

## **HODGISS DIRECTOR AWARD 2024** **INFORMATION PACK**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Hodgkiss Director Award will provide an exciting and unique opportunity for an emerging Greater Manchester based director to forge a meaningful relationship with the Royal Exchange Theatre.

The aim is that this will provide a uniquely ambitious and life-changing opportunity for a Greater Manchester theatre director to benefit from a home at the Royal Exchange and a bespoke programme of work which will provide them with comprehensive and wide-ranging insights and embedded knowledge and experience to support them to forge a sustainable career.

We hope to engage people that have a distinctive voice that is currently under-represented, an energy to generate ideas and the drive to tell ambitious stories that connect with a range of people. They have experienced a barrier to pursuing their career ambitions and would tangibly benefit from the opportunity of structured support, a bespoke developmental journey and a sense of home.

They will work with award-winning director JOSHUA ROCHE as Assistant Director on the forthcoming production of [THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST](#).

They will be supported by the artistic team at the Royal Exchange Theatre who will provide them with a unique insight into forging a career as a theatre director at a particularly difficult and precarious time in the arts ecology. The Award will also enable them to gain in-depth knowledge of the running of a major regional producing theatre, to learn about the programming of the theatre at this time and to gain a greater understanding of what it means to make work at this scale in Manchester. Through a close dialogue with the Creative Director, Director of Producing, Associate Director and Dramaturg at the Royal Exchange Theatre, they will have a journey with a long-lasting legacy to understand how to forge relationships and make the most of opportunities with other producing theatres.

They will also have an opportunity to play a role in our Local Exchange work in Rochdale, including the Den Festival to explore ways in which their skills might open opportunities to make work in other ways – through engagement with communities, our Young Company and our Company of Elders.

[Local Exchange](#) is the Royal Exchange Theatre's community engagement programme which sees us take up residency in 5 communities across Greater Manchester. In each area we develop relationships with local residents and partners like housing associations, libraries, schools, or arts organisations to find out what is happening on the ground in those areas. We recruit a group of local Ambassadors, people who are passionate about the place they live and are excited by everything that arts and culture have to offer. Together with professional artists, Ambassadors, partners and the team at the Royal Exchange we will develop projects, workshops, performances, culminating in a two-week festival in our

mobile pace, [the Den](#). Over the last year we have been working with communities in Rochdale to build a strategy for our work there, and programme the two-week community festival which is expected to take place at Kingsway Park School from 7<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> August 2024. Within the festival the Royal Exchange and the Ambassadors will commission a new piece of theatre, and the Royal Exchange will also produce a brand-new production in collaboration with a group of South Asian Elders in Rochdale. We look forward to inviting the Director placement to meet the Ambassadors, learn more about the vision and delivery of the festival and assist on a brand-new Royal Exchange production in this unique community setting.

Finally they will also be afforded an opportunity to explore what they have learnt through their placement in a practical way with an opportunity to workshop an idea with two professional actors – this will be shaped through conversations with the artistic leadership at the Royal Exchange to enable them to explore something that will have the greatest impact on their creative development.

Our ambition for the Hodgkiss Director Award is to provide an exciting emerging director with an in-depth experience that is not just focussed on the rehearsal process, but also encompasses the range of ways a director might work with a theatre to forge a sustainable career journey. It will provide an opportunity that is becoming increasingly rare in the theatre landscape with many other schemes for emerging / assistant directors closing and is something that the Royal Exchange Theatre has a proven track record of delivering in a way that has a lasting impact on the artist's journey and career opportunities.

#### HODGKISS DIRECTOR PLACEMENT

The candidate will receive a bursary to enable them to be Assistant Director to award-winning director Joshua Roche on his forthcoming production of THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST. In their role as Assistant Director, the duties will include but are not limited to:

- Providing general assistance to the Director.
- As agreed with the Director, to carry out any research that will inform and benefit the production.
- To observe rehearsals and have input in discussions and production meetings.
- To be able to lead warm-ups and step in for the director in leading rehearsals when necessary.
- To assist the company in documenting the rehearsal process for the purposes of marketing, archiving and evaluating the project through blogs, social media and other forms as agreed.
- To be a sounding board in the rehearsal room, to offer notes where appropriate and to be an active observer in the room to engage in useful and active discussions with the director outside of the rehearsal room.
- To note the show to the actors after press night in consultation with the director.
- To observe and assist the director in technical rehearsals, through previews to press night.
- Any further duties as required by the Director.

Through their placement with the Local Exchange and Den Festival, the aim is for the Hodgkiss Director to be Assistant Director on a key element of the work during the festival and to support the broader offer throughout the festival. Through this, the Director will also play a key role in liaising with the Local Exchange Producers to engage with the communities and Local Exchange Ambassadors. We hope this experience will provide the Hodgkiss Director with the following learning –

- Delivery high quality theatre/art in a community setting
- Opportunity to work alongside non-professional artists
- Experience a festival setting

The Royal Exchange will also provide:

- At least two 1:1 meetings with the Director during the rehearsal process
- One final 1:1 meeting with the Director at the end of the placement to evaluate the experience
- Access to different departments within the Royal Exchange to fulfil the specific interests of the individual and support their development in understanding other areas of the theatre's work.
- Weekly 1:1 meetings with a member of the core Artistic team at the Royal Exchange Theatre – this will also give them an opportunity to discuss future planning
- The Hodgkiss Director will also have the opportunity to meet with other departments in the theatre.

We hope that this scheme will provide a greater understanding of the process of a rehearsal room, how to work with creative teams and how to build a production of a play. We would hope that they would feel better equipped to pursue their development as a theatre director.

Continuous learning is vital to our delivery of this Scheme – it is therefore expected that the recipient will take part in a full evaluation of the Scheme.

#### WHO WE ARE LOOKING FOR

- Someone who can demonstrate a commitment to directing and a passion for theatre making.
- Someone who is organised, confident, flexible, calm and approachable.
- Someone who has had some experience of directing in a professional capacity or on the fringe – engaging with professional actors who are not just personal connections.
- Be able to demonstrate an interest in or engagement with the work of Oscar Wilde, especially THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST.
- A good team player who is willing to work collaboratively with the team around the show (creatives, actors, stage managers and staff).
- Someone who can demonstrate a keen interest in engaging with communities and making work in collaboration with communities.

- Someone who is living in or originally from the Greater Manchester area with a commitment to making work in the region.
- Candidates should be aged over 18

## TIMELINE

The Hodgkiss Director Award scheme runs from 6<sup>th</sup> May to 31<sup>st</sup> August.

The schedule has been broken down as follows –

8 <sup>th</sup> April	Deadline for Applications
15 <sup>th</sup> / 16 <sup>th</sup> April	Interviews for shortlisted candidates
Week commencing 22 <sup>nd</sup> April	Announce recipient of Award
Week commencing 6 <sup>th</sup> May	Induction and Prep Week
Week commencing 13 <sup>th</sup> May	Rehearsals start on THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST
Week commencing 10 <sup>th</sup> June	Tech Week
14 <sup>th</sup> June	Previews
19 <sup>th</sup> June	Press Night for THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST
20 <sup>th</sup> July	Final Performance of THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST
End of July / beginning of August (two weeks - exact dates TBC)	Den Festival in Rochdale
Week commencing 12 <sup>th</sup> August (TBC)	Workshop / outcome week
16 <sup>th</sup> August	Placement ends
31 <sup>st</sup> August	Report Delivered

The successful candidate will be expected to be present throughout the timeline of the Scheme. However, during the run of the production of THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST, the successful candidate may work half-time.

Normal working hours will be 10am – 6pm but there will be evening and weekend working, particularly during tech and preview weeks.

More detail on the timetable and working hours can be provided upon request when shortlisted candidates are invited to interview.

## BURSARY

We are able to offer the Hodgkiss Director Award a fully inclusive bursary payment of £6,000.00

The Assistant Director's fee has been calculated in line with industry guidelines drawn up by Equity – more information at <https://www.equity.org.uk/news/2023/equity-announce-new-agreements-for-directors-west-end-commercial-and-subsidised>

This will be made as a bursary payment in three instalments. The applicant will have to be responsible for their own NI and Tax Payments. If they are not set-up as a self-employed practitioner, the Royal Exchange Theatre can support them to do this.

### TO APPLY

To apply for this bursary, please send us the following –

- An up to date CV or biog (no more than one side of A4)
- A link to your website or 3-5 images from your work

Please answer the following questions –

1. Why is this opportunity useful to you at this point in your Director journey and what would you hope to learn from this placement? (300 words / up to 3 minutes of video)
2. What show have you experienced at the Royal Exchange and how has it influenced you as a director? (300 words / up to 3 minutes of video)
3. The role of Assistant Director often involves giving constructive feedback to a wide range of people. Can you give an example of a time when you've had to give feedback to someone who is older or more experienced than yourself? (300 words / up to 3 minutes of video)
4. Please share an experience of working within a community or working with young people or working with non-professional artists and how this interested you and fed your creative practice. (300 words / up to 3 minutes of video)

We can accept either written or video applications.

Please submit your application to [literary@royalexchange.co.uk](mailto:literary@royalexchange.co.uk)

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS – Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024