



291 Mare Street, London, E81EJ  
info@hackneyempire.co.uk  
+44 (0)20 8510 4500

[hackneyempire.co.uk](http://hackneyempire.co.uk)

TEDxEastEnd, January 2016

Registered Charity in England and Wales No. 1062085  
Company Registration No. 2060996. VAT Registration No. 1879 55

Image courtesy of Maria Alejandra Huicho | Designed by Atticus Creative



Annual Review 2015/16

**London's**  
**Most**  
**Welcoming**  
**Theatre**

# Welcome

**It was a year of tremendous successes and accomplishments throughout the organisation from programming and community engagement to finances.**

Here at Hackney Empire, we are so proud to tell the story of a thriving and bustling performing arts centre. One that hosted over 200 events this year, selling out 79% of the 63 mainstage performances, increasing engagement across all programming, and welcoming over 250,000 visitors.

As a vital part of London's cultural landscape, Hackney Empire. We continue to be a key economic driver in Hackney, contribute over £4 million to the borough, create jobs, stimulate community dialogue, introduce young people to theatre, and entertain audiences with diverse programming.

This year, performances featured internationally-acclaimed artists representing a broad spectrum of cultures and genres: opera, musicals, comedy, rock, R&B, jazz, family programmes, and more. Pantomime continued to thrive at Hackney Empire; 2015 saw our highest-grossing and best attended pantomime, *Jack and the Beanstalk*.

But one of the most significant of this past year's achievements has been Hackney Empire's recognition as the London's Most Welcoming Theatre at the 2015 UK Theatre Awards.

While our stage staff, artists and theatre companies are enriching lives, building community and making Hackney a better place, every day' one workshop, one performance, one concert at a time, this recognition is due to our dedicated and friendly front of the house and box office staff that welcome you into our beautiful theatre at each and every visit.

Decided by a public vote, this award is particularly important for us and we are eternally proud of your recognition.

At the heart of Hackney Empire's story, of course, is you. Without you, our vital community of supporters, our story cannot be told. We are eternally grateful to you for allowing us to bring the world to your doorstep.

We are delighted to share with you in these pages how we lived out our mission in 2015 as we look forward to serving you in the years ahead.

**Thank you!**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicola Stanhope', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Nicola Stanhope  
**Chair of the  
Board of Trustees**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clarie Middleton', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Clarie Middleton  
**Chief Executive**



This year we again engaged with over 100 local partners (schools, community organisations and charities) and welcomed over 30% of Hackney's population as visitors and participants.

# The Year of Welcoming Our Community



This was accomplished via offering reduced hire rates for our space, concessions on performance tickets, community events, and school matinee performances.

**Hackney Empire Community Choir** is growing as an inter-generational platform, with over 100 registered members aged from 17 to 87.

**The Hackney Empire Youth Forum** has continued being integral to the planning and development of our artistic programmes by providing the local youth perspective and producing events by young people for young people.

**Alter Ego**, the largest annual talent competition for young people in London and the South East, welcomed over 1000 young people in the audience and more than 40 participants on stage.

This year's competition judges included Layla Manoochehri and CeCe Sammy, and the winner was Steppaz, an all-female dance crew.

**Hackney Empire Next Generation**, with the financial support from Hackney Council's Connecting Young Hackney, continued delivering over 700 creative learning workshops and events for children and young people from Hackney and the surrounding boroughs.



**'...don't know anywhere else were I could get the opportunity to meet artists like this for free...'**

15-year old participant, Mandem on the Wall



Alter Ego, February 2016



Family Fun Weekend, October 2015

The programme continues to build on existing partnerships. This year we are particularly proud of new partnership with the Royal Academy of Music. In October 2015, Freya Wynn-Jones (ENO workshop director), Michael Betteridge (Musical director) and students from the Royal Academy of Music led a 2 day workshop with local young people to create a new piece of musical theatre using *Mozart's Le Nozze di Figaro* (The Marriage of Figaro) as their inspiration.

This year, as part of **Artists Development Programme (ADP)**, has also seen the formation of a new resident company at Hackney Empire - **TWIST Theatre Company**, which has developed and performed a piece of musical theatre, *MACBETH*, that was directed by Susie McKenna.

The production is touring at 2016 Edinburgh Festival and Hackney Empire.

**Hackney Village**, this year in partnership with Huddleston Trust, returned in Summer 2015 welcoming a record number of 37 local children and young people with disabilities, aged 8 to 12, for a week-long series of workshops.

We attracted participants from hardest to reach communities, with disabilities that ranged from Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) and Autism to Downs Syndrome and Dyslexia.

**All participants reported:**

- i) increasing in self-esteem and confidence;
- ii) creating networks and friendships;
- iii) developing listening, negotiating and communicating skills;
- iv) improving social skills and behaviour

We continue to work closely with young artists to help them progress academically and professionally with the additional support of many past students who return to mentor and facilitate workshops.

This year, 14 young people progressed into further education or creative industry careers.



Community Choir, June 2015



Twist Theatre Company, August 2015

**Hackney Empire Next  
Generation Class of 2016 are:**

**Corinna Brown,**  
RADA

**Malika Cholwe,**  
Recording Artist

**Bea Collett-Bell,**  
Performing Artist

**Ethan Edwards,**  
Performing Artist

**Dominique Florent-Lee,**  
Performing Artist

**Andre Fyffe,**  
Performing Artist

**Shaquille Henry,**  
Performing Artist

**Sebastian Orozco,**  
Arden Academy

**Shannon Panter,**  
Performing Artist

**Mahesh Parkar,**  
Performing Artist

**Keon Phillips,**  
Performing Artist

**Ryan Yengo,**  
Performing Artist

**'My favourite part of the week was making friends, meeting new people and learning different things.'**

10-year old participant, Hackney Village



Hackney Village, August 2015



# Say 'ello to Ellora

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a brown cardigan over a striped shirt, dark pants, and brown sneakers, is sitting on a black stool. She is positioned in front of a bright yellow backdrop. To her left, a professional camera is mounted on a black tripod. In the background, a white umbrella light is visible on a stand. The floor is made of light-colored wood.

**'Be your  
biggest believer'**

Ellora Torchia, Featured Artist

## **How did you get involved with Hackney Empire and what was your experience?**

I've travelled ever since I was born, and finding a place to call 'home' has always been difficult, however, I found a home at the Hackney Empire and a second family.

I joined Artist Development Programme (ADP) in 2005, because I just wanted to perform. The experience changed my life. For two weeks a year, I was free to write, sing, dance, act, collaborate with others who held the same passions and leave at the end proud of something we had, as an ensemble, worked to create

I don't think there is anything young people need more than to be provided with a safe starting place to play with their creative energy.

It is such a fragile, personal thing and the grounded direction, the belief the mentors have in these young artists, allow for people to grow uninhibited and flourish to reach their true potential.

The ADP allowed me to practice being open and deal with insecurities. I made friends who are still some of the closest people in my life. We support each other even now, years on.

## **What have you been up to since leaving the Artist Development Programme?**

I was accepted to RADA, where I studied for three years and left with BA in Acting. On graduating, I was taken on by a well-established talent agency, Conway Van Gelder Grant, and since then have been fortunate enough to be working consistently.

My first job was acting alongside Paddy Considine in *The ITV's The Suspicions Of Mr. Whicher: Beyond The Pale* and soon after I was cast as Sita in *Channel 4's Indian Summers* with Julie Walters, Patrick Malahide, and Lillette Dubey.

On the big screen, I worked with John C Reilly in a critically-acclaimed, independent French film *Les Cowboys* directed by Thomas Bidegain that had its premier in Cannes.

My recent stage work involved playing part of Priya in the *Boys Will Be Boys*, Headlong and Bush Theatre collaboration.

## **How are you involved with Hackney Empire now?**

I often come in to talk to young people in ADP to try and encourage them to pursue their dreams... and also learn from them. There is a raw, guttural talent that bubbles away in those rooms, and it is always a joy to have a gateway to witness such new talent...

## **Any advice for young people considering a career in the creative industries?**

Be bold. Be strong.  
Be your biggest believer.

'Career is a marathon, not a sprint', so aim to learn patience, and be truthful to your integrity. Embrace who you are, positives and negatives. No one is perfect, and I believe it's those imperfections that make us as humans interesting, beautiful.

Finally, try and keep perspective. We artists do this because we love it... never forget the joy, and 'play' in it all!

# Bringing theatre to Hackney & crowds to their knees

**With 63 productions and 213 performances, this was another record-breaking year celebrating the UK's creative diversity on our stage.**

We presented a high quality programme that attracted an audience diverse in age, gender, socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds, and truly representative both of the Borough of Hackney and of London.

Hackney Empire's stage and auditorium are ideal for opera and musical theatre and these lyric forms demonstrate our commitment to bridging the gap between "art" and "popular culture".

Highlights from this part of the programme included a return visit by Sasha Regan's ever popular production of *The Pirates of Penzance* and the beginning of a highly fruitful relationship with the Royal Academy of Music with their presentation of *The Marriage of Figaro* directed by Janet Suzman and conducted by Jane Glover.





'...Musically  
it's terrific..'

\*\*\*\*\*

Guardian

Image courtesy of Richard Hubert Smith



English Touring Opera delighted audiences with their regular spring and autumn visits to the Empire in February and October 2016.

Our varied and exciting family theatre programme presented over 100 performances this year and continued to be recognised as one of the best in London.

Other family productions included *Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom* in April 2015, *Octonauts* and the *Deep Sea Adventure* in June 2015, *What the Ladybird Heard* in September 2015 and *Horrible Histories* in October 2015.

Hackney Empire, as a venue for comedy and music events, continues to receive considerable acclaim from promoters, audiences and the media.



We continued welcoming to our stage diverse number of comedy and music artists during the year including *BBC2's John Bishop Show*, Richard Blackwood, Slim, Oliver Samuels, Jonathan McReynolds, Stephen K Amos, Show of Hands, King Crimson and Rudimental.

The BBC Concert Orchestra broadcast seven concerts from our main house.

This year's pantomime production, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, was our most successful pantomime to date, playing to over 50,000 people.

This year also marked the start of our partnership, as the headline sponsor, with one of the largest TED events in UK, TEDxEast End. This sold out event held in January 2016 featured over 40 speakers and performers sharing new ideas on science, technology, human rights, history, art, and design.

This event is a welcome addition to our programming slate as it reflects Hackney Empire's core mission focusing on sharing innovation and ideas that positively influence local communities, cross borders and drive progress in a world where the local and global are ever more inextricably linked.



**'...a brilliant coup  
de theatre in the  
shape of the Giant  
Blunderbore...'**

**\*\*\*\*\***

Daily Telegraph



Image courtesy of Robert Workman



# The Year in Numbers

**£19.95**

Average  
ticket price

**£99**

Average  
West End ticket price

**£19.42**

Average price  
paid per seat

**£42**

Average price paid per  
West End theatres seat

**Making Hackney  
Empire tickets at least**

**216%**  
cheaper

**780** educational  
workshops delivered

Children and youth  
in creative learning **2,800**

**880** hours of space committed  
to creative learning and  
community activities



**250,000**

visitors

Including performances, events,  
community and educational activities, and  
dining on the premises.

**63**



Main Stage productions



**79%** occupancy



**213**

Performances



**24%**

repeat visitors

**£2,947,268**  
turnover

**£2,214,694**  
(75%) earned income

**£468,514**  
(16%) public subsidy

**£263,945**  
(9%) raised income

**£10.2** Generated  
per £1 of public subsidy

**114**  
jobs created

**£4,872,268**  
overall economic impact  
on Hackney\*

\* Calculated using Arts Council's Economic Impact Reporting Tools = total turnover in last FY + additional contribution £1,925,000 last year (National Additional Visitor Spend (AVS) for non-West End Theatre of £7.7 per visitor\* 250,000 total visitors)

**505,031**  
unique website visitors

**37% increase**  
mailing list subscribers

**15,992**  
Twitter followers

**1500**  
individual performers  
engaged

**2,526,102**  
webpage views

**41% increase**  
online bookings

**10566**  
Facebook followers

**100**  
partner organisations

producers, presenters, touring companies, schools, community groups and other arts organisations

**40%**

BAME  
audiences

**35%**

visitors from  
Hackney

**WINNER**

London's Most  
Welcoming Theatre  
2015 UK Theatre Awards

**Manager  
of the Year**

Clarie Middleton shortlisted  
2015 UK Theatre Awards

**52%**

Main Stage productions  
made by or featured  
BAME performers

**55%**

visitors from  
East London

**80%**

children & youth in creative  
learning come from the top  
10% of the most deprived  
LSOAs in England

**Consolidated statement of financial activities (Including income and expenditure account)  
For the year ended 31 March 2016**

	<b>Unrestricted funds £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>2016 Total £</b>	<b>2015 Total £</b>
Incoming resources				
Incoming resources from generated funds				
Voluntary income				
Donations, gifts & legacies	82,909	–	82,909	30,289
Grants receivable	468,514	181,036	649,550	538,514
Investment income	115	–	115	66
Income from trading activities	414,301		414,301	421,134
Incoming resources from charitable activities				
Income from running theatre	1,800,393		1,800,393	2,145,529
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>2,766,232</b>	<b>181,036</b>	<b>2,947,268</b>	<b>3,135,532</b>
Resources expended				
Cost of generating funds				
Fund-raising costs	118,013	–	118,013	64,289
Charitable activity				
Cost of operation of the theatre	2,600,219	798,986	3,399,205	3,478,418
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>2,718,232</b>	<b>798,986</b>	<b>3,517,218</b>	<b>3,542,707</b>
Net (outgoing)/ incoming resources in the year	48,000	(617,950)	(569,950)	(407,175)
Transfers between funds	(698,972)	698,972	–	–
<b>Corporation tax</b>	<b>66,601</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>66,601</b>	<b>53,413</b>
Net movement in funds	(584,371)	81,022	(503,349)	(353,762)
Opening fund balances	764,826	10,219,854	10,984,680	11,338,442
<b>Closing fund balances</b>	<b>180,455</b>	<b>10,300,876</b>	<b>10,481,331</b>	<b>10,984,680</b>

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in preparation of these financial statements is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

## Balance sheets as at 31 march 2016

	<b>Group 2016 £</b>	<b>Group 2015 £</b>	<b>Charity 2016 £</b>	<b>Charity 2015 £</b>
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	10,561,363	11,145,241	10,561,363	11,145,241
Investments	–	–	1	1
	<b>10,561,363</b>	<b>11,145,241</b>	<b>10,561,363</b>	<b>11,145,241</b>
Current assets				
Debtors	273,300	264,426	297,909	366,495
Cash at bank and in hand	197,153	177,137	148,401	70,535
	<b>470,453</b>	<b>441,563</b>	<b>446,310</b>	<b>437,030</b>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(517,485)	(552,124)	(493,343)	(547,592)
Net current assets	(47,032)	(110,561)	(47,033)	(110,562)
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<b>10,514,331</b>	<b>11,034,680</b>	<b>10,514,331</b>	<b>11,034,680</b>
Creditors: Amounts falling due after one year	(33,000)	(50,000)	(33,000)	(50,000)
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>10,481,331</b>	<b>10,984,680</b>	<b>10,481,331</b>	<b>10,984,680</b>
Represented by:				
Restricted Funds	10,300,876	10,219,854	10,300,876	10,219,854
Unrestricted Funds				
Designated Funds	80,000	30,000	80,000	30,000
General Funds	100,455	734,826	100,455	734,826
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,481,331</b>	<b>10,984,680</b>	<b>10,481,331</b>	<b>10,984,680</b>

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities SORP (FRS 102).

For further information see the 2015-16 audited accounts for Hackney Empire Limited on the Charity Commission website or contact [info@hackneyempire.co.uk](mailto:info@hackneyempire.co.uk) for a copy.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 6th December 2016 and signed on its behalf.



Nicola Stanhope, Chair of the Board of Trustees

# Your Empire Team

## Trustees

Delphine Brand  
Jo Cottrell  
Sean Egan  
Jean Nicholson  
Franny Moyle  
Jay Sheth  
Nicola Stanhope (Chair)  
Chris Unitt  
Emma Williams  
Caroline Yates

## Staff

### CEO Office

Clarie Middleton,  
Chief Executive Officer  
Jo Hemmant,  
Director of Operations  
(Deputy Chief Executive)  
Lorraine Wood,  
Project Manager -  
Chief Executive Office  
(until January 2016)  
Sue Hyman,  
Associates, PR Consultant

### Programming & Creative Learning

Joanne Benjamin,  
Producer  
(until November 2015)

Clive Chenery,  
Executive Producer  
(from November 2015)  
Yamin Choudury,  
Creative Learning and  
Community Associate  
Producer  
Susie McKenna,  
Creative Director  
Teeah Ngwenya,  
Creative Learning and  
Community Coordinator  
(until November 2015)  
Jane Walsh,  
Programme Manager  
and Executive Producer  
for Comedy & Music

### Marketing

Fatima Botella,  
Marketing and PR Assistant  
Reuben Cook,  
Digital and IT Advisor  
(freelance)  
Dominic Draper,  
Marketing Manager  
Lucy Hughes,  
Digital Projects Manager  
Jane Morgan,  
Marketing Associate  
Livvy Morris,  
Digital Projects (freelance)

### Development

Sultan Fiappi,  
Head of Development  
Mia Gulati,  
Development Manager  
(until January 2016)  
Mary Loxley, Trust Fundraiser  
(until December 2015)  
Rumbi Shava-Masere,  
Development Coordinator  
(from February 2016)

### Finance

Neil Lawrence,  
Assistant Accountant  
(until November 2015)  
Roderick St John Bentley,  
Finance Manager  
(until June 2015)  
Josephine Olugbekan  
(from November 2015)  
Lei Wang,  
Assistant Accountant  
(from October 2015)

### Building

Brian Wren,  
Building and  
Maintenance Technician  
Simon White,  
Maintenance Assistant



## Customer Experience

Shaniece Deleon,  
Customer Experience  
Coordinator

Alison Louis,  
Head of Cleaning and  
Theatre Presentation

Biko Mason,  
Customer Experience  
Manager

Marika Morgan,  
Customer Experience  
Manager

Noel Morgan,  
Stage Door Manager

Jenny Wong,  
Duty Manager

## Cleaning Staff

Michelle Banton

Coreen Bent

Athlyn Harry

Caroline Knight

Caroline Leonce

## Technical

Othman Read,  
Technical Manager

John Ryan,  
House Technician

Mark Whyte,  
Technical Administrator

## Technicians & Crew

David Ashford

Peter Carrington

Keith Edgehill

Dave Fisher

Adam Johns

Hansel Lewis

Stewart Mckean

Pete Morland

Niall Mulachy

## Door Supervisors

Awet Abdurhoman

Laura Hyland

Marcia Joseph

Akan Karadavut

Jason Lewis

Shirley Liverpool

Juan Sanchez

## Box Office staff

Priscilla Ambele

Holly Barry-Scott

Rosie Barry-Scott

Kiyah Cousins

Jack Gilbert

Rosie Gilbert

Amelia Grant

Matilda Hunter

Charlie Jones

Leah McGurk

Francesca Perry

Desree Richards

Nicole Seraphin

Henry Taylor

Broin Zinga

## Fire Marshalls

Channon Allen-Gulley

Sabrina Amod

Giovanni Nini



## Front of the House staff

Jasmin Abraham

Samar Ahmed

Nilufer Altinsoy

Staisy Amod

Zhaleh Bahrani

Tania Bridgeman

Rayne Cook

Mekeda Cousins

Anne Crickett

Jessica Da Costa

Asher Eastwood

Aysia Edwards

Aissta Fofana

Anselina Francois

Jamilah Fraser

Siris Gallinat

Shani Glover

Sam Green-Dorado

Korah Hamilton

Ciara Hodge

Jordan Irving

Zenakay Jones

Leonardo

Kellaway

Alina Lacutas

Adina Letang

Kai Mason

Qamar Merchant  
Read

Monae Moodie

Terrell Moodie

Jessica Opoku

Sean Osinlaru

Retesh Patel

Shereen Phillips

Flora Raynham

Kiman Read

Edward Reiband

Marlon Ryan

Amari Smith

Irene Sola

Haile Tafari

Alan Walden

Sydney Wilson

Armani Williams

Kate Winters

# The Year of Welcoming Our Supporters

We acknowledge our loyal supporters who give generously each year, making possible Hackney Empire's work on stage and in the community. Each year we must raise at least 40% of our annual budget.

We were pleased that this year our new fundraising and supporter engagement strategy started to bear some successes. We have reviewed our membership scheme and plan to relaunch it in the next year. We have launched our brand new Leadership Giving Group- The Matcham Circle and welcomed its first members. And we have increased the number of Hackney Empire supporters and the income from grants and donations by over 170%.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the individuals and organisations listed here and the hundreds of supporters in the Friends of Hackney Empire programme, over the years, who cannot be listed due to space limitations.

## **Grants**

London Borough of Hackney  
Arts Council England  
The Monument Trust  
Newman's Own Foundation  
Sylvia Waddilove Foundation  
Lucille Graham Trust  
Andrew Lloyd Webber  
Foundation

## **Patrons and Major Donors**

Yvette Davis  
Anonymous  
Kathryn Robinson-Lang  
Ian Simpson  
Nicola Stanhope  
Geoffrey Wheat

