

Grove Theatre
Customer Forum Minutes
Thursday 14th January 11.00



1 Life Staff Present;

Jo Ditch – General Manager
Rhea Yeung - Head of Operations
Ellie Garrett – Theatre Administrator
Ann-Michelle Sinclair – Head of Front of House
Becca Henry – Acting Marketing Manager
Tom Davies – Head of Food & beverage

(NB staff comments noted by initials)

JD –The last customer forum was in October.

In the Education department Academy has continued to be to capacity in all classes, a second afternoon class has now been added and is going well.

Disco Ducks was launched in the autumn season and this class is proving popular.

Youth Theatre and workshops are continuing well.

Auditions will be held in February for the summer production, title has now been announced and it is Beauty & the Beast Jr. Had a lot of interest and applications are coming in ahead of auditions.

Panto workshops for schools were very successful.

Currently working on an Idea for world book day Payne & Pearce will be coming in to do a show, currently contacting schools about this offer.

Busy few months for theatre shows 40 shows over October to November.

Live broadcast and film screenings continue to grow.

In December we had two days of Opera, Josh Widdicombe before Cinderella opened. Cinderella had highest footfall for a panto in total 21,389, it was also highest financial performance.

Pre sales for Aladdin are ahead of Cinderella on a like for like basis. Aladdin tickets available as last years panto prices until 31st January 2016.

Theatre is proud to have been working in partnership with Kids Out charity. Kids Out are a local charity that help children who are taken out of abusive situations or having to be put into emergency care, often they arrive with little more than the clothes on their back. Kids Out arranges for toys and clothes to be given to help them settle in. One of the ways we worked with them was the Giving Tree, we distributed tags this gave a description of the child age, gender and what sort of toy they would like, once the toy was purchased it was brought into Theatre who then passed all donations to the charity to distribute. It was very successful with 143 presents donated in total.

Theatre also hosted a Christmas party for the charity with staff members donating their time free of charge. It is a charity that Grove Theatre will continue to work in partnership with in the future.

Now we have moved into January, we have a strong film season with some films proving to be very popular already adding extra screenings where possible.

Current focus is working on new brochure

Cream teas are going well with several booked in over next couple of months.

There has been some staff movement within the team, Marketing Manager has left since last forum and General Manager will be leaving in February. Interviews will be taking place next week. In the interim Becca is the acting marketing manager.

Comments:

A comment was made about posters, feeling was they are used for two purposes to advertise and get brand awareness.

JD explained that the Council is looking into getting lamppost banners up in Park.

A question was asked about the future of dramas.

JD explained dramas are struggling nationally; a lot depends on production value which you don't necessarily know until the show arrives.

Question about making the explanation of what a live & encore broadcast is.

JD explained would look into best way to explain feedback from the Royal Opera House is that it is something they are also struggling with trying to get the message out there.

A discussion was had regarding accepted theatre etiquette.

AMS explained that the bar is closed while show is going on.

A question was asked about the toilets and how long it takes between flushes. JD explained the flushing system is being investigated with the Council.

A question was asked about if the Sparkle will it be happening this year.

JD it is unknown at this time, there are several factors but without sponsorship it is impossible to run it the way it was on the first year.

Asked if there are any plans for orchestra concerts.

JD explained Orchestras often want a large guarantee so not always commercially viable in our venue.

Comment about the Film leaflet could maybe a diary be included so you can decide by date as well as title.

JD & BH will look into for next film leaflet.

Those present at the Forum thanked Jo for all her hard work in establishing Grove Theatre and for all her hard work over the years. She was wished well for her new job.

Date of Next Meeting: 19th April 1.00