

Artistic Director Recruitment Pack

SUMMER 2024

WELCOME

As Stratford East celebrates its 140th year we are looking for an exceptional Artistic Director to follow in the footsteps of Nadia Fall. During her seven-year tenure Nadia has strengthened the reputation of the theatre, maintaining Stratford East's character and overseeing a strong programme, which has included a West End transfer and an Olivier award.

Stratford East sits in the heart of East London, in the London Borough of Newham. Along with just four other boroughs in London, Newham was identified by ACE as one of their Priority Places for increased investment and improved engagement. It has one of the youngest and most ethnically diverse populations in London and is an area which has undergone massive regeneration and change over the last 15 years.

2024 is a fantastic time for us to be looking for our new Artistic Director who can build on the theatre's reputation of artistic excellence, as well as on our strong programme of community work. With continued regeneration in the Olympic Park, alongside huge investment and development across the borough, Newham is an exciting place to be with more people being encouraged to visit the area than ever before.

We are looking for a dynamic and inspirational leader, who understands the importance of being rooted in a community, as well as creating work that connects people from across London to the building. Our successful candidate will be an artistic leader who is excited to work with the Board and Executive Director to inspire the team and create an artistic programme that supports a thriving theatre for the future.

Dame Margaret Hodge
Chair

"Good theatre draws the energies out of the place where it is and gives it back" - Joan Littlewood



The Wonderful World of Dissocia Photo: Marc Brenner

ABOUT STRATFORD EAST

Stratford East is here to make truly great theatre in an atmosphere that welcomes all, with extraordinary shows that are affordable for all in the beating heart of East London.

Stratford East is a producing theatre, built in 1884, in the London Borough of Newham, situated a short walk from Stratford station. We have a proud history and face an exciting and challenging future. Our culturally and socially diverse community are represented in the work we make, the people we employ, the audiences we attract and the participants in our learning programmes. We tell stories that are current, political and representative of the people in our part of London.

From 1953 – 1979 the theatre was the home of Joan Littlewood's legendary Theatre Workshop Company. The Company received international recognition with their acclaimed productions of shows like *Oh, What a Lovely War!* and *A Taste of Honey*. Many leading actors, writers and directors have been part of the Stratford East family including Meera Syal, Barbara Windsor, Don Warrington, Sheila Hancock, Indhu Rubasingham, Tanika Gupta, Roy Williams and Cynthia Erivo.

Stratford East has a 455 seat auditorium, a vibrant bar, and a rehearsal space. In 2023-24 we welcomed over 72,000 audience members.

"The Coolest Theatre in London" - The Times

OUR VISION:

We believe that brilliant quality theatre should be available to everyone

OUR MISSION:

We make theatre both for, and inspired by, our community in Newham, East London. We continue the political and revolutionary ethos of our founder Joan Littlewood as a leading London theatre and civic hub for East London. We are driven by our art, which is inclusive and bold. We tell stories that provoke discourse about the world we live in and our place within it.

OUR VALUES:

- Revolutionary – we are confident in leading change
- Inclusive – our doors are open to all
- Bold – we are willing to take risks
- Excellent – we strive to make everything of outstanding quality
- Relevant – the work we do is relevant to the place we are in, and the times in which we live
- Eclectic – we are informed by a wide range of thoughts, styles, tastes

OUR PRODUCTIONS

In recent years, Stratford East has produced or co-produced four to five productions a year, alongside a programme of shorter runs of touring work, and one-off nights of music, comedy and cabaret.

Under Nadia Fall's artistic leadership we have presented a bold programme of reimagined classics, timely revivals and ground-breaking new work. Recent productions include a new commission from Lanre Malalou, *Now I See*; the 20th anniversary revival of the ska musical *The Big Life*; and a new production to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Jonathan Harvey's coming-out and coming-of-age story *Beautiful Thing*. We produce our own annual pantomime - in 2023 this was *Jack and the Beanstalk*.

In September 2024, Nadia will direct *Abigail's Party*, which is followed by The Bristol Old Vic's production of *Wonder Boy*, Ballet Black's newest piece *Heros*, and Curve and MAST Mayflower Studios' production of Katori Hall's *The Mountaintop*. Our 2024 pantomime, *Pinocchio*, is written by Trish Cooke and Rob Hyman, and directed by Omar F. Okai. Our 140th Season programme (to October 2025) will be announced at the start of September.

★★★★★ **"Unique, challenging
and oh-so necessary"** - The Guardian

Tambo & Bones Photo: The Other Richard



Our full programme of work – past and future - can be found on our website. Our produced and co-produced work from the past few years include:

2024

Pinocchio
Abigail's Party
Now I See
The Big Life

2023

Jack and the Beanstalk
Beautiful Thing
Tambo & Bones
Village Idiot

2022

Cinderella
The Wonderful World of Dissocia
Burn It Down
After the End

2021

Red Riding Hood
Shining City
Extinct
The Sun, The Moon and the Stars
Press Play Here (online only)

2020

No Masks (film)
846 Live
846 (online only)

2019

Dick Whittington
Our Lady of Kibeho
Noye's Fludde
King Hedley II
Equus



The Big Life Photo: Mark Senior

★★★★★ *"Infectious,
heart-rendering and...
achingly resonant"* - Time Out

LEARNING & PARTICIPATION

Alongside our work on stage, we run a Learning & Participation programme that is accessible and inclusive to all. Our range of programmes creates a lasting impact for our local community and aims to:

- Provide routes into the industry, across all theatre departments, with a particular focus on diversifying those coming into the workplace, ensuring the theatre workplace of the future is a diverse and skilled one
- Provide opportunities to people of all ages to develop their creative talents and engage with the work of the theatre, ensuring that there is a creative outlet open to the widest possible constituency

Key projects include:

Junior Youth Theatre (11-15 year olds) and Youth Theatre

(16-21 year olds): A year-round programme for young people to develop their acting and creativity.

Young Company: A 10-month programme for 18-25 years who are interested in developing their acting skills. Working with a range of industry freelancers, and led by a professional director, the programme culminates in a full production on the Stratford East stage.

Young Techs: A short course to develop the technical theatre skills of 16-21 year olds. The course leads to paid work experience, and potentially paid casual work.

Adult Drama: A termly course for any Newham adult above 26, to develop their acting and creative skills in a friendly environment.

Schools Programme: A programme specifically for Newham Secondary Schools. This includes technical theatre insight days, as well as bespoke programmes linking to the productions and the school curriculum.

Community Ambassadors: A volunteer programme, supporting volunteers to work with groups in the community to introduce them to the theatre, as well as to run heritage tours of the theatre.

Community Socials: Regular light touch events to introduce local people and community groups to the theatre.

Freelance Royalty Scheme: A free membership scheme to support all theatre freelancers living or working in East London. Membership includes access to space, free tickets, workshops, networking and surgery events.

"Our children aren't able to afford theatre trips so this was particularly important for us. I loved the diversity in the cast also. It allowed the students to see themselves."

- Newham Primary School Teacher



Young Company in *SCREAM FIRE*. Photo: Greta Zabulyte

REPRESENTATION, JUSTICE AND BELONGING

We want Stratford East to reflect the community in which we work and the programming on our stage to speak to the people who come to our theatre. We want everyone who works with us to feel empowered and supported, and we want our theatre to feel accessible to anyone, no matter what their background. Stratford East's programme of work has always championed a diversity of stories, so that any audience member might see their story on our stage. We are committed to our anti-racism and anti-ablism work as a continuous journey of change and progression.

For seven years Stratford East was part of the first Ramps on the Moon consortium, a group of theatres working to increase D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent representation. We worked with five other theatres around the country, elevating the presence of D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people on and off stage to enrich the stories told by them and the way they are told. Whilst the official consortium has ended, we are committed to continuing this work.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

We need and aspire to be an environmentally sustainable organisation and are embedding our environmental work across all departments. We want to reduce our carbon footprint by ensuring that our buildings and processes are as efficient and sustainable as possible. We are in the process of updating our environmental policy in alignment with our values and with the Theatre Green Book and have a short-term and long-term set of KPIs which we are working to achieve.

**For more information about Stratford East
and our work please visit stratfordeast.com**

★★★★★ *"As timeless
as ever"* - Evening Standard

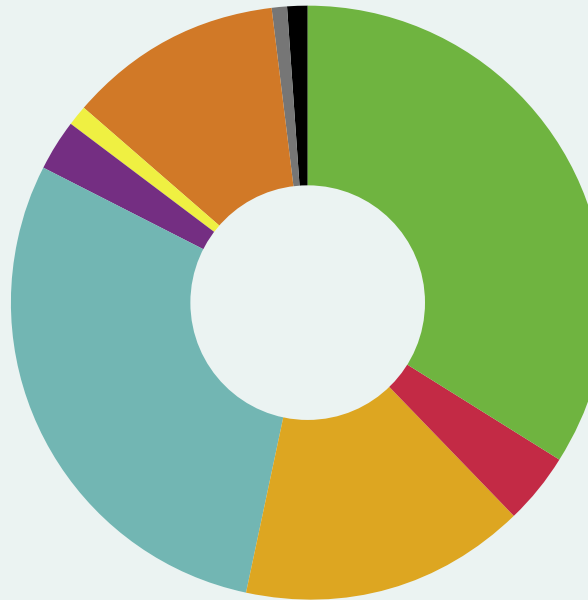


Beautiful Thing Photo: The Other Richard

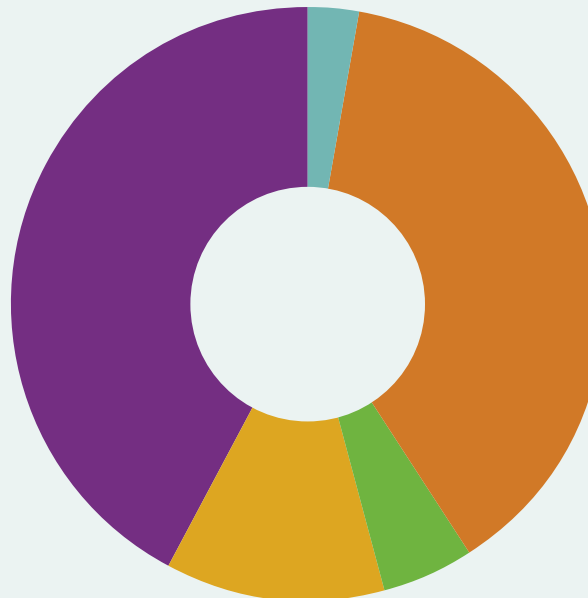
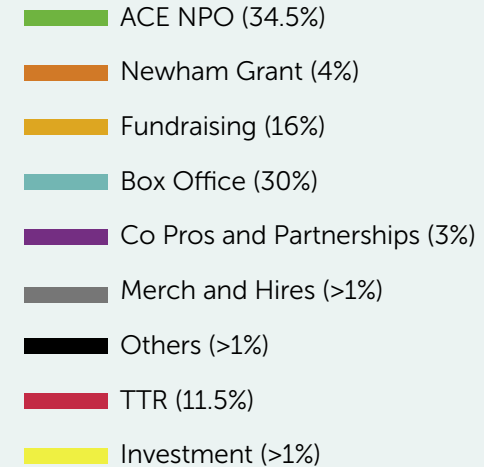
FINANCES

Our annual turnover is just over £4m. We successfully secured Arts Council England National Portfolio Funding for the 2023-2026 period. Additional income comes from ticket sales, fundraising, Theatre Tax Relief and other revenue sources.

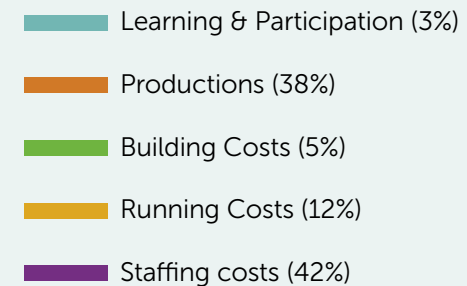
At year end March 2024 our general reserves stood at £787,472, plus designated funds of £670,000 (two funds for three months' operating costs plus capital building maintenance).



Income 2024-25 Split



Expenditure 2024-25 Split



GOVERNANCE

Stratford East is registered as Pioneer Theatres Limited with Companies House (Company number: 556251) and with the Charity Commission (Charity Number: 233801). The Charity is led by a highly experienced Board of Trustees, led by Chair Dame Margaret Hodge. The Board includes skilled individuals from the world of arts, local government, finance and communications. We have two Young Trustees who have come through our Learning & Participation programmes.

We have a trading subsidiary, Stratford East (Trading) Limited which operates our bar. We also have a Development Board, which has no formal role in governance, but supports our fundraising, and is chaired by one of our Board Members.

PEOPLE

Senior Management Team

Stratford East is led by the Artistic Director and Executive Director, reporting to the Board. They are supported by the Senior Management team of six including the Learning & Participation Director, Finance and Fundraising Director, Operations Director, Senior Producer, Head of Production and Head of Marketing & Communications.

Staff Base

We have a 45-strong central staff base and a customer facing causal team of 60 working across front of house, bar and box office. We also engage a large number of freelancers to work on and off stage in our productions, as well as casual technicians.



FACTS AND FIGURES FOR THE 2023-24 FINANCIAL YEAR

174 Freelancers
employed

8 PRODUCTIONS

1,114 Members of
our Freelance
Royalty Scheme

225
PERFORMANCES

72,582
Audience members

38,583 Average monthly
website visits

17 ONE OFF
NIGHTS

9,384
Young people
engaged with us

9 Community
Ambassadors

ROLE

Job Title: Artistic Director

Currently, the Artistic Director is joint CEO with the Executive Director. This will be reviewed during the recruitment process

Reporting to: Board of Trustees

Direct reports: Senior Producer, Director of Learning & Participation, Head of Production, Creative Associate

MAIN PURPOSE OF THE POST

The Artistic Director works collaboratively with the Executive Director to lead and shape Stratford East's mission and programme to achieve the highest standards, reaching a wide audience. The role holds specific responsibility for Stratford East's artistic programme, talent development and learning & participation work.

Working closely with the Executive Director, the Artistic Director provides Stratford East with inspirational and inclusive leadership, overseeing the growth and development of the organisation, and ensuring it remains rooted in its local communities whilst continuing to build its wider profile.

The Artistic Director will, with the Executive Director, lead on external stakeholder management and industry advocacy.

The Artistic Director will:

- Programme and deliver outstanding, ground-breaking work, which attracts a wide range of audiences
- Lead and advocate for the talent development and learning and participation work within the organisation
- Embed the mission and values of Stratford East within all activity
- Lead an organisation that is inclusive and supportive
- Build the external profile for Stratford East
- Work with the Executive Director to set the strategic direction of Stratford East, ensuring that we operate as a sustainable and successful organisation



Equus Photo: Richard Davenport

PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ARTISTIC LEADERSHIP

- Develop and deliver an ambitious and distinctive artistic vision that reflects Stratford East's values, achieves artistic excellence, ensures a strong reputation for Stratford East and serves our audiences
- Plan and deliver an outstanding artistic programme, and, alongside the Executive Director, ensure that it is financially achievable, and reaches our core audience and attracts new audiences
- Work with the Head of Marketing & Communications to ensure that the programme of work engages with our audiences
- Lead on the commissioning and development of new plays
- Appoint freelance directors and creative teams, guiding and supporting them in their delivery of each production
- Alongside the Executive Director, identify and develop relationships with possible co-producers and commercial investors
- Together with the Executive Director, seek to maximise the opportunities for touring, transfer and commercial exploitation of work originated by Stratford East
- Oversee and support the Learning & Participation team to deliver an outstanding programme both within the local community and a wider talent development programme
- Stay abreast of artistic developments and best practice in British and world theatre and ensure that they are central to Stratford East's work

ORGANISATIONAL LEADERSHIP

- With the Board and Executive Director, develop and deliver Stratford East's overall strategic direction and the artistic and business plans
- With the Executive Director lead the Senior Team, providing inspirational leadership to ensure the organisation is delivering on its potential
- Provide clear direction, motivation and purpose for staff and freelance teams so that all staff are embedding Stratford East's vision and values in all work, fostering a positive, respectful and collaborative working culture
- Proactively support the Development team, taking the lead in key donor/sponsor relationships, attending cultivation events as required and ensuring that existing and new funding opportunities, both public and private, are secured
- Work with the Executive Director and Finance Director to ensure effective budgeting, across all the theatre's activities
- Ensure that inclusion and access remain at the heart of all aspects of Stratford East's work
- With the Executive Director and the Head of Marketing & Communications lead on the strategy for Stratford East's brand, positioning, publicity, marketing and audience development
- Champion the importance of environmental sustainability across Stratford East in creative and innovative ways
- Support the Executive Director to ensure Stratford East meets all its statutory requirements
- Attend and prepare written reports for Board meetings and for any sub-committees of the Board as required

STRATEGIC RELATIONS, REPRESENTATION AND ADVOCACY

- Act as Stratford East's lead spokesperson with key stakeholders, the press and media, and represent the theatre at appropriate artistic regional, national and international forums
- Develop relationships with theatres, touring companies and commercial production companies
- Actively develop and maintain good relationships with key funders, including Arts Council England, and with current and potential sponsors and donors
- Develop relationships with local government and with organisations in the London Borough of Newham, including Royal Docks and East Bank
- Be a visible presence within the sector, promoting Stratford East's reputation and its work, ensuring it is regarded as a key player within the national and international theatre sector
- Maintain a positive and engaged working relationship with Stratford East's Board of Trustees and its committees, in particular with the Chair, ensuring that Trustees are able to contribute their skills, knowledge and counsel to support the work of the theatre

★★★★★ ***"Funny, heart-warming & splendidly staged"*** - The Daily Mail



PERSON SPECIFICATION

EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

- A track record of excellence as a theatre-maker with a strong understanding of the creative and production process
- A deep understanding of the role of an artistic leader and the importance of setting clear strategic direction and meeting business targets alongside excellence in artistic delivery
- Experience of identifying and working with a wide range of freelance creative teams
- Experience of delivering high quality productions across a range of genres that reach a variety of different audiences
- Proven experience in initiating and developing effective and successful partnerships and collaborations
- Experience of working with producers to set and manage production budgets with an appreciation of cost control
- An in-depth appreciation and knowledge of current theatre practice and trends in the UK and the wider world
- Knowledge and experience of the UK arts funding system and other fundraising initiatives (*desirable*)
- An understanding or appreciation of the importance of good governance and working effectively with the Chair and Board of Trustees (*desirable*)

SKILLS

- The ability to create an inspirational artistic vision for Stratford East's across all activities
- A high level of skill in establishing collaborative working relationships both with a wide range of freelance artists in a creative team and with the senior team and staff
- Excellent, confident communication skills, with the ability to articulate the theatre's artistic vision to inspire a wide range of stakeholders
- The skill to balance innovation and creative flair with the need for financial probity and commercial awareness
- The ability to manage multiple priorities
- Entrepreneurial, with the ability to innovate and seek out, or respond to opportunities that will enhance and further the aims of Stratford East

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- An inspiring leader with the ability to motivate artists and colleagues
- A commitment to artistic excellence, with the ability and desire to work collaboratively and inclusively
- A commitment to identifying and offering creative opportunities to develop talent
- Genuinely committed to work with young people and communities
- Robust and resilient, with the ability to work under pressure
- A track record for being respectful and generous of spirit with other artists and team members
- Demonstrable alignment with Stratford East's core culture and values

"As electric as anything in the theatre in the last 100 years"

- The Observer on King Hedley II

INFORMATION

- Contract type:** Full time. Permanent.
Open to job share / applying in partnership
- Salary:** £70,000 - £75,000 per annum, dependent on experience
- Hours of Work:** Office hours are generally 10am - 6pm; weekend and evening work will be an essential part of the role
- Holidays:** 30 days per annum including bank holidays. This will increase by 1 day for each full holiday year of service completed to a maximum total of 33 days.
- Probation:** 6 months
- Notice Period:** 6 months
- Pension:** Up to 5% matched pension contribution after qualifying period
- Other Benefits:** Season ticket loans, Cycle to Work Scheme, complimentary theatre tickets, staff catering discount, Employee Assistance Programme (support and advice via phone and online for on various matters including legal, debt, counselling etc.)



HOW TO APPLY

Stratford East is committed to a policy of equal opportunities embracing diversity in all areas of activity and positively welcomes applications from disabled people and people of all ethnicities.

To apply, please send your CV and a covering letter setting out why you think you are the best person for the job, and how you meet the person specification. You should send your application to

ADrecruitment@stratfordeast.com

Letters should be no more than three pages. All applications will be acknowledged.

The deadline for the applications is Wednesday 21 August 2024 at noon.

Interviews will take place in September, with the first round of interviews in w/c 2 September 2024.

Please also complete our Equality and Diversity monitoring form to help us assess this recruitment process. Please complete the form **[here](#)**

If you would like an informal and confidential chat about the role, please contact our recruitment consultant, Donna Munday, on **donnajmunday@googlemail.com**

If you need any reasonable adjustments or support when completing this process, please contact Donna who will facilitate this.

★★★★★ ***"Outrageously funny"*** - The Times

★★★★★ **"Powerful, emotional intimacy"** - The Stage

**STRATFORD
EAST**



stratfordeast.com

020 8534 7374

Now, I See. Photo: Camilla Greenwell

