**The Repertory Players**

**Production Report 2011**

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen

Allow me to begin by echoing the statement made by the Chairman in his report that the past year has not been an easy one for The Repertory Players.

We went into the year under a heavy debt burden and the onus was on the Production Committee to make a dent in that debt by ensuring that the productions we staged were a commercial success. To assist with this, we went back in history and looked at one of our most successful years, in terms of commercially successful productions, 1997. We saw from the results of that year, that musicals were without a doubt, the single most popular genre of theatre in that year. With this in mind, we tweaked the calendar to accommodate four musicals, as against the originally planned three.

We staged “The nOughties” in February, “Dream Lover” in January, “Rent” in April and “Motown Golden Jubilee” in September. While “The nOughties” was not a financial success, the show introduced our audiences to the new musicals released in the 2000s. “Dream Lover” was enjoyed by all who saw it and some sterling performances were seen. “Rent” was another new musical (to Harare in particular and Zimbabwe in general), despite having been seen on DsTV. It tackled the thorny issue of HIV/AIDS so was topical and not a little controversial for Zimbabwean audiences. An excellent production which did not get the audience support it deserved. “Motown Golden Jubilee” celebrated 50 years of Motown music and told the story from the start of the label by Berry Gordy. The cast was a mix of talent seen before on the Reps stage and some new comers which was very refreshing to see. This show attracted a different sector of the community to our theatre which can only be good for our audience numbers and we hope that they continue to attend our productions.

2011 also saw the welcome return of imported shows to our stage. Working with South African promoter, Colin Law, we brought in a singing group from Thailand called “Viva”. A young group of opera singers, they thrilled everyone who saw their show. Sadly, due to delays in clearance from the National Arts Council, we weren’t able to advertise the show adequately and the audiences did not do justice to the fabulous presentation. As a result of the lack of commercial success of this show, Colin Law cancelled the appearance of Garth Taylor which was scheduled to take place later in the year.

We also had a visit from a Zambia theatre company who staged two productions during their week in Harare – “Married vs Singles”, a comedy satire about infidelity, on the main stage in the evenings and “Panali Panali”, a story telling show aimed at younger audiences, in the afternoons. Again, both good productions which did not get the audiences they deserved.

Theatre Upstairs too had its fair share of non-traditional hirers. After HIFA (in which Reps had our own production for the first time in the history of the festival – “Jesus, My Boy”), we invited “What in the World Happened to Betty Lemon” and “Burn Makwerekwere Burn” to reprise their HIFA shows in the Theatre Upstairs. These were both successful and as they were done as joint ventures with the theatre companies concerned, we both made money.

In total, we staged 14 Reps productions on both stages, were part of 9 joint venture productions and hired out the theatres for 13 different productions. As a result of all this activity, in 2011, a surplus of $52 870.00 was made by productions as compared to a surplus of $42 482.00 achieved in 2010.

The Reps productions were as follows:

The Noughties

5 Star

Fame & the Poet/Magic

Dream Lover

Rent

Hitchhickers Guide

Shirley Valentine

Harare’s Got Talent 3

Motown

Saturday Night Live

Much Ado About Nothing

Robinson Crusoe

Caroline's Man (TU)

Humble Boy (TU)

Jesus My Boy (TU)

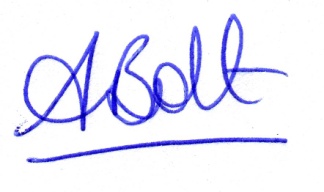
Double Bill (TU)

The 2012 calendar for the Main Stage is virtually full, with a week here and there available for hire and the 2013 Main Stage calendar has already taken shape with the genres and in some cases, the actual title of the production already in place. We are confident that we can continue to increase our revenues and our contribution to the running of Reps going forward.

My thanks go to my committee, directors, actors, singers, dancers, musicians, stage managers, stage crews, sound crews, lighting personnel, props ladies, workshops staff, wardrobe staff and mistresses, front of house and box office personnel and the Reps office, for their contribution to the productions over the last year. I am also delighted to welcome Zane E Lucas as our Director of Productions and assure him of the support of the production committee going forward.

Onward and upward!

Thank you



Sue Bolt  
Chairman – Production Committee