

Press Release – Friday 14 January 2022
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#Springboard

MEET OUR FIRST EVER SPRINGBOARD TRAINEES



The Lyric Hammersmith Theatre is delighted to welcome and introduce the first ever 10 trainees of **SPRINGBOARD**, a free, ground-breaking training programme and major alternative performance pathway into employment for future theatre makers.

Following auditions in December, the 10 Springboard trainees who join the Lyric in January 2022 on the start of their two-year course are: **Adelaide Banks**, 25, from Hammersmith & Fulham; **James Douglas-Quarcoopome**, 23, from Hillingdon; **Kane Feagan**, 25, from Hammersmith & Fulham; **Chanel Fernandes**, 23 from Hillingdon; **Rees Jenkins**, 24, from Richmond upon Thames; **Georgia-Rose Oliver**, 22, from Brent; **Sam Purkis**, 24, from Ealing; **Ryan Stevens**, 19, from Hammersmith & Fulham; **Wilf Walsworth**, 24 from Wandsworth; and **Romario Williams**, 24, from Brent.

Rachel O’Riordan, Artistic Director of the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, said: *“This is a special moment in the Lyric’s history and we are so proud to welcome 10 inspiring young individuals*

into our building on the start of this exciting journey together. SPRINGBOARD is a game-changing talent development programme and our trainees will gain 360-degree hands-on experience through hundreds of opportunities based within this theatre. They will train with the artists in our season, gain access to all departments and staff across the Lyric, create and perform work on our stages and much more, all supported by the Lyric and leading industry professionals, enabling them with the confidence, skills and knowledge to succeed in the industry."

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.

Adelaide Banks, 25, from Hammersmith & Fulham, said:

"I applied to SPRINGBOARD to build on my knowledge of theatre and the theory of it. I want to nurture my talent as a performer while broadening my creative and mental reach when writing and composing."

James Douglas-Quarcoopome, 23, from Hillingdon, said:

"I'm looking forward to meeting great creatives, building networks and making new friendships with the rest of the cohort."

Kane Feagan, 25, from Hammersmith & Fulham, said:

"I knew from very young watching TV, movies and theatre that I wanted to be an actor. I'm excited to learn from professionals at the Lyric and in the industry, to progress and grow within the building and work with my nine new peers. I think SPRINGBOARD will make me grow as a performer and give me the opportunity to pursue my career and become a bigger and better me."

Chanel Fernandes, 23 from Hillingdon, said:

"To be at the centre of a leading producing theatre in London and being trusted to work with the professionals who work here is a huge privilege and such an exciting opportunity. I take a lot of inspiration from athletes, there are lots of parallels to acknowledge with the creative sphere and sports discipline, hard work, physicality, competitiveness, performance, rest and so much more."

Rees Jenkins, 24, from Richmond upon Thames, said:

"Community made me want to be a performer. The rehearsal room is my favourite place to be, to be able to explore, experiment and just play is such a privilege. I'm excited to just be in the building and be supported and cared for and to squeeze every opportunity that the Lyric offers. SPRINGBOARD will give me the tools and confidence to access this industry."

Georgia-Rose Oliver 22, from Brent said:

"I've always been inspired by theatre from a young age and SPRINGBOARD gives me an opportunity to grow and expand my skills in a working theatre that I otherwise wouldn't have had."

Sam Purkis, 24, from Ealing, said:

"SPRINGBOARD will help me to be a more versatile actor. I'm looking forward to working with people currently in the industry, the variety of performance opportunities and learning from first class directors, and the Lyric truly embracing raw talent and platforming it."

Ryan Stevens, 19, from Hammersmith & Fulham; said:

"I'm so excited to be able to act a whole lot more and work on my confidence and make new friends. SPRINGBOARD will help me learn how to become a full-time actor and the routes to get into film and television."

Wilf Walsworth, 25 from Wandsworth, said:

"SPRINGBOARD will benefit my training immeasurably. I would not be able to train otherwise. I think the course will push us and allow us to work and support ourselves."

Romario Williams, 24, from Brent, said:

"I love the feeling and freedom of being on stage. I'm excited about being able to meet and learn from so many different industry professionals through SPRINGBOARD and learning the tools I need to get through the industry."

SPRINGBOARD – FURTHER INFORMATION

SPRINGBOARD addresses current challenges facing aspiring young performers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and groups underrepresented in theatre. It is designed specifically for ages 18-25 who have had zero to little formal drama training and will provide trainees with a specialist understanding of all aspects of a producing theatre through performances, workshops, masterclasses and artist development opportunities on and off stage. It is a vital new addition and flagship programme from **Young Lyric**, which is known for pioneering educational initiatives for marginalised young people including its START and REWIND schemes.

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, Tinuek 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.

<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

Listings

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