



THE EMMANUEL KAYE FOUNDATION

Press Release - Tuesday 09 November 2021

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#Springboard

## THE LYRIC HAMMERSMITH THEATRE LAUNCHES SPRINGBOARD, A FLAGSHIP TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR FUTURE THEATRE ARTISTS

- Applications open today for auditions for the free two-year training programme which will start in January 2022, available via [www.lyric.co.uk](http://www.lyric.co.uk)
- SPRINGBOARD is supported by Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and The Emmanuel Kaye Foundation

The **Lyric Hammersmith Theatre** is proud to announce **SPRINGBOARD**, a ground-breaking, free two-year training programme that aims to find, shape, inspire, champion and sustain the next generation of performers from underrepresented backgrounds. Applications open today for the first year of the programme starting in January 2022. The full company will comprise 20 people, with 10 places available each year via an audition process.

In response to the current challenges facing aspiring young talent, SPRINGBOARD is a major new performance pathway into employment designed specifically for ages 18-25 who have had zero to little formal drama training and who come from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and groups underrepresented in theatre. It is a vital new addition to **Young Lyric**, which is known for pioneering educational initiatives for marginalised young people including its START and REWIND schemes.

**Rachel O’Riordan, Lyric Hammersmith Theatre Artistic Director**, said: “*SPRINGBOARD is a bold new initiative at Lyric Hammersmith Theatre. It speaks to our profound commitment to equity of opportunity, and builds on our long and influential history of talent development.*”

*SPRINGBOARD is a focused and immersive two-year programme for young people from West London. It is for those people who might slip through the net; whose talent might go unseen, undeveloped, uncelebrated.*

*The 10 young people per year who we select will have an experience like no other; they will be able to learn in a working theatre; to feel comfortable in this space; to train as an actor in an environment which acknowledges that to be an actor, takes enormous strength and resilience. They will be challenged, supported and included in the life of this great theatre.*

*I am so proud of SPRINGBOARD; the Lyric is leading the way and offering a genuine alternative pathway into theatre. The programme is unique - the Lyric is changing the game."*

**Rob Lehmann, Director of Young Lyric**, said: "We are delighted to announce SPRINGBOARD, our new and unique free training programme that nurtures the next generation of performers through unrivalled theatre-based training in their journey from participant to professional.

*SPRINGBOARD has been created with young people at its core, whose experiences have helped in the curation and design of this programme, addressing the needs of the industry today. We are throwing open our artistic doors to young talent, providing our SPRINGBOARD trainees with full access and development opportunities both on and off stage, in order to represent and sustain theatre's future."*

SPRINGBOARD's expansive development initiatives cover performances, workshops and masterclasses, artist development, pastoral support and opportunities both on and off stage, enabling trainees to gain a specialist understanding of all aspects of a producing theatre to boost individual, sustainable careers in the arts.

SPRINGBOARD is kindly supported by **Esmée Fairbairn Foundation** and **The Emmanuel Kaye Foundation** who have helped to launch the programme through funding over the next three years for the first 30 trainees. SPRINGBOARD is a long-term commitment by the Lyric and will provide an inspiring, industry-leading model to improve access to careers in the theatre. Following its launch at the Lyric, the programme and framework will be shared with UK arts organisations to adapt, actively making the performing arts sector more inclusive with a workforce which better represents society.

Trainees will receive hundreds of engagement opportunities over the two-year programme. They will learn from leading industry practitioners in masterclasses led by each main house director: Michael Buffong, Atri Banerjee, Clare Lizzimore and Ola Ince for 2022; Lyric Artistic Associates Nina Steiger, Tinuke Craig, Tanika Gupta, Philip McMahon and Good Teeth; and the Lyric's Associate Director Nicholai La Barrie and Artistic Director Rachel O'Riordan.

As well as performance opportunities across main house and studio productions, film and the Lyric's annual panto, trainees will also receive an induction into front of house, facilitation training in delivering educational classes and workshops, shadowing days with all Lyric departments, bespoke artist life skills classes and more. Sessions with external partners will include commercial producers, Equity, a casting director, touring theatre company, film production company and theatrical agent to provide valuable knowledge and contacts. This wide range of experiences will also be supplemented with tailored mentoring, career advice and one-to-one support throughout and after the two-year programme.

The Lyric is committed to championing young talent from West London and is encouraging applicants to apply who are from the Global Majority, not in education or training, who are non-binary, LGBTQIA+, who are d/Deaf or disabled. Applicants must be aged 18-25 from the programme start date (10 January 2022), have zero to little formal drama training, and live in one of the eligible West London boroughs - Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kensington and Chelsea, Richmond upon Thames, Wandsworth and Westminster.

The deadline for applications is 02 December 2021. All eligible applicants will receive an audition pack and will be invited for auditions on 09 December, followed by a second round on 13 December.

Further details to apply can be found online at <https://lyric.co.uk/young-lyric/springboard/>

- ENDS -

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## Notes to Editors

IMAGES available to download [here](#)

**The Lyric Hammersmith Theatre** produces bold and relevant world-class theatre from the heart of Hammersmith, London, the theatre's home for more than 125 years. Under the leadership of Artistic Director and CEO Rachel O'Riordan, it is committed to being vital to, and representative of, the local community and to being a major force in London and UK theatre, resulting in the creation of adventurous and acclaimed theatrical work. The Lyric Hammersmith Theatre has a national reputation for ground-breaking work to develop and nurture the next generation of talent, providing opportunities for young people from all backgrounds to discover the power of creativity. The theatre is West London's largest creative hub working to deliver life-changing creative opportunities for thousands of young people. Right in the heart of Hammersmith, the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre is here for everyone.

## **Esmée Fairbairn Foundation**

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation aims to improve our natural world, secure a fairer future and strengthen the bonds in communities in the UK. We unlock change by contributing everything we can alongside people and organisations with brilliant ideas who share our goals.

The Foundation is one of the largest independent grant-makers in the UK. In 2020, we provided £53.5m in grant funding towards work in support of our aims and our emergency response to COVID. We also have a £45 million allocation to social investments for organisations with the aim of creating social impact.

[www.esmeefairbairn.org.uk](http://www.esmeefairbairn.org.uk)

## Listings

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[www.lyric.co.uk](http://www.lyric.co.uk)

Twitter: [@LyricHammer](#)  
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