

RTYDS leads the field in increasing the diversity of theatre directors and artistic leaders.

The Regional Theatre Young Director Scheme (RTYDS) has made significant inroads in promoting and enabling directors from under represented backgrounds to forge a career in theatre and artistic leadership, with significant new funding from Arts Council England. Recent milestones include:

- RTYDS has been awarded Grants for the Arts Project Funding of £185K from Arts Council England to continue and build on its current programmes.
- In partnership with Northern Stage, RTYDS has selected Elayce Ismail as the first recipient of a paid 18 month pilot scheme to enable an associate director to both develop their career as a theatre director and to learn artistic leadership skills.
- RTYDS has become an Associate Company of Manchester Royal Exchange, in addition to its existing Associate Company status with the Young Vic.

Sue Emmas RTYDS Artistic Director said: *"There is no limit to the talent, ideas and vision of directors making work in England today. However, there aren't always the opportunities that enable directors to learn skills, find collaborators and make exceptional work. Through our programmes RTYDS works in partnerships to provide transformational opportunities with theatres that share our commitment to supporting talent and reducing the barriers to working in theatre. Our new base at Manchester Royal Exchange is at the centre of the Northwest's theatre producing, and our new Associate Director residency at Northern Stage will further increase the impact of our work and provide an accessible route into theatre directing from entry level to artistic leadership."*

Enabled by its new funding, RTYDS now supports a nationwide structure of paid opportunities for career development for emerging directors from under represented backgrounds. It provides a comprehensive programme of director training workshops and masterclasses as well as partnering with theatres and organisations countrywide to find, nurture and develop talented directors. In the coming year RTYDS will work with over 250 new and emerging directors with six Introduction to Directing projects, three 18-Month Residencies and the pilot Associate Directorship. Details below.

And in what is often an isolated and competitive profession, RTYDS 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.

Ten new RTYDS projects have been announced:

18-Month paid Assistant Director Residencies will take place at three major theatres; Birmingham Repertory Theatre, Sheffield Theatres, Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester. Directors apply to RTYDS to become a paid Resident Assistant Director at one of these theatres. The residencies offer exceptional work-based training to talented directors and potential artistic leaders with an opportunity to direct their own show.

Paid Three-Month Placements will take place at Nottingham Playhouse, Oldham Coliseum Theatre and Salisbury Playhouse with directors Katie Brailsford, Sushil Chudasama and Hannah Petley respectively.

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Introduction to Directing projects will be hosted by Birmingham Repertory Theatre, The Dukes, Lancaster, West Yorkshire Playhouse and Eclipse Theatre with Slate network in Sheffield and South Yorkshire, supporting up to forty new theatre directors to start their professional careers.

In addition, RTYDS has launched a **new Pilot Associate Directorship** in partnership with Northern Stage aimed at preparing directors for artistic leadership. The recipient of this award is Elayce Ismail, who said: *"I'm thrilled to be joining Northern Stage as the RTYDS Associate Director as this fantastic opportunity will allow me to develop my artistic leadership skills in a practical and meaningful way. It's hugely exciting to have the chance to make work on a bigger scale and at a venue as vibrant and creatively ambitious as Northern Stage. I'm very much looking forward to joining the artistic community of the North East!"*

Lorne Campbell, Artistic Director, Northern Stage: *"I am delighted to welcome Elayce Ismail to Northern Stage as RTYDS Associate Director for the next 18 months. Elayce is one of the most exciting directors of her generation and this scheme will enable her to develop her work on a larger scale, embed herself within a vibrant, diverse regional creative context and develop the key organisational skills and perspectives to emerge as a future artistic director."*

Manchester Royal Exchange joins the **Young Vic** as an Associate Company, and will become the Northern base of RTYDS as well as hosting an 18 Month Residency.

Sarah Frankcom, Artistic Director, Royal Exchange Theatre said: *"RTYDS is rewriting the future of UK theatre. Discovering 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."*

David Lan, Artistic Director, Young Vic said: *"We're delighted to have the RTYDS as our associate company. The strength of our partnership lies in the fact that, working independently, we answer two distinct needs for director development across the UK. In their different ways, RTYDS and the Young Vic Directors Program are both essential. Without the effects they achieve in parallel, theatre would lack a bridge into the future."*

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.

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."

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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 are piloting 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, and is an Associate Company of the Royal Exchange Theatre Manchester and the Young Vic.
www.rtyds.co.uk

About the Royal Exchange Theatre

Manchester's Royal Exchange Theatre Company transforms the way people see theatre, each other and the world around them. Our historic building, once the world's biggest cotton exchange, was taken over by artists in 1976. Today it is an award-winning cultural charity that produces new theatre in-the-round, in communities, on the road and online. 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).

In 2016 the Royal Exchange won The Stage's award for Regional Theatre of the year. Recent work includes HAMLET with Maxine Peake (for stage and film), LITTLE SISTER (by Mark Storer & developed with communities across Greater Manchester), and THE HOUSE OF BERNARDA ALBA (a co-production with Graeae theatre Company). Spring/Summer '17 productions include PERSUASION and FATHERLAND.

About Northern Stage

Northern Stage makes ambitious, intelligent, enjoyable theatre. The company has a reputation for reviving classic plays in fresh adaptations and creating bold new work. It has been one of the UK's most popular national touring companies for the last 20 years. Alongside its own work, Northern Stage presents the best regional, national and international theatre. Its extensive Creative Residencies programme supports local and national theatre-makers to develop their work at Northern Stage and a year-round programme of projects and events encourages people of all ages and backgrounds to take part in making theatre. Northern Stage also hosts a venue at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, presenting some of the most interesting theatre from across the north of England.

About the Young Vic

The Young Vic produces classics, new plays, forgotten works, musicals and opera, and tours widely in the UK and internationally. It has deep roots in its neighbourhood and extensive co-producing relationships with leading theatres all over the world. The Young Vic's associate companies are BirdGang Dance, Belarus Free Theatre (BFT), Good Chance Theatre and Regional Theatre Young Director Scheme (RTYDS).