

## PROGRAMMING PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

### OUR MISSION

Vibrant, historic, and thriving, the Theatre Royal & Royal Concert Hall Nottingham provides an exciting variety of cultural experiences to entertain, inspire and connect people.

### OUR PROGRAMME AIM

To provide a high-quality, balanced, diverse and accessible performing arts entertainment offer at two nationally recognised venues for the people of Nottingham and beyond.

#### 1. UNDERSTANDING OUR PAST

- High quality is a principal factor in all programming decisions. As the No. 1 Touring Theatre in the East Midlands, the Theatre Royal has always presented the highest quality performances from many of the country's leading companies and will continue to do so. It is the host and partner for a number of Arts Council funded companies. Its pantomime tradition extends over more than 150 years. The Royal Concert Hall, which opened in 1982 and is regarded as having one of the finest acoustics in Europe, has always presented an eclectic range of shows and events including Nottingham Classics.
- TRCH receives funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and working in partnership with the University of Nottingham, is a leading regional venue for theatre heritage learning. Our Heritage Officer, with community volunteers, produces, and promotes a heritage learning programme of public talks and events, bespoke schools' projects, backstage tours and a digital programme, including our heritage website at [ourtheatroyal.org](http://ourtheatroyal.org)

#### 2. A THRIVING FUTURE

- TRCH helps to ensure maximum financial return on its investment through working with the foremost national and international commercial promoters and producers.
- When considering programme elements possibly returning to TRCH, the previous sales figures are reviewed alongside any customer and internal feedback to assess the suitability of a show to return.
- The Programming Team's network of contacts with other venues is employed to assess any programming opportunities/deals where artistic concerns or financial risks need to be addressed.
- The Creative Learning programme enhances audiences' appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the shows, events and concerts presented in both our venues, and

also facilitates its own bespoke projects. The Creative Learning programme is underpinned by a strong partnerships' philosophy, and seeks to ensure an advocacy of, and adherence to, equality, diversity and inclusion throughout.

### **3. A VARIETY OF CULTURAL EXPERIENCES TO ENTERTAIN, INSPIRE AND CONNECT PEOPLE**

- Variety is a primary strength of TRCH's cultural offer and programming principles, and processes ensure a broad, diverse and balanced programme across both our venues and beyond. The Theatre Royal's programme includes drama, opera, dance and ballet alongside large-scale touring musicals and an annual pantomime. In the Theatre Royal, at least one week in every four is drama, dance, opera or a children's show. The Royal Concert Hall offers a wide range of music, arts and entertainment, including rock & pop music, modern & contemporary music, world music, international dance & ballet, large-scale touring musicals, comedy, variety, circus, talks and film music concerts.

### **4. A FIT-FOR-PURPOSE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**

- Programming for the Theatre Royal & Royal Concert Hall main stages sits under the Director of Programming and is a combination of proactive and reactive activity by the post holder and the Event Admin. Manager. A balanced programme is always sought in both venues to ensure a wide and diverse range of productions on offer and to offer a flow of performance opportunities for audiences across Nottinghamshire and beyond.
- The Classical Music concert series and other orchestral concerts are programmed by the Music Programme Manager.
- Third Stage performances, Live at Lunch events and Foyer performances are programmed by a combination of the Director of Programming, Creative Learning Manager and Music Programme Manager and directly feed into the venues' programming development strategy working with underrepresented artists to give them a platform to perform and engaging with audiences that may not currently be regular (or may even be infrequent) visitors to the venues.
- Regular programming meetings ensure that the relationship between what we present on all our stages/spaces has a consistency and balance to it.

### **5. PUTTING CUSTOMERS AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO, BECOMING MORE DIVERSE AND MORE ACCESSIBLE**

- TRCH is committed to proactively programming and working with incoming producers to offer a more diverse range of shows and events and welcoming more diverse

companies and audiences into its venues. We seek to work with companies that share this vision.

- At all times our programming decisions are informed by the feedback of our audiences, which we facilitate by a variety of means, including customer surveys, focus groups and engagement with social media commentary. We also use marketing intelligence from our CRM system.
- It is our policy to programme a wide variety of accessible performances including captioned, BSL-interpreted, audio-described and relaxed across a range of the programme in each venue every year.

## **6. A STRATEGIC ARTS LEADER FOR THE CITY AND A CREATIVE HUB**

- TRCH continues to develop, and provides a gateway for, artists and art-forms which are currently under-represented in the programme on the main stages. This includes, but is not limited to, artists from diverse backgrounds and artists with disabilities.
- The Theatre Royal welcomes the annual visit of two local non-professional companies. It also hosts the bi-annual Gang Show. In the Royal Concert Hall non-professional companies are also regular visitors.
- TRCH is a leading partner in a number of Nottingham's festivals and major outdoor events.

## **7. ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY**

- We are committed to addressing the environmental concerns across the industry and within our venues, and taking the necessary steps, in conjunction with our artistic partners, to improve our environmental impact.

## **8. A UNIFIED, MUTUALLY RESPECTFUL INTERNAL CULTURE ACROSS THE WHOLE OF TRCH**

- We ensure that programming discussions take place at regular intervals so that all staff are able to input into this process and that feedback is welcomed on current programming decisions.

## **9. GOVERNANCE**

- TRCH is part of Nottingham City Council, and its programme of activity contributes towards the Strategic Council Plan and Economic Recovery and Renewal Plan by:
  - Contributing to a City Centre which is a vibrant place to live, work and spend time in.
  - Increasing visitor numbers and supporting the City's night time economy

- Helping Nottingham to be internationally renowned as a city of culture, creativity, and innovation.

The above narrative identifies **FOUR** essential elements of our programme: (1) HIGH QUALITY; (2) VARIETY/BREADTH/BALANCE; (3) FINANCIAL RETURN; (4) DIVERSITY/ACCESSIBILITY/DEVELOPMENT. When making programming decisions, therefore, and when monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the programme in achieving its aim, the following mechanism is used where it's considered appropriate:

