

A FAMILY THEATRE PRODUCTION IN BRAMHALL PARK

We are a group of theatre professionals who live in and around Stockport, with experience of putting on productions in the open air. With the relaxation of lock-down we thought it would be an opportunity to put on a cheerful, thrilling, summer show of the kind that attracts large audiences in Heaton Park in Prestwich and Williamson Park in Lancaster every year except this year.

It must be said that this is very short notice to organise funding, and therefore this is an application in principle, and possibly dependent on suitable funding being arranged. In the event of that not being possible, we are nevertheless so excited by the prospect of working in Bramhall park that we are determined to approach you again next year, so the consideration of this application would be useful to us in case there are any major objections we would need to overcome.

THE SHOW

Given the constraints of social-distancing currently in place, we have decided not to adopt the promenade format – ie walking the audience from location to location – and instead to perform in the courtyard in front of the Hall. If access to the Hall were possible for performers so they could, for example, lean out of a window to deliver some lines, that would be helpful but not essential.

We do not yet have a title, but that and the script and so on is the easiest part of the process for us, and we are researching pre-existing shows at the moment. It will have a cast of 6 professional actors.

TECHNICAL RIG

The courtyard has a fine natural acoustic that should make it unnecessary to provide amplification. Any musical instruments played will be acoustic. Performances will take place in the morning and afternoon (11.30 and 14.30, lasting 75 minutes) so lighting will be unnecessary. Any special technical effects will be rigged and derigged every day so nothing will be left on site.

COVID RISK ASSESSMENT

All aspects of the performance will be compliant with the Government guidelines for theatrical performances as described at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts>

and any further updates to this guidance. In practice this will mean :

Audience

1. All tickets and financial transactions will be done electronically. Tickets will be limited by the number of socially distanced places for seating. Probably 60 at the most.
2. We will prepare and staff several entry points to the area around the courtyard, and practice social distancing at all relevant points.
3. The audience area in the courtyard will be delineated into separate areas for each ticketed group, eg a family, or a single person, with appropriate distancing between each group.
4. The audience will be told in advance the timescale of the show and that no toilets are available

5. At the end of the show the audience will be asked to remain in their areas until they are released, so that we can stage a socially distanced departure.
6. The audience will be reminded to bring umbrellas in case of rain.
7. We will provide stewards who will manage the audience.

Acting Company

We will try to cast actors who live together – there's quite a lot of that – so that they can work more closely together. And they

1. Will be rehearsed in the open air, not at the park initially.
2. Will keep social distancing whilst performing, as far as possible.
3. Will not get so close to the audience as to breach social distancing.
4. Will travel to and from the venue in their own transport.

FINANCE

The producers will seek support from Arts Council England. However the timescale may mean their application process is inappropriate. If other sources of funding aren't available it may be that the show could be mounted as a profit-share. In other words the performers and producers take the risk, and split any proceeds between them. That is a risk for them, but everyone is very keen to work and would probably take the chance.

Under Equity rules, and allowing for one week rehearsal and one week performance, the salaries of six local performers would be approx. £4200 (6x£350x2). Publicity costs could be as little as £500 if we pull in some favours. There will be no technical hire, we will raid other theatres' costume depts., and we will rehearse in someone's garden. Administration, transport and other costs might be £1000, including contingency. Stewards will be volunteers.

If we can get 50 people for 12 performances at £10 a ticket that would be £6000, which will cover our costs, but leave little for a hire charge for the Hall. We would be grateful if you would consider waiving a charge, or making it a second call on our income after our other costs are settled.

I will attend the Area Committee meeting and answer any questions if our application is put on the agenda.