



**Minutes of Meeting of HITN Board of Directors
held on Wednesday 17 May 2006
At the Columba Hotel, Ness Walk, Inverness, 14.00 – 16.30**

Present:

Ian Brown, Lara McDonald, Ann McKay, Dolina MacLennan.
In attendance: Robert Livingston (HI~Arts), Colin Bradie (Promote YT Scotland), Muriel Ann MacLeod, Stuart Brownlee.

Apologies:

John McGeoch, Sandy Anderson.

1. Welcome - minutes of the meetings of 16 March 2006 & matters arising

1.1 Ian Brown welcomed Colin Bradie (Promote YT Scotland) for Agenda item 5.

1.2 The Minutes of the meeting of 16 March 2006 were approved.

1.3 Matters arising:

Typo - page 5, Item 6.6: should read "... these used to be ...".

Item 1.1: Elaine Bailey is not now available to join the Board. Arts & Business are looking at who might be available.

Action 1.2: Meeting with (BR) to be arranged within the next 2-3 weeks.

Action 1.3: Fringe – Chair's action not to proceed, only two companies were interested/brochure deadline. 2007 may be a possibility – revisit this autumn. Also put onto 'away day' agenda.

Item 3.2: Still looking for a natural point for a launch. Visit to Sweden in early July so mid-July might be the right moment. Highland Quest winner announcement is also expected in early July, so could build on 'good news' stories for the HITN/DNA-STAFF/Swedish links launch. It might also be advisable to wait until after the planned meeting with SAC (date still to be confirmed).

Action 3.2: In the process of setting up a meeting with Colin Marr. **[note: (IB) and (SB) to meet with (CM) on Wednesday 31 May, 14.00].**

Action 3.3: HIE monies for DNA related business case preparation approved.

Item 6.1: Members 'away weekend' 2 & 3 June in Oban, and visit to Ballet West.

Item 6.4: FST Market Day – on agenda.

Item 6.11: Contracts continued. (RL) will send a written Funding offer to Chair for £25k for 2006-07, to be followed by a formal offer for the remaining funds from 2005-06 to be transferred into the HITN Bank Account.

Action 6.5: Robert Softley has been invited to the Members meeting on 2 & 3 June. The Visiting Arts seminar on international touring was held in Inverness on the morning of 17 May 2006.

Action 6.6: The HITN Members meeting held on 16 March 2006 approved the move to 3 members meetings per year.

Action 6.8: International workshop – (MAMaCL) – work is ongoing.

Other items on agenda.

ACTION:

- 1.3.1 (IB) and (RL) to arrange meeting with (BR);
- 1.3.2 Fringe to be put onto Members 'away day' agenda;
- 1.3.3 HITN/DNA-STAFF/Swedish links launch arrangements – aim for mid-late July 2006;
- 1.3.4 (IB) and (SB) to meet with (CM) on Wednesday 31 May, 14.00;
- 1.3.5 (RL) to write to Chair regarding funding arrangements for 2006-07 and rollover funds from 2005-06.

2. Update on Company set up, charitable status

- 2.1. Charitable Status: (MAMaCL) – this is still with Stronachs. Nothing to report. Charity law has changed. Implications on company accounts. Maybe HITN should approach OSCR directly with Memorandum and Articles of Association and ask them for an opinion on the likelihood of HITN obtaining Charitable status – (MAMaCL) to action.

ACTION:

- 2.1 (MAMaCL) to contact OSCR seeking opinion on Charitable status.

3. Festival of Theatre 2007 – “Dràma Na h-Alba” - update

- 3.1 Minutes of Meetings: 18 April 2006 (previously circulated – posted on website):

National Theatre of Sweden is very keen to be involved. The Visiting Arts Unit was also briefed this morning at the International touring seminar. For information, Visiting Arts is an independent body funded by all UK arts councils and the British Council to help international visiting artists visits the UK.

Festival will happen in September 2007. Format now established. FIG is now operating as the programme committee. The issue of selecting HITN members product needs to be handled sensitively. (RL) - suggestion that as the Producers Fund (PF), or whatever replaces it, will be an integral part of the funding for the festival, we consider expanding the Producers Fund Selection Panel to invite John Durnin from Pitlochry Festival Theatre (PFT) to sit on the Selection Panel. The advantage of this would be that PFT is a HITN member, but not eligible for PF funding. It was agreed by the Board that this arrangement would be tested in the 2006 PF round and that if it works, this will become the model for 2007. HITN companies will be invited to come forward with production proposals that will then be assessed and selection(s) made by this panel.

(RL) - until we meet with SAC we have no idea what kind of funding structure might be available. The planned NTS co-production will likely be selected by a bidding process. (MAMaL) - 4 Highland companies may have work at this stage.

(MAMaL) – in relation to the Exhibition element, Stuart Laing has been in touch highlighting the fact that there hasn't been a major theatre design exhibition in Scotland for some time.

(SB) – for information: the H2007 selection panel is sitting on 17 May to select regional fund applications. We would hope to hear about the FIG application by the end of May.

ACTION:

3.1 Proposed Selection Panel arrangement to be tried out during 2006 (PF meeting planned for Monday 22 May 2006).

4. Northern Periphery Project – update.

- 4.1 (MAMaL) – report back on the return visit to Sweden in March/April 2006 – workshops mainly led by Scottish practitioners. Working together despite language differences. Visited Profilteatern's own venue in Umea and also Vasterbottensteatern's large theatre in Skelleftea. There are challenges of bringing so many artists together and there are ambitious proposals arising from this collaboration. Robert Herrala has written with a proposal for a 2008 joint summer production developed between Sweden and Scotland, with performances in June through to August 2008. The proposed production is likely to happen in a tent, with some 15 performers. Indications are that a budget of c£200k could be committed to this from the Swedish end, but there are obviously matched funding issues that HITN will need to address. An underlying principle of the production is that it would be committed to serving rural communities and audiences. Currently all involved have been asked to

contribute ideas with a view to arranging a meeting in Sweden on the first weekend in July to sift through proposals.

- 4.2 A Swedish member has suggested that the 'lunchtime group' should manage everything. This proposal is not acceptable to HITN as this group is merely a temporary device to sift through the contributed ideas only. The whole group of practitioners should then take the project forward on a collaborative basis. This is an inclusive project that can't be taken over by a small sub-group. The Board agreed with the approach being taken by HITN regarding the ongoing management of the project. **[note: a subsequent e-mail has clarified that there had been a misunderstanding by a Swedish colleague who had apologised for this and agreed that each contributing organisation – HITN and the Swedish companies – would determine their own representation at meetings.]**
- 4.3 There are many similarities in issues between the two countries: 'centre' v's 'periphery' issues, rural industries, emigration/immigration. It would also appear that there is not usually collaboration between the Swedish companies, so this in itself is an interesting development. Overall the project is moving positively. It is not just about swapping work – it's about collaborating to produce new work. Spin-off projects are already happening, e.g. Andy Thorbrun and Alasdair Satchel working with two Swedish artists – to produce a CD. Also Jackie Goode and Murder Mysteries.

ACTION:

- 4.2 HITN Board approved the action taken by the Chairman on behalf of HITN in stating the case to our Swedish colleagues for how this project should continue to be managed.**

5. Skill Up 2007 (Promote YT Scotland)

- 5.1 Colin Bradie (CB) - Promote YT was created some 2.5 years ago to address the imbalance of youth theatre being under-represented nationally. A brochure handout was tabled. (CB) joined in October 2005 from the Lyceum. Promote YT operates as a collaborative group and collaboration is key for the sector of youth theatre, whether that be professional, amateur, SCDA, film groups, etc. Promote YT provides information services, promotes the sector, provides advocacy and lobbying at government and public agencies level. Promote YT is operating in areas of social deprivation. Currently looking at setting up a youth board.
- 5.2 Training and skills development is another key priority. "Skill Up" is a scheme covering training and professional development for the sector. It is for young people and professional producing companies. Promote YT provides a platform for this. In 2006, Promote YT in collaboration with NTS, organised 2 days of workshops, surgeries, etc. at the Scottish Youth Theatre (SYT) building – [a report on this event is contained in the tabled pack]. Promote YT is aiming to hold a similar event in 2007 and is looking to hold it in Inverness as they have a national remit, there is a lot happening in the H&I's and they also want to pick up on the energy of 2007. Promote YT is also keen to establish ongoing links with hubs of creativity and is looking to develop a

partnership with HITN for a more globalised event for early 2007, including Swedish connection.

- 5.3 The aim is to attract 200+ practitioners for 2 days of workshops, skills sharing, etc. Promote YT also looking at a public element for this event, with performances and maybe supported by a fringe youth theatre festival from work across the country. Discussion around the table agreed that this proposal has a good, natural fit with HITN's own training objectives - a good synergy – and would also practically act as a natural lead-in to the planned September DNA festival & forum. One of the forum days could be dedicated to youth theatre. (LMcD) - Companies being asked more and more to undertake youth work on the ground.
- 5.4 (CB) – there is a Skill Up “Improving Access to Youth Theatre” training session in Perth on 9 June, with Solar Bear and Birds of Paradise [**note: details of this have been circulated to the HITN e-list group**]. Promote YT does not support curricular based work. Promote YT want to engage local practitioners for a fee to deliver their programme of youth theatre training and support and has a large freelance base. The youth theatre sector is fractured, particularly in H&I's. Promote YT brokers partnerships and collaborations. Perhaps what we need in H&I's is a theatre equivalent of the Fèisean movement – accessible, affordable and not school based.
- 5.5 (MAMaCL) – propose take the topic of youth theatre to the members and put on the agenda for the ‘away weekend’. (RL) – the Highland 2007 programme is looking thin earlier in the year and this proposal for a Promote YT “Skill Up” event would be very timely and could be the counterpoise to DNA, particularly if Promote YT would consider holding an event every 2 years in the H&I's to match DNA. It was agreed to take this item forward to the members meeting on 2 & 3 June 2006.
- 5.6 (CB) - Promote YT would like to become a HITN member.

ACTION:

- 5.5 (CB) to be invited to attend HITN Members meeting on 2 & 3 June 2006 to speak on the work of Promote YT and to discuss with members the possibilities and opportunities of holding a “Skill Up” youth theatre event in Inverness in early 2007 and potentially biennially thereafter to link in with the proposals for DNA-STAFF.**
- 5.6 Promote YT to be invited into corporate membership of HITN (SB to action).**

6. CATS 2007

- 6.1 (RL) – Critics Awards for Theatre in Scotland – third year. Planning to bring 2007 awards to Inverness. Event happens in June on a Sunday. There have been some thoughts about combining this with the launch of the full programme of DNA. Suggestion now is to hold both CATS and the DNA programme launch at Pitlochry Festival Theatre in 2007. Furthermore, in order to continue to build a critical mass of ongoing theatre arts activity in the H&I's, to then hold CATS in Inverness in 2008 along with the launch of the

collaborative production of the HITN/Sweden "Northern Connections" project. The Board approved that HITN go into collaboration with CATS for Pitlochry 2007. (RL) – will pass on the formal letter from CATS.

ACTION:

6.1 (MAMaCL) to make contact with CATS regarding the joint planning for a June 2007 event at Pitlochry Festival Theatre.

7. Members 'away weekend' – Oban 2 & 3 June 2006

7.1 (SB) – provided an update on members attending. It was also agreed that Colin Bradie of Promote YT would be invited to attend to speak with members. (MAMaCL) – indicated that while ITC could not be present for this members meeting they were very interested in co-hosting theatre training events with HITN in the future.

ACTION:

7.1 (SB) and (MAMaCL) to finalise programme for members 'away day' meeting and circulate to members prior to 2 June. Colin Bradie to be included on circulation list for this.

8. Any other Business [from Addendum to Agenda]

8.1 Meeting with Colin Marr: arranged for Wednesday 31 May at 14.00.

ACTION: (IB) and (SB) to attend meeting with (CM) on 31.05.06.

8.2 Meeting with SAC: still to be arranged.

ACTION: SAC meeting to be arranged (IB), (RL), (MAMaCL), (SB).

8.3 HITN/DNA/Swedish links launch: Propose to integrate these – wait until July. Format for the day – this event will be targeted, with invited participants, and the Chair was authorized to manage the event working with (SB) and (MAMaCL); it is Glasgow or Edinburgh. Not NTS offices. Suggested Tron or Traverse. Scottish Youth Theatre (SYT) building, round from NTS building in Glasgow was suggested and agreed, with the Traverse as the fall back. (IB) – propose that (IB), (DMaCL) (MAMaCL), (SB) attend, with perhaps (SMaCK) and/or (MZ) representing FIG. Also invite representatives from the FIG observer bodies, (CB, RL, JE, VF/JT, LN), a representative from the Swedish consulate. Handouts, PR's, statements of support, etc. to be prepared within the next 10 days. Aiming for the second or third week in July.

ACTION: (IB), (SB), (MAMaCL) to action organisation of HITN/DNA/Swedish links launch for second or third week in July.

8.4 HITN as promoter (of selected international development work/projects): (MAMaCL) – as we will be bringing in work through DNA, is it worth HITN becoming a promoter to bring in one-off works of artistic merit? What would the financial impact be? HITN would be liable to take the financial risk? (RL) – example of the Nairn Jazz Festival doing this, resulting in a promotional role

for the Jazz Festival itself and also adding to the richness of what is available outwith the actual festival. This is akin to a 'Tune Up' structure for visiting theatre. (IB) – concern regarding the workload issue, HITN already has the c£300k DNA project, a major Swedish project, building marketing and training activities, can we cope with this as well? Suggest we aim for 2008 for this idea – it would also help keep the DNA momentum up and running during the gap year between DNA festival/forums. This suggested approach was agreed by Board. (RL) – with regards to providing centralised marketing support for HITN members, perhaps a more practical and achievable short-term solution is to try and centralise Media contacts for HITN member companies in an effort to ensure consistent information to the media.

ACTION: Defer action on HITN as a promoter until 2007 for further consideration by the Board and Membership. (SB) to liaise with (RL) regarding centralised media contacts.

8.5 HITN Budget: (SB) tabled a summary sheet showing the current known financial situation [since revised – see attached], which shows a small operating deficit of £705 for 2006-07. **[note: (SB) has since met with (CMacL) of HI~Arts to discuss the management of HITN finances. An audited set of management accounts will be provided to the HITN Board on a quarterly basis from now on].**

8.6 HITN Policies: (SB) tabled three draft policy documents (see attached) – Child Protection; Equal Opportunities; Environment and Sustainability. It was agreed that Board members would advise (SB) of any changes required with a view to ratifying these at the next Board meeting.

8.7 DNA Logos: Draft logo/banner heading for DNA tabled (see attached) based on the family resemblance model of approved HITN designs. (MAMaL) – too close to the HITN logo, maybe DNA needs its own identity. Marketing issue about the identity of DNA, preference for a design separate from the HITN design that can also be badged with the HITN design. (IB) – suggest put this to the next meeting of FIG. Agreed.

ACTION: (SB) - DNA logo/banner heading and marketing to be put on agenda for next FIG meeting.

8.8 FIG Meeting: Wait till meet with SAC, which is important in terms of future funding, before arranging next FIG meeting.

ACTION: Look towards mid-end June for next FIG meeting.

8.9 Membership Request: In line with Company Policy, the Board was asked to consider a request for membership from Glynis Newberry, founder and principal dancer, illusions-scotland, who is due to graduate in June 2006 from Inverness College with a HND in Acting and Performance. After discussion, it was agreed that a membership request should be invited on the basis of corporate membership of the company.

ACTION: (SB) to draw up membership form and action membership request.

- 8.10 HITN position on requests to circulate information about individuals: (RL) – has been approached by an individual seeking to circulate their career details to the HITN membership. Concern expressed that this could be seen as providing an endorsement of such an individual by HITN. It was therefore suggested and agreed that individuals who approach HITN with this request can be invited to join the HITN e-mail list, which allows them to receive HITN member information and also post information about their own talent or skills to the list – hitn@lists.hi-arts.co.uk .
- 8.11 Report back on FST Scottish Theatre Market Day, 23/03/06, Dundee Rep.: a positive and worthwhile day, good feedback on HITN stand and collected a reasonable number of completed DNA-STAFF survey forms in support of the concept to inform the business case preparation.

9. Date, Time and Place of next Meeting

The next Board of Directors Meeting will take place on **25 July at 2.00pm at a venue tbc.**

HITN BOARD 17/05/06 - ACTION CHECKLIST:

- 1.3.1 (IB) and (RL) to arrange meeting with (BR);
- 1.3.2 Fringe to be put onto Members 'away day' agenda;
- 1.3.3 HITN/DNA-STAFF/Swedish links launch arrangements – aim for mid-late July 2006;
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- 3.1 Proposed Selection Panel arrangement to be tried out during 2006 (PF meeting planned for Monday 22 May 2006).
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- 5.6 Promote YT to be invited into corporate membership of HITN (SB to action).
- 6.1 (MAMaL) to make contact with CATS regarding the joint planning for a June 2007 event at Pitlochry Festival Theatre.
- 7.1 (SB) and (MAMaL) to finalise programme for members 'away day' meeting and circulate to members prior to 2 June. Colin Bradie to be included on circulation list for this.
- 8.1 (IB) and (SB) to attend meeting with (CM) on 31.05.06 (see 1.3.4).
- 8.2 SAC meeting to be arranged (IB), (RL), (MAMaL), (SB).
- 8.3 (IB), (SB), (MAMaL) to action organisation of HITN/ DNA/Swedish links launch for second or third week in July.
- 8.4 Defer action on HITN as a promoter until 2007 for further consideration by the Board and Membership. (SB) to liaise with (RL) regarding centralised media contacts.
- 8.6 Board members to advise (SB) of any changes required to the draft policies with a view to ratifying these at the next Board meeting.
- 8.7 (SB) - DNA logo/banner heading and marketing to be put on agenda for next FIG meeting.
- 8.8 Next FIG meeting – look to mid-end June.
- 8.9 (SB) to draw up membership form and action membership request.