



# **A Guide to Venues and Festivals in the North East**

Updated January 2018

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## Introduction

Here in the North East of England, there is a growing group of people who are truly passionate about supporting artists.

The North East Artist Development Network is led by a group of organisations committed to support artists to develop their work.

We want to support artists who are living and working in this region to make outstanding performance work, not just by programming it, but by supporting its development too.

Despite the challenging economic climate, we are working both individually and collaboratively to provide more support and opportunities for artists than ever before.

We know that money isn't everything – although it helps – but aside from financial support, we can also provide space for rehearsals, sharings and performances; technical, marketing, financial and creative advice; and support for funding. We can act as advocates for your work with potential funders and programmers, and most importantly, we can see your work and provide critical analysis and feedback to help with its future development.

We believe the North East is a fantastic place to live and work whatever you do, and we want to ensure we are supporting artists to fulfil their creative potential. That is why we are publishing this document, which outlines some of the opportunities available. Whilst it is not an exhaustive list, we hope it provides a useful starting point for artists seeking support and not least, demonstrates our commitment to making the North East *the* place for artists to create exceptional new work.

Annabel Turpin  
Chair, North East Artist Development Network

## **North East Artist Development Network**

The project is led by a steering group consisting of:

Mark Calvert, Northern Stage  
Kate Craddock, GIFT  
Helen Green, The Firestation  
Jo Potts, Alnwick Playhouse  
Patricia Stead, Dance City  
Graeme Thompson, Live Theatre  
Annabel Turpin, ARC (Chair)

ARC acts as project manager for the Network, reporting to the steering group.

## **Venue Partners**

Alnwick Playhouse  
Alphabetti Theatre  
ARC Stockton  
Arts Centre Washington  
Bishop Auckland Town Hall  
Dance City, Newcastle  
Gala Theatre, Durham  
Gateshead Arts Development  
Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre  
Live Theatre  
Northern Stage, Newcastle  
Saltburn Arts Theatre  
The Maltings, Berwick  
The Witham, Barnard Castle

## **Contact:**

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## **Alphabetti Theatre**

Alphabetti Theatre formed in 2012 it is a space to experiment, evolve and discover excellence. We champion the thriving fringe culture of Newcastle upon Tyne and have been described as one of the catalysts for the growth in the independent artistic scene. We pride ourselves on being an entry point for artists and audiences. We are a space born out of necessity for artists and audiences; now in our third premises since forming we have close links with lots of organisations in independent sector and across varying art forms.

Alphabetti believes in socio-economical accessibility, that great art should be for everyone not just those who can afford it. Our maximum ticket price is £10 and we ultimately prefer to offer Pay What You Feel scheme, meaning that both artist and audience can experiment in what they're making and experiencing.

### **Programming Policy**

Alphabetti only currently offers box office splits which tend to be offers of a run from 3-5 nights with a day for a get in/ dress.

We are interested in programming new and original work across the performing arts, however if you've got an idea that doesn't quite sit in that section get in contact and sell it to us! WE DO NOT PROGRAMME AMATEUR DRAMATICS - it has an essential position in the ecology of performing arts but unfortunately that position is not with us.

We are ultimately interested in creating relationships with artists and companies; we don't really fancy being a one night stand, as we prefer to build a community and a network, working with you to secure funding and provide space. Alphabetti believes in being a socioeconomically accessible venue so all our ticket prices £10 or under and we ultimately prefer to do Pay What You Feel tickets.

Our space is intimate and characterful, our tech is versatile but minimal so we program work accordingly.

We tend to program in 6 month cycles.

To get programmed send a production pack to Artistic Director - Ali Pritchard and he'll arrange a meeting.

Please bear in mind that Ali is Alphabetti's only full time member of staff so he is run a little thin at time. If he doesn't get back to you immediately please just come in and introduce yourself, he is tall and usually wearing a hat.

### **Other Opportunities:**

Alphabetti is the unofficial actor's hub, we encourage artists to use our café as an office and have found, collaborations naturally happening.

## **Workshops:**

We have a huge amount of workshops going across all fields of the performing arts; with lots throughout the week most are listed on our website.

## **Music, comedy, poetry, variety:**

Come perform at our monthly Alphabetti Jam in the bar from here we book paid slots at Alphabetti Soup, onwards from Soup we look create relationships with the artist to aid their growth and support with larger events as best as we can.

## **Writers:**

We do not take open submissions. We work with north east based writers. We want to create a relationship with you this is done through our seasonal Write Something Workshops, here we get to know you and you get to know us. We tend to commission between 7 and 15 new short plays a year and support writers on longer projects as best as we can, if you want to be considered for these we have to have a relationship with you.

## **Actors:**

We hold open castings usually seasonally – we will strive to see as many as possible, all info is posted on our website and social media pages.

## **Hire:**

As well as our theatre we also have a 9m by 7.5m white box rehearsal room with lots and lots of natural light, usually used for rehearsal space but Alphabetti is more than just a theatre with space for plays. Since opening in September 2017 we have played host to multiple events, conferences, meetings, parties, rehearsals, markets and more! If you have got an event in the planning or need space to create or even to throw your birthday party then get in touch for a quote.

## **Volunteer:**

Want to see more work, but can't afford the ticket? Do a work swap with us! Volunteer your time to support us with our front of house, technical operations and marketing distribution.

We provide full training across all areas allowing you to gain skills in customer service, stage management and operating lighting and sound.

### **Mission statement**

- To provide a space for artists to experiment, evolve and discover excellence.
- To produce and create highly entertaining new theatre at affordable prices.
- To provide a community space for artists and other groups in the region.
- To bridge the gap regionally between finishing higher education training in the performing arts and professional work in the performing arts.
- To bring exciting work to the region.

- To provide a space that is affordable and welcoming, all tickets are either part of our Pay What You Feel scheme or under £10.
- To provide a platform for emerging artists to perform and develop.
- To champion fringe culture in Newcastle upon Tyne, being an entry point for audiences and artists alike.

Contact:

Ali Pritchard, Artistic Director

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W: [www.alphabettitheatre.co.uk](http://www.alphabettitheatre.co.uk)

## **Alnwick Playhouse**

### **Artistic Policy**

Our mission is to enrich the life of the community through diverse, inspiring cultural experiences. We achieve this by providing a rich and balanced mix of professional touring drama, music, dance and film of the highest quality alongside community productions. The programme balance is approximately 60% professional and 40% community. We engage the community through our learning and participation programme which includes the Playhouse Choir, Concert Band, Youth Theatres and Young Alnwick Playhouse.

### **Professional Programme**

The Playhouse professional programme does aspire to bring the best touring productions to the region. Our live theatre programme highlights from 2015 include Romeo & Juliet by Shakespeare's Globe, Opera North & The Wrong Crowd with Swanhunter, Pocket Propeller's Merchant of Venice and Tangled Feet's Kicking and Screaming.

We are passionate about supporting new artists although we do have to be commercially minded most of the time but not all the time. Whenever possible we encourage artists to build relationships with our local community through various pre/post participation workshops, talks and events. Generating an audience for new work is the biggest challenge and if you are thinking about approaching us for support, you will need to be clear about who your audience is and how your work can/will engage them.

Due to our small team of staff and financial constraints we usually work in partnership with other arts organisations to help present new work by emerging artists. Currently we are part of the REACH programme, Bridging the Gap and NEAD.

### **Space**

The Playhouse has one auditorium space with 266 seats, a generous greenroom with two chorus dressing rooms and living area. We have no free access to a studio space but we can negotiate a price with the owners if we identify a project/artist/company whose work requires it.

### **Contact:**

Jo Potts, Playhouse Manager

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E: [programming@alnwickplayhouse.co.uk](mailto:programming@alnwickplayhouse.co.uk)

W: [www.alnwickplayhouse.co.uk](http://www.alnwickplayhouse.co.uk)



## **ARC, Stockton Arts Centre**

### **Artistic Policy**

ARC's artistic policy is to present work that is contemporary and relevant. By that, we mean we want to show work that helps us understand and enjoy the world as it is today. We want to look forward, to excite you about the future.

ARC presents some of the newest and most exciting performance work being made in the UK today. Our programme features nationally-renowned artists and companies, who are making work we believe is relevant to people's lives today. This includes supporting the development of work by local and regional artists.

Often we bring work to ARC that challenges perceptions of what performance might usually look like, that offers audiences a different kind of experience to more traditional forms of theatre.

We don't generally book work that is based around classic texts or adaptations, or that has historical themes. The majority of our work is set in the modern day.

Ultimately, we present work we are passionate about, so there are exceptions to everything.

We select artists and companies to work with based on the content and style of their work, if we feel it is a good fit for our programme. We attend festivals and showcases, meet artists, listen to recommendations from other professionals and see as many individual performances as we can, all of which help us to identify people we want to work with.

Our drama, dance and spoken word programme is usually booked around 12 – 24 months ahead. If you are an artist or company interested in being part of our programme, please email details to [annabel.turpin@arconline.co.uk](mailto:annabel.turpin@arconline.co.uk) at the earliest stage of developing your work. Let us know how you think it fits into our programme, and how you can support us to engage and develop audiences, and we will tell you whether it is something we are interested in or not.

### **ARCADE**

ARCADE is a free membership scheme open to professional practitioners working in performance (primarily theatre, dance and spoken word) in the North East region. It is designed to bring professional practitioners together, to network and collaborate, to share ideas and resources, and to support the creation of new work in the region.

ARCADE activities include:

- Fortnightly e-newsletter
- Surgery sessions
- Discounted access to space

- Scratch events
- New writing night
- Professional development

## **Space +**

Each year ARC supports a number of artists and companies we are excited about to spend time at ARC – we might feel they have a particular talent, need more support to develop their work, or have a longer term relationship with us that we want to continue. We invest in their development by providing a package of support, which as well as free space at ARC can also include funding for basic costs, artistic, technical or marketing advice, an artistic mentor or associate or any other support required.

Sometimes time at ARC is used simply to develop ideas, but it is also used for intensive rehearsals on a specific piece of work, or even a production week leading to the opening of a show.

In particular, we work with artists to connect to potential audiences during their time at ARC, to support our audience development work. As well as having the opportunity to talk to ARC staff about their work, artists can also share work in progress with invited or public audiences, meet individuals or groups representative of their target audiences, invite potential audiences to participate in development activity, lead workshops around their practice or content of the show, carry out local research, promote pop-up activity in appropriate locations, connect with other local professional artists through our ARCADE network, meet audiences attending other shows at ARC, meet local 'experts' in their field of research and develop visual material to support the marketing of their show locally.

All activity is supported and facilitated by ARC staff, to enable artists to make real local connections and to develop their understanding of potential audiences.

## **Associate Artists and Companies**

ARC continues to develop enhanced relationships with a number of selected artists and companies whose work we feel is valuable to ARC's artistic programme. Packages of support are tailored to the needs of the individual artists, but the relationship is intended to lead to the presentation of work at ARC.

Support is likely to include ARC staff acting as an ongoing creative mentor or producer, as well as more practical assistance such as help with funding applications, rehearsal space, production, technical and marketing support.

'Associate' relationships are regularly reviewed, usually at the end of each project or production, to ensure that they remain of mutual benefit.

## **Bridging the Gap**

Bridging the Gap is an annual project originally developed by ARC, Newcastle Theatre Royal and The Maltings designed to contribute towards the creation of new theatre work within the North East region. The project has expanded since its inception in 2009 and

now includes nine venues across the North East and Yorkshire, who work together to offer a joint package of in-kind support to enable two emerging North East or Yorkshire based artist/theatre companies to develop and present a new piece of work across four venues.

Details of the 2018/19 scheme will be announced in late spring 2018.

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## **Arts Centre Washington**

Arts Centre Washington (ACW) is a community arts hub, providing a base for a variety of artists and creative industries in addition to supporting resident theatre and dance companies. It seeks to build engagement in the arts primarily amongst the residents of Washington and Sunderland which have some of the lowest levels of engagement in England.

Whilst it is a multi purpose arts centre that also programmes exhibitions, film, comedy and music; our core priorities are:

- Work for, by and with children and young people
- Artistic development and support - for emerging and established performing artists and their work
- The development of small scale theatre, dance and spoken word for Sunderland audiences

There is also a strong current of participation running through everything we do with approximately 75% of visitors to ACW taking part in activities.

There are currently only two professional theatres in Sunderland: Sunderland Empire and ACW - opposite ends of the spectrum in terms of programme, size, audiences, funding etc. ACW therefore seeks to achieve a balance to such a large, commercial theatre by concentrating on work that is original, inventive and, of course, small scale. Work that really appeals to us has the ability to engage us intellectually and emotionally. We try to find work that has a resonance for local audiences and a relevance to their lives. For instance, politics or anything to do with the armed forces sells well! Whilst we prefer to leave the classics to larger theatres we recognise the attraction for infrequent theatre attenders to known product. Consequently, we are always interested in adaptations of well known/classic novels and programme as a way of switching on our audiences to more original, edgy theatre. We also really like funny, quirky theatre; theatre that uses our space in a different way and theatre that engages directly with the audience – although not necessarily all these qualities at the same time.

ACW has been the leading partner on a project called Sunderland Stages. This initiative will present work by North East based theatre companies in venues, found and site-specific spaces in Sunderland. The main aim of the project is to drive up public engagement in new, original theatre.

ACW has joined the group of participating venues to support the Bridging the Gap initiative for the first time.

### **Residencies and rehearsal space**

Arts Centre Washington is able to host artist residencies where funding is available, and also offers free rehearsal space to emerging artists on an ad hoc basis (subject to availability) to theatre and dance companies. The theatre is also available to hire as a rehearsal space to more established companies.

Contact:

Matthew Blyth, Audience Development Officer

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E: [Matthew.Blyth@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:Matthew.Blyth@sunderland.gov.uk)

W: [www.artscentrewashington.co.uk](http://www.artscentrewashington.co.uk)

## **Curious Festival**

### **About Curious Festival**

Curious Arts limited was set up in April 2017 following a successful pilot festival in 2016 founded by Phil Douglas. Having quickly grown in scale the festival continues to develop. Alongside our commitment to an annual festival, we work across the North East to develop projects and events which explore and celebrate Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer culture through the arts.

Our projects champion and develop the LGBTQ cultural offer of the region, increasing opportunities for the LGBTQ community as artists, audiences and participants. Our festival programme, development platforms, commissions and artist development bursaries increase visibility of the North East's LGBTQ Culture. We support work by LGBTQ Artists or which explores or celebrates LGBTQ Culture.

Our annual flagship multi art form festival takes place in July and features regional and national artists.

### **Programming Policy**

Curious generally offers a guaranteed fee but is open to box office splits. As our programme encourages dialogue and visibility we would be interested in post show talks and workshop offers.

We program new and existing work work. We have a series of northern area programming partners and touring network of likeminded venues and festivals.

We work with a number of venues regionally and ensure that we are actively queering venues, spaces and programmes.

We tend to program in 4-6 months prior to the festival due to our fundraising and capacity.

### **Residencies**

We are able to offer residencies, producer support, Artist lab time through our partnerships. These are usually linked to an Artist Development bursary.

### **Mission statement**

- Champion LGBTQ Culture in the North East through the arts.
- Develop opportunities for the LGBTQ community as artists, participants and audiences
- Produce a high quality, diverse led festival programme
- Advocate for investment, increased programme and visibility for the LGBTQ Culture and arts offer of the North East.

**Contact:**

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## **Dance City, Newcastle**

### **Artistic Policy**

Dance City programmes up to 30 professional shows per year, as well as between 5 - 7 new commissions. We are looking for work that introduces new audiences to dance as well as more established work to help create a breadth of access points into dance across the programme.

We are particularly interested in work that contributes both to the dance sector, challenging and inspiring the creative process, and to developing and engaging audiences for dance, particularly where work is challenging and offering new experiences. We actively encourage applications from artists who identify themselves as black, Asian, minority ethnic, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or disabled.

If you are approaching us about your work, please let us know how you think it fits into our programme, and how you can support us to engage and develop audiences.

### **Professional Dance Artists**

Dance City offers a range of free development seminars, classes and workshops for professional artists. Guest speakers, practitioners and touring companies deliver a range of activity as part of Dance City's continued commitment to regionally based dance professionals.

The programme for professional artists includes daily professional classes, 9.30am – 11am, covering a variety of styles led by a mix of regular and guest artists, tailored CPD and skills development workshops and seminars and talks on dance issues hosted by leaders in their fields. We produce a fortnightly e-newsletter with latest information on workshops, auditions, open calls around the country and we have a closed Facebook group for professional dance artists keeping regional artists up-to-date of what's on offer on a daily basis.

### **Creative Summer**

Dance City offers eight weeks of applied for/curated free studio space called Creative Summer.

Artists and companies are able to apply, or will be approached by Dance City, to take up a week in the Creative Summer programme. This provides time for artists/companies to explore new ideas, begin new collaborations and develop their skills and work. It is a great opportunity to access the spaces at Dance City for free without having a particular project or piece of work to deliver. Artists are asked to offer open class during the week and to show progress to date at the end of their Creative Summer week. This provides an opportunity for Dance City to consider the work for one of their regular platform events.



## **Platforms**

Fresh, an artist led initiative produced by Moving Art Management at Dance City and around the region, is an open forum for sharing and discussing work in very early stages of development.

Dance Edits is Dance City's showcase for North East based dance makers. Work featured will include pieces from the most exciting companies and artists in the region, commissioned by Dance City.

Northern Platforms is an opportunity to perform as part of a Northern Platform in Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester or Edinburgh. Artists/companies are selected by Dance City's Artistic Director.

## **Commissions**

Dance City commissions new dance works from North East based/connected artists each year. Our commissioning programme encourages the development of new work from formative, R&D based short pieces through to full-length performance pieces through a three stage process. Commissions are available to North East based dance artists only. The application process for commissions in the year ahead opens in September with the deadline for applications being end of November. For exact dates and further information please check our website. [www.dancecity.co.uk](http://www.dancecity.co.uk)

## **Residencies**

Dance City offers one or two week long residencies, sometimes funded, to dance artists and companies to support their development. Invitations are made by the creative team to regional, national and international artists. Those undertaking residencies are expected to deliver some free classes and/or an end of residency sharing of their work. Residencies can include some support from the Dance City artistic and technical team.

## **At Home at DC**

From time to time we have studio space which is not in use so we offer professional dance artists the opportunity to use it. This can be booked up to one week ahead. Please contact Ticket Office on Fridays at [info@dancecity.co.uk](mailto:info@dancecity.co.uk) or by calling 0191 261 0505 for studio enquiries for the following week. Any space available will be offered free of charge on a first come first served basis. Please note this is offered on a rolling weekly basis and block bookings do not apply.

## **Contact:**

Patricia Stead, Executive Producer

T: 0191 261 0505

E: [patricia.stead@dancecity.co.uk](mailto:patricia.stead@dancecity.co.uk)

W: [www.dancecity.co.uk](http://www.dancecity.co.uk)

## **Gala Theatre, Durham**

### **Artistic Policy**

Our programme combines a diverse range of inspiring and challenging drama, dance, comedy, music and family friendly shows. Gala is moving towards a producing house model, though alongside producing our own work, we also currently programme intelligent and original touring work. It's important that we are commercial, so all shows in our 500 seat Main House must have the scope to attract mainstream audiences. Each season we like to programme into our 100 seat Studio some more commercially risky pieces of work, although our scope to do this is limited.

Artist Development is integral to Gala Theatre being a creative home for emerging artists in the North East. Likewise we truly value our artists' engagement with local audiences. The engagement and development strands that you can get involved with are below:

### **Artist Development**

We are able to give in-kind support to artists in the form of Research and Development space in either our large or smaller studio spaces. R&D residencies typically last a week, in which we offer technical support and practical advice. We encourage companies to then bring their works in process in front of an audience at our scratch night.

Our new writing scratch night takes place in the spring and autumn seasons. Incorporating a wide range of genres the event is a scratch night that provides an opportunity for playwrights, artists and companies to trial and share works-in-progress in front of a friendly and constructive audience. Next Up... is a chance for you to road-test new work and gather feedback; it's also the best way for the team at Gala Theatre to get to know you and your work. You can find more information on how to submit your work here: <https://www.galadurham.co.uk/about-engage/artist-development/>

### **Community Arts Development**

The work we produce and programme affects our audiences in different ways, and we work hard to embed our creative ethos into local communities. Gala has a dedicated team of Community Arts Developers who run workshops and longer projects with community groups in response to thematic or stylistic matters within our programme. In doing so, we also support local artists' practices by looking for new practitioners to help us deliver projects. We also like to hear from theatre companies who have educational or community workshops as part of their performance deal package.

### **Gala Gallery**

Gala Gallery is a new modern and contemporary visual arts venue housed within the theatre, playing host to regional, national and international artists which make association with the context of the theatre programme. This new visual stand of Gala aims to challenge, provoke and inspire audiences, and in response we are embedding education and learning opportunities to provide high quality, interactive community engagement.

There is an open call in February/March 2018 for site responsive, temporary artworks and installations which explore the context of Gala Theatre and Cinema.

## **Productions**

Building on our history of acclaimed productions, including our pantomimes, new writing piece *The Fighting Bradfords*, *Educating Rita*, and in spring 2018 the much anticipated *Talking Heads*, Gala Theatre is gently moving toward a producing-house model. This means that there are many opportunities for creative practitioners to work with us, and we're open to hear why you're ready to get stuck in. To enable us to bring our productions to life, we are keen to make contact with directors, writers, designers, costume designers and musical directors.

## **Programming**

Whilst the commercial needs of our Main House are demanding, this doesn't mean that Gala only stages work by established producers. If you think that there's an audience for your work, get in touch and tell us why: if it's something we think fits the bill, we'll happily consider your ideas. Just let us know why you think your show is ace; why it's appropriate for our mixed programme; and who the audience is for the work.

Contact:

Jo Cundall, Arts Programme Manager

T: 03000 266624

E: [jo.cundall@galadurham.co.uk](mailto:jo.cundall@galadurham.co.uk)

W: [www.galadurham.co.uk](http://www.galadurham.co.uk)

**Gateshead Council's Culture Team**

## **Artistic policy**

Gateshead Council's Culture Team provides an innovative and accessible arts programme for Gateshead residents and visitors across the borough. Covering all ages and all art forms and utilising our cultural venues, schools and community settings, parks and outdoor spaces, the majority of our programme is about engagement and audience development for the arts, our key strands are:

- Strategic Partner Development
- Community Arts Development
- Arts for Children & Young People
- Festivals and Events
- Talent Development

We raise external funding for projects each year to maximise the opportunities we can provide in Gateshead and work in partnership with a wide range of other services and organisations. We produce our cultural 'what's on' magazine promoting our public programme – 'Gateshead Live' and organise everything from one off workshops to residencies and community projects and annual events like Gateshead Family Sculpture Day.

We often work with cultural partners to make sure Gateshead features in the regional offer of cultural events, for example Juice - NewcastleGateshead's festival for children and young people, GIFT, and Winter Festival including Enchanted Parks in partnership with NewcastleGatesheadInitiative with 28,000 visitors in 2017.

We deliver targeted programmes of work with a diverse range of community participants on projects which are often very personal to them or their geographical location in Gateshead. We also have a Saturday morning Youth Theatre and work with schools on creativity in education including our Northern Cultural Ambassador Network.

Alongside work in indoor and outdoor, rural and urban community settings, we also programme events and exhibitions in the following venues with Gateshead Libraries and Heritage team:

- Caedmon Hall - multi-purpose, versatile arts and performance space with cabaret or raked seating and a maximum capacity of 240.
- St. Mary's Heritage Centre is a magnificent former church overlooking the River Tyne with a capacity of 150 as well as a more intimate workshop space.
- The Gallery at Gateshead Central Library offers a visual arts programme of professional regional artists and national touring exhibitions.

We are always open to suggestions from artists working in any medium, touring work, project ideas and possible partnerships and opportunities for collaboration.

**Contact:**

Karolynne Hart, Arts Programme, Culture Team

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W: [www.gateshead.gov.uk](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk)

## **GIFT: Gateshead International Festival of Theatre**

GIFT is an annual international festival celebrating contemporary theatre that takes place over a May bank holiday weekend. GIFT provides a platform for regional, national and international new theatre-makers in a unique artist-led festival context. In addition, GIFT curates and hosts a series of one-off events throughout the year.

The festival programme offer a range of professional development opportunities for artists through a varied programme of events including performances, workshops, discussions, and social events all underpinned by a commitment to promoting dialogue and exchange.

We embrace work that is concerned with experimentation, collaboration, crossing disciplines and cultures; work that responds to the times we live in; work that is relevant and challenging, and provides audiences with unique experiences. We are particularly keen to support artists in the region who might not otherwise have an obvious platform for sharing their work in the North East. We want to develop artists and audiences by inviting them to see new work they wouldn't see elsewhere.

### **GIFTed**

Within the festival, the GIFTed programme brings together students and recent graduates - nationally and internationally - to showcase work and facilitate cultural and intercultural dialogue and conversations. GIFTed also provides opportunities for networking and professional development for GIFTed artists within the main programme of work.

If you are interested in performing at GIFT, please send us an email, and come along to the festival and GIFT events.

### **Contact:**

Kate Craddock, Festival Director

T: 0191 227 4921

E: [kate@giftfestival.co.uk](mailto:kate@giftfestival.co.uk)

W: [www.giftfestival.co.uk](http://www.giftfestival.co.uk)

## Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre

Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre hosts a diverse range of professional and amateur performing arts to the people of Hartlepool and surrounding areas, including comedy, drama, children's theatre and music.

The theatre is a traditional proscenium arch theatre which holds 402. The space can be adapted to allow for cabaret and also studio style performances; however the technical provisions in this method are limited.

We currently have a largely older audience who prefer a traditional theatre programme, but we are working with consortiums such as REACH to develop our new-writing and contemporary theatre programme. We are keen to work with both experienced and emerging companies to generate and engage new audiences. Work which is relatable to our audience and engaging are of particular interest.

The theatre is managed and wholly funded by Hartlepool Borough Council, whose budgets are under ever-increasing pressure in the current economic climate. Unfortunately this consequently restricts our ability to take risks on our programming. We would welcome expressions of interest by those who understand our position and are happy to work with us on a shared risk basis. We are able to offer small guarantees in some cases. Shows which include a workshop or outreach element would be particularly favourable.

We can offer support in kind in the following areas: physical space in the main auditorium or studio, technical and marketing support.

Proposals can be submitted to the Performance Venues manager.

### **Contact:**

Jamie Kelly, Performance Venues Manager

T: 01429 523451

E: [Jamie.Kelly@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:Jamie.Kelly@hartlepool.gov.uk)

W: [www.hartlepooltownhalltheatre.com](http://www.hartlepooltownhalltheatre.com)

## Highlights Rural Touring Scheme

Highlights is a rural touring scheme. We work in partnership with a network of over 75 promoters in village halls and community venues across Northumberland, Cumbria and Durham to tour the work of regional and national performance companies into the heart of small communities. We mostly tour to rural villages but also to semi urban areas in the south east of Northumberland. We are part of a national network of over 40 touring schemes under the umbrella of the National Rural Touring Forum.

### Artistic policy

Highlights programme a range of work (familiar to more challenging) across a variety of artforms – theatre, music, dance, spoken word, children’s shows - as well as special projects and an annual contemporary craft tour each spring. We present small scale work that is of high quality and flexible to meet the needs of a range of village and community venues. Highlights also works in partnership with the NRTF, a consortium of northern schemes, arts partners and agencies to commission and tour new work.

Rural touring provides extensive performance opportunities across the UK for companies who want to connect with new audiences. It is a partnership between the knowledge and commitment of local people - and the expertise of schemes and artists. The schemes are coordinated by professionals but the shows are chosen, promoted and hosted by mostly unpaid local volunteers. Venues are usually unequipped and challenging performance spaces, but are familiar, welcoming spaces for the local community. Most of the audience will live within 5 miles of the venue and the outcome of your performance, for better or worse, will resonate with the local community. Successful rural touring companies are flexible, equipped and understand the terrain.

Highlights operate across two seasons Jan – May and September - December. Each season, we collate a menu - a filtered choice of around 16 artists and companies from which our network of promoters choose to suit their community. When bookings are confirmed Highlights produce a seasonal brochure and provide marketing support to help promoters reach an audience for your show.

If you are interested in touring your work with Highlights, visit the performers section of our website for more information.

Jazz musicians can either approach direct or visit [www.jazzservices.org.uk](http://www.jazzservices.org.uk) for information on Rural Touring Support Scheme.

### Contact:

Rosie Cross & Barbara Slack, Co-Directors

T: 01768 353954

E: [info@highlightsnorth.co.uk](mailto:info@highlightsnorth.co.uk)

W: [www.highlightsnorth.co.uk](http://www.highlightsnorth.co.uk)



## **Live Theatre, Newcastle**

### **Artistic Policy**

Live programmes new writing, text based work and theatrical stories that provoke and entertain audiences. We are interested in finding new voices and untold stories that speak to contemporary audiences and have something to say about how we live now. We are open to what new writing and text based work means.

We have two indoor theatre performance spaces, the main house (162 capacity) and a studio theatre (60 capacity), which is flexible and intimate for more experimental work. We are also looking to programme work for children, families and young people, in particular, programming the best and most innovative work outside of the Christmas period. Some of this work will happen in our new outdoor performance space which is due to be ready by May 2016.

We are open to establishing relationships with individuals and companies. Please email us and invite us to see your work, particularly in the development stages (scratches, readings, work in progress showings); if this is not possible then we will look at scripts. We operate three month-long script submission windows during the year (September, February and June). We will only read scripts that are submitted during these periods. For the type of work we are interested in programming, please check our website:

<http://www.live.org.uk/new-writing/script-submissions>

### **Live Theatre/The Empty Space Bursaries for Emerging Artists**

Live Theatre and The Empty Space run a bursary scheme for emerging artists, awarding at least one bursary every year. The bursaries enable artists and companies to develop an idea with dramaturgical and technical support over a ten day period in appropriate rehearsal space at Live. There is a public showing of the work in progress and there then follows a discussion between the artists, Live and The Empty Space about future planning for the piece. Recent bursary winners have gone to further development at Live and elsewhere and one has received a full production at Live.

### **Live Lab Take Over**

Building on the success of four years of Live Scratch Nights, curated in association with The Empty Space, 2016 sees the launch of the Live Lab Take Over, a twice yearly event when the three main performance spaces in the theatre (and elsewhere in and around the building) are given over to new work in development. Each space is curated by a programming partner to showcase the work of a variety of theatre producers and makers. The Take Over will also allow some companies the opportunity to spend up to a week in rehearsal at Live, with appropriate dramaturgical and technical support, and some financial assistance.

### **Live Lab Associate Artists**

Part of the re-launch of our Live Lab talent development strand of work saw the introduction of the Live Lab Associate Artists scheme, where early career artists take part in a bespoke programme of professional development workshops culminating in their



participation in a final Production. The first cohort of Associate Artists in 2015 consisted of three spoken word performers and a young theatre director.

### **Development Time for Emerging Artists and Companies**

This is given primarily in order to facilitate the development of a new piece of text-based work. Live is keen to invite a variety of interpretations of what text-based work might be. They recognise that development may take many forms and are happy to accept proposals for different outcomes and ways of working. Artists might want to test an already existing text in some way or spend the week devising with some actors to enable the creation of text. There is no obligation to have a sharing or showback of work at the end of the development time at Live, but these can be arranged if it would be useful to the process.

Subject to availability and suitability, Live can offer:

- 1 week's rehearsal space, in either rehearsal room or studio theatre
- dramaturgical support and advice from our literary department

If you are having a showback, Live are happy to advise and help with invites for industry members. For development work, Live is unable to accommodate a public showback of the work but will enter discussions about the potential inclusion of the work at an appropriate Live Lab session.

### **Contacts:**

Gez Casey & Graeme Thompson

T: 0191 269 3492 / 0191 229 2374

E: [gez@live.org.uk](mailto:gez@live.org.uk) / [graeme@live.org.uk](mailto:graeme@live.org.uk)

W: [www.live.org.uk](http://www.live.org.uk)

## Middlesbrough Theatre

### Artistic Policy

Middlesbrough Theatre aims to deliver a diverse range of professional and non-professional performing arts to the people of Middlesbrough, the Tees Valley and surrounding districts in friendly and welcoming surroundings. To this end, we provide:

- a programme of quality professional productions encompassing a wide range of drama, music, dance and popular entertainment.
- opportunities for young people to experience the creativity of theatre and the performing arts, both as participants and spectators, through a regular programme of productions and workshops.

We welcome interest from any artists and companies who feel they can help us achieve these goals.

The theatre was originally built as a playhouse for the local amateur dramatic society – who still perform here regularly – and our emphasis remains on the presentation of drama, both one-nighters and longer runs. Our core audience is older but we are keen to reach out to younger audiences and have had particular success in recent years with the presentation of new adaptations of classic texts. We are especially keen to present plays that have a “northern voice” and can speak to the experiences of local audiences.

The theatre is a traditional proscenium arch theatre, seating 484 on two levels, and whilst this feels quite intimate, it is not really suited to the more experimental studio-scale productions.

The theatre is managed and wholly funded by Middlesbrough Council, whose budgets are under ever-increasing pressure in the current economic climate. This severely restricts the theatre’s ability to take risk and our programming is being ever more commercially-driven. Our ambitions to drive the programme forward are consequently countered by these demands. We are therefore regrettably not in a position to offer substantial funding to artists/companies, but welcome expressions of interest by those who understand our position and are happy to work with us on a shared risk basis.

We are happy to receive outline proposals by e-mail in the first instance. Or call the Theatre Manager for an informal chat.

### Contact:

David Lindsey, Theatre Manager  
T: 01642 824490  
E: [David.Lindsey@middlesbrough.gov.uk](mailto:David.Lindsey@middlesbrough.gov.uk)  
W: [www.middlesbroughtheatre.co.uk](http://www.middlesbroughtheatre.co.uk)

## **NewcastleGateshead Initiative (NGI)**

### **Festivals and Events**

The Culture Team at NewcastleGateshead Initiative (NGI) currently produce and deliver a number of key festivals and events. In addition to this we also work with partners in response to opportunities that arise. In 2015 the Culture Team is involved in a range of cultural activity including NewcastleGateshead as a host city for the 2015 Rugby Union World Cup.

From 2015 NGI is an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) for producing Juice Festival, an annual festival of arts and culture by and with children and young people.

We can provide opportunities for artists to create work for high profile festivals and events in NewcastleGateshead, and we often look to engage new artists and create new work for each of our festivals, with an emphasis on local artists.

We are interested in work which takes unusual venues and spaces in the city and thinks about how they can be used and what stories could be told. Collaborations are key, so we would be looking to work together with you, venues, businesses and others.

There will also be further opportunities for artists within other festivals and events in 2015 and beyond, and we would be interested to meet and work with new artists. Email us your ideas.

### **EAT! NewcastleGateshead**

EAT! NewcastleGateshead champions local food producers, restaurants and culinary talent in North East England through a programme of events that includes; The Big EAT!, a mouthwatering weekend of street food markets, themed satellite festivals, cookery demonstrations, competitions and food adventures.

### **Juice – NewcastleGateshead’s festival by and with children and young people**

Juice Festival is packed full of activities and events for children, young people and their families. Juice Festival takes place every October half term and is presented in the world-class venues, facilities and open air locations that make NewcastleGateshead such a brilliant place to live, grow up in, and visit.

### **Enchanted Parks**

Enchanted Parks is an innovative after-dark outdoor arts experience developed and co-commissioned by NewcastleGateshead Initiative and Gateshead Council as part of the annual NewcastleGateshead Winter Festival. Members of the public are invited to join us after-dark to explore Gateshead’s Saltwell Park through atmospheric installations, light, sound and performance in this magical and intriguing event for all the family.

### **New Year’s Eve Winter Carnival**

Newcastle's **New Year's Eve Winter Carnival** will see an array of theatrical creations take over the streets and entertain crowds with dancers, musicians and performers.

### **Chinese New Year**

The Chinese New Year Festival returns to Newcastle upon Tyne in February 2015 to celebrate the Year of the Sheep, bringing a programme of Chinese Lion, Dragon and Unicorn dancing through the streets of China Town, performances, a number of stalls, and creative educational activities for children and families.

### **Contact:**

Vikki Leaney, Programme Development Manager

T: 0191 440 4757

E: [vikki.leaney@ngi.org.uk](mailto:vikki.leaney@ngi.org.uk)

W: [www.Newcastle.Gateshead.com](http://www.Newcastle.Gateshead.com)

Chris Batstone, Juice Festival artistic director

T: 0191 440 5745

E: [chris.batstone@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:chris.batstone@artscouncil.org.uk)

W: [www.juicefestival.co.uk](http://www.juicefestival.co.uk)

## Northern Stage, Newcastle

### Artistic Policy

NORTHERN STAGE makes ambitious, intelligent, enjoyable theatre. We do this by

- producing new work for adults, children and families at our home in Newcastle and on tour around the UK
- collaborating with the most inventive regional, national and international theatre and dance companies and artists to present and celebrate their work
- encouraging and supporting audiences to take a risk with us
- creating the conditions for emerging and established theatre makers to develop their work
- inviting people of all backgrounds and ages to make theatre with us

We are committed to offering a programme of work which supports and offers a platform to the widest possible diversity of artists, in order to grow audiences for their work in the North East. All of our produced theatre is offered in accessible formats for Deaf and Disabled audiences including our groundbreaking integrated BSL performances.

Below is a rough guide to how we programme our spaces:

Stage 1: Contemporary and classic plays, adaptations and new commissions. We are increasing our produced and co-produced programme of work on this stage but will still present the most intriguing work from mid-scale touring partners.

Stage 2: A space for what comes next. An innovative residency programme that invites visiting companies to make ambitious new work in a fully technically resourced environment, while simultaneously engaging in participatory and audience development initiatives. Bespoke residencies are offered by invitation and in collaborative conversation and will include a cash investment as well as in kind support. We also have straight presenting slots in this space.

Stage 3: a low-cost, accessible, technically supported community/fringe space. Stage 3 operates on a shorter programming cycle and presents work from across a wide range of disciplines and for artists at differing stages of their careers. It also functions as a community space and seeks to connect with a variety of local partners working within the social inclusion and creative development agenda.

We have fortnightly programming meetings at which suitable work is discussed. If an approach is personally made ie. addressed correctly, and written in a way that shows that the artist/company has researched Northern Stage and the various spaces, then a personalised response will always be given in due course. Generic emails will not be responded to.

## **Creative Team**

Artist development is at the heart of what we do. It will fuel the programming of all our spaces.

Creative Team is our membership scheme for professional artists from a variety of disciplines. The website <http://www.northernstage.co.uk/take-part/creative-team> has further information about this and the forthcoming options which will involve a programme of workshops, masterclasses, performance opportunities and talks.

### **First in Three: Northern Stage's scratch-night**

A chance for theatre-makers, writers and performers to showcase new work and try it out for the first time in front of an audience in the Stage 3 space. The audience are asked to give written feedback, answering questions set by the performers, and are encouraged to stay around afterwards, have a drink and chat to the performers about their work. The evenings have a lovely, collaborative and generous feel to them and are a great chance for artists to see each other's work and make connections. All contributors are unpaid and submissions are accepted up to six weeks before each event.

### **Spare Room**

A way to share our resources. Free last-minute spaces to any individual or group, for the purposes of creative work. This can be anything from one of our main stages down to a dressing room. Allocated on a first come, first served basis. Artists need to register their interest and sign up to our email list, then on a Thursday they will receive the breakdown of what space we have available for the following week. This is given on a room only basis so no technical support can be offered.

### **Periodic workshops**

We always try to capitalise on our presented programme and offer workshops and masterclasses with visiting artists when possible. These offers are always made to our full Creative Team mailing list and are usually allocated on a first come, first served basis.

### **Contact:**

Katie Catling, Producer – Stage 3 and Artist Support enquiries  
T: 0191 242 7205  
E: [kcatling@northernstage.co.uk](mailto:kcatling@northernstage.co.uk)

Sarah Brown, Assistant Producer – Stage 1 & 2,  
T: 0191 242 7217  
E: [sbrown@northernstage.co.uk](mailto:sbrown@northernstage.co.uk)  
W: [www.northernstage.co.uk](http://www.northernstage.co.uk)

## **Queen's Hall Arts Centre, Hexham**

### **Artistic Policy**

Queen's Hall Arts is committed to supporting and developing the production of new drama. There is a relatively small demand in our main 340 seat theatre space, and currently a lot of this is being met through our involvement in national consortia and networks. We mainly focus on small-scale work in our studio (the Green Room) which meets our programming needs, makes a contribution to the small-scale theatre ecology of the North East and beyond, and contributes to the development of artists and artforms. Our range of support includes:-

- Research and Development Residencies
- Commissioning & Co-commissioning
- Co-productions and other partnership arrangements
- Mentoring – artistic, technical and business.

### **Research and Development**

We provide the use of the Green Room, normally for periods of 1-3 weeks for companies and individual artists to develop work. During these residencies there is some equipment and technical support available. There is also some financial support in the form of small R&D grants (particularly where this can be used as a match in grant applications). We also provide the use of the main theatre at quieter times of the year (mainly January and August) to both drama and dance companies who are developing small to mid-scale work.

### **Commissioning**

Our in-house commissioning focuses on our Bite-Size model (similar to Oran Mor's "A Play, A Pie & A Pint"). These are normally small cast one-act plays that rehearse and perform in the Green Room for a short run. We do not retain any rights and writers often use this experience to further develop the work with a view to establishing relationships with touring companies. We also co-commission with partners (usually a producing company that is opening their show at QHA). Rights for this are negotiable.

### **Co-productions**

We are not funded to tour productions, so we often seek to develop shows by working with producing companies. Under this type of arrangement we would finance the production costs and an opening in Hexham and the producing company would finance and manage the associated tour.

### **Mentoring**

In the above we can provide advice on all aspects of creating theatre whilst respecting the independence and integrity of artists. We have limited resources, so cannot commit to reading unsolicited scripts.



## **Who We Work With**

Queen's Hall Arts is involved in a number of networks and schemes and our Artistic Director aims to attend regional and national pitching days, works in progress, etc. with a view to establishing relationships with individual artists and companies. We also periodically issue general call-outs.

Although our policy is specifically related to drama we recognise that traditional artform labels are not necessarily important to emerging artists and work, particularly in the R&D stages of a project. We welcome a broad range of proposals and as an arts centre, rather than a traditional theatre, we are resourced and willing to support a variety of outputs.

We are not a passive organisation and it is not our policy to simply provide a space or finance. We support artists who genuinely wish to have a dialogue with us as key connectors to the local community and who respect our artistic advice.

We prioritise working with regionally based artists but are also interested in national and international connections.

## **Contact:**

If you have specific programme ideas or you are looking for support to develop new work please contact:

Geof Keys, Artistic Director  
T: 01434 652477  
E: [geof.keys@queenshall.co.uk](mailto:geof.keys@queenshall.co.uk)  
W: [www.queenshall.co.uk](http://www.queenshall.co.uk)



## **Saltburn Community & Arts Association**

### **Artistic policy**

Nestled in the centre of the popular seaside resort of Saltburn by the Sea we occupy a Grade II listed Arts & Crafts building. We celebrated our 100 year anniversary in 2010. The Association policy is to educate through performance. We aim for as diverse a programme as possible to cater for all types of audiences. Engaging audiences is key to our ongoing audience development. As well as our own programme of events we are available for private hire for touring productions.

### **Spaces**

The building has a 150 seat theatre with one large dressing room with toilet to the back and two smaller spaces either side of the stage. We have community hall with a capacity of 120 and a coffee room for meetings holding 40. There is a kitchen/bar area to supply all three spaces. As well as being a resource for the community there is a full programme of events throughout the seasons. Disabled toilets and access is available at the venue including a loop system in the theatre.

### **Programming**

Highlights this year have been taking playing host to the Yorkshire Silent Film Festival in July and the INTO Film Festival in November.

The local '53 Drama Group rehearses here and performs four times a year with one performance from the youth section, an annual pantomime and hosts a Spring Drama Festival every year.

There is also an Annual Art Exhibition held over the August Bank Holiday open to all artistic forms and all levels of experience.

We play host to touring theatre companies and music shows and our monthly jazz evenings, which are cabaret style regularly sell out. We work closely with Jazz North to help showcase emerging musicians and groups.

Always keen to work with new artists I would be happy to hear any ideas which could attract funding and bring exciting performances to our stage.

### **Contact:**

Wilma Gardiner-Gill, Arts Development Promoter

T: 01287 624997

E: [arts@saltburnarts.co.uk](mailto:arts@saltburnarts.co.uk)

W: [saltburnarts.co.uk](http://saltburnarts.co.uk)

## **Seaton Delaval Arts Centre**

### **Artistic Policy**

We programme popular and mainstream music, drama and comedy, which can be challenging and inspiring. As well as producing our own work, from single handers to ensemble pieces and pantomime, we also book intelligent and original touring work. Being commercial is important, so the work we book must have the scope to be seen by a mainstream audience.

### **Productions**

Since opening in 2007 the Arts Centre and associated Pantomime Society has produced a range of shows including plays, dramas, musicals, Geordie Nights and a successful yearly Pantomime. We are always keen to make contact with directors, writers, designers, musical directors and costume designers to help us bring our productions to life.

### **Programming**

Our programme is a mix of music, drama and comedy and community theatre. We aim to host shows and events to include the entire community, from 5 year olds through to 50 year olds. We often book performances on a split basis, but can work with set fees providing it is viable. The centre is a registered charity ran entirely by volunteers with no paid members of staff, so performances need to be financial viable.

If you think there is an audience for your work, and we think it is something which fits with our programme, we are happy to consider it. If you have a proposal for an event or production you want to stage, we are always happy to hear your ideas. Just send us an email about your show, telling us why it is great, why you think it is appropriate for our programme and who you think the audience will be for the work.

### **Space and time**

For those artists who we are keen on building a relationship with, we have a small rehearsal space we can offer to give you time to develop your work.

### **Contact:**

Stu Bennett, Operations Manager  
T: 0191 237 5460  
E: [stubbennett@seatondelavalartscentre.com](mailto:stubbennett@seatondelavalartscentre.com)  
W: [www.seatondelavalartscentre.com](http://www.seatondelavalartscentre.com)

## **Sage Gateshead**

### **Artistic Policy**

The Sage Gateshead is a music venue with three performance spaces:

- Hall 1 (700 seated, 1550 standing capacity)
- Hall 2 (400 flexible capacity)
- Northern Rock Foundation Hall (flat floor space for small scale concerts)

We are interested in quality and diversity, commissioning new work and nurturing and developing new artists. We programme all genres of music and sometimes non-music artforms when they include live music, such as comedy or spoken word. We are particularly interested in ways artists can integrate learning and participation with performance.

Approach us by contacting us via email or telephone.

The Sage Gateshead's support for young and emerging artists falls into three areas:

### **Performance opportunities**

Regular student showcase events (across a range of genres and contexts); a pro-active policy of seeking out young and emerging artists/students for support slots and concourse performances; one or two popular and contemporary gigs per month featuring emerging local acts; Folk Rising showcase concert series, co-programmed with the English Folk Dance and Song Society, presenting emerging folk acts, ideally but not confined to artists from the North East; Folkworks Hexham Gathering festival presenting young emerging folk musicians. The Sage Gateshead also regularly commissions artists to create new work.

### **Professional training**

An ongoing programme including one-off master-classes; music business seminars; community music, teaching skills and workshop skills training; presentation training; bespoke mentoring on specific skills/roles (e.g. composition or teaching); co-mentoring for early and mid-career musicians; one-off bespoke work-based placements across The Sage Gateshead's programme. Professional artists are also welcome to attend workshops offered to the public. The provision of external tutors/visiting artists of sufficient variety or high quality is a learning opportunity for professional musicians whom we work with.

### **Pre-professional training**

We offer roll-on, roll-off Creative Apprenticeships (work-based learning for people aged 18 – 25); BA (Hons) Community Music and BMus Jazz, Popular and Commercial Music (taught in partnership with Sunderland University); master-classes and rehearsal/workshops for composition students (which may lead to the performance of

new works) Introduction to Community Music – workshop skills training course; and HE Access Course in Community Music.

**Contact:**

Katherine Zeserson

T: 0191 443 4586

E: [Katherine.zeserson@sagegateshead.com](mailto:Katherine.zeserson@sagegateshead.com)

W: [www.thesagegateshead.com](http://www.thesagegateshead.com)

## **Seven Stories, Newcastle**

### **Artistic Policy**

Seven Stories is Britain's home for children's literature. We champion the art of children's books, ensuring their place as an integral part of childhood and of our national cultural life.

We hold a nationally important collection of artwork, manuscripts and archives created by Britain's highly acclaimed writers and illustrators for children from c.1930s to the present day. We are creative in the way that we share our Collection and bring books to life - sharing our knowledge through exhibitions, public programmes, learning and participation, research and digital media. Seven Stories' exhibitions have a child-centred approach to design and production, showcasing collections within immersive environments which stimulate play, creativity and learning. Many of our exhibitions tour nationally.

Located in the Ouseburn Valley, Newcastle's cultural quarter, Seven Stories has seven floors of galleries, creative and performance spaces, a specialist bookshop and cafe. A trained team of front of house staff and volunteers animate the centre. We run a year round public programme of author, illustrator and performer events, creative activities, talks, workshops and masterclasses at Seven Stories and other venues.

Our learning and participation programme offers approaches to books and reading that engage different learning styles, inspiring children, young people and families to enjoy books, extend their reading and encouraging them to express their own creativity through creative writing, drama, drawing and other art forms.

We are always interested to hear from artists who have small theatre shows for young children, particularly work which is inspired by children's books. We also programme a number of different creative workshops for young people throughout the year and welcome hearing from artists with different ideas for workshops and classes. Please make an initial approach by email with details on your work, including costs and photographs.

### **Contact:**

Lorna Duncanson, Programme Coordinator

T: 0845 271 0777 Ext 219

E: [lorna.duncanson@sevenstories.org.uk](mailto:lorna.duncanson@sevenstories.org.uk)

W: [www.sevenstories.org.uk](http://www.sevenstories.org.uk)

## **Stockton International Riverside Festival (SIRF)**

### **Artistic Policy**

Stockton International Riverside Festival is a European festival of outdoor arts and street theatre held in public spaces in Stockton town centre, run by Stockton Borough council. We are interested in work of different scales e.g. large and small, spectacular and intimate, that tells wonderful stories and has lots of community engagement. We consider how things work in different environments and how we juxtapose shows next to each other and the landscape.

We are interested in premiering and presenting work that hasn't been seen elsewhere in the UK, and we also commission new work in partnership with other festivals, artists and organisations, for example, Without Walls Commissioning Consortium (outdoor arts festivals in UK) and Gone in 20 Minutes (national showcase for emerging artists and new work). Both include mentoring support and development funding as we want to help build work for outdoors.

Approach us via email, telephone, arrange a meeting or invite us to see your work. We want to build relationships and discuss your ideas about creating work for outdoors.

### **Contact:**

Jan Doherty, Artistic Director  
T: 01642 526465  
E: [jan.doherty@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:jan.doherty@stockton.gov.uk)  
W: [www.sirf.co.uk](http://www.sirf.co.uk)

## **Sunderland MACQ**

(Music, Arts & Culture Quarter)

Sunderland MACQ is in the early stages of development with 3 small scale spaces coming on line within the next year and a potential mid-scale space, subject to a successful ACE capital bid. Located next to the large-scale Sunderland Empire Theatre, the new cultural quarter aims to provide quality, variety and balance to Sunderland's cultural offer. There are also further longer term opportunities beyond those currently in development. The 3 small scale venues are:

### **The Dun Cow**

A small upstairs function space of this Edwardian Grade II listed public house directly next to the Empire Theatre with a capacity of 50. Suitable for acoustic music, spoken word, and very small scale theatre.

Work programmed into this space will suit an intimate setting. It may have a more traditional and local relevance and appeal to an older demographic. Available immediately.

### **The Peacock**

The first floor of an Edwardian Grade II listed public house (formerly The Londonderry) situated on the edge of Keel Square. This space, a former nightclub, is a flexible space with a small fixed stage that can be used for music gigs, small scale theatre, spoken word, comedy, workshops, seminars, meetings etc. It can accommodate 200 standing, 120 seated, 80 cabaret style.

Work programmed into this space will aim for a younger market with opportunities for emerging artists across all art forms. The venue will aim for a Fringe vibe with work that is edgy, topical, contemporary. Programming events from its reopening in May 2017.

### **The Fire Station**

Situated between The Dun Cow and The Peacock, Sunderland's original Edwardian city centre fire station is currently being restored and repurposed with a £2.5 million HLF Grant into a centre for arts and heritage learning and participation. It will house dance and drama studios, a heritage centre, a café and a high-end restaurant. Live Theatre and Dance City will be anchor tenants delivering participatory activities.

There will opportunities to present small scale performances in the Drama Studio with a preference for work made for children and young people. Opportunities for other events and activities are possible.

### **Contact:**

Helen Green  
Director, The Fire Station / MACQ venues  
E: [Helen.green@mactrust.org.uk](mailto:Helen.green@mactrust.org.uk)



## TakeOff Festival, Durham

### Artistic Policy

TakeOff Festival of Theatre for Children and Young People is an annual festival of children and young people's theatre for audiences which takes place in venues across the North East. We are interested in work that shows respect for young audiences and how important they are, and we want to work with people who share our passion for creating good quality theatre for young audiences. We programme work on all scales from small groups to large theatre spaces and welcome professional colleagues from the UK and abroad to the region to share the work with our audiences.

In 2014, the festival starts a new two year cycle, with the 3-day delegate festival becoming biennial and a larger regional programme every year for schools and families. The Festival works with a guest programmer across the two year cycle to programme 15 – 20 companies annually from both within and outside the UK. One of our ambitions is to programme artists and companies from the North East.

There is an application procedure to show work at the festival which opens annually in December. We are also happy to have a chat with you about your work, so do call us to arrange a meeting.

### Scratch programme

At each of the biennial delegate festivals, Theatre Hullabaloo will be offering opportunities for artists to present new pieces of scratch work specifically for young audiences in the festival Departure Lounge. These opportunities will be offered in 2015 & 2017.

The scratch programme will provide a place to try out a new idea or for more developed work to find a platform to attract co-producers, partners, funders - or just advice. The festival provides a small budget for each piece, space, a delegate audience, a professional mentor and a free delegate pass so artists can share in the full TakeOff programme. If you have an idea to develop, please get in touch.

In 2015 & 2017 we are also offering 3 new commissions in partnership with Northern Stage, Live Theatre & Dance city to artists based in the North East, or with a strong connection to the region, who are interested in developing theatre for young audiences. Selected artists will be given a budget to

create a scratch piece and mentoring and professional development opportunities during their creation process.

All three commissions will be presented in scratch during TakeOff, as well as having a platform in Newcastle. The aim of the project is to create a critical mass of artists engaged with creating dynamic work for young audiences in our region.

TakeOff 2015 will take place in venues across the region from 19 - 25 October. Follow Theatre Hullabaloo on Facebook and Twitter for updates on the festival programme.



**Contact:**

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## **The Customs House, South Shields**

### **Artistic Policy**

More than 60 populist plays have been produced at the Customs House over the last few years. Our core audience are older and we are keen to work with young and emerging companies to generate new audience and engage young people with theatre. We programme theatre and other shows across four performance spaces, and well as site specific work outside the venue.

If you would like us to consider your work, please take time to understand the venue – come and visit, get a feel for the spaces. We prefer not to receive DVDs or unsolicited scripts, but would rather you contacted us with some details, and if we are interested, we will arrange to meet you.

We are interested in exploring the potential of our 140 seat Community Theatre space with work aimed at young people, children and families which might include an element of outreach work.

We can offer support in kind in the following areas: physical space, technical, marketing and administrative advice.

### **Contact:**

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Marketing, Programming & Fundraising Coordinator  
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## **The Maltings Theatre, Berwick-upon-Tweed**

The Maltings (Berwick) Trust (Registered Charity No. 701194 trading as The Maltings and Berwick Visual Arts) is located in Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland. It is England's most northern theatre and cinema and uniquely positioned on the border between England and Scotland.

The Maltings' building contains the Main House Theatre (a proscenium arch theatre with raked stalls, circle and boxes, seating 311) and the Henry Travers Studio (a black box space with retractable seating for 74). The venue also includes the Stage Door Bar (a bohemian-style theatre bar), Maltings Kitchen restaurant, offices of the Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival, Northumberland College courses (Music Production, Media Make-up and Art & Design), meeting rooms and associated facilities. Off-site facilities include two galleries in the town: the Granary Gallery (located within the recently refurbished Berwick YHA building) and the Berwick Gymnasium Gallery.

The Maltings currently presents approx. 200 live events annually. Additionally, it is one of the North East's leading independent cinemas, screening around 200 film titles per year.

### **Artistic Policy**

The Maltings is a "mixed-use" venue, presenting both live work across a variety of artforms (theatre, dance, music, comedy, etc.), films & event broadcasts, classes, and visual arts exhibitions.

Typically, we look to programme 1-2 theatre events per month. The sort of work that sells for us generally has a family/local focus. Whilst our digital broadcasts service a particular strand of our audiences, we aim to work with the best of the Fringe, local professional writers and producers, shows with a local interest, adult theatre. The majority of shows we look to programme are small scale, however larger scale well-known companies (such as National Theatre of Scotland/The Globe/etc.), performers (Simon Callow) and children's show based on popular literature (The Very Hungry Caterpillar) or featuring well known faces (Sid's Show/Andy and Mike's Tick Tock Time Machine).

Whilst we mostly look for commercially successful programming opportunities, we are looking to develop audiences for more challenging theatre. Our aim for this sort of work in 2017 is to curate a short programme of specially chosen productions.

As well as being a receiving house, through in-house productions such as La Mouche (a playful homage to The Fly), What Happens? (a music/poetry tribute to Langston Hughes), Here Come The Girls (our hugely successful jukebox/comedy show) and Berwick Festival Opera (our annual opera festival) we have a greater focus on work as a producing house and are keen to see how we can develop relationships with companies that expand into partnerships in the creation of new work.

### **Residencies**

Wherever possible, we are keen to increase the number of residencies we offer per year, where we may not currently be in a position to showcase as many brand new companies as we'd like, we are able to look at support in the shape of rehearsal space for development of work (subject to availability of our spaces).

**Contact**

Daniel Cox, Programming and Projects Associate

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## Tyneside Cinema, Newcastle

### Artistic Policy

At Tyneside Cinema we are interested in work that allows audiences to experience, enjoy and engage with the past, present and future of cinema. We are especially focused on examining the creative crossover between artists and filmmakers and their work with the moving image.

### Arts Programme

The Arts programme extends the Cinema's mission by working with artists and curators to develop and deliver artist residencies, commissions, exhibitions, live events, research projects and opportunities for young people.

### The Factory

The Factory is a free digital arts project for young people at Tyneside Cinema. Sessions are run weekly in seasons, each season lasting between 4 and 5 months. The Factory is run by young artist mentors, close in age to the participants, but who have been trained by the Cinema.

### The Gallery

The Gallery is Tyneside Cinema's new exhibition space and cinema screen. Throughout the day it hosts exhibitions of moving image art for free to the public, and during the evening it transforms into a 33 seater cinema screening movies from around the world. Exhibitions in the Gallery are complemented by an events programme that including live artist talks, artist film screenings as well as school programmes.

### Artist Residencies

In October 2011, Tyneside Cinema launched its first Artists in Residence programme. Each year three emerging and mid-career artists work across the fields of digital technology, new media and moving image for eight weeks. During this time, the resident artists have developed new work, mentored The Factory group and presented their work at events. In the case of Kelly Richardson (Artist in Residence 2011), the work developed, *Mariner 9*, went on to be exhibited internationally to great critical acclaim.

Find out more about Tyneside Cinema's Arts Programme at [www.tynesidecinema.co.uk/art](http://www.tynesidecinema.co.uk/art) or follow us on twitter @TynesideArt.

### Contact:

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## **Wunderbar**

### **Artistic Policy**

Wunderbar produces stand-out projects that bring audiences and artists together on journeys of intrigue and wonder.

Previously the highly acclaimed Wunderbar Festival, it is now an ongoing initiative with the aim of inspiring, challenging and nurturing new philosophies for modern living.

We produce dynamic, creative projects that place the audience at the heart of the experience and bring work to unusual places and spaces that take in the city and invite people to take part.

Our projects are led by artists, but fuelled by unique contributions from those who take part, responding with creativity and playfulness to issues of relevance to real people, real places and real time.

We like work that is playful, brave and mischievous and across every scale, from the most minute of interactions to grand, city centre spectacles.

We programme performance, installation, extraordinary happenings, interaction, social events and games, and events take place in both traditional venues, like theatres, galleries, arts centres and cinemas, and non-traditional performance spaces, like shopping centres, hairdressers, private homes and city streets.

Take a look at our website to get a taste for what we have done and what we do.

You can approach us via email, Facebook or Twitter and arrange a chat. We also recommend you get involved with other projects we're doing so we can get to know you, and you can get to know us.

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Ilana Mitchell, Artistic Director

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Tw: [www.twitter.com/wearewunderbar](https://www.twitter.com/wearewunderbar)

## Collaborative initiatives

### Bridging the Gap

Bridging the Gap is a project developed by ARC, originally in conjunction with Newcastle Theatre Royal and The Maltings, designed to contribute towards the creation of new theatre work within the North East region.

The venues work together to offer a joint package of in-kind support to enable North East based artists/theatre companies to develop and present new pieces of work across the venues. Over the years the scheme has expanded and now includes Arts Centre Washington, Gala Theatre, Live Theatre, Northern Stage, Sunderland MACQ, The Maltings in Berwick, York Theatre Royal and The Witham in Barnard Castle

To date Bridging the Gap has supported:

- Rabbit Damage: Wherever I Lay My Hat (2010)
- INK Productions: Wanting for Anghus (2011)
- Daniel Bye: Ash or How to Occupy an Oil Rig (2012)
- Black Coffee Theatre: Found (2013)
- Amy Mackelden: Retail (2013)
- Encounter Productions: Choir (2014)
- Northern Nomads: Butterfly (2014)
- Camisado Club: You, Me and Everything Else (2015)
- Zoe Murtagh: The Lamppost Petition (2016)
- The Six Twenty: FANS (2016)

Bridging the Gap is advertised in early January, with selection made by the end of February each year.

### Contact:

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