

Dear Paul Griffiths

Thank you to those who have signed the open letter to the Eisteddfod Council and Board.

We appreciate that the decision to suspend the Drama Medal competition remains a hot topic for many. We have listened carefully to the criticism that has already been circulated, and accept that our previous statements did not ease the worries of many people about the decision.

The Board of Trustees of the Eisteddfod, and the Board alone, is responsible for this decision. No volunteers involved in the Eisteddfod should therefore be criticised nor the staff.

Below is a response to the two issues you raised.

The Virtual Symposium

The Virtual Symposium was held in November this year to discuss representation in theatre in Wales, and to try to look forward to the future.

We are sorry if you did not feel you were allowed to express your opinion at the event. There was an opportunity for people to ask questions in the usual way within the Webinar throughout the session, and this was made clear more than once during the evening. No person was prevented from making comments or raising questions at any point. All comments and questions were visible to the panel.

It is also worth noting that very few of those who have signed the open letter (less than 8%) had registered and therefore attended the Symposium.

The Symposium was an opportunity to raise a number of important principles that have also been discussed by our panels and committees when revising our processes, rules and conditions in relation to the competitions. We believe that those principles will give confidence to competitors, judges, and benefactors of the Eisteddfod and the theatre in Wales when they are included in our guidelines and processes in their new form.

The way the Eisteddfod responded to what happened this year

We apologise for any upset caused because it appears that the principle of competing under a pseudonym, and in secret has been undermined for invalid, unnecessary reasons, or due to censorship, by the Eisteddfod.

Things were not like that. A completely valid and unprecedented concern arose which justified the need for us to make further enquiries. Following this, the Board's decision was to exercise their right to stop the competition in its entirety to protect everyone involved, and to ensure compliance with country's legislation.

We behaved in accordance with the rules and conditions of the Eisteddfod when taking this step. We had to act as we did, because of our duties as trustees for the benefit of the charity, and the integrity of the competition process.

As stated in August, our duty is to ensure that we have appropriate guidelines to avoid such situations arising in the future.

Yours truly,

Ashok Ahir

President of the Court and Chairman of the Management Board

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