

November 2023

Thank you for your interest in the post of Assistant Director – The Big Life.

This pack includes information on Stratford East, the job description, person specification and details on how to apply. Please read all the information carefully before starting your application. Only relevant information will be considered when shortlisting applicants for interview. You may find it helpful to look at the Stratford East website www.stratfordeast.com for general information on the theatre's policies, current programme and past history.

We would like all applicants to know that if they need additional support during the recruitment process we are happy to make reasonable adjustments.

Access requirements for the application process

We want to make this application process as accessible as possible and supply large print application packs. We will accept covering letters and CVs in a video or audio format.

We appreciate that some candidates will have needs which mean that it is preferable for them to submit a recorded application, rather than a written one.

Recorded applications should be:

- No longer than 4 minutes, unless longer is needed to meet your access needs
- We welcome application videos in BSL

If you have any specific requirements including anything you might need should you get called for interview (e.g. interpreters, information in different formats etc.), or would like to discuss any aspect of the role in confidence, please contact recruitment@stratfordeast.com.

Please note, any information you provide around your access requirements will not form part of the shortlisting process.

To apply for the post, please send us the following:

- A summary of your Directing credits or other relevant experience. This can be in your preferred format: CV, film or audio.
- Your answer to the question: 'Why are you interested in working on this specific project?'
 - When answering we encourage you to tell us about your experiences, skills and interests so that we can understand as much about you and your suitability for the role as possible.
 - If you're writing the answer then please keep it to **one side of A4**. If it's filmed or recorded, then please keep it to less than four minutes.
- Let us know your access requirements (eg. Printing on coloured paper, step-free access, BSL interpreter etc.)

The deadline for receipt of completed applications is 10am on Monday 27 November. **Applications received after 10am on the deadline date will not be accepted.**

It is intended that initial interviews will take place on **w/c Monday 04 December**.

We may ask you to carry out a task as part of the interview process. We give as much notice as possible ahead of a task. We are happy to make reasonable adjustments for applicants, if needed, to complete the task.

We look forward to receiving your application and thank you for your interest in Theatre Royal Stratford East.

Theatre Royal Stratford East

Stratford East makes theatre both for, and inspired by, our community in Newham, East London. We continue the political and revolutionary ethos of our founder Joan Littlewood as a leading London theatre and civic hub for East London. We are driven by our art, inclusive and bold. We tell stories that provoke discourse about the world we live in and our place within it.

Stratford East is a producing theatre, built in 1884, in the heart of East London, situated a short walk from Stratford station. We have a proud history and an exciting future. We represent our culturally and socially diverse community in the work we make, the people we employ and our audiences and participants. We tell stories that are current, political and representative of London.

From 1953 – 1979 the theatre was the home of Joan Littlewood's legendary Theatre Workshop Company. The Company received international recognition with their acclaimed productions such as *Oh, What a Lovely War!* and *A Taste of Honey*. Many leading actors, writers and directors have been part of the Theatre Royal Stratford East family including Meera Syal, Barbara Windsor, Don Warrington, Sheila Hancock, Indhu Rubasingham, Tanika Gupta, Roy Williams and Cynthia Erivo.

Under Nadia Fall's Artistic direction, we present a bold programme of reimagined classics, timely revivals and ground-breaking new work. Our current season includes a new production to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Jonathan Harvey's coming-out and coming-of-age story *Beautiful Thing*, *Jack and the Beanstalk* as our annual pantomime, and a revival of the Stratford East hit musical *The Big Life*.

Alongside our work on stage, we run a Learning and Participation offer that is accessible and inclusive to all, with the aim to develop creative talent for people of every age. We run a range of programmes to create a lasting impact for our local community which aims to:

- provide routes into the industry, across all theatre departments, with a particular focus on diversifying those coming into the workplace,

ensuring the theatre workplace of the future is a diverse and skilled one; and

- provide opportunities to people of all ages to develop their creative talents and engage with the work of the theatre, ensuring that there is a creative outlet to the widest possible constituency.

Our Mission

- We produce work of the highest artistic quality that is:
 - Popular: Theatre of the highest quality that seeks to move and entertain everyone
 - Political: Work that provokes discourse about the world we live in and our place within it
 - Inclusive: Stories that are representative of our East London home and speaks to a wider London audience and which strive for an expansive and imaginative portrayal of its diverse communities
- We ensure diversity and inclusion is central to everything we do
- We are investing in our Grade 2 listed building
- We work to be environmentally sustainable
- We nurture and develop our staff
- We create and champion opportunities for a diverse range of artists
- We develop an emerging generation of talent
- We present a year-round participation programme for people of all ages
- We engage with local partners and people in Newham and the East London area

Governance and Finances

Theatre Royal Stratford East is a registered charity (Charity Name: Pioneer Theatres Ltd) and a company limited by guarantee. Stratford East Trading Limited is a subsidiary of the charity and operates the bar and catering provision. We are overseen by a non-executive Board of Directors chaired by Dame Margaret Hodge MP. The Board delegate day-to-day management of the theatre to its Executive Team: Nadia Fall (Artistic Director and CEO) and Eleanor Lang (Executive Director).

We have an annual turnover of approximately £3.5m and our work is funded through four main sources: grant income from Arts Council England and the London Borough of Newham; box office income;

fundraising income from trusts, businesses and individuals; and other earned income which includes commercial hires, catering and front of house sales.

Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment Practises

Stratford East is committed to safeguarding and embeds safeguarding in all of its working practices.

As part of our recruitment process, we ask applicants to agree to undertake a DBS check and complete a self-disclosure form, if applicable to the role.

If required, applicants will need to complete a self-disclosure form if invited to an interview. The completed form should be brought to the interview in a sealed envelope, marked 'confidential'. The envelope will only be opened, and the contents reviewed, as part of our referencing process, if the candidate is successful. All unopened disclosure forms will be shredded.

References are only sought for successful candidates, when referees are approached, we will ask them to assess the candidate's suitability for the role if it involves working with children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Assistant Director

Reporting to: Tinuke Craig

MAIN PURPOSE OF THE POST

We are looking for an Assistant Director for our production of *The Big Life* – Book by Paul Sirett and Tameka Empson, Lyrics by Paul Sirett, Music by Paul Joseph, directed by Tinuke Craig. This is a Theatre Royal Stratford East production.

About The Big Life

It's 1948 and on board the *Windrush Empire*, journeying over from the West Indies to England, Ferdy, Bernie, Dennis and Lennie are full of expectations and aspirations.

Eager to make successes of themselves, they are optimistic about what the future holds, plus Dennis is certain that showing his brother's posthumous medal from World War II will mean he is welcomed heartily. Building this new life will take focus and sacrifice, and the young men make the bold decision to forswear wine and women for three whole years and devote themselves to their future in London.

Sybil, Mary, Zulieka and Kathy have other ideas. They know that man cannot live by bread alone! So each one's resolve is put to the test as the reality of life in a less-than-welcoming England, not to mention the weather, makes forgoing the warmth of female company hard to resist. Will the men stick with their idea of The Big Life, or will Cupid have the final say?

A joyful and uplifting production, where the story of Shakespeare's Love's Labour's Lost meets that of the Windrush generation in a fun-packed Ska musical that'll have you dancing in your seats.

The Big Life returns to the stage 20 years after its Stratford East premiere and subsequent West End transfer.

PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Working in collaboration with the Director and Creative Team to realise the artistic aims of the production
- Attending, supporting and participating in production and creative team meetings, rehearsals, technical rehearsals and preview performances of the Production up to and including the Press Night Performance, as required
- Attending and facilitating pre- and post-show question and answer sessions and outreach events in the absence of the Director
- Research, preparation and support during the pre-production period, as required
- Overseeing understudy/cover rehearsals including the regular understudy/cover rehearsal call and ensuring that the understudies/covers are ready to perform to a professional standard throughout the run of the Production
- Checking and noting the Production on a weekly basis following the Press Night Performance

PERSON SPECIFICATION

	Essential	Desirable
Experience and Knowledge		
Experience working on a professional production (can be of any scale as a director, associate director, assistant director or similar)	X	
Knowledge of production process and practices	X	
Experience of working on a professional musical production	X	
Personal Attributes		
Team player who enjoys collaborative working	X	
Demonstrable alignment with Theatre Royal Stratford East's core culture and values	X	
Enthusiasm for theatre and the arts	X	
Someone who is excited by the creative process and interested in working with people of different experiences	X	

INFORMATION

TRSE is committed to a policy of equal opportunities embracing diversity in all areas of activity and positively welcomes applications from disabled people and people of all ethnicities.

Contract type: Freelance

Fee: £4,000

Hours of Work: The Assistant Director will be required on a full-time basis throughout the rehearsal process, technical rehearsals and previews up to and including Press Night. They will be required to attend at least once a week for noting and supporting the production during the run, on a schedule to be agreed subject to their availability.

Rehearsals commence:

Rehearsals from: Mon 08 Jan 2024

Fit-up: w/c Mon 05 Feb 2024

Technical Rehearsals from: Mon 12 Feb 2024

First Preview Performance: Fri 16 Feb 2024
Press Night Performance: Thu 22 Feb 2024
Final Performance: Sat 30 Mar 2024

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