

Pegasus

Annual Review

sparking young imaginations
2014/15



Young People at the heart

An exemplary programme of Creative Learning, at the heart of a thriving professional theatre - two strands fueling and creating each other. We're a place where young people can take part in, experience and shape inspiring work – but we're also a meeting place between generations, cultures, artists and participants, a place of creative exchange and community.

These are challenging times but Pegasus is in rude health and focused on its mission to spark the creativity and imaginations of young people of all backgrounds.

Our Creative Learning Programme offers an amazing range of ways in which young people can take part in the arts, and provides them with a level of care and support that makes us distinctive. 2014-15 saw us develop and expand our professional programme, producing our very first in-house Christmas show, The Snow Queen, refresh our SPARK programme for Supported Artists and attract a world-class programme of diverse drama and dance.

Looking ahead to 2015-16, creative partnerships will be even more vital to our approach, with partners including the Oxfordshire Library Service, The Oxfordshire Teaching Schools Alliance, the Public Health team at Oxfordshire County Council and The Oxford Research Centre for Humanities (TORCH). We want to thank those partners, and all our funders, audiences and participants for their generous and vital support, and all our staff, freelance tutors and volunteers for their incredible and inspiring work. You make all the difference; without you, we couldn't begin to make the impact we do.

Becky Hall
Chair of Trustees

Jonathan Lloyd
CEO / Artistic Director



Artistic Programme

"I feel this makes a great contribution to the development of young people's theatre... that really does take inclusion very seriously...this show was a triumph on many levels and across press media, the 'in house' ness was well marked and understood as an important strategic move for Pegasus under its new direction, involving young people from across the programme in staging the show."

Arts Council Assessment

2014-15 saw us develop the range and quality of the companies in our visiting professional programme, including Paines Plough, Tamasha, Urban Playground and Birmingham Rep. There was an increased focus on quality programming for family and schools audiences, including shows from Theatre Rites, Inspector Sands, Metta Theatre, Travelling Light, Tutti Frutti, Spitalfields Music Festival, Theatre Centre, Contender Charlie. We are developing longer-term relationships with many of these companies.

Producing: The Snow Queen

This was a crucial step in our ambition to develop Pegasus as a thriving producing theatre for young audiences. It received an overwhelmingly positive reaction from our schools and families audiences, and reviewers. We worked hard to strike a balance between appealing to children at Key Stage 2 (7 to 11s) and younger teenagers. We're keen to establish a reputation for Christmas shows that are adventurous, imaginative, packed with emotion but funny and playful too.

The Snow Queen allowed us to open up the process of staging a professional show to young people on our participatory programme, through attending casting sessions, design meetings and rehearsals. As part of the run we offered an integrated BSL-interpreted performance and a relaxed performance for audiences on the autistic spectrum or with special education needs.





We offered a diverse and vibrant programme to our audiences, with additional space devoted to our youth theatre shows, schools and community groups, Oxford Brookes' 'Outburst' festival, Oxford School of Drama, the return of annual dance festival Dancin' Oxford, family work as and our first in-house Christmas production, The Snow Queen.



Supported Artists

We refreshed our SPARK programme and invited nine emerging and more established artists and companies to be Supported Artists with us for two years. They are: Dumbshow, Lunabug, Emma Boor, Flintlock Theatre, Joe Lott Dance, Sole Rebel Tap, Saikat Ahamed, Ellen Havard, Reuben Massiah. Tailored specifically, opportunities include:

- A week-long residency with rehearsal space and support for scratch performance or sharing.
- Dramaturgical advice
- Expert advice in fundraising, marketing, audience development and company structure.
- Networking and mentoring opportunities with other artists and companies.

In return we asked SPARK artists to:

- Join our Artistic Advisory Panel and keep us informed of exciting work, artists and ideas
- Engage with the participatory work at Pegasus, for example by running a workshop or involving young people in R & D or a rehearsal.



Soapbox City

Soapbox City, co-produced by Pegasus and Oxford Playhouse, took place on 1st May, from 7am to 7pm. As part of a wider season of 'Radical Thinking', we put a soapbox in the centre of Oxford, and split the day into 5-minute slots, creating 144 opportunities to share an idea, opinion or story. We worked with many different organisations and individuals from across Oxford, including The Oxford Research Centre for Humanities (TORCH), ASPIRE (the University museums), Crisis and the Old Fire Station, Ruskin College, Oxford Spire Academy, Hammer and Tongue poetry collective, Science Oxford, Oxford Contemporary Music.



Streetlight Festival

As part of 2014 Christmas Lights Festival, we worked with Magdalen Road Studios to curate a pop-up festival: Streetlight - down our street. We secured the support of local shops, cafes and businesses to host a series of intimate artworks, music and performances, over a weekend in November. This and our Soapbox City project has led us to plan a strand of work called 'Pop Up Pegasus' in our Business Plan, which is about how we engage creatively with our local community in surprising and unexpected ways.

Creative Learning Programme



It is a vital principle for us that Creative Learning productions enjoy the full support of our technical and production team and that our work with young people and our professional programme of visiting and produced shows are interwoven and given equal status. In 2014-15, we staged four full productions with young people, involving 19 performances.

Our commitment to excellence involves creative exchange between professional artists and young participants, each challenging the other. For example, the double-bill for our dance and theatre companies: *Warzone* and *The Power Within* brilliantly showcased this commitment, developing a new script by award-winning writer Andy Mulligan and supported by the production team who worked on our own in-house Christmas show.

In 2014/15 Pegasus offered:

- 36 weekly courses for 6-19 years, for 536 young people, with 5 different productions, 12 different art forms and 19 performance opportunities in the year.
- 8 weekly courses for under 6 years and 19+, in 2 different art forms, for 120 people with 3 performance opportunities in the year.
- 38 Holiday project sessions for 667 young people age 6-19 years
- 352 Young people have taken part in one off classes at Pegasus between April 2014 and March 2015.
- 1,493 Young people have taken part in Schools projects run by Pegasus.
- 668 young people have taken part in Outreach projects run by Pegasus
- 35 young people who have been on Outreach or Schools projects have joined ongoing Pegasus projects
- 157 professional freelance writers, directors, musicians and choreographers worked with Pegasus young people;
- Pegasus gave 39 full bursary or subsidised places to young people on our in house and holiday courses plus 35 young people were funded by external agencies;
- 36 young people were on our Added Extra Weekly projects for young people who are at risk of being or are excluded from school, or are vulnerable young people within the care system.



Tale Trail Project

This year saw the second year of a schools project in partnership with Artswork, Experience Oxfordshire, The Story Museum and Oxford City Council. Pegasus worked with six primary (Yr3 -6) and two secondary schools (Yr7-8), using the arts to improve literacy, and to address schools' SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) agenda.

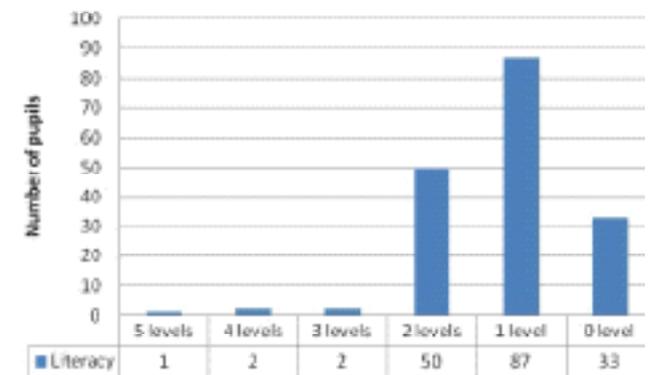
Pupils have looked at cultural heritage to create poems, scripts and short stories. Working with illustrators, creative writers, directors and arts specialists they created a class book of their work, and came to Pegasus to present performances of their own work on our main stage. We worked with 240 pupils and our evaluation demonstrated an 80% increase in literacy levels in pupils taking part in the project above normal expected levels.

Following the success of this year's project, we have since secured funding from Artswork to extend it across the county for the next two years, working in partnership with the Oxfordshire Teaching Schools Alliance.

The below graph represents the increase in levels above the normal expected improvements.



81% improvement in literacy levels





Warzone and The Power Within

'.... Pegasus Youth Theatre Companies' double bill, Warzone and The Power Within, is immensely affecting. Its thoughtful themes of how historical events and personalities impact on contemporary youth were masterly.Drawing on their own contemporary experience of strength, idealism and principles, the actors and dancers were able to pose the most important challenge of our times: 'what would you stand up for?' It's a question none of us should escape, and one I have longed to see posed in all the coverage of past historical events. Pegasus Youth Theatre has done so in a magnificent, thought provoking way.'

Alison Boulton,
Review, Daily Info

An incredibly accomplished double-bill from Pegasus' Youth Theatre, Dance Theatre and Production Companies, Warzone and The Power Within were part of Eyes Wide Open a four year programme focused on taking young people on a journey, exploring ideas that are both local and global, asking them to look at their own lives and the difference they can make in the world.

Warzone was scripted by Pegasus Patron and award-winning writer Andy Mulligan (author of Trash), fiercely and sharply acted by its young cast and beautifully designed by Pegasus' own Naomi Everall. The Power Within showcased the energy and grace of our dance company and addressed a wider theme of 'What would you stand up for' directly and effectively.



"I learnt how all the themes are related. How the past and the present are connected. The themes went very deep and were meaningful."

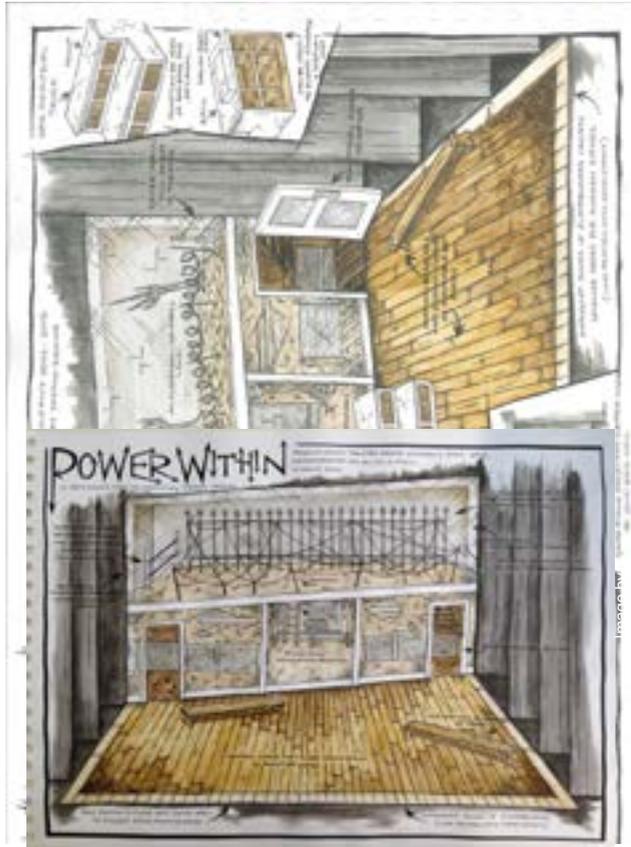
Anne, aged 17

"I learnt about the battle between 'serving your country' and your ethics."

Spike, aged 15

"An amazing and unforgettable experience working with some incredible people to develop skills and devise a performance I am really proud of. I think Warzone has really developed as a play, and the end result had a wonderful mixture of emotional, comedic and intense moments that were thought-provoking and impressionable.."

Theatre Company member, aged 15-17



Alternative Education

"My time here at Pegasus has been amazing and I am so grateful. I think that the best thing I have got out of this experience is that I have gained a lot more confidence."

When I first came I was worried about making mistakes; my usual phrase was 'I can't do it', but I've learnt that when I do make mistakes I can overcome them. If I wasn't here, I'd be getting into trouble at school, but my teachers have responded well to my progress reviews from Pegasus – they even seem proud of me!

I think I've changed a lot since I've been at Pegasus and it makes me really happy that I have done something good."



Our programme targets young people who are NEET or struggling at school needing something additional in their curriculum to help them achieve key skills in the workplace as well as increasing confidence and self-esteem.

We offer a wide range of experience within Box Office, Cafe, Creative Learning and Technical along with the opportunity to gain an Arts Award

Case Study

Lucy Mitchell undertook a ten week Technical Traineeship which was an advised bespoke package between Pegasus and Lucy's school.

During her time with us, Lucy experienced the technical side of producing theatre and developed a wide range of practical skills as well as gaining an understanding of conduct within a work setting.



Added Extra

Helping young people at risk or excluded from school or in care.



"Pegasus is completely brilliant. It's been a home from home for Isaac. When he walks in the door everyone knows him. He has been able to do creative things. He has been given ideas, but has been able to develop his own ideas as well."

Kathy

Our weekly Added Extra projects and holiday projects are aimed at young people who are in danger of being or are excluded from school, or are vulnerable young people within the care system. In 2014/15 36 young people were on our Added Extra Weekly projects, 25 were referred to us by external agencies. A further 45 young people took part in our Added Extra Outreach projects. We worked with Oxford University's Department of Education to evaluate the impact of this project; this report was published in October 2015.

"The participants in these programmes were identified before intervention as being at risk of losing the most fundamental characteristics that enable active involvement in society: cooperation in groups; a sense of investment in a communal process; and the ability to engage productively with the societal structures which they find themselves within. Arts based projects, led by skilled practitioners in arts and pedagogy, enable these young people to acquire tools for self-transformation. Participation in these arts based programmes has the potential to change young people's lives."

Oxford University

MESH 2014

Youth Exchange - Extending our work to have an International impact.

Oxfordshire Youth Arts International Festival. This was the third year of Mesh launched by Pegasus in 2011, co-planned, run and hosted with, by and for young people. It took place from the 23 July to the 1 August 2014 and involved 150 young people from France, Germany, The Netherlands, Croatia, Russia, Lithuania, Zimbabweans from Corby and Oxfordshire, UK. 1,200 audience members watched the 9 international shows and many more the street theatre performances and parade.

- 9 Months of planning and preparation
- 21 Funders
- 150 young people from France, Germany, The Netherlands, Croatia, Russia, Lithuania, Zimbabwe and UK
- 18 young people on the Mesh Planning Committee
- 25 Creative Arts Tutors
- 16 Pegasus Staff
- 24 Volunteers
- 8 International Theatre and Dance productions
- 1,033 audience members plus hundreds watching the street theatre and parade
- 1 international epic performance of Beowulf and Grendel
- 10 days of international workshops, debates, performances and socials
- 9 debates including the Grand Debate on Creativity, Culture and Story



Why we need your help!

Pegasus' financial model has historically relied on a very high level of public subsidy, 85% of turnover in 2008/09 to just under 50% currently.

The range of work and level of support, often given to young people from challenging backgrounds, means that this work requires a lot of intensive staffing, often for a modest financial return. It's why we describe ourselves as an educational and social service as well as a theatre, to highlight that we are a charity, with a charitable mission with the needs of the young people we serve at its heart. This model is also one of the things that make us distinctive.

However, we recognise the pressures on public funding and we need to become more resilient. We will continue to be bold and ambitious in our artistic and creative learning programmes but improve how we communicate and celebrate our work, to help us grow our fundraising from other sources.

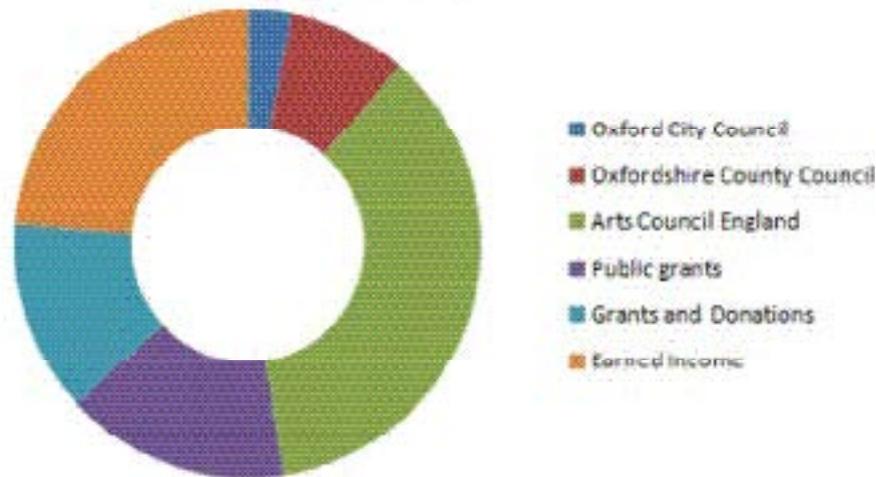
Key activities for 2015-18

Earned income – ticket sales. Our strategy involves a significant shift of focus towards audiences for shows and developing Pegasus as a thriving professional venue, targeting in particular schools and families through increased producing and programming.

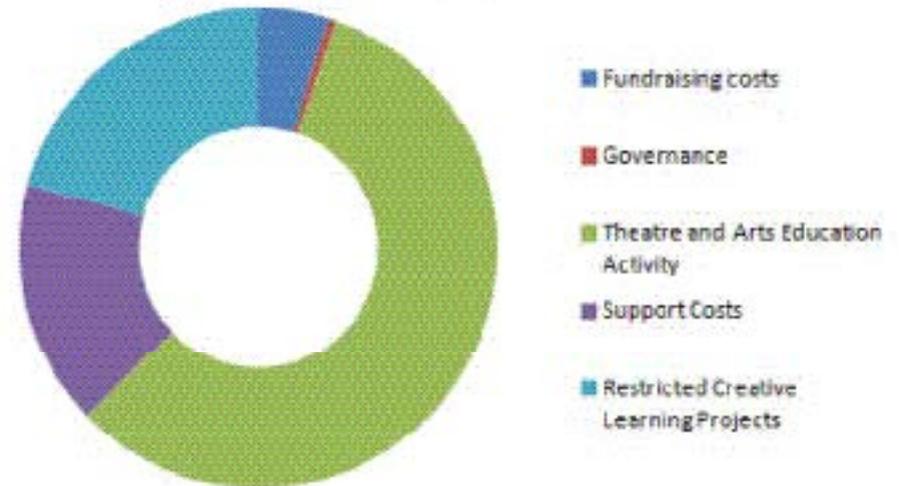
Fundraising - To grow our income from fundraising we will: establish a 2-year rolling fundraising strategy to prioritise core funding needs and increase multiple-year funding options. We have reviewed and clearly defined our core activities which will be funded from our unrestricted funding campaign, similarly we have identified our project funding which will be solely dependent on successful funding applications.

Control of costs - We have well-established budgets and monitor actual costs against budget with monthly management accounts as part of a systematic cost-control process.

Income



Expenditure



Thank you



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