 to make things run smoothly. The shortage was tough on our Team Leading Volunteers and on volunteers themselves. Many organizations are seeing a decline in volunteer numbers.
- This year we have done what we can to find efficiencies and re-examine volunteer positions to try to streamline things and reduce the number of volunteer shifts.

- We are very conscious of wanting to continue the incredible numbers, breadth, and diversity of shows and so the number of volunteers is something I'm working on with the team and keeping a close eye on.

### **Operations Update**

- I'm working with the staff to create more clarity, find efficiencies, be more cost-effective, document things more, and move up timelines particularly in light of the reality of regularly having new staff, and the fact that we're discovering that our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion work often necessitates the need to take more time to discuss and potentially change systemic things as they arise.
- The need to increase compensation levels is top of mind and we're working hard within the reality of our limited human resources to increase revenue generation

### **Technology**

- We've been slowly making improvements to our organization's server, hardware and general technology (thanks Sam!)
- We applied for and received \$20,000 from BC Gaming to purchase new tablets. We are in the process of configuring them for this year's Festival. Thank you, BC Gaming!

### **Theatre Wire**

- Our year-round project, Theatre Wire, continues to provide ticketing services and support to local theatre producers and offers packages to patrons interested in seeing independent theatre year-round.
- Last season, we presented Kahlil Ashanti's production Razor, Monster Theatre's crazy 48-hour play creation event Theatre Under the Gun, and God is a Scottish Drag Queen: A Christmas Special. Theatre Wire also provided ticketing for the Writers Festival .
- New this year, we will have a Theatre Wire booth in the Fringe Festival hub to increase awareness of the Theatre Wire offerings this year for patrons

### **EDI Work**

- We have expanded a previous seasonal-only Communications Coordinator into a year-round position that now also includes Outreach. Karla Comanda is in this role and we have recently hired Siobhan Barker as our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Director.
- Created an Executive Summary of a Diversity Audit conducted on our organization and posted this along with the full Audit on our website .
- Held a workshop during the 2018 Festival on Inclusive Hiring and Casting Practices.
- Held two sessions called Fringe 101 in community spaces encouraging Artists of Colour to consider having a show in the Fringe.
- Provided tickets to community cultural groups.
- Revised who is included in the Welcome page of the Fringe Guide.
- Engaged professional consultants in the selection of shows appropriate for the Deaf community and for those with low vision.
- Started building relationships with groups in the community we are seeking to engage.

- We offer accessibility training for our Crew Chiefs and Venue Captains.
- We revised our form for billet hosts to contain more inclusive language.
- At this year's Festival, we will have a workshop on Radical Collaborative Inclusive Theatre, and our EDI Director will be hosting a community lunch chat on Next Steps in Arts Equity Diversity and Inclusion with 5 members of the arts community involved in this work.

### **TD Fringe Forward Award**

- We have a new award – the TD Fringe Forward Award. This is sponsored by TD Bank Group and in partnership with Newworld Theatre
  - The Award recognizes a production that centres the work of Artists from historically marginalized communities and approaches the work from a place of authenticity.
  - It is selected by jury and includes a performance opportunity, rehearsal space, mentorship, and \$5000 cash for future development.

MOTION: To accept the ED's report as delivered

MOVER: Claudia Sjoberg

SECONDER: Maria Denholme

Vote: All in Favour, Motion Carried

### **6. Financial Statements - Jai Djwa**

Please see Audited Financial Results

Report Highlights

- Bob Enns (independent auditor) commented on Audited Financial Results
  - Last year deficit, this year small but mighty surplus.
  - Financial Statements are accurately presented.
- In 2018, our deficit was -\$30,674, but thanks to Laura's excellent leadership and the support of the staff and board, we were able to reverse this and post a modest surplus of \$7930.
- We are also very pleased that 252k of our revenue this year went to artists. This is up 36k from last year.
- I'd also like to highlight our donor activities this year. We have continued to do a great job at attracting in-kind donations, which totalled 255k this year. We could not pull off the festival without these sponsors and donors. We'd also like to thank an anonymous donor, who gave 25k to the Fringe to help support our activities, 5k last fiscal year and 20k this year.

MOTION: To accept the 2018-19 audited financial statements as presented

MOVER: Jennifer O'Leary

SECONDER: Jai Djwa

Discussion: Question from member and volunteer Larry Ghini about what constitutes our contributions in kind. Jai mentioned beer etc, and referred anyone interested to our Finance Manager Jennifer Kasun for a detailed breakdown.

Vote: All in Favour, Motion Carried

### **7. Appointment of Auditor**

**MOTION:** To nominate Enns and Co, CPA's as auditors for 2019-2020

**MOVER:** Beth Busby

**SECONDER:** Andrew Westman

Vote: All in Favour, Motion Carried

### **8. Appointment of Directors**

#### **Presentation of board slate:**

- Continuing directors; Nancy More, Jim Sibley, Leslie Carty, Claudia (as Vice President), Jai Djwa, and Jennifer O' Leary
- Reappointment and New Members; Sharon Sutherland, Katia Tynan, Kuan Foo, Lee-Lynn Gan, Robyn Kurtz

**MOTION:** To approve the returning and new board members.

**MOVER:** Jai Djwa

**SECONDER:** Maria Denholme

Discussion: Korky Day said he had not been at a Board meeting where someone who wants to be re-elected doesn't have to explain why. Is that not done at this organization? Claudia Sjoberg: Explained the Fringe process: we ask people to apply, we interview them, and then put them forward.

Vote: 1 opposed, Motion Carried

### **10. Motion To Adjourn**

**MOTION:** To adjourn the 2018-19 Annual General meeting.

**MOVER:** Jennifer O'Leary

**Meeting Adjourned at 18:52**