

# Bush Theatre

PRESS RELEASE: WEDNESDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 2018

## **Madani Younis announces his departure from the Bush Theatre to take on the role of Creative Director of the Southbank Centre**

The Bush Theatre today announces that Madani Younis will step down as Artistic Director and Chief Executive of the Bush Theatre to take on the role of Creative Director of the Southbank Centre in January 2019. Associate Director Omar Elerian will also step down, following his production of *Going Through* in spring 2019.

Madani became Artistic Director of the Bush Theatre in 2012 and has led a significant period of growth enabled by his vision of cultural diversity and the successful redevelopment of the theatre's home.

Madani's tenure has pushed the boundaries of the company's physical space, tripled the audience capacity of the Bush Theatre, and welcomed a greater diversity of both creative talent and audiences than ever before.

He leaves the organisation following a critically acclaimed season that exceeded the theatre's audience and box office records. The season included Monica Dolan's Olivier Award nominated *The B\*east*s; Arinzé Kene's critical and popular hit *Misty*, which will transfer to Trafalgar Studios from September; and the critically acclaimed revival of *Leave Taking*, by Winsome Pinnock.

Madani oversaw a period where the organisation enjoyed international reach. Highlights include: Cush Jumbo's *Josephine and I*, staged by the Public Theater, New York; *The Herd* by Rory Kinnear, which played at Steppenwolf Theatre, Chicago; and Ayad Akhtar's *Disgraced*, which enjoyed a run at the Lyceum Theater, New York. The Bush's 2017 production of *NASSIM* is currently touring internationally.

Last year, Madani was appointed to the Mayor of London's Cultural Leadership Board to advise Sadiq Khan on the issues facing the creative industries and cultural sector and to help craft a bold new culture strategy for London.

In 2016 he led phase two of the company's £4.3m capital redevelopment project – the largest in the organisation's history. The building now comprises a flexible 190-seat theatre, a second performance space, a rehearsal studio, a Café Bar, a newly developed terrace garden and a playtext library.

The expansion of the theatre has enabled an expansion in the Bush's community and talent development work. Ticket prices have also remained accessible thanks to the £10 'Count Me In' ticket scheme and the theatre consistently welcomes 50% of audiences to the venue for the first time.

In Arts Council England's last funding round, it was announced that the Bush Theatre would be one of a handful of London-based organisations to receive an increase in annual funding for 2018-2022 – an endorsement of a vision that spoke boldly about the many communities of contemporary London.

This September Madani will direct his final play for the Bush and its most ambitious show yet – *An Adventure* by Vinay Patel (*True Brits, Murdered By My Father, Doctor Who*).

Madani Younis says: "My time at the Bush Theatre is undoubtedly one of my proudest achievements to date. The Bush invested in a vision that celebrated not just the best of theatre but the best of our country's inherent culture. The result was a more reflective community of artists and a breadth of new audiences that represent the diversity of the city around us. None of what we've achieved would have happened without the deep, thoughtful commitment of so many. I want to thank the board, the staff team, our generous supporters and stakeholders who all invested in that vision and allowed us to create a depth of experience both on and off stage. I'll forever be in their debt. I'm also thrilled to have had the opportunity to have worked with Executive Director Lauren Clancy, someone whose values and vision has shaped and informed the vision of the Bush. In Lauren, we have an exec that will be a significant force in British theatre for another generation."

Lauren Clancy, Executive Director says: "I'm thrilled that Madani has such an exciting next step in his career as Creative Director of the Southbank Centre. He leaves an impressive and inspirational legacy that has shaped the Bush Theatre and those individuals that have been lucky enough to work alongside him. I look forward to building on the Bush's success as we write our next chapter."

Simon Johnson, Chair of the Board says: "I am immeasurably proud of Madani and what the Bush Theatre has achieved under his leadership. Madani built on our longstanding value of promoting the highest quality of new writing to create a bigger vision where the Bush Theatre has become one of the loudest voices nationally in championing diversity and reflecting London today. On behalf of all the trustees, our artists, our community and our audiences I would like to thank Madani and Omar for their passion, drive, creativity and friendship. They leave the Bush Theatre bigger, bolder, operationally and financially sound and firing on all cylinders creatively and socially. We look forward to welcoming their successors to build on that momentum"

Joyce Wilson, London Area Director for Arts Council England, says "Madani has built up a strong reputation for innovation and experimentation at the Bush, and he will be missed. However, his appointment to the role of Creative Director at Southbank is good news, and we have no doubt that he will bring the same energy and vision to his new role."

Recruitment for Madani's successor starts today and for an Associate Director in the new year. For more information on the recruitment process, please visit our [Jobs page](#).

**ENDS**

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Images of Madani Younis and a selection of Bush Theatre productions can be downloaded [here](#).

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