

Royal Exchange Theatre

Recruitment Pack



Creative Director
Nov 2023



Our Vision and Mission



Vision

We change the way people see theatre, each other, and the world around them.

Being an accessible world-class theatre and a thriving civic space is central to our vision. To achieve this, collaboration and partnership is paramount. We will shine a light on what is good in our society and will share stories that question what a better future looks like for all of us.

Mission

We Connect, and Art is our vehicle.

By experiencing theatre together or taking part, we will provide transformative points of connection and exchange, reminding us all who we are and what we share with the people around us. Our role in bringing joy and entertainment to people is critical.

We have identified six strategic aims that guide our business. They are:

Strategic Aims

- Exceptional theatre, in a space like no other.
- We are a sustainable charity that navigates change, balancing ambition and financial responsibility
- We keep our audiences close and open doors for new people to join in.
- We reflect the population of Greater Manchester in our workforce, audiences and participants.
- We understand our local communities and our civic role, to ensure we have the greatest impact for the people and partners across Greater Manchester
- We are an organisation that people want to work for and with
- Our environmental responsibility and impact are a consideration in all our decision making.



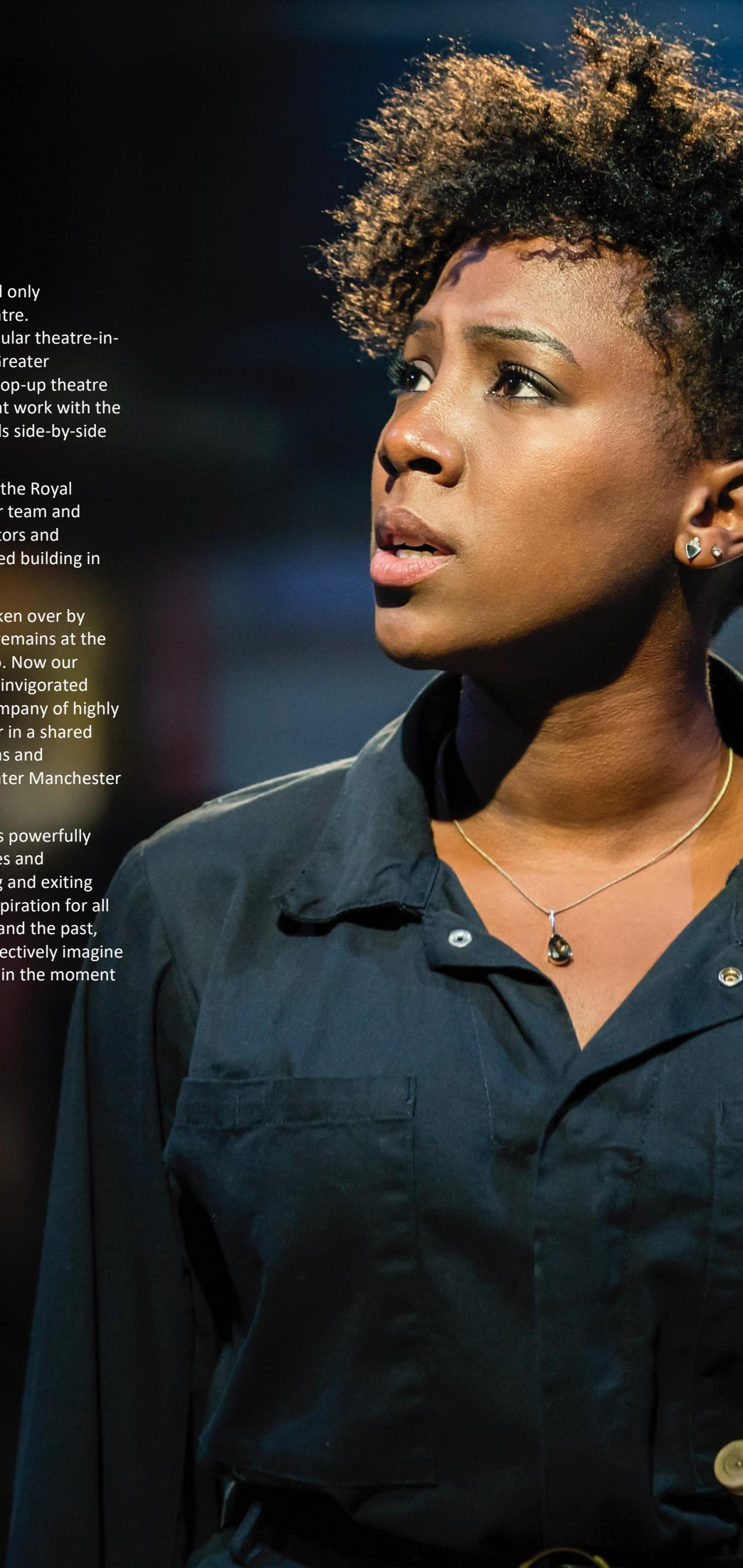
Introduction

We are the North West's largest and only full-time, text based producing theatre. We present work in our unique modular theatre-in-the-round as well as spaces across Greater Manchester, in our equally unique pop-up theatre The Den. Our exemplary engagement work with the people of Greater Manchester stands side-by-side with the theatre we produce.

This is an exciting time to be joining the Royal Exchange Theatre, as we expand our team and welcome increasing numbers of visitors and audiences back into our Grade II listed building in the heart of the city centre.

The Royal Exchange building was taken over by artists in 1976 and today exchange remains at the heart of everything we make and do. Now our currency is brand new drama and reinvigorated classics, the boldest artists and a company of highly skilled makers – all brought together in a shared imaginative endeavour to trade ideas and experiences with the people of Greater Manchester (and beyond).

The Exchange's unique auditorium is powerfully democratic, a space where audiences and performers meet as equals, entering and exiting through the same doors. It is the inspiration for all we do; inviting everyone to understand the past, engage in today's big questions, collectively imagine a better future and lose themselves in the moment of a great night out.



Creative Director

Job Overview

The Royal Exchange operates in a rapidly changing cultural, social and economic landscape and the introduction of a new leadership structure will respond to this in the delivery of our Mission and Strategic Aims; “we connect, and art is our vehicle”.

To ensure we have greatest potential to deliver on our mission, and that we are able to consider a range of potential creative approaches to this, we are not being prescriptive about the discipline or final structure of the Creative Director role. We are open to a broad range of proposals.

The incoming Creative Director will lead a creative team who will work closely with our new Director of Producing and Director of Production. This will include appointing a permanent Resident Associate Director and cohort of Creative Associates. The Creative Team will work across the organisation providing artistic leadership and challenge in everything that we do. The successful Creative Director will centre audiences in all our decision making and will be committed to providing the highest quality cultural experiences for the broadest range of people.

The new creative structure at the Royal Exchange will elevate the number and range of artistic voices that are present within our Leadership Team, meaning that the Creative Director, Resident Associate Director, Dramaturg and Creative Associates will all contribute to the key decision-making processes. The Creative Director will line manage the roles responsible for the delivery of our artistic activity.

This structure will be at the heart of our organisation, driving forward the two key elements of our business, Art and Audiences. This team will create the environment for directors and artists to thrive in our organisation, providing opportunities for next generation artists to work alongside established theatre makers in the delivery of a programme that has audiences at its heart.

The creative leadership will play a pivotal role in celebrating creativity across Greater Manchester, supporting exceptional and innovative creative practice with artists, communities and participants.

This approach to creative leadership will work across our organisation, providing artistic insight, direction and challenge in every aspect of our business. The creative direction we take will be directly informed by what we know and learn about existing and new audiences.

The new Creative Director will be responsible for establishing the best environment for a broad spectrum of artists to work in our theatre, including world class artists from Manchester, the UK, and beyond.

We want to Innovate around new models of commissioning, producing and presenting live experiences for audiences, harnessing the potential of all our spaces and platforms, including digital.

The Creative Director will drive our role as the 'making house' in Greater Manchester and wider region, as well as extending our reach and collaborations Internationally.

A key objective for the organisation is to advance our programming plans, developing ambitious projects over a three-year rolling cycle, that enable us to look at new ways of making work and reaching audiences. 2026 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Royal Exchange Theatre Company when we will deliver a programme of work that celebrates the history of the theatre company, as well as looking to the future. This will include projects of significant scale and ambition.

Creative Director

Job Title	Creative Director
Team	Executive
Reports to	Chief Executive
Responsible for	Resident Associate Director, Dramaturg, Dir. of Production, Dir. of Engagement, Dir. of Producing, Creative Associates.
Salary	c. £65,000 pa
Contract type	Permanent
Hours of Work	35 hours per week
Annual Leave entitlement	25 days per annum plus bank holidays
Pension	Auto enrolment into The People's Pension after 3 months' service (4% employer contribution, 4% employee contribution)
Probationary period	6 months
Notice period	6 months

Key Responsibilities

Strategic

Work in collaboration with the Chief Executive to set the Artistic Strategy for the organisation, providing clear direction for all areas of our operation that is informed by audiences both existing and new.

With the Executive and Leadership Team, to develop the Strategic Aims of the organisation, ensuring the successful delivery of our Vision and Mission.

To provide inspiring creative direction for the Royal Exchange Theatre, ensuring that all of our work contributes to our Artistic Strategy, Vision, Mission and Aims.

Set our talent development strategy, devising programmes and schemes that explore the uniqueness of the Royal Exchange and its resources.

Leadership

Provide inspirational leadership and support to all of our creative teams, both permanent and temporary.

Embed a progressive and active approach to equality, diversity and inclusion in all of our artistic and creative work.

To deputise for the Chief Executive as required, both internally and externally.

Develop a sustainable strategy for the utilisation of our performance spaces, including the Studio Theatre.

Innovate around new models of commissioning, producing and presenting live performance.

Artistic Creative Practice

Drive the programme planning cycle, taking key responsibility for devising seasons of work and special events that respond to our strategies.

Devise initiatives and programme work that challenges the complex history of our building and Greater Manchester through the lens of racial justice.

To inspire the direction of our Engagement and Participation work, ensuring a synergy between our produced and participatory programmes. The Creative Director will support the Director of Engagement to embed our work within the organisation and across Greater Manchester.

To support the creative team in the delivery of our programmes of work, providing guidance and artistic challenge where necessary in the delivery of our strategies.

Advocacy

The Creative Director will represent and advocate for the work of the Royal Exchange at a local, national and

international level, ensuring that the theatre retains its position as a leading producing theatre in the UK.

To support the development of a strong brand, ensuring that our work strengthens the Royal Exchange's reputation as the leading full-time producing theatre in the North of England.

To develop initiatives that showcase and strengthen the Royal Exchange's reputation within the UK Theatre sector.

To actively promote the Royal Exchange as a place that people want to work for, and with, within the artist and cultural sector of the UK.

Industry

Take responsibility for building strong and dynamic relationships with artists, producers and venues.

Initiate conversations and foster healthy relationships with high profile actors and creatives, with a view to long term planning.

Support the work of the sector, ensuing progressive and inclusive practice, at industry forums and events.

Ensure that the Royal Exchange hold up-to-date knowledge about developments in the UK Theatre sector by engaging in future initiatives and research.

Seeing work from a breadth of leading producers both locally and nationally.

Support a local cultural and creative ecology by engaging with artists and venues, ensuring that the Royal Exchange holds a relevant and contemporary knowledge of NW based creatives.

Operational

To provide inspiring, generous and empowering line management for direct reports.

To take an active leadership role in the day-to-day running of our business.

To contribute to fundraising initiatives, including devising compelling and investable propositions for securing contributed income.

Engage with, and inform the financial management and planning processes of the Royal Exchange ensuring that the appropriate resources are provided for in the pursuit of our artistic aims.

Person Specification

CORE SKILLS, ATTRIBUTES AND EXPERIENCE

- The ability and confidence to inspire and galvanise people around artistic vision.
- Experience of senior leadership within an artistic/ cultural organisation.
- Confident and skilled in providing artistic challenge and engaging with a wide range of creatives.
- Substantial professional experience of the canon and classic British/ American repertoire.
- A strong commitment to understanding people's lived experience of discrimination, marginalisation, or other social and cultural barriers.
- Experience and or knowledge of commissioning and dramaturgy, as well as Innovative approaches to producing.
- Experience of working within a busy producing theatre.
- Experience of line managing diverse teams of people in a generous and inclusive manner.
- An understanding and interest in the financial management and planning of a large cultural organisation.
- Knowledge and experience of working with world-class artists, producers and venues.
- A commitment to providing inclusive engagement and participation opportunities, in a place-based approach.



Our work

The Royal Exchange was named Regional Theatre of the Year in 2016 and School of the Year at The Stage Awards in 2018. Our work, developed with an incredible array of artists and theatre makers, and our two resident companies The Young Company and the Elders Company, includes *Hamlet* with Maxine Peake (for stage and film), *The Skriker* (with the Manchester International Festival), *King Lear* (co-produced with Talawa Theatre Company, filmed for BBC iPlayer and BBC Four), *The House Of Bernarda Alba* (a co-production with Graeae theatre Company), *Light Falls* (a world-premiere from Simon Stephens directed by Sarah Frankcom with original music by Jarvis Cocker), *Rockets And Blue Lights* (by award-winning writer Winsome Pinnock and directed by Miranda Cromwell and aired on BBC Radio 3 during lockdown), *All I Want For Christmas* (Digital commission for Dec 2020), *Wit & Wisdom* directed by Andy Barry, *The Survivors Guide To Living* by Zodwa Nyoni and *Bloody Elle – A Gig Musical* by Lauryn Redding, directed by Bryony Shanahan and which reopened the Theatre in June 2021. Other recent work includes *The Glass Menagerie* directed by Atri Banerjee, *Betty! The Musical*, directed by Sarah Frankcom, and *Untitled F*ck M*ss S**gon Play*, directed by Roy Alexander Weise.

Engagement

Engagement and participation plays a central role in the Theatre's vision and mission. It provides vital points of access and extends our reach beyond the walls of our theatre, continuing to have real and lasting impact on the confidence and creative aspirations of everyone involved. Through the development of strong creative partnerships with individuals and community groups we continue to nurture long-lasting relationships between the Theatre and the people of Greater Manchester.

Each year the Engagement Department offers new and distinctive ways for people to explore theatre, become involved in creative projects and make the Royal Exchange Theatre their own. Over 6,000 people take part every year from school's days, volunteering and careers weeks to our flagship Young Company, Elders Company and Local Exchange programme.

We continue to develop our award-winning Young Company to support and nurture young writers, makers and performers and our Elders Company for those over 60 who want to feel connected to new people and ideas, be creative and challenge the stereotypes of ageing.

Local Exchange is a strategic, long-term and ambitious approach to working in communities across the boroughs of Greater Manchester and our neighbouring city wards. During a four-year residency we develop key creative partnerships with local organisations and residents to develop a wide range of cultural activity and co-create work in new and found locations and our mobile theatre space The Den. All of this work enables us to build a lasting arts and culture exchange between the Theatre and its communities.

For further details, please see the videos below:

Local Exchange: [The Den in M8](#)

Local Exchange: [M11 Ambassador film](#)

Elders Programme: [The Dream Project](#)

Romeo and Juliet Schools Day: [Student Vox Pops](#)

Our partnerships

The Bruntwood Prize

A partnership between the RET, Manchester, and property company Bruntwood, the Bruntwood Prize for Playwriting is Europe's biggest playwriting competition. It is an opportunity for writers of any background and experience to enter unperformed plays to be judged by a panel of industry experts for a chance to win part of a prize fund totalling £40,000.

At the heart of the Bruntwood Prize for Playwriting is the principal that anyone and everyone can enter the Prize – it is entirely anonymous and scripts are judged purely on the basis of the work alone and with no knowledge of the identity of the playwright. It celebrates creativity, encouraging and supporting anyone to explore telling stories through the live medium of theatre. Since its inception in 2005 over 15,000 scripts have been entered, £304,000 has been awarded to 34 prize winning writers and 27 winning productions have been staged in 39 UK wide venues. In 2015, it celebrated its 10th anniversary and is now recognised as a launch-pad for some of the country's most respected and produced playwrights.

Each winner enters into a development process with the RET in an endeavour to bring their work to production. It is not guaranteed but we aspire to produce each play and find co-producers to give the plays a longer life and further reach. There have been co-productions with Young Vic, Lyric Hammersmith, Live Theatre, Paines Plough, Soho Theatre, Bush Theatre, Orange Tree Theatre, Sherman Theatre, High Tide and the Royal Court Theatre. Work has also gone on to be produced internationally from Australia, USA, Germany, France, to Canada and Sweden.

For further details on the prize, please go to writeaplay.co.uk

For further details about the RET, please see our website and our social media channels below:

www.royalexchange.co.uk

[@RXTheatre](https://twitter.com/RXTheatre) – Twitter

[@rxtheatre](https://www.instagram.com/rxtheatre) – Instagram

[rxtheatre](https://www.youtube.com/rxtheatre) – YouTube

[Royal Exchange Theatre](https://www.linkedin.com/company/royal-exchange-theatre) – LinkedIn



Our Values and Behaviours

We are invested in the people we work with and their values and behaviours. We want all our team to display and live by the following principles:

ACCOUNTABLE

- We take ownership of our own part and are accountable for our own decisions.
- We trust others to be responsible for what they do, and how they do it, to drive the aims of RET and its future.
- We will challenge people and practice, as well as support them, to achieve our aims especially in our active commitment to removing discrimination.

HONEST

- We will ask difficult questions, feel empowered to do so and give and receive feedback, even if it is difficult to say or hear. This is vital for equality, diversity and inclusion.
- We will be empathetic and demonstrate emotional intelligence.
- We will apologise if we have done something wrong – and move on.

OPEN

- We will develop the appetite to learn and grow, so that we can be truly open to anyone and everyone.
- We will be collaborative, flexible and adaptable in how we do things and get “stuck in” if we see others need help.
- We will welcome innovation and show entrepreneurship where we can.



How to apply

If you would like an informal and confidential conversation about this opportunity, we warmly encourage you to contact Mary Caws, an independent consultant who is working with us: cawsmary@gmail.com

When you are ready to make an application, please email recruitment@royalexchange.co.uk with:

A two-page A4 statement, telling us why you want to be our Creative Director, outlining the skills and experiences you would bring to the role, and how these meet the person specification

AND your CV (max. two pages) with the names and contact details of two referees

You can also provide all this Information in a voice note OR in video format. Please contact michelle.hickman@royalexchange.co.uk for further details.

Deadline for applications is **Friday 5th January 2024 at 12.00pm (midday)**

First interviews will be held on **Wednesday 17 January 2024**

Second interviews will be held on **Friday 2 February 2024**

PLEASE REMEMBER TO COMPLETE THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES SURVEY (LINK ON RET WEBSITE CREATIVE DIRECTOR VACANCY PAGE)

We are a Disability Confident employer, a Real Living Wage employer, and a supporter of the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter.

At our core we uphold values of Openness, Honesty and Accountability which guide our every action and decision.

We firmly believe that a truly creative space is one that thrives on the richness of different perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences. By actively seeking diversity in our team, we aim to create a collaborative and inclusive culture where everybody's voice is heard and respected. We value the unique contributions that individuals from all walks of life bring to our organisation, and we are committed to providing equal opportunities for everyone. We are dedicated to fostering and encouraging an inclusive and creative environment that truly reflects the diverse demographics of Greater Manchester.

Central to pursuing our EDI mission is building diverse and inclusive teams in which everyone has a sense of belonging. We particularly welcome applications from people we would like to see better represented in our organisation and sector - people from the global majority, LGBTQ+ people, Deaf, disabled, neurodivergent, and learning disabled people.

If you are Deaf or disabled, neurodivergent or learning disabled and meet our minimum criteria you will be guaranteed an interview for this role, and we will provide reasonable adjustments as required. We follow the social model of disability and have experience of using Access To Work. Flexible working patterns will be considered.

If you need this recruitment pack in a different format, please contact Michelle Hickman on michelle.hickman@royalexchange.co.uk or by phone on 0161 615 6704.

Thank you for your interest the Royal Exchange Theatre

GMCA GREATER
MANCHESTER
COMBINED
AUTHORITY



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