

**ST HUGH'S FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS REPORT
SIX OF ONE AND HALF A DOZEN OF THE OTHER
GIUSEPPE AND EMMA BELLI**

We would both like to thank the Foundation for your support of this project and the award.

The planning of this project took almost two years of development from concept.

Our main difficulty was not in the development of the idea itself, but getting all relevant creative partners on board, and timetables coinciding with often scarce availability. Making preemptive bookings again and again during this and finally making plans for the events to happen efficiently.

Our application to the Foundation was for the development of Phase 1 of our project. This consisted of a research and development WORKSHOP and a later SYMPOSIUM founded on the information gathered from the R and D. The first important planned public and wider legacy component of the process.

The funding we received sadly only allowed us to complete the workshop.

The R&D Workshop and consequence of the loss of the Symposium.

The workshop was a great success and took place over two days at Lincoln Drill Hall.

Collaborators included esteemed Director martin Duncan, Producer Simon Hollingworth, Writer Dr Michael Pinchbeck, Strategic Planner and Cultural Place Making specialist Charlie Kemp, Education Specialist Sarah Luty, and Company manager and production and budget management advisor Julian Hanby. With support from St Hugh's in the presence of Phil Cosker.

On day 1 we presented the idea brief for the project in the Drill Hall Theatre and Auditorium, and gathered initial responses from in depth discussion.

The set was revealed and the group responded to that.

In setting up alone, we decided that the Turf should be removed as it was too prescriptive. The Tent sat in a plain black circle with a scattering of leaves as suggestion. It did create an air of anticipation.

In further discussions that day we were able to preempt many potential technical, practical and creative problems in detail. These were collated and used to inform the group in more detailed discussion the following day.

All discussions were sound recorded.

Day 2 was a day of enlightenment. With detailed overnight scrutiny, Julian Hanby arrived with a full production budget breakdown including performance costs, including searching questions regarding the various roles theoretically allocated to the prospective partners, including those present. This discussion was at times uncomfortably honest, but absolutely necessary. From it we discovered the commitment we needed from members of the group going forward, and it was concluded following this that the role we had made for Charlie going forward was flawed.

She was invaluable in an advisory role, but after R&D what was needed was a Marketing and media strategist, and even then at very specific times.

It was also clear that we had all massively underestimated the presence and potential in Julian as a widely specialized creative producer. He shone.

We were thus able to begin planning for the production in finer detail as a potentially national experience too, the building of a local profile and promoting local creativity in a national context.

The role of education was noted as integral to all processes as was marketing. More abstract thinking out of normal contexts were also

discussed which included ideas for publishing and revenue pre production.

All of these ideas formed the content contexts within which questions would be asked in the SYMPOSIUM and would be wide reaching challenges to normal process thinking.

The SYMPOSIUM in its nature was a complex beast to plan, we had several key players with schedules booked years in advance offering dates. The Drill Hall had committed to support in kind with rehearsal and space for the performers, and was a committed keen future partner moving on.

The Drill Hall was booked, a guest list and audience pretty much guaranteed.

Most importantly we had keynote speakers and further offer of support from The Society of British Theatre Designers, Creative Industries and Arts Council England as well as respected representatives of several of the major regional universities. All of this had to be planned and placed on the premise it would happen, while making applications for funding.

The actioning of this was a major producing learning curve, but also very exciting.

Our only disappointment is that we did not secure funding for it to happen.

The consequence of this loss was that the symposium; the culmination of Phase 1 as a perfect moment in time, was gone.

Momentum was lost. That same group was impossible to schedule in the next year even.

The climate need for it was in an educational sense alone was perfect. We were disappointed as were many, but in retrospect and after a period of time many good things came from the R&D alone.

Since this time, we have continued to promote the idea of designers as project instigators.

This project was born out of an analysis of process; the questioning and challenging of the norm with a huge emphasis on inclusion and specialist mentorship, and to promote this as a norm. An opportunity to raise an eyeglass to the region and focus a wider attention on its regional talent. The Symposium fulfilled this role as a Launchpad, had great interest, time to be marketed thoroughly, and was the vital part of our process whose success would have underpinned all of our further funding and partnership applications. Particularly with the arts council and other creative bodies.

We met many people while developing the symposium that allowed these ideas in abstract thinking to live on proactively in the creative processes of a wider set of prospective career creatives.

We have given talks and masterclasses as Designer Instigators at Nottingham Trent University, Lincoln, Bishop Grosseteste and other events, and have been invited on to several panels as advisors and promoters of abstract process thinking.

As a direct consequence of the project and its development-

- We are now on an advisory panel at NTU.
- We are both associate lecturers at the University of Lincoln.
- We are Regional Ambassadors to the East Midlands for The Society of British Theatre Designers, in association with the V&A bringing some of the Prague Quadrennial exhibition, the largest international exhibition of performance design to Lincolnshire at the National Centre for Craft and Design.

Very exciting for us too is a commitment from the amazing company of TRANSPORTED to making an opera in Lincolnshire, with us as creative project leaders.

The list does go on but it is all a direct result of the support in part of The St Hughs Foundation and our project.

This support was fundamental in a period of intense personal creative development. It was critical in allowing us a wider focused approach to analysis of processes, and allowed us to explore and share our thinking with others and discover that it is something important, and worth developing. Promoting new thinking with the new thinkers outside the context of the formality of established education.

Six of One and half a Dozen of the Other in some form will happen at some point. The thinking behind it and the repercussions of beginning it continue to bear good fruit.

The R&D was great for our personal development. The Symposium was planned at a great time and would have been amazing.

What we have learned and achieved since then tells us that now is a better time. We have done better thinking. Time has allowed us to share our ideas more definitely.

Added to this, our current Political and cultural climate both locally and nationally, and the demands on educational establishments to commoditise creativity, particularly point to a greater need for different creative thinking and its nurture.

Maybe its time for that Symposium.

Very best wishes and thank you again
Giuseppe and Emma Belli