



## Aaptle Meeting #18 Minutes 20/10/2020

Chaired by SBTD Nicky Shaw

Amy Wildgoose SMA  
Andy Rowley SMA  
Lucy Carter ALD  
Mark Jonathan ALD  
Jo Town ALD  
Ian Sunders ALD  
Katie Scott SBTD  
David Farley SBTD  
Cat Silver SBTD  
Katie Scott SBTD  
Mandy Ivory castille PMF  
Grit Eckert ASAM  
Domin B ASD  
Zoe Milton ASD  
Ian Galloway - Video Code  
Gilly T - Video Code  
Catherine CITA  
Helen Mumby PMA  
Peter McKintosh FMTW  
Bruno Poet Stage Sight  
Tamykha Patter Stage Sight

### Actions in blue

### Things to keep an eye on in green

#### 1. Welcome and Apologies

- Apologies - Scene Change

#### 2. Housekeeping - no updates

#### 3. Future Guests Updates

- Amanda Parker – confirmed for 27<sup>th</sup> Oct, meeting to be hosted by FMTW  
Amanda is going to talk so let her talk and ask questions for after - no requirement to collate questions in advance

Action - can we ask Amanda if she would allow it to be recorded and put on the cloud for those who cannot attend - Peter McKintosh to make this request.

- Helen Ryan from Bectu, invited via CITA -

Action - group meeting to form questions. There is a group on Slack already #bectu-meeting-questions. It was proposed that if anyone would like to meet to work on the questions then is Saturday workable? Lucy Carter is on this group

- Julian SOLT and Sebastian UK Theatre SBTD - FW is chasing up
- IPSE & CIF – Bruno Poet / Paule Constable - more news to follow - PC chasing them up

- Backstage Niche – **Video Code volunteered to update** on Backstage Niche and to find out if Backstage Niche might also want to join Aaptle.

**Action - It was agreed that we might want to invite some Artistic Directors/ Exec Direc & Producers along as future guests. See Section 6 Back to Work Letter below.**

#### 4. Representation within Aaptle

- **Unconscious Bias Training.**

Tawala and Chickenshed both offer training - Stage Sight still looking for more info from each organisation.

SMA and ALD think they would have a high take up - proposed sharing any spare places if they don't have full take up of a booked session.

Cost around £40. The question of affordability to individuals raised. Stage Sight might seek ACE funding for sponsored places but that's not in the short term.

Regionally this training is accessible as it is delivered online. Is regional funding a possibility to help enable regional engagement?

**Action: Get numbers in from organisations for interest in this - what associations definitely want places and give responses before the Aaptle meeting on 3rd Nov. Please refer to the slack channel #unconscious\_implicit\_bias\_training**

- ABTT to hold speak-listen-reset-heal anti-racism conference on 3<sup>rd</sup> November. **This session is limited to people who have experienced racism, if you have not experienced racism it the first would be 10th November.**

Amanda Parker is running these in association with Bectu & SOLT and could perhaps tell us more next week.

#### 5. Government Culture Fund Distribution

- Discussion of Aaptle response to the Guardian and The Stage articles (regarding organisations required to thank the government for funding). It was considered that it wasn't necessarily useful to make any open comment on this from Aaptle but **we should support the FMTW letter to the government.**

#### 6. Regional views

- The funding announcements were due this week for funding in Wales (&Scotland?) - we need to keep an eye on this. It was noted how different the rules are in the regions apart from London. In Wales it's reported that there are still not socially distanced performances allowed.
- It was noted that in the North members of our community have been hit very hard by economic hardship and are not necessarily able to afford union representation. Paul Fleming (Equity) is to visit FMTW this Friday - question for him would be how can you help freelancers and how can they help you when they are not members.
- It was agreed that this is what Aaptle was created to address. Can Aaptle (through the member associations) do more - perhaps by signposting or in education session with Directors/ Producers?
- It was stated that some SOLT management are departing from SOLT contracts and not paying membership fees. Also there are many companies cannot join SOLT/UK theatre. This adds to the 'Take it or Leave it, Starvation contracts' that are out there at the moment.

**Action: we collectively need more regional representation within Aaptle meetings**

### **This led into the discussion about the response to the Aaptle Back to Work letter**

- Should we be writing another letter to The Stage to say how disappointed we are with the response (only 2 people responded - one was SOLT member). How can that letter have more reach? Aaptle has weight and can support the weight of the unions
- It was suggested we could think about inviting selected AD's and Executive Directors along and pose questions directly, those with industry knowledge. It was suggested that we set up a channel for possible invitees.
- There is now in slack a channel called #future-guests so members can compile a list incl new and emerging producers
- With regards to showing the value of what backstage and creative workers do and how much time we put in, different organisations have published different documents, including ALD 'Producers Guide', Campaigns such as The Value of Design, SMA has had a How to Employ A Stage Manager Guide which can be sent out in support of members who are being offered low or incomplete contracts/payments.

**Actions: share accessible info through Aaptle. Share Association information on own websites. Signpost to FMTW.**

### **Discussion on ability to negotiate successfully for higher fee.**

- Need to differentiate between two categories of contracts when negotiating - when there is no more money to ask for, or when a producer does have reserve funding to increase a fee. It was agreed that negotiation feels like a 'dark art' to those without representation and individuals would find it useful to understand it better.

**Actions: We need to feed back to ACE if an organisation is paying below the fee - who when and how?**

### **7. Creative and Backstage representation on theatre boards**

- How can we create more opportunities to have influence in theatre boardrooms? if we want more opportunities for backstage workers, we have to make them visible at board levels too

#### **Is it useful to compile a list of Aaptle members who already sit on boards to understand how to do this?**

It was noted that boards are also full of people who are in full time paid employment - whilst being on a board and a freelancer is very time consuming.

- A couple of Aaptlers on boards gave insights - surprisingly easy to feel comfortable, can ask a board if you can sit in on it to get experience of how one operates. Most boards have documentation on how to join some links were shared

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/sculpt>

<https://boardappointments.co.uk/board-vacancies#>

<https://www.charityjob.co.uk/volunteer-jobs/trustees>

- Boards are in need of the backstage and creative perspective, so It was agreed to keep this as a live point for future meeting

### **8. COVID working practice update**

- AAPTLE associations are developing organisation-specific working practice documents to share within the Alliance and put on public facing websites.

**Action: Encourage everyone else to consider neurodiversity and accessibility of documents.**

### **9. Back to Work Guidance Letter**

- Please refer to previous discussion about this under Section 6. It was suggested to - hold off until the start of November for this as by then we'll know about the funding.
- Keep the point for discussion going forward

#### 10. SOLT/Equity (erosion of t's&c's)

- Progress/insights from MU Westend ballot - **Nothing new to add**
- Group of spokespeople from Aaptle formed to respond to any impact of Aaptle letter on SOLT/producers – any updates/comments? **Nothing new to add**

**Action: keep this on Aaptle agenda**

#### 11. Future Projects Updates

- Education Outreach -next meeting next week on 27th to move things forward
- FMTW Future labs - The next three are happening next week - for people with specific needs not allowing time for applications - re-open applications for those future labs as want lots of people to apply. Keep an eye out for this - so they can go in our separate newsletter.
- SBTB
  - Mentoring programme and reaching out to link up for a multi-disciplined future

**Action: SBTB to contact Video Code- looking at providing some collaborative meetings.**

**SBTB to contact Cita - looking at providing some collaborative meetings.**

- Coffee on the Kings's Road update – talks for Designers.
- **Sustainability working groups.**

**SBTB's meets every other week - you don't need to be a SBTB member to join in.**

<http://www.theatredesign.org.uk/working-groups/sustainable-design-group/>

- ALD mentioned the popularity of their mentoring programmes.
- ALD's Sustainability declaration is on their website if anyone wants to look at it. Talking the same language and also happy to edit ours as still in early stages

#### 12. A.O.B.

**Next Meeting:**

**Host: FMTW 27<sup>th</sup> Oct, with Inc Art's Amanda Parker**