

LETTER to the EDITOR

From Kim Hicks

Support the fight for the Bristol Old Vic - not just the Theatre Royal!

Dear Civic Society members

As people of action I am writing to ask for your immediate support in yet another campaign. Time is very short as crucial decisions could be made in the next couple of weeks.

No doubt most of you are aware that Bristol's wonderful Theatre Royal (the oldest continually working theatre in the country!) is closed for refurbishment. You may not be aware that the historic Bristol Old Vic company is threatened with extinction; the Theatre Royal and the Old Vic are not one and the same, but are funded separately.

The Bristol Old Vic company is a repertory company that creates and produces its own programme of work - providing fantastic opportunities for writers, directors, designers, lighting and sound technicians, set builders and of course actors. If repertory companies are squeezed out of existence young theatrical practitioners will have nowhere to hone their skills.

If the Arts council can avoid funding the Bristol Old Vic that will be a substantial saving for them (as money is channelled towards the 2012 Olympics in London). They may save funds in the short term but they will undermine not only the tradition of theatre in Bristol, but the fabric of the British theatrical profession as a whole - a profession which leads the world in the quality of the work it creates and the performers it produces.

Please write a letter supporting the survival of the Bristol Old Vic Company as well as the theatre Royal to: *Sir Christopher Frayling, Chairman Arts Council England, 14 Great Peter Street, London SW1P 3NQ, and Mrs Margaret Hodge MP, Minister of State for Culture, Media and Sport, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. Please also copy the letter to your local MP and your local Councillor.*

Thank you for reading this and for taking the time to add your voice to this important campaign.

Kim Hicks
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