

OLDHAM
Coliseum
THEATRE

2018-19
Annual Report



Photo: Joel Chester Filles



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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

GMCA **GREATER
MANCHESTER
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On Oldham's Stage

In 2018-19...

**72,000 people saw a show
at the Coliseum**

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On Oldham's Stage

We staged 283 performances over 65 shows and events

46 shows and events in our Main House and 19 in our Studio





We staged three world premieres in Oldham, including two commissions written especially for the Coliseum

★★★★ *“Both a celebration and a revival of the tradition. And jolly good it is too”*
- Northern Soul on *Whisky Galore*

★★★★ *“Moving and compelling, with a deeply evocative score”*
- The Reviews Hub on *Bread & Roses*

★★★★ *“An absolute celebration of diversity and a truly special piece of theatre”*
- North West End on *Dishoom!*

On Oldham's Stage

We had our most successful pantomime ever

Just under 35,000 people saw *Cinderella*

"A lovingly made dessert of a panto"
- The Guardian



*"Cinderella at Oldham Coliseum is
the best traditional panto
in the North"*

- Upstaged Manchester

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Our productions were nominated for two awards



NORTHERN SOUL AWARDS 2016

Bread & Roses was nominated for Theatre Production of the Year at the Northern Soul Awards



THE GREAT BRITISH PANTOMIME AWARDS

Cinderella was nominated for Best Ugly Sisters at The Great British Pantomime Awards

We held 21 Access performances:

- 9 Audio Described performances
- 8 British Sign Language Interpreted performances
- 2 Captioned performances
- 2 Dementia Friendly / Relaxed performances

And we were named as one of the most accessible theatres in the UK in an article by TickX



From Oldham to the World

We staged two national tours, playing at 12 venues across the country

“This production deserves full marks for finding a fresh new way of interpreting a classic story” - Love Midlands Theatre reviews Whisky Galore at Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

“Dishoom! is a successful example of why we need more diverse theatre to provide us with cultural stories beyond our own experiences” - Romford Recorder reviews Dishoom! at Queen’s Theatre Hornchurch

And we transferred *Relatively Speaking* to Yorkshire

“This production of a truly wonderful play promises both silliness and sophistication aplenty in a world of endless misunderstandings” - Always Time for Theatre reviews Relatively Speaking at Harrogate Theatre

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From Oldham to the World

We collaborated with four other theatres, enabling us to produce new work on a larger scale

Whisky Galore was co-produced with Hull Truck Theatre and New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme



Dishoom! was co-produced with Rifco and Watford Palace Theatre



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Supporting Theatre Makers

We held our first Cultivate Festival

Welcoming 200 artists to 12 accessible workshops, talks and opportunities covering the many areas of theatre making over the course of a week

CASE STUDY: Kitty Douglas, Actor

Cultivate Festival 2018 included the Coliseum's first Open Auditions, which received over 400 expressions of interest. Our panel of experts met with 61 actors on the day, including Kitty Douglas, who later auditioned for and was cast in the role of Kate in the Coliseum's 2019 production of *Visitors*.

"The Open Auditions concept is brilliant, it provides a great opportunity for a young actor to share their work and engage with a professional creative team. It also meant that, for me, when I auditioned for Chris [Lawson, Director] a year later, I was a little less nervous - a bonus for any actor and something I hugely appreciated. Everyone I encountered at the Coliseum was lovely and full of warmth and my time there was an absolute joy."

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Nine independent theatre companies performed new work in our Studio

We provided 160 hours of free Research & Development space for artists



CASE STUDY: *Purge* by Manchester ADP

Manchester ADP used the Coliseum's Studio space to R&D their second full length production, *Purge*, from 1 - 15 March 2019. The show opened at the Coliseum later that month and transferred to The Lowry, Salford.

"Oldham Coliseum were very helpful in supporting the development of Purge. They were kind enough to provide rehearsal space and tech advice. We even experimented with a more inclusive rehearsal room by having a mother and very young baby involved in the cast. The staff at the Coliseum were very accommodating in ensuring parking and access for the pram were available and making us feel very welcome. They're always the perfect hosts and we can't thank them enough for all their support." - Diana Atkins, Manchester ADP

We welcomed two independent theatre companies as our first Associate Artists

Fine Comb Theatre

- Rachel McMurray and Catherine Morefield

“The mentorship and guidance we have received since being at the Coliseum has been invaluable, helping us secure our first Arts Council funded Research and Development Project. From day one we have been welcomed into the building and Oldham Coliseum has helped us grow so much as a company.”

Rogue Bones

- Kash Arshad and Amie George

“This partnership means that Rogue Bones has the space to play and experiment, helping us develop our unique style of work. The recognition and support of the Coliseum is invaluable to us as we strive to grow our company.”



We held our first Main House Takeover

Welcoming over 400 people to see work by independent companies, usually seen in Studio and Fringe Theatres, on the Coliseum's historic Main Stage

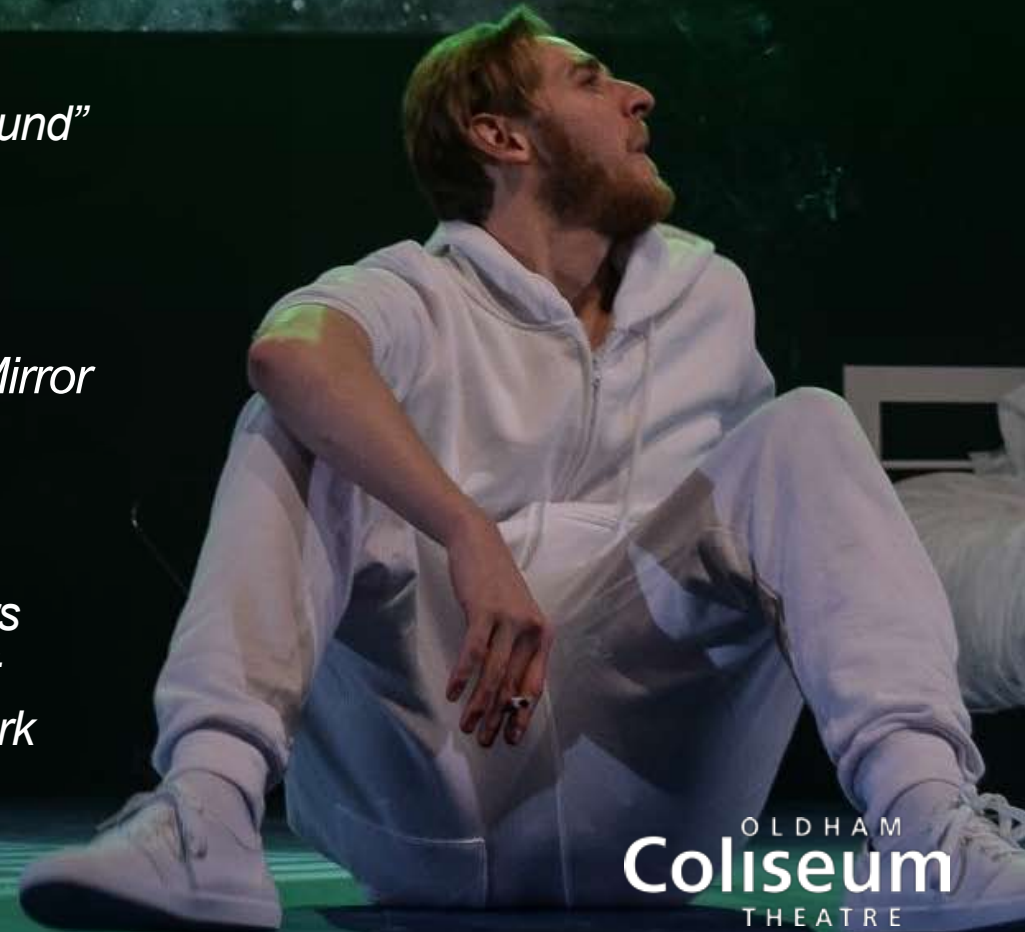
The Effect by Play With Fire

★★★★ “Solid and sophisticated performances all round”
- North West End

Double Bill: Rosie Fleeshman's *Narcissist in the Mirror* and winner of Oldham Coliseum's Pick of the Greater Manchester Fringe Award, *POP* by EventHorizon

“The Pick of the Fringe Award gives young Northern actors like ourselves a chance to develop our play and perform it on the Main Stage. It's vitally important to support new work from the North; that's exactly what Oldham are doing.”

- Martha Godber, EventHorizon



**30 young people took part
in our training programme
for NEET young people,
Teaching Theatre Pathways**

20 young people achieved their Bronze Arts Award

CASE STUDY: Sophie Taylor-Hall, former Teaching Theatre Pathways participant

Sophie joined the Teaching Theatre Pathways course after graduating from university. She knew she wanted to work in the theatre industry but didn't know where to start. Following Teaching Theatre Pathways she went on to train with the National Youth Theatre and is looking to start further training in Theatre Studies or Stage Management.

"The course allowed me to experience different aspects of backstage theatre and the various routes that I could choose to go down. I attended an audition for the National Youth Theatre in which I spoke a lot about the course and how it had helped me, and I think it was instrumental to me passing that interview. I'm incredibly grateful."

A Teaching Theatre

We worked with over 400 pupils from 15 schools and supported three inter-school performances on our Main Stage as part of our Secondary Education Partnership Scheme

“The project has helped to solidify drama as a vital part of the wider school community with a great opportunity for pupils in Key Stage 3 and supported me by bringing other practitioner’s ideas and methods into the department”. - S Wane, Mossley Hollins High School

In partnership with North West Drama Services, we worked with 396 children from 12 Oldham and Rochdale schools and supported two performances on our Main Stage as part of the Children’s Shakespeare Festival

We delivered four Continued Professional Development sessions for Teachers

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50 young people took part in our youth programme: The Young Rep, TheatreLab and The Steering Group (TSG)

The Young Rep toured family friendly
work to five venues/libraries

TheatreLab produced and performed
three shows at the Coliseum

*"The young actors commanded the stage from start to finish and worked well as a cast in bringing one of the strangest and most horrific chapters of human history to life." - The Oldham Reporter reviews TheatreLab's performance of *The Crucible**



CASE STUDY: Ryan Roberts

An aspiring writer, Ryan began his journey with the Coliseum as a participant of the Teaching Theatre Pathways programme. Following the course he joined TSG, becoming a Youth Board Rep for the Coliseum, and joined the Secondary Education Partnership Playwriting Scheme, where he wrote a short play which was performed by schools taking part in the Secondary Education Partnership Scheme.

"I wouldn't have gone to uni if it wasn't for this course. It's such a brilliant place here and it's allowed me to do so much. I'm really thankful for that."

A photograph of a woman and a man leaning over a table, looking at a project. The woman is on the left, wearing a dark, patterned top. The man is on the right, wearing a striped polo shirt and glasses. They are in a workshop or studio setting with various tools and materials on the table. The background is slightly blurred, showing some equipment and lights.

A Teaching Theatre

We delivered 36 play reading and writing sessions for adults, whose work was showcased as part of Cultivate Festival

We delivered 18 arts related workshops and talks with 50+ social group Full Circle

We relaunched our Dementia Friendly creative workshops, with a focus on puppetry and storytelling

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We delivered over 100 sessions in community and youth settings across Greater Manchester

We celebrated the creative work of over 100 residents aged 50+ from Housing and Care 21 properties across Oldham and produced a verbatim piece with residents from Hollinwood in partnership with Regenda Homes

CASE STUDY: *The Moon, The Stars and Eid* by Jigsaw Women's Group

Community and youth groups from across Greater Manchester came together to create and share theatre that explored family, community, neighbourhoods, memories and aspirations on the Coliseum's Main Stage; celebrating their collective identities and promoting community cohesion. Jigsaw Women's Group chose to celebrate their favourite parts of Eid at home through storytelling, movement and comedy.

"It was something new for all the ladies and it sounded like lots of fun. The ladies have tightened their friendships within the group by working on this performance, everyone played a part and has grown in confidence." - Minaz Aslam, Community Development Officer at Jigsaw Homes, on Jigsaw Women's Group's performance of *The Moon, The Stars and Eid*

We continued our long term relationship with Jigsaw Homes Group as our Major Partner

Delivering an in-depth scheme of work providing culture on the doorsteps of Jigsaw residents and numerous opportunities to engage with groups and unique projects which improve and enable creativity, health and employability



Photo: Jigsaw Homes Group

We helped 48 other charities by offering ticket vouchers which were used as prizes for fundraising raffles

In Oldham's Communities



CASE STUDY: Pantomime visit Dr Kershaw's Hospice

The Coliseum collaborates with other charities in the town to help make Oldham a better place to live and work. For the past three years our Pantomime cast have taken a break from their busy performance schedules to visit patients and staff at Dr Kershaw's Hospice.

"We are very grateful to the stars for giving up their time to visit and it really does make a difference - patients are at the centre of everything we do and to see so many smiles and so much laughter was precious, a memory we can all share." - Adele Doherty, Clinical Matron at Dr Kershaw's Hospice, speaking to the Oldham Reporter on the day of the visit.

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In Oldham's Communities

We continued relationships with over 13 businesses in Oldham and across Greater Manchester with bespoke sponsorship agreements

We hosted six VIP events for our supporting businesses, which were attended by key influencers from the Greater Manchester business and philanthropic community

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**36,000 people from Oldham
saw a show at the Coliseum**

**10,000 people from Rochdale and
Ashton saw a show at the Coliseum**

**14,000 people from across Manchester
saw a show at the Coliseum**

**A further 9,000 people from the rest of
the North West saw a show at the Coliseum**



We continued to appeal to people who wouldn't usually visit the theatre

53% of our audiences were classed as being somewhat engaged with arts and culture

31% of our audiences were classed as having little to no engagement with arts and culture

61% of the Coliseum's audiences also visited other cultural, leisure and retail destinations in the town centre when they visited Oldham to see a show at the theatre

Our impact in Oldham

We employed over 170 people



Including full time, part time, freelance and contractual staff, actors and creatives

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**We continued to reduce our
total emissions (CO₂e) by 5%
Making a total reduction of 32% since 2015**



We hosted our first digital installation

We increased our video output by 33%

The number of people visiting our website increased by 12%

Our monthly e-newsletter readership increased by 15%

Our Facebook Likes increased by 11% and our Twitter Followers grew by 7%



An Oldham Charity

1,400 donations were made to the Coliseum by our audiences, helping us to continue our work as a cultural and educational charity for Oldham

We received support from 16 Trusts and Foundations for education based projects as part of our Learning and Engagement programmes, including four Trusts that had not previously engaged with the theatre

Thank you

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An Oldham Charity

**44 volunteers donated
4,300 hours of their time
to the Coliseum, playing
a vital role in the Front of
House areas of the theatre
We couldn't do it without them**

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Thank you for your support of the Coliseum

**We look forward to what
the next year brings**

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www.coliseum.org.uk

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If you would like to support the Coliseum please contact John Edwards,
Lead Capital Fundraiser and Development Manager, on 0161 785 7018
or email johnedwards@coliseum.org.uk