

One Dance UK, SoLT/UK Theatre and ABO call for urgent support for the performing arts

Today the sector support organisation for dance **One Dance UK** - alongside **The Society of London Theatre (SoLT)/UK Theatre**, and the **Association of British Orchestras (ABO)** and the three Chairs of the corresponding All Party Parliamentary Groups – have called upon The Government to urgently provide additional support to the performing arts sector.

The three sector bodies work closely together and have been in regular contact with Government and officials from the very beginning of the pandemic given the uncertainty around the financial viability of theatres being able to reopen whilst social distancing measures remain in place. Together One Dance UK, UK Theatre/SoLT and the ABO form the DCMS Arts working group on reopening, and along with Professor James Calder and various working groups are developing return to work guidance for the performing arts as part of the Entertainment & Events subgroup reporting in to the Cultural Renewal Taskforce.

Today, they are jointly calling on the Prime Minister to take action on what is needed immediately and over the coming months to rescue the performing arts. The letter is co-signed by the three organisations, and the Chairs and Officers of the All Party Parliamentary Groups for Dance, Theatre and Music and urges the Prime Minister and the Treasury to take the following urgent measures to rescue the performing arts and ensure they are able to contribute to the future success of the UK:

- **Safeguard the strength and UK-wide impact of the Performing Arts sector**, through an Emergency Rescue Fund and a Cultural Investment Participation Scheme, and the protection of Local Authority Leisure Budgets
- **Sustain the workforce**, through a sectoral extension of the Job Retention Scheme and an extension or replacement of the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme. This will also protect the wider ecology of the performing arts, and the thousands of small companies and sole traders across the UK that enable the sector to function.
- **Catalyse the recovery**, through temporary modifications to Theatre and Orchestra Tax Reliefs for three years, and other measures to ease the tax burden in the short-term and allow for a stronger return to income generation.
- **Review insurance and liability policies** in light of the new risks of re-opening while Covid-19 is still in the community, to allow access by the sector to appropriate insurance. Currently, only 12% of organisations in the Sector believe they would be able to secure insurance to cover cancellation of performances here and abroad.

The three sector bodies have also written an open letter for members to sign, and will be providing a template letter to enable concerned members to write to their MP's.

Andrew Hurst, CEO of One Dance UK says:

“We are grateful for the existing support from government and emergency funds from Arts Council England and Creative Scotland, which have thrown a lifeline to the sector, but the situation is not the same for members in Wales and Northern Ireland and many individuals, especially the large number of freelancers and self-employed in dance, small businesses and sole traders including suppliers and many private dance teachers and schools, and organisations of different sizes and types are falling through the gaps. Whilst we are confident that the guidance we have been working on with government and officials

and the other sector bodies will mean that much dance activity will be able to restart in July, social distancing is apparently here to stay for the foreseeable future, and with no clear timeline for the reopening of theatres, we may just be delaying the inevitable, and the future livelihoods of many and the artform itself is at risk.”

Co-Chair of the APPG for Dance Baroness Hooper elaborates on the letter, saying:

“The contribution made by the World of Dance and the Performing Arts as a whole has never been more necessary for physical and mental health and general wellbeing. They must be supported!”

LINKS

The open letter can be found [here](#)

For more images and information please contact comms@onedanceuk.org

- ENDS –

Note to Editors

The UK’s world-renowned performing arts have a workforce in excess of 350,000 with dance playing a critical part in this – employing over 40,000 people (including an estimated 17,000 dancers and choreographers with 12,000 of these being freelance or self-employed). The necessary measures that have been taken in response to COVID-19, have brought both the dance and wider performing arts sector/s into a period of increasing turmoil, and without swift and supportive intervention from The Government, the country risks losing large parts of the sector entirely.

The UK performing arts rely on a complex ecosystem comprising of three main pillars (all pillars include both venues and production companies):

Commercial theatre; Not-for-profit companies who receive funding by the Arts Councils, Local Authorities, alongside philanthropic donations to supplement income from ticket sales; and Independent charitable trusts who receive no Government subsidy and rely solely on philanthropic donations and ticket sales. These three pillars are inextricably linked: an intricate cross-country network of collaboration that has evolved over the past 70 years. **Without support for each element, the entire ecosystem falls apart and cannot be rebuilt from scratch.**

One Dance UK is the sector support organisation leading the way to a stronger, more vibrant and diverse dance sector. We provide one clear voice to:

- Support all those working in the sector to achieve excellence in dance performance, education and management
- Advocate for the increased profile and importance of dance in all its diverse forms and settings
- Enhance dancers’ health, well-being and performance
- Identify gaps, provide opportunities and improve conditions for dance to be learnt, discussed and seen



Photo One Dance UK, Dani Bower, Motionhouse Dancers Chris Knight and Berta Contijoch