

STRATFORD
EAST

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR – THE HARDER THEY COME
APRIL 2025



STRATFORD
HERE FOR
GREAT THEATRE **EAST**





WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in the post of **Assistant Director** for the upcoming production of *The Harder They Come*, based on the film, produced and directed by Perry Henzell and co-written with Trevor Rhone. Adapted for stage by Suzan-Lori Parks and directed by Matthew Xia. Including songs by Jimmy Cliff with additional songs by Suzan-Lori Park.

The Harder They Come is presented by Stratford East in association with Washington Square Films, Joshua Blum & Bruce Miller.

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.

The deadline for receipt of completed applications is 10am on Monday 28 April. Applications received after 10am on the deadline date will not be accepted.

It is intended that initial interviews will take place w/c 12 May and w/c 26 May.

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.

If you have questions about the recruitment process, or need assistance, please contact recruitment@stratfordeast.com

Stratford East 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.



STRATFORD EAST

Stratford East is here to make truly great theatre in an atmosphere that welcomes all, with extraordinary shows that are affordable by all in the beating heart of East London.

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 which 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 Stratford East family including Meera Syal, Barbara Windsor, Don Warrington, Sheila Hancock, Indhu Rubasingham, Tanika Gupta, Roy Williams and Cynthia Erivo.

We run a Learning and Participation offer that is accessible and inclusive to all. 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; and
- provide opportunities to people of all ages to develop their creative talents and engage with the theatre’s work, ensuring there is a creative outlet to the widest possible constituency.

GOVERNANCE AND FINANCES

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 who delegate the day-to-day management of the theatre to its Executive Team.

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.



Theatre Royal Stratford East Photograph by Ian Grundy

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for the post, please send please send the below to recruitment@stratfordeast.com:

- 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 (e.g. Printing on coloured paper, step-free access, BSL interpreter etc.)
- Complete the optional equal opportunities monitoring form via this [link](#)

Supporting statements can be submitted in written, video or audio format, please see the application form for more details.

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

Production: THE HARDER THEY COME

MAIN PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

We are looking for an Assistant Director for our production of THE HARDER THEY COME. A UK premiere adapted for the stage by Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize winner **Suzan-Lori Parks** and directed by Olivier Award-winner **Matthew Xia** (Tambo & Bones, Skeleton Crew).

ABOUT THE HARDER THEY COME

Based on the cult classic film that brought reggae to the world, THE HARDER THEY COME tells the story of Ivan, an aspiring singer who arrives in Kingston, Jamaica, determined to live out his dreams on his own terms and make it as a music superstar.

After cutting a record deal with a manipulative music mogul, Ivan learns that the game is rigged and becomes increasingly defiant. As his star rises, he finds himself topping the charts and the most-wanted list of criminals.

This unmissable show transports audiences to 1970s Jamaica and asks us the question: "What is the personal cost of fighting against systemic injustice?"

This staging of the seminal film features a sensational soundtrack with brand new songs plus many of Jimmy Cliff's hits including "You Can Get It If You Really Want" and "Many Rivers to Cross".

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
- Supporting the director and stage-management team with scheduling and overseeing rehearsals.
- 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 during the run 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





THE BIG LIFE Photograph by Mark Senior

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

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, as well as leading understudy rehearsals and supporting the understudy/cover process throughout the run.

Contract type: Full time, Freelance, Fixed-Term

Fee: £5,000

Schedule:

Rehearsals from 4 August 2025 (Toynbee Studios)

Fit up w/c 1 September

Technical rehearsals w/c 8 September

Preview performances from 13 September

Technical lock off 19 September

Press Night: 23 September

Close 25 October or 1 November 2025