



Annual Report 2010



About Us

Unfolding Theatre makes theatre with a North Eastern spirit: a wild sense of humour, strength of character and a delight in bringing people together.

We create theatre by responding to people's stories, talents and imaginations. For this reason, we try to involve as wide a range of people as possible in making our work. That way we find things out that we didn't know before.

Unfolding Theatre was founded in 2008 and is led by Artistic Director, Annie Rigby, and Producer, Leyla Asadi. We pride ourselves on bringing together teams of talented, imaginative and exciting artists and technicians for every project we deliver.

We are based at The Shed Creative Studios in Gateshead, a workspace for artists and creative businesses.

Come and visit us sometime.



Photographer: Reed Ingram Weir

Artistic Director's Report



Photo: Reed Ingram Weir

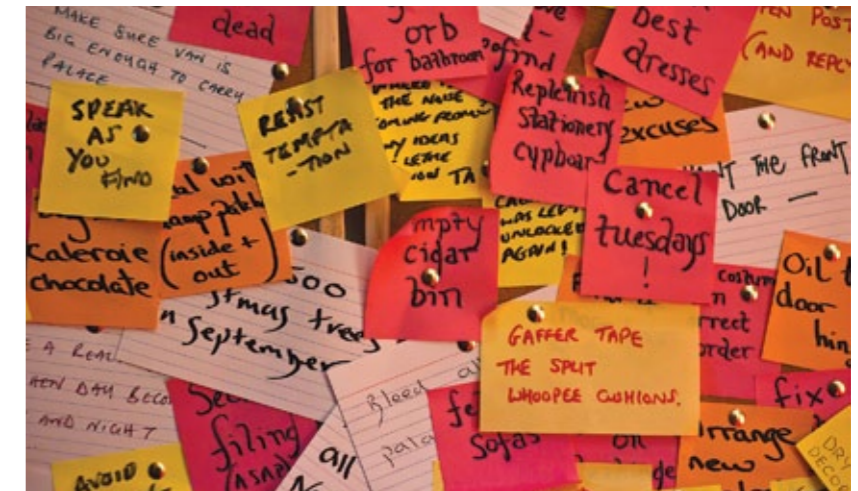


Photo: Reed Ingram Weir

2010 was Unfolding Theatre's second year in existence. And what a year it was.

We presented our first major production, **Building Palaces**, to sell-out audiences, receiving national critical acclaim. We ran theatre projects with 1300 participants, employed 30 artists and technicians and shared 25 performances with nearly 3300 audience members. And to top it all off, we moved into our first company home at The Shed Creative Studios in Gateshead.

Building Palaces was perhaps our greatest achievement so far. Responses were incredible, with feedback such as, "one of the most magical and joyful things I have ever seen". The production won 'Performance of the Year' at The Journal Culture Awards 2010, and a 4 star review from *The Guardian* described the company as "thrillingly talented people". This confirmed we had achieved our goal of launching Unfolding Theatre as an artistically ambitious, inventive and successful young company.

Other highlights of 2010 were the great working relationships we built with some of the North East's most talented and imaginative artists and technicians. For example, we were delighted to work with award-winning writer, David Almond, on his new play, **Noah and the Fludd**, as part of the Durham Mysteries Festival.

1300 participants from across the North East of England and in Port Elizabeth, South Africa contributed to our projects in 2010, achieving our mission of making theatre that responds to the stories, talents and imaginations of a wide range of people. One project that had a big impact on us was working with recovering heroin addicts in Stockton to create the empty shop installation, **Let Me Tell You**.

Thank you to all the artists and technicians we worked with, our audiences and participants, our advisory group, the people who have commissioned our work and the funders of our projects. Unfolding Theatre's first few years have been, and continue to be, an amazing journey.

Looking forward to 2011, we plan to develop a new touring production, **Best in the World**, that seeks to answer the question, "What is it like to be best in the world at something?" We look forward to sharing it with you.

Annie Rigby, Artistic Director



Photo: Reed Ingram Weir

2010 Projects

Building Palaces

“Thrillingly talented people”

★★★★ *The Guardian*

“[A] visual and aural feast... a magical fantasy hotch-potch of music, colour and performance” *The Journal*

Winner of Performance of the Year
The Journal Culture Awards 2010

Building Palaces, in September 2010, was our first major production: a fantastical, music-filled, promenade piece performed in one of Newcastle’s hidden architectural gems, The Stephenson Works, where Robert Stephenson designed the original locomotives.

A team of musicians and actors built their own palaces within Stephenson’s palace of invention. Audiences then took an unforgettable journey where they got the chance to play gongs in Brendan’s percussion palace, follow a rope while blindfolded in Jane’s palace of fantasy and flight and be sung to in Beccy’s palace

Photo: Reed Ingram Weir



of songs. The audience then had space to think about their own palaces before a spectacular musical celebration brought the evening to a close.

The production was a sell-out success and received regional and national press coverage and fantastic feedback from audiences. It engaged 100 local people who designed their own palaces, many of which were displayed as part of the show.

We are proud of the strong working relationships we built with the production team, project partners and funders. Thank you to everyone who made it happen.



Let Me Tell You

“Excellent - everyone should see it and realise that people are people. Thank you.” *Comment in the visitor’s book*

Throughout Spring 2010 we worked with a group of recovering heroin addicts at the STAR Project in Stockton to create a remarkable installation.

Let Me Tell You was presented in June 2010 in an empty shop on Wellington Square. Over 550 people visited the installation.

It explored the recovering addicts’ past, present and hopes for the future, and inspired visitors to think about changes they might make in their own lives.

Due to the impact the project had on visitors, participants and ourselves, we

Photo: Reed Ingram Weir



Photo: Reed Ingram Weir

The schools began by thinking about what they knew and imagined about South Africa, before filming greetings and questions to send to the artists. Annie worked with the artists to create video responses, enabling conversation in advance of the South Africans’ visit.

We developed **Introduce Yourself** further, working with The Forge and Creative Partnerships Durham Sunderland, by running a project with Stanhope Primary School and filmmaker, Rafieka Davis. The children explored South Africa through Rafieka’s eyes, directing her view to answer their specific questions. The children integrated her video into a performance they created in response.

Other projects

We surpassed our goal for 2010 to deliver one major production and three commissioned projects, by delivering an additional three projects. We ran a module on devising theatre at Northumbria University, re-staged **Wasted** at ARC in Stockton, a play made with the mothers of heroin addicts, and presented **The Journeys Project** in three libraries across the North East.

Business Training & Consultancy

“Annie Rigby was an inspiration. She spread enthusiasm and enjoyment and had a natural ability to get people talking and thinking creatively.”

Kirsty Williams, Senior Area Project Officer, Newcastle City Council

We achieved our 2010 goal of launching business training workshops and consultancy. Our first project was a workshop with Newcastle City Council’s Regeneration Team, helping them to develop ideas for the launch of the Make your Mark programme in Benwell and Scotswood.

We also developed the workshop, **The Art of Ideas**, which is currently on sale to businesses for 2011.

Photo: Reed Ingram Weir



Photo: Tim Thornalley

Noah and the Fludd

“One of the theatrical events of the year” *The Journal*

In May 2010 Unfolding Theatre was delighted to work with award-winning children’s writer, David Almond, to produce **Noah and the Fludd**.

The show was performed on a massive outdoor stage at The Sands, Durham, as part of the Durham Mysteries festival.

Noah and the Fludd was performed by a fantastic community cast of 55 adults and children from Esh Winning and Waterhouses in County Durham.

Introduce Yourself

This international project saw Annie Rigby travel to Port Elizabeth, South Africa, to establish creative dialogues between 5 British schools and 19 South African artists.



Company Development

Staff

One of the joys of 2010 was collaborating with the 30 skilled and inventive artists and technicians we employed in 2010. We are very proud of the positive feedback they have given us, and delighted that they all want to work with us again in the future. This supports our aim of building up a pool of talented and trusted regular collaborators.

We are also pleased that Leyla Asadi, who first came on board to produce **Building Palaces**, now has a long term relationship with Unfolding Theatre working part-time as our Producer.

Advisory Group

Our Advisory Group has continued to be a source of good ideas, wisdom and guidance, supporting the company's strategic development and project

delivery. At our 2010 AGM, Susan Coffey and Anna Disley were elected as company directors, alongside Annie Rigby, ensuring good governance as the company grows.

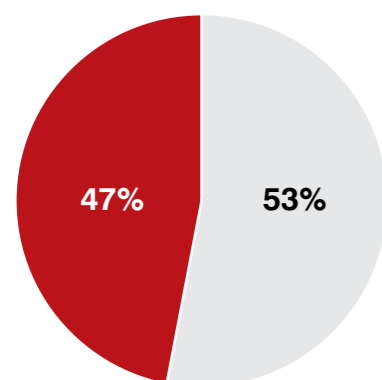
Company Base

In August, we moved into our first company home, The Shed Creative Studios in Gateshead. It has been fantastic to have our own workspace, and even better to work in a building that houses other creative businesses and artists.

Our online presence has continued to grow throughout 2010, as we developed the website to include **Building Palaces** rehearsal diaries and a project archive. We have also used our mailing list, Vimeo, Twitter and Facebook to enable dialogue with our audiences and to work digitally with artists in South Africa.

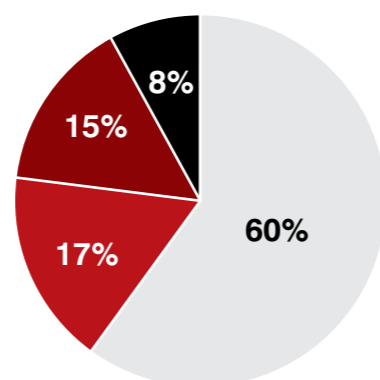
Finance

Company turnover in 2010: £64,085



Grants: £33,450
Earned income: £30,355

Company expenditure in 2010: £62,828



Artists and production staff: £37,539
Director's salary (inc NI): £10,325
Production costs (set, equipment): £9,645
Administration costs: £5,319

Unfolding Theatre made a surplus, after taxation, in 2010 of £1,586.

Audiences and Participants

In 2010 Unfolding Theatre worked with 1300 participants.

We presented 25 performances, which were seen by a total of 3287 audience members.

What they said about our work

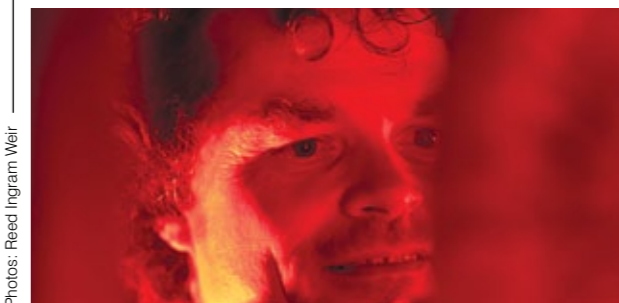
"Truly incredible. One of the most magical and joyful things I've ever seen."

"I can't express how much I loved this."

"Building Palaces was thoughtful, imaginative, seductive theatre. The best kind!"



Photos: Reed Ingram Weir



What they said about us

"Annie Rigby is an acutely perceptive theatre maker and brilliant at managing people." Jane Arnfield, Performer

"I experienced commitment, respect, a high level of creativity and sense of ownership from, and for, all of those involved." Adele Evitt, Volunteer

"Thank you for letting me work not only on a fantastic production but a production with exceptionally nice people. I had a great time and was proud to be associated with something that put so many smiles on so many faces." Paul Aziz, Stage Manager

Plans and goals for 2011

Unfolding Theatre aims to build on 2010's success by developing high quality theatre projects that extend the company's reach and raise its profile regionally and nationally throughout 2011. The company also aims to generate income to build up reserves and invest in its staff and projects.

To achieve these goals, Unfolding Theatre plans to develop its first touring production, **Best in the World**, a studio production that explores what it is like to be best in the world at something. In 2011 the company will undertake research and development and deliver participation work on this theme, before touring the show in 2012, coinciding with

the Cultural Olympiad.

Unfolding Theatre also plans to deliver at least three commissioned projects, building relationships with partner organisations. Projects already in place include **Let Me Tell You: Gateshead**, re-making our shop installation working with recovering drug addicts and alcoholics, and **Where do Ideas Come From?**, a Creative Partnerships project working in three primary schools in County Durham. Unfolding Theatre plans to develop its strand of work in business, by delivering two training workshops.

Unfolding Theatre also plans to begin research and development on a new piece of theatre, to be produced in 2013.

How You Can Work With Unfolding Theatre

Theatre Projects

Unfolding Theatre makes theatre with a North Eastern spirit: a wild sense of humour, strength of character and a delight in bringing people together.

We work in partnership with other theatre companies, individual artists, schools, universities and community groups, with projects ranging from single workshops to long term projects. If you are interested in commissioning or co-producing work with us, drop us a line and we can get talking.

In 2011 we are also looking for groups of all ages to participate in workshops for our next production, **Best in the World**. Workshops explore what it might be like to be best in the world at something.

Business Training

Generating and nurturing ideas is as fundamental to business as it is to making theatre. Unfolding Theatre uses its creative expertise to offer a range of services for businesses, from one off workshops to creative consultancy for projects and organisations.

Our one-day workshop, **The Art of Ideas**, is currently available. The workshop gives you and your team the

chance to reflect upon your own creativity, explore techniques to generate, nurture and develop new ideas, and to work together as a team more productively and energetically.

Contact us for more information.

Funding and donations

Unfolding Theatre raises funds for all of its projects, and accepts donations of all sizes.

If you would like to support our work, you can send us a cheque, made out to Unfolding Theatre, or get in touch to arrange a direct bank transfer.

Contact Us

Annie Rigby, Artistic Director

annie@unfoldingtheatre.co.uk

Leyla Asadi, Producer

leyla@unfoldingtheatre.co.uk

Telephone 0191 265 4355

Website unfoldingtheatre.co.uk



Unfolding Theatre

348-354 The Shed
Creative Studios
High Street South
Gateshead
NE8 1EN

Unfolding Theatre is a company limited by guarantee in England & Wales. Company No: 6764666.

