

**THE
INSIDE
GUIDE TO
BEING AN
ARTISTIC
DIRECTOR
FROM
THE
OLD VIC**

GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION BY LENNIE STEVENSON



PHOTO: WILL PATRICK

I got involved in theatre as a teenager when I joined Chorley Youth Theatre. It was ace because we were kind of left to do our own thing — there wasn't an adult who told us how everything had to be done. Kids of different ages and from different schools pulled together to make the shows, and we had such a laugh doing it. I loved that buzz of being on stage, and the ritual of rehearsing, performing, and then celebrating. By the time I got to college I knew I didn't want to be an actor, and I didn't know anything about the other roles in theatre, so I went to university to do an English degree. Whilst I was there, I spent pretty much all of my time in the student theatre on campus, Nottingham New Theatre. I acted in a few plays, but I remember not liking how some of the directors were doing things, so I decided to have a go myself. I've been directing ever since.

I decided to move to London for a year to do the Theatre Directing MFA at Birkbeck University. Even though I'd been away for uni before, it was both daunting and amazing being in London. I soon realised that my ambition was to run a regional theatre, and to make work for people that didn't ordinarily go to the theatre. From my years at Chorley Little Theatre, to the student theatre, to my residency at the Royal Exchange in Manchester as part of my work placement at Birkbeck, I knew that theatre buildings were very special places. I believed in their potential to be buzzing hubs of creativity, bringing people together to laugh and cry and share stories, and to have a few pints in the bar afterwards. I wanted to be at the heart of all that, to be rooted in a place, to lead a team, and get to know a community rather than darting about from place to place with each new show. I wanted to be an Artistic Director.

After my training I balanced work as a freelance theatre director, with setting up Junction 8 Theatre with my brother and theatre producer, Nick Stevenson, in our hometown. It was an amazing few years, full of ups and downs, and I got to work with some incredible people.

Then in 2019 I got the job as Artistic Director of Theatre by the Lake in Keswick, Cumbria's producing theatre. It was a dream that came true earlier than I expected! But I was ready to throw all my energy into one place, and I could see what I could bring to the organisation.

I'm responsible for the artistic vision and output for the organisation, so I need to have an understanding of everything in the life of the theatre, from finance to front of house operations. As the artistic leader you're aware that the decisions you make every day, big or small, will affect others around you. You're always trying to plan for the future whilst dealing with what is thrown at you in the moment. It's stressful and consuming, but it's rewarding too.

The advice I'd give my younger self is much the same as what I need to remind myself of now. Be wary of the voice inside your head that tells you can't do something, or compares yourself to others. Your uniqueness is what will make you right for some opportunities, and not for others. Hold on to the friends and mentors who make you feel brave and supported. And if you don't have those people yet, go out and find them, I promise they're there! Be honest with yourself and with others. There are no stupid questions, it's fine to say 'I don't know'. People respect honesty, authenticity and vulnerability, you don't have to pretend like you have all the answers. Keep listening and learning, and working out what your strengths are.

I hope this guide will give you a useful insight into being an Artistic Director. As with all the other creative roles in theatre, there's not one right way of doing it. Your way will be different to mine, and to the other ADs featured in this guide. I hope though that if you're excited by the idea, you explore it further, and see where it takes you.

WHAT ARE YOU READING?

At the moment I've been reading lots of new plays, as at Theatre by the Lake we've been supporting writers and developing new plays as part of our first digital programme, 'Spark'. I am also reading *Light Falls* by Simon Stephens, as we are discussing it at our next monthly online play reading club.

Finding time to read outside of theatre is important, though I only ever seem to get to novels when I'm on holiday... note to self — take my own advice!

WHAT'S SOUND-TRACKING YOUR LIFE?

I'm always listening to Muse who have been my favourite band since I was 14. Each album reminds me of different times and experiences in my life, and there's something very theatrical about their gigs that give me a fuzzy feeling when I think about it!

I'm also listening to 1950s jive music as inspiration for the next play I am directing...

TELL US ABOUT A SIGNIFICANT OR INFLUENTIAL CREATIVE EXPERIENCE IN YOUR LIFE:

When I was 16, I performed a monologue from *Road* by Jim Cartwright for my Drama GCSE. I remember reading it and thinking 'Wow, I didn't know plays could be like this!'. Cartwright is from Bolton, like my Mum, and I grew up in nearby Chorley. The people sounded familiar to me, and it was bursting with energy. It made you laugh and it made you cry. At university, it was the first play I directed. It was only ever meant to be a one-off thing, but I had so much fun doing it, making it happen. I remember a friend asking 'so will you be directing something next season?' and in that moment something clicked.

LIZ STEVENSON

Liz is the Artistic Director of Theatre by the Lake in Keswick. She was the co-founder and Artistic Director of Junction 8 Theatre. In 2018 she was the Associate Director on the UK and Ireland tour of the National Theatre's production of *Macbeth*. As the winner of the 2015 JMK Young Director Award, she directed *Barbarians* at the Young Vic which was nominated for an Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in an Affiliate Theatre.

Work as a Director includes: *A Christmas Carol* (Theatr Clwyd); *Lancastrians* (Lancashire tour, Junction 8 Theatre); *The Secret Garden* (York Theatre Royal, Theatre by the Lake); *Under the Market Roof* (Chorley Market, Junction 8 Theatre); *Handbagged* (Theatre by the Lake); *How My Light Is Spent* (Royal Exchange Theatre, Sherman Theatre, Theatre by the Lake); *Macbeth* (Dukes Theatre, Lancaster); *Barbarians* (Young Vic).



WHAT IS AN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR?



An Artistic Director (or AD for short) is the person in charge of creating and implementing the artistic vision of a theatre or theatre company.

In larger companies they will work with an Executive Director to form the leadership team and will work across every aspect of running the theatre or company.

The Artistic Director's mission is to serve their audience and bring them the shows they expect as well as some that may challenge and develop their taste. They are the theatre's artistic leader, working to develop the theatre's vision for today and the future. It's an incredibly exciting and demanding job that has many parts. These are some of them:

PROGRAMMING

This is where the AD picks what shows will be performed at the theatre. This involves a lot of skill as they will need to have an intimate understanding of what the theatre's audience wants to watch. A good Artistic Director will balance shows they know will be commercially successful with shows that they think will broaden and challenge their audience's taste. An example of this could be programming a well-known Shakespeare play alongside a new play by an unknown writer.

Programming a season of work is a bit like a music album. When you listen to the tracks on their own, they're great, but when you listen to them all together, they give you a better understanding of the artist and what they're trying to convey to you. A well programmed season at a theatre works just like this.



MANAGING STAFF

The Artistic Director is in charge of hiring and managing any staff that might work for the theatre/company. Generally, this divides into two strands; permanent members of staff who work on the day to day running of the theatre and freelance staff who work on a show-by-show basis. As an Artistic Director is a senior position it's important that an AD is good with managing people. Also as being an AD is a demanding role, being able to delegate work to members of your team is vital. Running a theatre is a team effort; the AD needs their staff to buy into their vision for the theatre so they can collectively achieve the theatre's aims.

DEVELOPING NEW WORK

Another vital aspect of an Artistic Director's job is to develop new work for the theatre. A lot of the time this is in the form of commissioning writers to create new plays. They will discuss the idea with the writer, provide funding for the script and then read and deliver notes on subsequent drafts of the play to develop it to production. Another way of developing new work can be by providing resources for artists to develop ideas through research and development workshops.

FORMING AND REVIEWING THE ARTISTIC POLICY OF THE THEATRE

The Artistic Director will need to constantly review and update the artistic policy of the theatre to ensure it's up to date and in line with the theatre's aims for the audience, its surrounding community and the industry as a whole. Theatre reflects the world we live in so it's important these policies are reviewed regularly to ensure the work the theatre makes stays relevant.

FUNDING AND BUDGET

Artistic Directors are responsible, along with the Executive Director, for the theatre's finances. This could be meeting with funders, writing funding applications to the Arts Council and other organisations, or creating links with other theatres to make work together. Sometimes it also means making creative decisions around what productions to programme as some shows can be more expensive to produce than others.

REPRESENT THE THEATRE AT PUBLIC EVENTS

The Artistic Director is the ambassador and spokesperson for the theatre, they are the public face of the theatre. They are expected to model best practice and reflect the theatre's values to the press, at events and to the public in general.

MAKING WORK

Finally, the Artistic Director will generally direct one to three shows per year dependant on their other duties. Sometimes an Artistic Director may be a playwright or actor and in other instances they may not direct at all.



ARTIST PROFILE: GBOLAHAN GOBISESAN

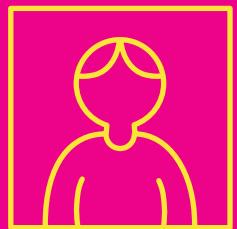


PHOTO: HELEN MURRAY

HOW DID YOU BECOME AN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR? WHAT'S THE MOST EXCITING PART OF YOUR JOB?

I had been working in the industry as a freelance theatre maker for roughly fourteen years. Having previously applied to be Artistic Director for other organisations and not been successful I was reluctant to apply again. I was convinced to apply for Brixton House formerly Oval House as its identity of representing and foregrounding marginalised artists, voices and communities resonated with my affinity with outsider stories.

The most exciting part of the job so far is rebranding the theatre for our new community by redefining our priorities and principles in the vision, mission and values. Equally important has been putting together a new team of staff; the board and I believe that they will be great contributors to the identity and aspirations of the organisation.

WHAT'S THE MOST CHALLENGING PART OF YOUR JOB?

The most challenging part of my job is balancing our civic responsibility with our business targets. The Artistic Director has to keep a lot of people invested and motivated to pursue our focus on excellence and success. Essential to our pursuits are meaningful impact, whilst maintaining authentic relationships with the artists we work with and support, our communities, stakeholders and supporters.

IN YOUR VIEW, WHAT MAKES A GOOD ARTISTIC DIRECTOR?

A good Artistic Director is someone who listens and remains open to learning ways in which the organisation they are running can continue to have a positive impact as a place for artistic progress, social inclusion and cultural importance for all.

BRIXTON HOUSE HASN'T OPENED YET AND IS A BRAND NEW THEATRE. HOW HAVE YOU APPROACHED PROGRAMMING YOUR FIRST SEASON OF WORK?

Brixton House will be opening in autumn 2021. It is anticipated that there will be a need for the programme to showcase cross art activities and the international communities in and around Brixton. I want our programme to reflect the brilliance of local and freelance artists, whilst the voices and stories on our stages are exploring conversations with exciting international provocateurs.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO BECOME AN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR?

For anyone interested in one day becoming an Artistic Director, I would suggest developing an eclectic taste in art and artists. It will also be useful to study the work and public statements of other Artistic Directors to formulate an idea of those who share principles and ethics that inspire you and align with your politics.

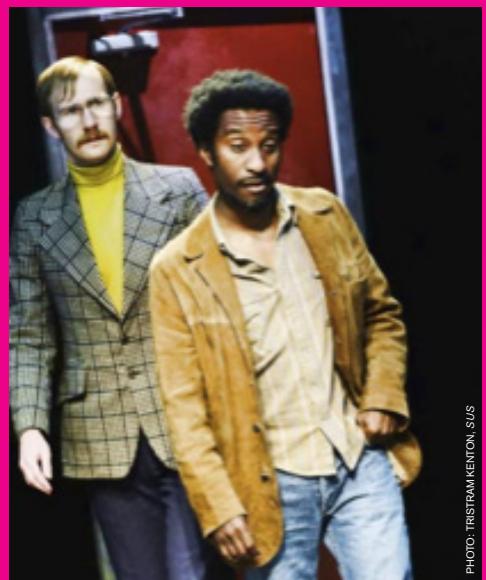


PHOTO: TRISTRAM KENTON SUS

WHAT ARE YOU READING?

I am currently reading *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* by Robin D.G. Kelley. It's a rich book that really helps me to challenge and reframe my thinking and will be enlightening to anyone.

WHAT'S SOUND-TRACKING YOUR LIFE?

It is what it is by Thundercat is really satisfying to my ears right now.

TELL US ABOUT SIGNIFICANT OR INFLUENTIAL CREATIVE EXPERIENCES IN YOUR LIFE:

I worked on *generations* by debbie tucker green and it gave me a real awakening about the power of theatre to affect and change people. I still believe and regard *Bicycle Thieves*, *La Haine* and *City of God* to be exquisite cinematic storytelling.

I love the detail and energy of paintings by Dalí, Ernie Barnes and Younousse Sèye.

I felt really empowered and seen working on *Feast* with Rufus Norris and directing *We are proud to present a presentation about the Herero of Namibia formerly Southwest Africa, from the German Sudwestafrika, between the years 1884–1915* at the Bush Theatre.



GBOLAHAN OBISESAN

Gbolahan Obisesan is Artistic Director & Joint CEO of Brixton House formerly Oval House. His directing credits include 2019 stage premier production of *The Last King of Scotland* (Sheffield Crucible); 2017 Olivier nominated *Cuttin' it* (Young Vic, Birmingham Rep, Sheffield Crucible, Royal Court, Yard Theatre); *Off the Page*, a short film for the Royal Court/The Guardian's microplays season; *How Nigeria Became: A story and a spear that didn't work* (Unicorn Theatre); *We are Proud to Present...* (Bush Theatre); *The Web* (Young Vic).

Gbolahan directed four plays as part of The Bush Theatre's epic 66 BOOKS project which ran at the Bush and Westminster Abbey in 2011.

In 2009, his Jerwood Director's Award of Barrie Keefe's *SUS*, subsequently received a revival in 2010, ran at the Young Vic and had a successful UK tour.

Gbolahan has previously been Director in Residence at the National Theatre Studio as the recipient of the Bulldog Princep Director's Bursary in 2008.

PHOTO: HELEN MURRAY / LAST KING OF SCOTLAND

TOP TIPS FOR ARTISTIC DIRECTORS



EXPERIENCE AS MUCH WORK AS YOU CAN

Be greedy in the way you consume art. Go to plays, musicals, dance shows, art exhibitions, music gigs, concerts. See everything.

SEE WORK YOU DON'T LIKE

It's important to build an objective understanding of all types of work. Your personal preference is important but an Artistic Director needs to think about their audience's taste before their own.

BUILD AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE INDUSTRY

Sign up to every theatre's newsletter you can. Not just the ones near you but all over the UK. Read their season announcements and reflect on what they're programming. Sign up to industry news sources like The Stage and read reviews from newspaper and online publications. This will help you build an understanding of what work is being made and the wider theatre industry in the UK.

START NOTICING THE ARTISTS WHOSE WORK YOU LIKE

An Artistic Director is in charge of hiring the artists for the shows at their theatre so having a note of shows you've seen and people's work you've found exciting is really useful.

READ, READ, READ

Read all the plays you can get your hands on. Get to know the classics as well as new work. The wider your knowledge the more you'll be able to understand what excites you.

KEEP A JOURNAL OF YOUR IDEAS

Ideas come and go, don't let an idea pass you by. You never know it could become the next big thing.

BUILD A NETWORK OF YOUR PEERS

Keep in touch and make connections with people your age who make work that excites you. Remember, you're the Artistic Directors and Arts Leaders of the future.

MAKE YOUR OWN WORK

Do what you can to make your own work and keep making it. The only way we progress as artists is through practice. Do everything you can, ask favours, be persistent, be innovative and be creative.

REFLECT, DISCUSS AND REPEAT

Reflect and discuss work you've seen, plays you've read and work you've made on your own and with others. Keep it constructive and it will help to build a critical and reflective artistic mindset.

KEEP GOING

The theatre industry is competitive but if it's your passion stick to it and stay determined. Keep positive and keep pushing, the world needs more you.

FINDING YOUR ARTISTIC IDENTITY



Finding, crafting and honing your artistic identity is an important part of being a creative. It's a process that some people intrinsically know and others take their whole career to figure out. The most important thing is that you are active in your pursuit of it.

Even if you know the work you want to make and the artist you want to be it's important to keep an open mind and keep yourself up to date. The world of the arts is constantly shifting, morphing and responding to the world around us.

TASK

On a piece of paper answer the following:

1. Write one sentence that tells us all about you and who you are.

Think carefully about this, what is it that makes you, you? It could be about your hobbies, your background or a cause you feel passionate about. Try to give a whole picture of yourself and who you are.

2. Write down answers to the list below:

- Your two favourite music artists/bands
- Your favourite music video
- Your two favourite films
- Your two favourite TV shows
- Your two favourite things you've seen live (theatre, dance, art, music, museums)
- One political cause or topic that resonates with you. This could be anything from issues around identity, culture and society. Some examples could be Black Lives Matter, LGBTQ+, feminism, working class identity etc.

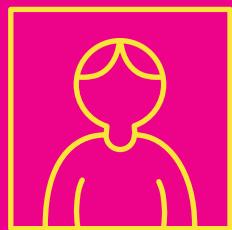
3. Now read over your answers to part one and two. What connections can you see? Are there any common themes? Looking at your answers, what kind of work do you think you'd be interested in making? Write down any thoughts and then go out and try them.

This kind of thinking is the start of your path to finding your artistic identity.



ARTIST PROFILE

KANE HUSBANDS



HOW DID YOU BECOME AN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR?

In 2012, after working for three years for the National Youth Theatre and choreographing for the Olympic and Paralympic ceremonies, I decided to head back to my family roots and spend some time in St Lucia with my family. It was the trip of a lifetime and a real grounding and inspiring gear change in my life. A chance to look at where I was, had been and wanted to head towards. I was 24 and wanted to take some autonomy and feel like I had options, choices, like I was in the driving seat. So, I called on a number of friends from many walks of my life and asked them to join me for a few days to play, explore and physically train with me as the facilitator. That group continued in an ad hoc way for a year. We were a company, and I was the facilitator of that cohort and training. We were a group of people who trained together, in movement, dance, ensemble and devising; we thrived in play and experimentation and that became our focus. It was never about making work, but about unpicking and training, collaborating and process. It's the cornerstones of that practice, the values that I built the company on, that have formed The PappyShow's ethics, identity and ethos.

WHAT CHALLENGES HAVE YOU FACED ALONG THE WAY AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME THEM?

There are so many challenges along the way. We've faced a lot, particularly around what we do and how we do it. I created a company because the way things worked in the industry didn't work for me. I hated the hierarchies, labels, fixed ways of making. I wanted to find new ways — but that often made it hard for buildings or companies to see how we could fit in, in their model. To work with large companies and many voices, to speak and write and dance and DJ and rap and cross over many platforms makes it hard for buildings to wonder if we will fit their programme. We don't fit in, however, it's important we don't. When I think of the identities of the people we are making work with — I'm glad we don't fit in. That shows me that there can be hope for new paths, where many identities are included, not just some. I want to keep questioning that.

Running a company with your very best friends is hard. It's the best thing when it's going well but can be painful when it goes sideways. When one of our core team members chooses to step away from The PappyShow, I think we all find it hard. It can feel like real heartbreak. We've gotten way better at being able to communicate these things and have these conversations now though. That said, the joys we've had along the way have been the real exquisite froth on the wave break and I wouldn't change that at all.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEING THE AD OF A COMPANY RATHER THAN A BUILDING?

It's hard for me to say because I've never been an AD of a building first, so I'd hate to assume what the challenges within that role are. We don't necessarily have to have a constant stream of performances happening for The PappyShow to still be thriving. We've seen this through lockdown. We will make the work we want, for the audience we believe it's for and then look at taking that work to them. It's meant we haven't been stuck; we don't expect people to necessarily come with us the whole way.

I started work as a Movement Director and Choreographer so collaboration is at the heart of my work, and our work. I see collaboration in everything, and when we work in buildings — that's a collaboration too. We've been bold in the work we have made and at times have struggled to find homes for it. It doesn't fit into the frame that some theatres operate in, which can be frustrating to us. Every single time we've performed *BOYS* it's been sold out — so I get confused with why we appear as 'such a risk'. That's always lit a fire underneath us to get our voice out.

You are either aligned to us, our values, what we stand for and our way of making and performing work — or you're not — I'm ok with that.

HOW HAVE YOU MANAGED TO FUND THE WORK THE PAPPYSHOW MAKE?

We started in 2013 with a focus on training and bringing people into spaces to work together. At the start people paid for some of those sessions, to cover the costs. That continues, we have a thriving bursary scheme and offer lots for free but really appreciate that those who can, pay. Over the years we have had so much support from The National Youth Theatre, New Diorama Theatre and the North Wall, who have given us space and time in kind. We have applied several times to the Arts Council who have supported our work but really, it's a thriving workshop practice, either in universities, colleges, schools, theatres, communities — that's the bottom layer to our work.

HOW DID YOU CREATE YOUR COMPANY'S IDENTITY?

Our brand has been pretty consistent from the start. My work with Delma Walsh, a dear friend and psychotherapist has guided me throughout my adult life. She has a wonderful reflective approach to facilitation and we've been leading a programme at NYT for over ten years together — looking into creative leadership. This has really informed the way we work and our therapeutic approach to leading rooms. We have always been up for the experiment, that means it can go well or upside down — but the journey is taking the risk and asking the questions — I think our work does that well.

The company's voice has been joyful, colourful, caring, brave and kind and I try to lean into those values. The word PappyShow is a Caribbean word, it means playfulness, or silliness or nonsense — my cousins call each other it all the time. It really makes you belly laugh; our workshops really hold that feeling that I get when I'm with them.

YOU ARE ALSO A MOVEMENT DIRECTOR AND TEACHER. HOW DO YOU BALANCE YOUR OTHER COMMITMENTS AND HOW DO THEY FEED INTO YOUR WORK WITH THE PAPPYSHOW?

I took a full time role as course leader at Central Saint Martins at the start of lockdown, as a maternity cover post, which was a huge challenge, but highlighted a quality of walking head first into the unknown. Over the years, I've got better at spinning many plates. It's hard to hold a career in the arts, it feels like a constant juggle. I love my job though, I get to facilitate conversations, and help people notice things in themselves and their work — I love those lightbulb moments in rooms. I really get that from teaching/lecturing. The students/ young people teach me loads too and I thrive in a place of learning.

As a Movement Director I'm excited to collaborate and to work on someone else's vision, to realise a world through someone else's lens.

My work with The PappyShow is aspirational and inspirational. I want to change the world, platform people of colour, offer a more inclusive workspace; our mission was never about just making theatre shows! We teach, mentor, facilitate space, open discussions with communities and bring people together to participate and facilitate in joy.

I really love having all three of these strands to my work, that's what the juggle is — but it's all I've known really.



PHOTO: DINAH BOYS

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO BE AN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR?

Think about what your values are, what will your work do — what impact do you want it to have and how can that infiltrate all parts of your practice and process? Be kind, shine your spotlight on others — I believe theatre can change lives, it absolutely changed mine. I've witnessed it transform people from the inside out and I'd hope that The PappyShow and my own practice will be a tiny cog that makes a small change in our industry; for something kinder.

WHAT ARE YOU READING?

Sonya Renee Taylor's new book *The Body is Not an Apology*. Brene Brown's *Dare to Lead* is always on my bedside, and I've just bought a gorgeous photobook called *Black Boy Fly* by Joshua Renfro.

WHAT'S SOUND-TRACKING YOUR LIFE?

Frank Ocean and James Blake speak to my soul, so anything by them. I rediscovered Lapsley on a run the other day — and her voice is so wonderful.

TELL US ABOUT SIGNIFICANT OR INFLUENTIAL CREATIVE EXPERIENCES IN YOUR LIFE:

I recall Wildworks *Wolf Child* — an extraordinary site-specific piece for the Norfolk and Norwich Festival — it was epic and beautiful. It used all the elements, was wonderfully theatrical and all took place outside in an enchanted forest. It was so stunning and moving and magical.

Moonlight is one of the most exquisite films I've ever seen. The colours, visuals and heartbreakingly story of love has stayed with me as an experience since I first saw it.

I love the work of Prince Gyasi and Zanele Muholi both working in photography but with a beautiful way of presenting blackness.

I worked on the Olympic and Paralympic Games — I'll never forget how proud I felt in that moment. International multi-culturalism in the centre of London, it felt like a surge of joy and sunshine. It was such a special summer and the birthplace of my company, The PappyShow.

KANE HUSBANDS

Kane Husbands is Artistic Director of The PappyShow theatre company dedicated to diverse approaches to visual narratives, with movement training at the heart of their practice. For the company he has directed *BOYS, GIRLS, CARE* and *Our House*; as Associate for National Youth Theatre: 'Squint Theatre' and 'The North Wall'.

He choreographed the London Olympic, Paralympic and Glasgow Commonwealth Team Welcoming Ceremonies.

As Movement Director he has worked on *Butterfly Lion* (Chichester's Minerva Theatre); *Last King of Scotland* (Sheffield Crucible); *One Night in Miami* (Nottingham Playhouse).

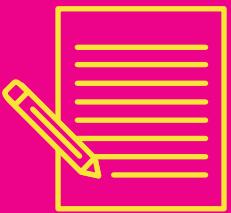
He continues to work and freelance for National Theatre, Old Vic New Voices, Sheffield Crucible, Rose Bruford College, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, National Youth Theatre, King Abdulaziz Centre for World Culture, National Theatre Scotland, Kiln Theatre and others.

He is a lecturer at University Arts London.



PHOTO: HELEN MURRAY BOYS

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF A BUILDING OR A COMPANY?



An Artistic Director runs a theatre building or a theatre company, they are the leader of that organisation, but what's the difference between the two?

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF A COMPANY

A theatre company tends to focus on making their own unique style of theatre, such as new writing, devised theatre, physical theatre or multi-disciplinary work. Generally, the Artistic Director will be the creative lead and direct most of the work the company makes. Companies might tour their work nationally and internationally as well as to theatre festivals like the Edinburgh Festival. Theatre companies might also build relationships with specific theatre buildings whose ethos chimes with their own and bring their work to them.

As an AD of a company, you are not restricted by location. You can find and engage different audiences around the country and even around the world. This means your reach has the potential to be much wider than a theatre building in one location. It also means that companies whose work may be viewed as less mainstream can find their audiences and take the work to them.

Being an AD of a theatre company is a great way to make your work the way you want to make it. Also, as a theatre company is essentially a group of people, the costs involved in setting up a company are very low compared to running and maintaining a theatre building.

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF A BUILDING

As a building is permanently located in one area the Artistic Director of a building has a lot more responsibility to that building's audience and local community. Think of an Artistic Director of a building like a curator; they mould and form the work the venue makes. They are the person overseeing all artistic output and ensuring the venue meets its aims for their audience and community. They will hire theatre companies and freelancers to perform and make work at their venue. One of their biggest responsibilities is to programme each season of work at the venue.

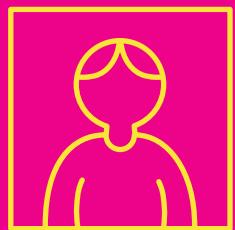
Another important duty an AD has is audience development. They need to look after their regular audience and programme the work they want to see, but it's just as important to foster a relationship with new audience members. The AD can do this by identifying the key groups who aren't attending, developing a relationship with them and creating work for them. Ideally this means that everyone in the community feels ownership and pride in their theatre and so it becomes an even more vital hub for the culture of that area.

Being an AD of a theatre building normally means less time making work and more time working as a leader. However, the potential impact an AD can have on a theatre's audience, community and the industry as a whole should not be underestimated.

WHICH IS BETTER?

Neither. They're roles with lots of differences and similarities. Each one comes with their own unique challenges and each suit different types of people better.

ARTIST PROFILE MATTHEW WARHUS



YOU WERE A FREELANCE DIRECTOR FOR MANY YEARS. WHAT IS THE BIGGEST DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEING A DIRECTOR AND AN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR?

As a freelance director your entire focus is on the production you are directing. This means you first focus on the script — either finding one that already exists or working on a new script — then on casting, set and costume design, lighting, sound, choreography, props, magic and special effects, music, staging and performances. Those are your areas of responsibility when you are a Director. You might be marginally involved in marketing and budgeting for the production, but that's it.

As an Artistic Director, who also directs shows, I have all those responsibilities, but I am also responsible for shows that appear at The Old Vic which I am not directing. So I will work on finding a script, then finding a director and a creative team to support them. I will also try to support the director as they go through their own process of creating the show, by watching rehearsals and run-throughs, and giving notes. I might be involved in their design and casting decisions, but usually in an, arm's length, away.

The Artistic Director can also be responsible for designing and developing the identity of the company or building they work for. The Old Vic's identity has changed quite a lot in the last few years, which is a team effort, however the principals of what the theatre stands for, and the reasons for choosing certain shows over others, often stems from the Artistic Director.

WHAT DOES AN AVERAGE DAY AS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF THE OLD VIC LOOK LIKE?

This depends on whether I am in rehearsals or not. When I'm in rehearsals I usually have meetings before rehearsals begin, meetings during lunch and dinner breaks, and phone calls at the end of the day. These meetings and calls will be about forward planning, the future programming of shows, developing other projects with writers and directors, and keeping in touch with all the other work and projects at The Old Vic which aren't productions on the main stage. This includes all the work that goes into upholding our social mission, such as our Education and Community projects. I also attend some meetings about funding and building upkeep and the development of the building, and so on.

When I'm not in rehearsals, my days are full of these meetings, without them having to be squeezed into breaks. I will also do a lot of script reading, and meeting actors, directors and writers. I spend a lot of my time talking to, and working with, The Old Vic's Executive Director, Kate Varah, who is responsible for all the things in the theatre which aren't on the stage.

WHAT'S THE MOST EXCITING PART OF YOUR JOB?

Without question, the most exciting part of my job is seeing parties of school children arrive to watch shows or to do workshops at The Old Vic. This is because for many children this will be their first experience of theatre, and I remember how formative that was for me when I was young. It's an experience that can be so inspiring for young people. You have a feeling of responsibility, when you give someone their first experience of live performance, because you have the opportunity to create a new habit of theatre-going and a love of the whole art form for that person.

WHAT'S THE MOST CHALLENGING PART OF YOUR JOB?

It's having a split focus and deeply caring about many different things, and feeling like you're not always being able to give those things the right amount of attention and time. For me that not only includes the shows that I'm working on, including the preparation for those shows, and the meetings squeezed around rehearsal hours, but also the non-production projects and goals that The Old Vic has. Sometimes I would like to be able to give these things fuller attention. Also, my family at home sometimes get short shrift when I am working during weekends, arriving home late, reading scripts or taking calls, when instead I should be giving my children attention or going on holiday with my family. Juggling all of this and managing the tiredness it brings is very challenging.

HOW DO YOU APPROACH PROGRAMMING A SEASON FOR THE OLD VIC?

We designed an underlying model of programming when I started, which was a reflection of all the different kinds of theatre that I love. These are: shows for families, musicals, new writing, dance pieces, classics with a twist, and avant garde envelope-pushing work. The Old Vic was the theatre where the National Theatre was born, as well as English National Opera and English National Ballet, so it has a long tradition of many different types of live performance and I wanted to continue and develop that tradition. The theatre had mainly been known in recent history as a venue for stylish classic revivals and I wanted to introduce, and re-introduce some of these other forms of theatre, especially new work and work for families.

When we are programming, we bear in mind all these different categories and Kate, Harriet (our Old Vic Producer), and I have many brainstorming sessions where we discuss the evolving list of pre-existing plays that we might be interested in programming, and the

evolving list of writers, directors and actors we might be interested in working with. As well as these internal conversations, Harriet and I juggle a lot of approaches from third parties, as hundreds of suggestions for ideas and projects come in each year from writers, directors and actors, and we consider these too. The programme we put together is a mixture of third-party ideas that are brought to us and which we develop, and internal ideas — projects that we generate and develop from scratch.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO BECOME AN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR?

Surround yourself with a great team, because in the end it's very much a team effort. Have a clear sense of purpose for the theatre you want to run and articulate it for yourself and other people repeatedly. Drive towards that goal with as much energy as you can muster, but at the same time bear in mind that it's always going to take much longer to achieve those goals than you would wish. Also, try to find a work-life balance because nobody should live their job 100%.

I became an Artistic Director after 29 years of freelancing which is unusually late. This is because I never thought I wanted to be one, yet some people might have that as an ambition from the get-go. I think if you know you want to be an Artistic Director then try to familiarise yourself with aspects of producing, budgeting, commissioning, and developing projects. Try to get an understanding of what all the different departments in a theatre do. It might be that you do that by getting a job as a Resident Director, or an Assistant Director at a theatre, and working for a sustained period of time in a company to get a feel for how a whole institution operates. Directors spend most of their time in rehearsal rooms and auditoriums, so we often don't know what happens in offices around the building. It's important to try and get the whole picture.



WHAT ARE YOU READING?

Right now, I'm reading and rereading the screenplay for *Matilda*, the film I'm currently directing. I haven't read a book that hasn't been for work for 15 years because I'm always reading scripts or books that have been proposed for adaptation for a play or film.

WHAT'S SOUND-TRACKING YOUR LIFE?

Demos of tracks for *Matilda* and other new musicals I'm working on.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PLAY?

That's impossible! If I was going to attempt to say what I think the perfect play is, it would probably be *Oedipus Rex*. However, it's possible my favourite play hasn't been written yet — that's the exciting thing about working in theatre for decades, you see new work turn up and new masterpieces are being written every year. It's such an exciting, shifting landscape.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE TV SHOW?

I don't have time to watch TV but I occasionally squeeze in a bit of *Googlebox*. I watch it late at night if I can't sleep, often having come off calls to America or Australia. I think it's kind of brilliant, plus it makes me feel like I've watched far more TV than I actually have.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE FILM?

E.T.

DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE ARTIST?

David Hockney and Antony Gormley



MATTHEW WARCHUS

Matthew was an Associate Director at Leeds Playhouse and Artistic Associate at The Old Vic before being appointed Artistic Director of the theatre in 2014.

Theatre includes:
OLD VIC: IN CAMERA — *A Christmas Carol*, *Faith Healer*, *Three Kings*, *Lungs*

Lungs, *Present Laughter*, 'Art', *The Caretaker*, *The Master Builder*, *Future Conditional*, *Speed-the-Plow* (The Old Vic); *A Christmas Carol*, *Groundhog Day*, *The Norman Conquests* (The Old Vic/Broadway); *Matilda the Musical* (RSC/West End/ Broadway/International tour); *Ghost the Musical* (West End/ Broadway/South Korea); *La Bête* (West End/Broadway);

God of Carnage (West End/Broadway/LA); *Deathtrap*, *Endgame* (West End); *Our House*, *Much Ado About Nothing* (West End/UK tour); *Boeing-Boeing* (West End/Broadway/UK tour);

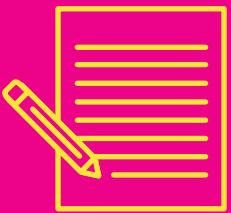
The Lord of the Rings (Toronto/West End); *Buried Child*, *Volpone* (National Theatre); *Follies* (Broadway); *Life x 3* (National Theatre/The Old Vic/Broadway); *True West* (Donmar/Broadway);

The Unexpected Man (RSC/West End/Broadway); 'Art' (Broadway/West End/Los Angeles); *Hamlet*, *Henry V* (RSC); *Betrayal*, *Death of a Salesman*, *The Plough and the Stars*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *True West*, *Peter Pan* (Leeds Playhouse).

Opera includes: *Falstaff*, *Cosi Fan Tutte* (ENO); *The Rake's Progress* (ROH/WNO).

Film includes: *Pride* — BIFA Best British Independent Film, *Simpatico*.

BREAKING DOWN A SEASON OF WORK



We'll analyse Season 4 at The Old Vic (2018–2019) to see what a season of work can look like. But first let's look at The Old Vic's artistic mission

THE OLD VIC'S ARTISTIC MISSION STATEMENT:

We aim to be a surprising, unpredictable, groundbreaking, rule-breaking, independent beacon of accessible, uplifting and unintimidating art.

SEASON 4

SYLVIA

A new musical about Sylvia Pankhurst co-written by Kate Prince and Priya Parmar with original music by Josh Cohen and DJ Walde

17C

A dance piece conceived by Annie-B Parson

WISE CHILDREN

An adaptation of the Angela Carter novel by Emma Rice's new company, Wise Children

ONE VOICE: REMEMBRANCE

An evening of monologues to mark 100 years since the end of World War I curated by Arinzé Kene

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

An adaptation by Jack Thorne of the Charles Dickens classic starring Stephen Tompkinson, directed by Matthew Warchus

THE AMERICAN CLOCK

A rarely performed play by the famous American playwright Arthur Miller directed by Rachel Chavkin

ALL MY SONS

A modern American classic by Arthur Miller, starring Sally Field and Bill Pullman, directed by Jeremy Herrin

PRESENT LAUGHTER BY NOËL COWARD

A modern British classic, starring Andrew Scott, directed by Matthew Warchus

Spend some time on the internet and research the shows. Try to get a feel for each production if you can. Look at the cast, creative teams, production images and what time of year they happened.

SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- What similarities or differences can you see between the shows?
- Which show would you most like to watch?
- Which show would your parents or teacher most like to watch?
- How much of the season is new work and how much is established classics?
- Which shows in the season do you think are the blockbuster classics and which are the lesser known daring choices?
- Look at the artistic mission again. What words from it can you associate with each show?

SOME THOUGHTS:

Matthew Warchus has programmed a really interesting season here. You can see classic plays with some well-known actors programmed alongside new or lesser-known titles by ground-breaking theatre artists. What that means in financial terms is that the classics will bring in good box office income to allow space for the more daring artistic choices, such as *The American Clock* because, although written by a famous playwright, it is not as well known as Miller's other plays. What that means for the audience is that they can see something conventional and unconventional all in one season at the same theatre. It keeps it interesting and exciting.

There is a very clear investment from Matthew in giving companies and artists a big stage to experiment on. Emma Rice, Katie Prince, Annie-B Parson, Arinzé Kene and Rachel Chavkin are all established theatre makers but their choice of shows are **surprising, groundbreaking** and **unpredictable**, particularly in a theatre the size of The Old Vic. The other shows like *A Christmas Carol*, *All My Sons* and *Present Laughter* are the side of the season that is **accessible** and **uplifting**. So, you can see how the theatre's artistic mission is directly related to the choice of shows for the season.

You can learn more about Season 4 at The Old Vic here:
oldvictheatre.com/news/2019/08/a-look-back-at-season-4-at-the-old-vic

PROGRAMMING YOUR SEASON OF WORK



STEP 1

Close your eyes and spend 30 seconds visualising what you want your theatre to be. Imagine how it feels, sounds, the atmosphere, what music is playing in the foyer, who's walking around the building.

NOW ON A PIECE OF PAPER ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:

- What type of work is your theatre going to present?
- Who is in the audience?
- Where is it located?
- What kind of work does it make?
- What does the theatre look like?
- Is there something other than just theatre that the theatre does? Some examples could be: community work, artist development, educational work or charity work.
- What size is the theatre? The size of a theatre has an impact on the type of work it makes. For example, The Old Vic has 1070 seats whereas the Tobacco Theatre in Bristol has a capacity of 350.

STEP 2

Now you've answered these questions you are going to write your theatre's artistic mission statement. It might be helpful to re-read The Old Vic's artistic mission on Page 37.

Using your answers from 'Step 1' and anything else you've picked up from the guide, write down the following and fill in the gaps.

ARTISTIC MISSION STATEMENT

MY THEATRE:

Insert name

WILL PRESENT:

Insert style or kind of work the theatre will make

THE WORK WILL BE:

Insert 3 describing words

STEP 3

Using your artistic mission statement, and your answers to the questions about your theatre as a guide, programme your first season. Imagine 4–6 shows that you would present in your theatre.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Each production should relate to your artistic mission statement in some way.
- Is there enough variety to keep the audience engaged and wanting to watch each production?
- How do the shows relate or differ to each other?
- Is there a theme running through the whole season?
- Which shows are your artistic risks and which are your blockbusters?
- Are you going to include a Christmas show?
- Does it appeal to new audiences?

CONGRATULATIONS!

**You've just programmed
your first season as
an Artistic Director!**

FURTHER READING, WATCHING & LISTENING



If you want to find out more about directing check out the following recommendations.

This is not an exhaustive list, there are so many other writings and resources on theatre and directing. Please do remember what works for one person may not work for you, it's important you find your own path. Keep experimenting and playing with your learning to understand how it fits into your work as this will change and evolve over time as your practice does.

THINGS TO READ

The Art of the Artistic Director
by Christopher Haydon

Directing — A Handbook for Emerging Theatre Directors
by Rob Swain

ONLINE

JMK Trust — Learn about Theatre Directing

jmktrust.org/learn-about-theatre-directing

Jennifer Tang

blacktheatrelive.co.uk/blog/interview-with-director-jennifer-tang

Natalie Ibu

exeuntmagazine.com/features/natalie-ibu

Arts Council England — The Art of Leadership Resources and Case Studies

arts council.org.uk/artofleadership

Arts Council England — Guide to appointing an artistic leader

arts council.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Appointing_artistic_leaders.pdf

THINGS TO WATCH

Matthew Warchus's: What does an Artistic Director do?

youtube.com/watch?v=3QneSIFmPLk&list=PLPQeuq5kolZr5TNnxLb2h-5ABGx4r508V

THINGS TO LISTEN TO

PlayCrush

podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/matthew-warchus-the-norman-conquests/id1515301471?i=1000479055966

The Old Vic's podcast. Joe Murphy is joined by The Old Vic's very own Artistic Director Matthew Warchus. In this episode Matthew reveals the journey that led him to the role of Director.

NT TALKS

podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/nt-talks/id486761654

Find out more about a director or show in the National Theatre's curated collection of conversations.

Young Vic — Off Book

soundcloud.com/youngvictheatre/sets

A collection of insightful interviews and inspirational recordings.

British Theatre Guide

btguide.libsyn.com

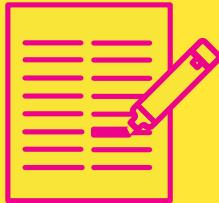
Provides a wide range of interviews with theatre professionals from around the UK and beyond.

The Spotlight Podcast

spotlight.com/news-and-advice/?tags=podcast

A series of interviews and talks about working in theatre and how to navigate the processes and stresses.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS



ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Assistant Directors assist the Director in delivering their creative vision for a production. This role can vary massively depending on the director. Possible responsibilities include research, reading in for actors, creating rehearsal schedules and running warm ups. An Assistant Director also acts as an extra pair of eyes in the rehearsal room. It is an opportunity to observe and learn from a director.

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Associate Directors assist the director in delivering their creative vision for a production. This role can vary massively depending on the Director. Whilst an Assistant Director will often support with rehearsal admin an Associate Director is more likely to offer artistic support. Possible responsibilities include implementing notes from the Director or acting as a sounding board for the Director's ideas.

BUDGET

An estimate of income and expenditure for a set period of time — in theatres usually one year running from April to March, in line with UK government financial year. A good budgeting process includes all departments and includes strong strategic planning. Budgeting decisions

are driven by a theatre's artistic mission and financial responsibility.

COMMERCIAL THEATRE

Commercial theatre shows aim to make a profit for their investors. These productions usually have big budgets. Examples of commercial productions are shows appearing in a West End theatre.

CREATIVES

A team of theatre artists who work together to put on a production, such as a movement director, designer, lighting designer, sound designer, costume designer and composer.

COPYRIGHT

Playwrights protect their ownership of their work or intellectual property by copyrighting it. To copyright a play (or piece of work) ensures the writer maintains control of the performance and publication of their play during a fixed time period. UK copyright expires seventy years from the end of the year in which the author dies. After this time the play may be performed freely and no permission is required.

FREELANCER

Working for several organisations on a project-to-project basis rather than

permanently working for one. Generally, the creative roles in theatre are freelance positions such as: actors, directors, movement directors, composers and set, lighting and sound designers

FRINGE THEATRE

Fringe Theatre provides a space to try new and experimental forms of work, or for artists who are starting out in their careers to make work. Typically fringe theatre productions have smaller budgets than subsidised or commercial work.

LICENCE

Permission to produce a play which includes specific details of how the play should be presented. A fee or royalty is usually paid before a performance licence is issued.

PERFORMANCE/ PERFORMING RIGHTS

If you want to produce a play that's in copyright you need to apply for a performing rights licence for that play. You should always check if performing rights are available before committing to produce a play.

PRODUCER

A highly skilled project manager and administrator who is responsible for the finance and management when making a new show or staging an existing play.

PROGRAMMING

The process of selecting the work a theatre or venue wants to present to their audience.

REHEARSAL

The process of creating a performance with a cast of performers. Rehearsals offer an opportunity to experiment, practise and refine a piece of work before it is performed in front of an audience.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (R&D)

An opportunity to test out ideas for a potential future production but without the pressure of a final performance. R&D offers artists the chance to experiment and play with ideas before taking them into a full production. This can also be a way to attract venues and funders to help further develop work.

RESIDENT DIRECTOR

A Resident Director is responsible for maintaining the artistic integrity of a performance once the director has left. They are usually employed on long running shows to make sure that the cast continue to deliver the Director's original vision. Responsibilities include watching and noting performances and rehearsing new cast members or understudies.

ROYALTY FEE

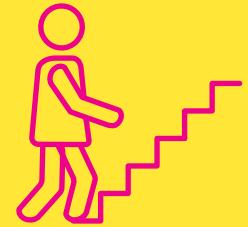
The way writers and artists are paid for the use of their play or work. A royalty fee should be paid whenever a play is performed for an audience, regardless of whether they pay for tickets or tickets are free.

SEASON

Theatres generally programme their work by seasons. The length of each season is determined by each theatre according to how they programme and present their work. Some theatres will have spring, summer, autumn and winter seasons but at other theatres, like The Old Vic, a season of work could mean the work programmed for the whole year.

SUBSIDISED THEATRE

Subsidised theatres and theatre companies receive funding from the government through the Arts Council or receive funding from Trusts and Foundations who want to support the arts. This funding allows for new ideas, new writing and experimentation as the artists have a financial safety net to fall back on without having to rely on ticket sales. Successful performances may be transferred to a commercial venue.



NEXT STEPS

Interested in taking directing further?

Whether it's training, competitions or online resources, we've got you covered. The following opportunities are completely free. This is not an exhaustive list but a good place to start. Talk to your local theatre to see what opportunities they offer for directors.

TRAINING

Donmar Warehouse, London – Work Experience and Training

donmarwarehouse.com/about/vacancies/work-experience-training

Each year one Resident Assistant Director is offered a 12 month position to work on every Donmar production.

Everyman & Playhouse, Liverpool

everymanplayhouse.com/yep-directors

This opportunity is open to 18–25 year olds. Direct your own play in the theatre's studio space and discover a range of directorial skills such as script interrogation, rehearsal technique and technical rehearsals in weekly sessions

led by experienced theatre practitioners.

King's Head Theatre, London – Trainee Resident Directors

kingsheadtheatre.com/get-involved/trainee-resident-directors

This scheme takes on two early career directors as trainees for a part-time, 12 month residency. The programme offers the opportunity to work across in-house and visiting productions and take part in workshops led by industry professionals.

StoneCrabs, London – Young Directors Training Programme

stonecrabs.co.uk/young-directors-training-programme

StoneCrabs is a director-led company: its interest in nurturing new Directors from all sectors of the community fuels this programme. Each year a small number of young directors go through training programme centred around production, project management and theatre directing. It introduces artistic and practical management tools for the Director and encourages an individual approach, utilizing the Director's own vision.

The Old Vic, London – The Old Vic 12

oldvictheatre.com/join-in-for-creatives

The Old Vic 12 aims to nurture and develop the next generation of theatre practitioners through offering access and insights into theatre-making, mentoring from industry experts, delivering masterclasses to other emerging artists, and collaborating with each other to create brand new work. Each year the project works with three directors and offers the opportunity to develop a new play over the course of the project with support from the theatre.

Regional Theatre Young Director Scheme

ryds.co.uk

The scheme offers Introduction to Director courses, paid three-month placements and 18-month residencies for directors at the start of their career. They are particularly interested in working with early career directors from backgrounds currently underrepresented in theatre.

Scottish Theatre – Assistant Director Bursary

scottishtheatre.org/sector-support/bursaries/

The bursary aims to nurture the professional development of individual artists by supporting an attachment to an established theatre company.

Young Vic, London – Directors Program

directorsprogram.youngvic.org

The Young Vic Directors Program offers networking, workshops and events for emerging theatre directors.

COMPETITIONS

Charlie Hartill Special Reserve

pleasance.co.uk/charliefund

The Charlie Hartill Special Reserve is a designated fund to support emerging theatre makers and comedians in bringing their work to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

Edinburgh Untapped

newdiorama.com/for-everybody/edinburgh-untapped-award

This scheme supports three early-career, or more established mid-career, theatre companies take a piece of work to the Edinburgh Fringe.

NSDF

nsdf.org.uk

A week-long festival for young artists to showcase their work, network with industry professionals and take part in workshops.

Sir Peter Hall Director Award Scheme

rtst.org.uk/directoraward

An annual award that offers an up-and-coming director to direct a fully funded production of a play as part of a main season of productions at a British regional theatre.



The JMK Young Director Award, London

jmkt.org/for-applicants

The JMK Award offers one young director the opportunity to direct a full-scale professional play. The JMK Award constitutes an award of £25,000 plus space at the Orange Tree Theatre. The winning director will receive a fee of £4,000 for their work as director on the production.

The LET Greenwich Award

lesenfantterribles.co.uk/awards-2

This award offers two emerging theatre companies a slot at an Edinburgh Fringe venue, £1,000 investment in the production and mentoring.

The Oxford Samuel Beckett Theatre Trust Award

barbican.org.uk/our-story/our-programme/theatre-dance/the-oxford-samuel-beckett-theatre-trust-award

This award is for a company or individual based in the UK or Ireland to create a show either for the Barbican's studio theatre or a site-responsive show to take place in East London or the City.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Artistic Directors of The Future

adofthefuture.com

An organisation devoted to creating change at a leadership level in the creative industries. They want to ensure the next generation of creative leaders are truly representative of the cultural landscape of Britain.

Take a look at the website and sign up to their newsletter, there are many valuable opportunities and resources on there. If you're interested in setting up a theatre company they have a whole series of practical videos on how to do it.

MAKE

talawamake.com

An online networking site for Black artists in the UK to network, spark collaborations and learn new skills within the theatre industry. The site was created by Talawa Theatre Company.

Masterclass, Theatre Royal Haymarket London

masterclass.org.uk

A regular programme of workshops with industry professionals, opportunities to develop your creative practice and careers advice for 16–30 year olds, all offered for free.

Stage Directors UK

stagedirectorsuk.com

An organisation dedicated to representing the interests of professional theatre directors, campaigning for better rights and working conditions.

The Old Vic
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oldvictheatre.com

The Old Vic Theatre Trust 2000 Charity No. 1072590
The Old Vic Endowment Trust Charity No. 1147946