

RTYDS moves into pole position for increasing the diversity of theatre directors and artistic leaders.

The Regional Theatre Young Director Scheme (RTYDS), under the leadership of Sue Emmas, has become the flagship organisation for promoting and enabling directors from under-represented backgrounds to forge a career in theatre and artistic leadership, with significant funding from Arts Council England.

- RTYDS has been awarded Grants for the Arts Project Funding of £185,000 from Arts Council England to continue and build on its current programmes.
- It has become management partner for a Consortium of four theatres, led by Tiata Fahodzi, which has been awarded funding of more than £400,000 through the Arts Council's Sustained Theatre Fund to support the development of established and emerging BAME theatre makers and increase their representation.
- It has become an Associate Company of Manchester Royal Exchange in addition to its existing Associate Company status with the Young Vic.

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Indhu Rubasingham, Artistic Director of the Tricycle Theatre and RTYDS Board

Member said: *"To ensure the future success of our industry, we must nurture emerging talent from all backgrounds and work to develop new routes into the arts. In the last three years RTYDS has not only transformed itself, but has also done vital work to help challenge and change the paths to becoming a director by opening up opportunities to many more people."*

RTYDS will now provide not only its existing programme strands of 18-Month Residencies, Three-Month Placements and Introduction to Directing, but also a new Pilot Associate Directorship in partnership with Northern Stage aimed at preparing directors for artistic leadership. And in what is often an isolated and competitive profession, they aim to facilitate a nationwide community by supporting directors and enabling directors to support each other through a Craft and Career Development Programme that will reach around 200 directors across the country with workshops and masterclasses.

In the coming year RTYDS will work with over 250 new and emerging directors across the country with six Introduction to Directing projects, three 18-Month Residencies and a pilot Associate Directorship, as well as a comprehensive programme of director training workshops and masterclasses. Programme details below.

Sarah Frankcom, Artistic Director, Royal Exchange Theatre said: *"RTYDS is rewriting the future of UK theatre. It has consistently helped to develop some of the most inspirational directors in the country by immersing them in producing theatres. Uncovering and supporting the next generation of theatre makers sits at the heart of the Royal Exchange. Working with RTYDS will provide even more opportunities for emerging directors to work in our studio and on our main stage. Creating a home for RTYDS in the city adds to an evolving and vibrant scene of creative opportunity here in the theatre and across Greater Manchester. We are thrilled that they are joining us as a new associate company and making Manchester their home in the North."*

RTYDS originated in the 1960s, aimed at supporting the development of artistic leaders, and has a star studded alumni including John Tiffany, Ken Loach, Rupert Goold, Vicky Featherstone and Matthew Xia. However, in response to consultation across the sector in 2014, RTYDS introduced new programmes dedicated to increasing diversity in the profession, uniting emerging directors with regional theatre companies of all scales, providing opportunities for training and development which are designed to overcome barriers to entering the profession which arise from social, gender, financial, ethnic, cultural, geographic or educational disadvantage or disability.

Since 2014 RTYDS has worked with 43 regional theatre companies and 277 directors. 93% of participants on programmes for new and emerging directors were from under-represented groups, 40% were BAME; 23% identified as disabled and are 61% face barriers due to socio-economic factors.

Confirmed Three-Month Placements for 2017 are: Ajjaz Awad-Ibrahim at Tiata Fahodzi, Watford, Olly Webb at Prime Theatre in Swindon, Emily Harrison at Open Clasp Theatre, Newcastle, Rebekah Bowsher at Greyscale Theatre, Newcastle and Corey Campbell at Belgrade Theatre, Coventry & Tamasha.

For more information about these directors please get in touch. RTYDS will also run Introduction to Directing courses at Queen's Theatre Hornchurch, The New Vic Newcastle Under Lyme and Theatre Royal Plymouth.

Neil Darlison, Director of Theatre, Arts Council England, said:

"I'm delighted we have been able to continue our support for the Regional Theatre Young Director Scheme through the Grants for the Arts programme. This ongoing initiative ensures a range of talented directors, from backgrounds currently under-represented in our theatres, are able to work in regional producing houses experiencing how the theatres are run, influencing artistic decisions, and having opportunities to create work".

For further press information please contact:

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PROGRAMME INFORMATION

In 2017/18 RTYDS will deliver five programme strands:

- 1. Pilot Associate Directorship (new in 2017).** In partnership with Northern Stage we will pilot a new model for a part-time associate director. Aimed at a director with a strong professional track record it will provide access to making work on the middle scale and to direct learning about the role of an artistic director. Simultaneously the associate will be able to pursue elements of the portfolio career of the contemporary freelance director.
- 2. Craft and Career Development Programme (new in 2017).** 10 master-classes, workshops and training sessions (one or two days) for a total of around 200 directors. Support for emerging regional directors through the RTYDS network. We will provide free local professional development and networking opportunities, incorporating peer support, action learning sets, coaching and leadership development. Practical workshops will offer craft skills development.
- 3. Introduction to Directing (introduced 2014).** Six projects, each of at least five days, each for 10 participants aged 18 years and above. Intensive practical training, targeted specifically at individuals from under-represented communities, in order to widen the pool of talent who will

consider a career in professional theatre directing. By detailed agreement with RTYDS each host theatre, company or consortium will tailor a training programme for its own circumstances. Programmes include a mix of hands-on practical work, observation, discussion with experienced practitioners and an introduction to further opportunities.

4. **Three-Month Placement (introduced 2014).** Six placements, also targeted at under-represented communities and focused on directors at the start of professional careers. RTYDS works in partnership with a regional theatre or company to offer a paid artistic placement equivalent to three full-time months at a host theatre. To overcome immediate barriers to participation such as employment or caring responsibilities, placements are shaped in response to each director's circumstances.
5. **18-Month Residency (reconfigured 2014).** Three residencies aimed at talented emerging directors with some professional experience and demonstrable commitment to a directing career. This strand is a developed version of RTYDS's historical core activity. Closely supervised by resident artistic directors and creative teams, trainees are paid to undertake an extended work programme in a regional theatre, including assisting experienced directors, an opportunity to produce at least one piece of their own professional work, a curated international exchange, master-classes, workshops and a personal learning fund.

RTYDS is funded by Arts Council England and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, is an Associate Company of the Young Vic and has a base at Northern Stage in Newcastle.
www.rtyds.co.uk