



JOB VACANCY: ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR (LITERARY)

MARCH 2024

Soho Theatre is London's most vibrant producer for new theatre, comedy and cabaret. A charity and social enterprise, we are driven by a passion for the work we produce, the artists we work with and the audiences we attract. We own our own home, Soho Theatre in the heart of London's West End. A former Synagogue, we raised funds, purchased and redeveloped it, opening it for the turn of the millennium in March 2000. Today it is one of the capital's busiest theatre and comedy venues, with a year-round festival programme and a buzzing bar. Our roots date back to the early 1970s at the Soho Poly Theatre. A small but influential venue, Soho Poly was radical and relevant, capturing the excitement and innovation of its time. Today our work is wide-ranging, drawing from this fringe heritage, and adding a queer, punk, counter-culture flavour. We champion voices that challenge from outside of the mainstream, and sometimes from within it too. We value entertainment and a great night out.

Led by a collaborative and diverse senior team and board, Soho Theatre is an exciting place to work with a strong team ethic, fast paced, and with opportunities and intent for staff development and progression.

We produce and co-produce new plays, work with associate artists and present the best new emerging theatre companies and comedians. We present the early work of countless UK artists (many who become industry giants), and we present many international artists' London debuts. We have a thriving variety of artist and talent development programmes, artists under commission and in development, and two new writing awards including the national Verity Bargate Award for new playwrights.

Work extends far beyond our Dean Street home, with a UK and international touring programme and connections. We present shows and scout talent at Edinburgh Festival Fringe and have close links with the Melbourne International Comedy Festival. We are the UK's leading presenter of Indian comedians and regularly present work there. We film shows and create our own digital work seen across our social platforms, on TV and inflight and streamed from our website.

We are working towards the opening of an exciting new second venue in London, Soho Theatre Walthamstow. A culmination of many years of Soho's work, in collaboration with a grassroots local campaign, to save a glorious, 1930s art deco venue with an incredible heritage reinvented as a 1,000-capacity venue for world-class comedy, panto, performance and participation – a 'local theatre with a national profile'.

STRATEGIC GOALS

THEATRE: continue to increase the resource, profile and quality of Soho's theatre and new writing programme; to ensure that this work sits well within Soho's lively cross-genre festival programme with diverse audiences, but also carves out the space to breathe and flourish within it.

COMEDY: work to ensure that we maintain an industry leading place through thoughtful curation, innovation and always being able to spot the next new talent; ensuring that artists continue to see Soho as a home for comedy and one of the places they want to perform; maintain programming integrity as we grow our audiences through Walthamstow, touring and digital.

CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT: grow our pathways for creative participation from early years to adulthood, supporting the next generation of artistic talent; support the growth of creative, connected communities around a new local theatre in Walthamstow

WALTHAMSTOW: successfully open and establish as a 'local theatre with a national profile', working with our key stakeholders of Council and community. Effectively manage the resultant change, organisational growth and risk.

AUDIENCES AND DIGITAL: build our distinctive London brand towards wider and inclusive audiences, with a particular focus on LGBTQ+, South Asian and Waltham Forest; international

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focus on India as well as Australia and the USA. Continue to build digital audiences and sustainable business models, also moving into specific digital content creation (as distinct from digital capture of live).

Job Description

Job title:	Associate Director (Literary)
Purpose of Job:	Champion new plays and help identify and nurture the best new writing talent for Soho Theatre's busy and vibrant central London venue.
Reports to:	Head of Theatre
Working with:	Theatre Programme Manager, Head of Creative Engagement, Creative Associates, Touring and Festivals Producer, Theatre Producer, Comedy team, Labs team
Location:	Primarily in Soho Theatre, Dean Street but also at Soho Theatre Walthamstow, Edinburgh Festival, touring venues and festivals

Aims and intentions:

- To support the development of new-writing: championing playwrights and nurturing the development of new plays
- To be an active member of the overall Creative team, engaged with our wide-ranging programme of theatre, comedy, cabaret and creative engagement - new-writing, performance art, solo performance, stand-up, drag, sketch, clowning
- To identify artists for in-house artistic support, commissioning and programming.

Job outline:

Artist Development

- Actively seek out, meet with, and champion emerging artists and writers for programming
- Facilitate artist R&D workshops to ensure that new work is given the best platform
- Contribute to other creative and literary projects as required
- Direct and/or act as dramaturg on Soho Theatre-produced productions as required

Literary

- Manage team of script readers for quarterly script meetings, helping to identify scripts for in-house productions and feeding outcomes into programming meetings
- Read and feed-back on scripts, maintaining an up-to-date understanding of new-writing trends
- Manage the biennial Verity Bargate Award: setting timelines, budgets and working with the Award sponsors and Soho Theatre team in building judging and readers' panels; curate engagement workshops; co-ordinate the prize-giving events
- Support the Head of Theatre in managing Soho Theatre's commissions, acting as a point of contact for writers and literary agents, helping to identify and champion writers to be commissioned, and financially managing commissioning payment plans over multiple financial years
- Provide regular updates to Soho Theatre development team on funded projects and opportunities for funders to engage with different stages of work

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Programming

- Support in the management of Soho Theatre's Coverage and Submissions programmes
- Coverage: attend performances, readings, sharings and workshops both internally at Soho Theatre and externally around London, the UK (including Edinburgh Festival Fringe) and internationally
- Submissions: attend Submissions meetings and respond to submissions to support Soho Theatre programming
- Support the Head of Theatre and Theatre Programme Manager with programming across Soho Theatre's output (21 Dean Street, Edinburgh, Touring, Walthamstow, Digital)
- Help to ensure that diversity in our programming is uppermost in our artist development and programming

Creative Engagement

- Understand and support the key relationship between the Theatre department and Soho Theatre Labs
- Writers' Lab engagement: attend Writers Lab full day panel discussion
- Tony Craze engagement: take part in Tony Craze Award script reading and panel
- Support the Writers' Lab team in shortlisting Writers' Lab applications
- Co-lead Writers Lab taster workshops
- Support in undertaking Labs alumni coverage
- Support in the programming and producing of Red Button workshops and masterclasses

General

- Support the aims and objectives of Soho Theatre both internally and externally
- Be an informed point of contact for the Theatre team, with a current knowledge of Soho Theatre's creative priorities and programming
- Represent the Theatre team, attending internal and external meetings as required
- Develop communication and collaboration across the organisation and with other companies and stakeholders, acting as a Soho Theatre ambassador to contacts and industry
- Attend and engage with Soho Theatre events such as press nights, guest nights and development and sponsor events
- Support Theatre team in meeting departmental income targets and adhering to departmental budget lines
- Support the co-ordination of financial, board and Theatre team activity reports as required
- Ensure there is diversity in all its forms across our stages and development programmes and contribute towards and champion Soho Theatre's Equality, Access and Diversity policies.
- Regularly and accurately monitor data in order to fulfil Arts Council England obligations
- Work with all staff to maintain an inclusive and welcoming organisation
- Undertake any other duties Soho Theatre may reasonably require

This is a guide to the nature of the work required of the Associate Director (Literary). It is not wholly comprehensive or restrictive and may be reviewed with the post holder, line manager and department head from time to time.

Person Specification

Qualities

- A passion for driving forward new writing and new performance for theatre
- The ability to interpret Soho Theatre's creative vision and find projects that fit within this vision
- The capacity to identify and pursue creative ideas and proposals, with an understanding how they can be developed and championed
- The ability to communicate sensitively and effectively
- A collaborative approach to work, recognising the value in having input and buy-in from colleagues
- Distinctiveness and bravery in artistic choices
- Strong demonstrable interest in Soho Theatre's artistic vision and programme

Skills & Experience

- Professional experience of working with writers and supporting the writing process
- Experience of reading proposals, scripts or pitches and assessing their viability
- Experience managing freelance script readers
- Demonstrable understanding of the best ways to nurture creative voices and script development
- Directing and dramaturgy experience
- Experience of commissioning playwrights and contract negotiation, and a familiarity with (or willingness to learn) the detailed understanding required for UK Theatre / Writer's Guild contracts
- Strong administration and project management skills
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills with acute attention to detail
- Line / team management experience

Terms and conditions

Equal Opportunities

Soho Theatre Company aims to be an equal opportunities employer. All staff members are required to adhere to Soho Theatre's Equal Opportunities Statement of Policy, a copy of which will be given to the successful candidate.

Terms of Employment

This is a permanent, full-time post with a 3-month probation period, working primarily from Soho Theatre (Dean Street), but also at Soho Theatre Walthamstow, Edinburgh Festival, touring venues and festivals

Salary

£32,000 full time

Holiday entitlement

20 days per annum plus Bank Holidays, rising to 25 days plus Bank Holidays after one full year of continuous employment.

Hours

The full-time working week is 35 hours, with an hour unpaid for lunch. Normal office hours are 10am-6pm Monday to Friday at Soho Theatre. Regular evening and occasional weekend / public holiday work will be required, there are no overtime payments but TOIL is negotiable on occasion with your line manager.

Pension

The Company operates an auto-enrolment pension scheme, which you are eligible to join after three months of employment. This is at the rate of 3% from the employer and 5% from the employee on qualifying (banded) earnings. The Government will pay in 1% of qualifying earnings, which is tax relief. If you have made other arrangements, there is the option to opt out altogether.

Staff benefits include:

- Complimentary tickets for Soho Theatre productions
- Bicycle and/or Season Ticket loan scheme
- Training and development opportunities
- Staff discount at Soho Theatre Bar