



## **LIVE LAB**

### **In Memory of Howard Davies CBE**

Thank you for taking an interest in The Yard's Live Lab, a four month programme for 6 artists to strengthen their artistic style, develop their directorial voice, and develop a new idea. Beginning with teaching from Katie Mitchell, the programme will be guided by some extraordinary artists including Omar Elerian, Rachael Young and Bijan Sheibani.

Here is everything we think you need to know, but if you have any questions, please do get in touch with The Yard's Theatre Producer Lara, on [lara@theyardtheatre.co.uk](mailto:lara@theyardtheatre.co.uk).

This programme is dedicated to the memory of Howard Davies CBE, described as "*one of the very greatest theatre directors of his generation*" by the National Theatre. This programme takes inspiration from Howard's fierce determination, astonishing work and his generous spirit towards all. Theatre journalist Kate Wyver has written more about Howard's legacy [here](#).

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## **KEY INFORMATION**

### **WHAT YOU WILL GET:**

- **Teaching and inspiration** from a range of directors and artists
- **£1200 bursary** to take part in Live Lab over 4 months
- **A week of research and development in April 2021**, including a £500 fee, a budget of £1000, rehearsal space and the opportunity to share the results onstage at the Yard Theatre
- **Mentoring** from The Yard's Associate Directors, Producers and Artistic Director

### **OTHER INFO:**

- The Lab is part-time, January - April, beginning 6 January 2021
- 6 Artists will be chosen to take part in the Lab. At least 3 places will be offered to artists who are of Black African, African Caribbean, South Asian, East Asian, South East Asian, South West Asian, North African, Arab, or Latinx heritage, or any artists from communities who are marginalised for their race. At least 1 will be offered to an artist who is d/Deaf or disabled. This is because these artists have been historically underrepresented in directorial roles at The Yard, and elsewhere
- If you require access support to help remove barriers to applying, please contact us at [lara@theyardtheatre.co.uk](mailto:lara@theyardtheatre.co.uk)

- Tailored support is available to take part in the Lab. If you need support related to access, financial concerns, or caring / parental responsibilities, let us know when you apply. You can read more about the support on offer in the [Access](#) section of this pack
- **The deadline for applications is: Monday 30 November 2020, 10am**

## **WHO IS IT FOR?**

The Live Lab is for artists interested in directing. For us at The Yard, a ‘director’ is someone who leads a team of people to make a show for a live audience. They may work with a writer, or they may not. They may work with actors, or people who have never performed before. We believe a director is someone with a strong idea and vision for a show, who can communicate a story and simultaneously embrace the live potential of theatre. The Lab aims to nurture these artists, supporting them to make exceptional, powerful work that is unmistakably theirs.

- The Lab is aimed at artists who relate to these ideas. It is geared towards those with an existing practice who want to strengthen their voice, vision and style, and hone their skills so they can lead the making of a future show.
- To take part in the Lab, you don’t have to already call yourself a “Director”, or have directed shows before, but ideally you will have had some experience of leadership in the making of theatre - perhaps within the context of design, movement, live art, or participatory arts. If you're wanting to take your ideas

and practice forward by leading a team in a director role and hone those skills, we'd love to hear from you.

- This is a course that aims to stretch, challenge and refocus artists with an existing creative practice. As such, we're looking for artists who have at least 2 years of professional creative practice, not including formal education. If you have questions or concerns about this please get in touch.

## **WHAT YOU'LL DO + WHEN**

**WELCOME MEETING:** Wednesday 6 January, 6pm - 7.30pm, online, Zoom.

### **TEACHING FROM KATIE MITCHELL - Online, Zoom:**

- Thursday 7th & Friday 8th January, 10am - 6pm
- Monday 11th & Tuesday 12th January, 10am - 6pm
- Monday 18th and Tuesday 19th January, 10am - 6pm

With an expectation of 1 days worth of reading and table work per week outside of sessions.

The Lab begins with teaching from world-renowned Director Katie Mitchell, focusing on the key skill in her practice: interpreting a text.

You will:

- Discuss the ten 'fundamental' skills of a director, reflecting on your own strengths and places for improvement
- Get an insight into the practice of a world-leading director
- Focus on the ways in which Katie interprets an existing text, then how Katie uses this to develop a concept for a production

- Be invited to develop your own concept for an existing text, with support and feedback from Katie and The Yard team. This is an exercise for this part of the Lab - you may wish to further develop your idea during the R&D in April, or you may not

**MASTERCLASSES - Online, Zoom - with the possibility of some in person sessions:**

Weekly sessions every Tuesday, between Tuesday 26 January - Tuesday 6 April, 4pm - 7pm

Designed to inspire, broaden and challenge your practice, these weekly masterclasses will provide an insight into the practice of leading directors and artists who have a clear vision in their work.

Artists confirmed so far include:

- **Omar Elerian** (previously Associate at the Bush Theatre and director of smash-hit *Misty*) on working with living artists and writers
- **Rachael Young** (award-winning artist and writer, *Out, Nightclubbing*) on making live work at the intersection of performance, dance and cabaret
- **Bijan Sheibani** (director and writer of *The Arrival*; director of *Barber Shop Chronicles*) on communicating your vision when working with actors
- **Nickie Miles-Wilden** (Associate at Graeae) on making work accessible for performers
- **Lanre Malaolu** (award-winning director, choreographer & writer, *Elephant in the Room*) on the body's capacity to tell stories
- **Jay Miller** (Artistic Director of The Yard) on telling stories that embrace liveness

- **Anthony Simpson-Pike** (Associate Director of The Yard) on dramaturgy as care

Plus a session focused on the theme of leadership with:

- **Tarik Elmoutawakil** (Co-Artistic Director at Marlborough Productions and curator of *Brownston Abbey*) on leadership and curation
- **Natalie Ibu** (Artistic Director of Northern Stage) on resilience and leadership
- **Richard Eyre** (former Artistic Director of the National Theatre) on running a building and leading creative teams

There will also be a handful of sessions that will be programmed in response to the interests of the artists taking part.

## **RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT - April 2021. TBC.**

A chance to put the skills learned during the Lab into practice for one week.

You might choose to R&D the idea you developed during Katie's teaching, the folk/fairy tale you talked about in your application, or another idea entirely - perhaps inspired by one of the masterclasses.

You will receive:

- 1 week of rehearsal space
- £500 fee
- £1000 budget (enough to pay up to 2 collaborators full time)
- Support from The Yard's Producers and Technical team
- Opportunity to share the results of the week at the Yard to an invited audience. You might want to share a short performance,

or it might be a game, a piece of music, or a video - whatever you feel is useful to support your artistic journey

We will be closely monitoring the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic to ensure those who partake in the Live Lab can do so safely. The majority of the teaching will happen online via Zoom. The research and development period will adhere to Covid-safe guidelines and in line with government advice at the time.

## **WHAT WILL YOU GET FROM THE LAB?**

By the end of the Lab, we hope you will:

- Have developed an idea for a new show that you can choose to take forward
- Have established supportive relationships with The Yard and others in the group
- Have honed your voice, style and theatrical ideas
- Have been inspired by the world-class artists teaching on the course

## **CARE**

Ensuring that everyone who takes part in the Live Lab is cared for during our time together is a priority for us, which is why we are doing the following:

- During the first session together, we will agree on a set of ground rules and guiding principles for the Live Lab. This will provide a vision for a safe and productive working environment

and support healthy collaboration. Ground rules and principles will also be sent to all invited speakers and artists

- Providing one-to-one mentoring and support sessions with our Associate Directors and weekly optional group check-in sessions
- We will provide contact details of other Yard team members should you wish to raise anything or talk to anyone else
- Offering support to remove barriers for people to take part, including those who have access needs, financial concerns and/or caregiving responsibilities - please see the [‘Access’](#) section for further detail

## **HOW WILL ARTISTS BE SELECTED?**

Artists will be selected by The Yard’s programming team, plus two members of the Yard’s group of young changemakers aged 15-19 (The Committee). When looking at Live Lab applications, the questions we will be asking ourselves are:

- Does this person have the potential to make work that has a clear voice, concept and style?
- Are we excited by their ideas?
- Is this the right opportunity for this artist right now? What is the benefit to this artist at the moment?
- Through the teaching, mentoring and support offered by the course, is it likely that this person will have the confidence, skills and ideas to lead in the making of a future show?

# **HOW TO APPLY**

**The deadline for applications is Monday 30 November 2020, 10am.**

Please complete our online [application form](#), by responding in text or sharing a link to your audio file(s). The form asks you to:

- List your previous work
- Share documentation, images, websites, social media accounts or any other resources to give us a sense of your work (please note, it will not be possible to upload files, so this will be via links to storage platforms, video sites or social media accounts only)
- Answer 3 questions (no more than 750 words for this section in total, or 4 and a half minutes of speech in total):

**1. Tell us about yourself as an artist and your artistic journey so far**

**2. How do you think your creative practice will benefit from the Live Lab?**

**3. Imagine you are directing a fairytale/folktale that already exists.**

- **What's the fairytale/folktale, and what's your director's concept?**
- **Two creative team collaborators you would work with to make it happen and why.**
- **Two performers who would be in the production and why.**

## **NOTE:**

- On the folktale/fairytale - Choose one that already exists, don't make one up. We recommend you choose something familiar to you and don't spend loads of time researching a story. We're interested in your creative interpretation of an existing tale that

already exists. Finally, don't use up lots of words explaining the fairytale to us. If it is a story you think we may not know, you can post a link to an online synopsis - such as a Wikipedia page.

- Your director's concept is the vision for a show. It's your creative interpretation of the fairytale or folktale's themes and characters. This concept is reflected through every element of the show. You might think about when, and where your fairytale or folktale is set, what is particularly different about your interpretation, and why it is important to be telling it in this way now. An example of a director's concept of a Shakespeare play would be Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo + Juliet*, with the play retold as a romantic crime movie, set in contemporary America. The Montagues and Capulets are warring mafia empires, swords are replaced with guns, Verona Italy becomes a teeming seaside metropolis called Verona Beach - a modern-day city with cars, high rise buildings, hot dog stands - like Miami.
- The performers and collaborators you choose can be realistic decisions, even people you have worked with before, OR a totally unrealistic dream team, such as Hollywood actors. Again, what we are most interested in is your reasoning. Why are these the people you'd most want to work with.
- This is just an exercise for the application, we don't expect you to work on the fairytale as part of the Lab

**It is possible that we may invite some applicants for a short Zoom chat as part of the selection process.**

We will notify you about the outcome of your application by 23rd December.

If you have any questions about the application, including if the Lab is right for you, please do get in touch with us at [Lara@theyardtheatre.co.uk](mailto:Lara@theyardtheatre.co.uk)

**Please do not apply if you are in formal education.**

## **ACCESS INFORMATION**

**Making an application:** We have support available to help remove barriers for people with access needs to make an application to us:

- We've created an audio version of this Introduction to the Lab [here](#).
- Your responses can be in audio form. Simply share a link to the audio file(s) (eg. via Soundcloud, Google Drive or Drop Box)

If you need any other support to help remove barriers to completing the form, please email Lara at [lara@theyardtheatre.co.uk](mailto:lara@theyardtheatre.co.uk).

**Taking part:** We know there can be barriers to taking part in opportunities like these, which is why we're offering the following if you are successful and need support:

- **If you have access needs:** We have allocated an access budget to help remove barriers for people with access needs, for example a BSL interpreter. Simply tell us what you need on the application form and we will aim to meet your needs wherever possible.

- **If you have financial concerns** which would prevent you taking part, such as needing support to cover internet costs, please let us know when you apply as we have some budget for this and may be able to help. Simply tell us in the application form.
- **If you have caring / parental responsibilities**, we are committed to offering flexibility and other adjustments where possible which may help you. Please let us know what you need when you apply and we will aim to meet your needs wherever we can.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **Can I Apply?**

#### **I'm an International artist, can I apply?**

Unfortunately, we are not accepting applications from outside of the UK and Ireland for this first iteration of Live Lab. We are working towards making this opportunity available to international artists in future years.

#### **I'm not based in London, can I apply?**

Yes you may apply. The majority of the teaching will happen over zoom, however for the week of research and development you will need to be in London. We have some budget to support the travel and relocation costs of one artist in the programme.

#### **Who is eligible for Live Lab?**

If you're:

- based in the UK or Ireland.
- not currently in formal education.

- have at least two years of professional creative practice, outside of an educational context.
- have a strong interest in strengthening your voice, vision, style and honing directorial skills to lead to the making of a future show.

Then this Lab is for you.

### **How do you define Professional Creative Practice?**

This is any creative work undertaken outside of an Educational context. It could be as a facilitator for a Youth Theatre group, as a Sound Designer for an installation, or as a maker of a cabaret show, as a few examples.

### **I'm a writer, can I apply?**

If your experience so far has been in writing, but you're interested in developing your skills as a director you can apply. This programme focuses on developing an artist's directorial voice, and equipping them to lead a team in creating a piece of live performance.

Please note that this course will not focus on writing.

### **I don't have a specific idea of a show that I want to make during Live Lab - do I need to already know that?**

Not at all. Live Lab is a programme that will help you create and develop an idea during a lab. That's what it's designed for.

### **I'm still in education, can I apply?**

No, unfortunately Live Lab is not open to applicants who are still currently in formal education.

### **Is it possible to apply as a duo or collective?**

No, we are only accepting applications from individual artists. It will be possible to work with your collective or collaborators in the

research and development period, as long as they are paid adequately for their work (from the £1000 Research & Development budget).

### **I work full time, how much annual leave will I need to take?**

There will be 6 full days of teaching with Katie Mitchell. We also ask that you are available for a full week in April for the R&D period. Masterclasses are currently scheduled to happen 4-7pm weekly, though we may be able to be flexible with this depending on the needs of the group.

We expect you will need to take a minimum of 11 days of annual leave to take part.

### **Do I need to be available for all the Live Lab dates?**

We hope that you will be able to join all of the teaching and masterclass sessions, however if you have a clash with one of the sessions, that won't preclude you from being a part of the Lab. However, it is essential that you are available for the 3 weeks of Katie Mitchell teaching, for 1 week in April for the R&D, as well as the majority of the masterclass sessions.

### **I recently graduated this Summer, can I apply?**

If you are no longer in university, it is possible to apply, so long as you have had 2 years of experience of professional creative practice in total (be that before, during or after). We are defining professional experience as any creative work undertaken outside of an educational context.

### **I have a question about the Application...**

#### **Can I make an audio application?**

Yes! You will be able to submit your application as an audio recording. You will be able to do this by supplying us with links to your audio file via storage sites (e.g. Soundcloud, Drop Box, Google Drive) in the application form.

Don't worry about the quality of your audio file.

### **What fairytale should I pick?**

Choose a fairytale or folktale that already exists - don't make one up. We're interested in your creative interpretation of a story that already exists. Choose a story that is familiar to you, and don't spend lots of time researching a story. Again, what we're interested in is your creative interpretation, rather than the story itself. Don't use up lots of words explaining the fairytale to us. If it is a story you think we may not know, you can post a link to an online synopsis - such as a Wikipedia page.

### **Do I have to develop the fairytale/folktale as part of the Live Lab?**

No. This is just an exercise for the application. Of course you can if you choose to - but it is by no means expected.

### **Who should I think about when naming my potential collaborators?**

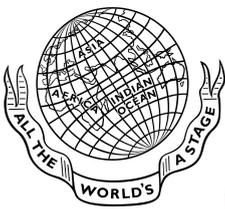
Again, this is just an exercise for the application. The performers and collaborators you choose can be realistic decisions OR a totally unrealistic dream team, such as Hollywood actors. Again, what we are most interested in is your reasoning. Why are these the people you'd most want to work with.

### **What do you mean by Concept?**

A director's concept is your vision for a production. It's your creative interpretation of the fairytale or folktale's themes and characters. This concept is reflected through every element of the show. You might think about when, and where your fairytale or folktale is set, and what is particularly different about your concept of this fairytale.

An example of a director's concept of a Shakespeare play would be Baz Luhrmann's Romeo + Juliet, with the play retold as a romantic crime movie, set in contemporary America. The Montagues and Capulets are warring mafia empires, swords are replaced with guns, Verona Italy becomes a teeming seaside metropolis called Verona Beach - a modern-day city with cars, high rise buildings, hot dog stands - like Miami.

**LiveLab is generously supported by:**



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**--- INFO ENDS ---**

