

CHAIR OF TRUSTEES RECRUITMENT PACK 2021

Bush Theatre



BUSH THEATRE: AN INTERNATIONAL NEW-WRITING POWERHOUSE

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Throughout its history the Bush Theatre has always punched above its weight – from its West London home in Shepherd’s Bush, its influence has always reached far beyond its walls.

Our passion for championing the new is driven by our commitment to highlighting and amplifying underrepresented voices within the British Theatre industry.

To achieve this, the Bush has three main objectives:

- **Great Art:** To introduce high quality new writing to the widest possible audience.
- **New Voices:** To revolutionise the artists and artistic leadership of UK theatre, by developing new talent and supporting emerging theatre professionals to better reflect the world we live in.
- **Our Community:** To open our doors to the communities that surround and inspire us, and to create a sustainable cultural landmark in Shepherd’s Bush.

Each year, we achieve this through:

- Producing 10 new plays
- Nurturing and developing 400 artists
- Working with 1,500 people in our local area
- Interacting with 60,000 people overall
- Welcoming an outstanding 50% new audiences
- Leading conversations around diversity and inclusion

OUR HISTORY



The Bush is a world-famous home for new plays and an internationally renowned champion of playwrights. Nearly 50 years ago, it began life above a pub in West London as a ground-breaking new writing theatre, showcasing the bold work of young talent who were to become future stars. Alumni of the theatre include writers such as Stephen Poliakoff, Vinay Patel, Sophie Wu and Arinzé Kene; performers such as Alan Rickman, Adjoa Andoh and Cush Jumbo; and artistic directors including Dominic Dromgoole, Josie Rourke and Madani Younis.

In 2017, we re-opened our renovated theatre following a £4.5m capital campaign. The renovation of the Bush has created a platform to expand our programme of shows, as well as our talent development and community engagement programmes. We now have a combined capacity of 280 seats across two performance spaces – the Holloway Theatre and the intimate Studio. It has also played a vital part in helping us be financially sustainable, allowing us to increase revenue from ticket sales, catering and events as well as fundraising. In 2017, we also became one of just three London arts organisations to receive an increase in our Arts Council England NPO grant.

In March 2019 writer and director Lynette Linton (winner of ‘Best Director’ at the inaugural Black British Theatre Awards for *Sweat*, Donmar Warehouse and Gielgud Theatre) took over the reins as Artistic Director. Lynette’s vision is to build on the Bush’s recent successes to ensure the theatre welcomes new audiences through the doors in record numbers. Under Lynette’s leadership, the Bush will continue championing diversity, giving a voice to those who are otherwise unheard and ensuring that theatres do not remain the domain of a privileged few. Her mission is not simply to focus on artistic excellence but to braid talent development and community work ever closer to the stage, creating resilient communities and a relevant, exciting hub of creativity in Shepherd’s Bush.

RECENT PRODUCTIONS



The Olivier Award-winning *Baby Reindeer*, which featured in Lynette's inaugural season, was the Bush's best ever selling production and secured transfers to both the West End and BAM in New York.



The world premiere of *The High Table*, written by Temi Wilkey, put black, queer love centre stage and won Temi the 2020 Stage Debut Award for Best Writer.



Misty ("the most important cultural experience in British theatre right now" BBC, 2018) written and performed by Arinzé Kene transferred to the West End and secured a transfer to The Shed, New York

TALENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AND COMMUNITY WORK

Our Talent Development Programme has existed since the Bush Theatre's inception and frequently adjusts to meet the changing needs of artists. The programme is well-renowned in the industry for offering real, career-changing opportunities for emerging talent without age limitations or requests for fees.

Our local community, rich in culture, is a microcosm of London today. Our programme of community engagement is inspired and influenced by our surroundings, though we hope that the ideas we test locally can inspire change far beyond Shepherd's Bush.



“I AM COMMITTED TO NARROWING THE GAP BETWEEN OUR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WORK AND ARTISTIC PROGRAMME. WE WILL OFFER CREATIVE AGENCY AND LIFE-ALTERING EXPERIENCES TO PEOPLE LIVING AND WORKING WITHIN OUR BOROUGH.”

—LYNETTE LINTON

Examples of our work:

- Following its summer pilot, this year we launched our first young company. Participants will co-create their own company with Lynette and Associate Director Daniel Bailey.
- The Community Associate Companies programme is our flagship adult-focused community initiative that works to develop long-lasting artistic partnerships with local community groups.
- Emerging Writers' Group supports six emerging writers to develop their craft and learn about the processes of producing theatre.
- Young Writers' Group gives local young people aged 16-18 access to workshops and masterclasses, and arranges for them to be mentored by writers from the EWG.

ORGANISATION AND GOVERNANCE

The Alternative Theatre Company Ltd, trading as Bush Theatre, is a Registered Charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee. There are two subsidiary trading companies, Bush Theatre Trading Limited and Bush Theatre Productions Limited.

The staff team of nearly 60 is jointly led by the Executive Team, comprising the Artistic Director (Lynette Linton) and Executive Director (Lauren Clancy) who report directly to the Board of Trustees. We also have an Associate Director (Daniel Bailey) and a new Head of Development (Ruth Davey) who leads a team of two staff who are responsible for meeting fundraising targets.

The Board is made up of 10 individuals from across the commercial, charity and arts sectors who give their time and expertise voluntarily to help the Bush achieve its aims. Representation is important and our Board is currently 60% female, 36% Black, Asian or ethnically diverse. A list of Trustees and outline biographical details is included at the end of this document.

The Board has ultimate responsibility for the strategic direction, development and governance of the organisation and Trustees offer guidance and expertise to the Executive Team, to whom day to day management of the organisation is delegated.

We hold 4 board meetings a year. Board members may be required to take additional roles as appropriate on sub-committees. The Chair is an ex officio member of the Finance and Audit committee and all Trustees are encouraged to attend each production and to support all development events.

All reasonable expenses of Board members incurred in the course of their duties will be reimbursed on receipt of an evidenced claim and in accordance with The Bush Theatre's expenses policy.

FINANCES

With a turnover of £2m per annum, the Bush's income is largely self-generated. At present, one quarter comes from box office receipts, one quarter Development income, one quarter bars, catering and events hire with the final quarter being our Arts Council England grant. The current ACE grant period runs until 2023.



PANDEMIC – RESPONSE AND IMPACT

Although the Bush was required to close its doors in March – towards the end of a very successful run of *The High Table* by Temi Wilkey (winner of Best Writer, Stage Debut Awards 2020) – and has had to suspend its original schedule of productions, it has responded agilely to the enormous challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic.

During the first lockdown, it produced a series of Monday Monologues which were viewed nearly 30,000 times across Instagram and Twitter. In response to the Black Lives Matter movement, it also produced six short Protest films (“a superb set of dramas” *The Guardian*) which were viewed 130,000 times across our digital channels: an audience three times as big as our annual visitors.

The Bush has continued its talent development work through its existing schemes and has initiated an income generating masterclass scheme by actors and directors associated with the theatre. It has also led, in partnership with other London theatres, a number of masterclasses aimed at furloughed workers across London in all areas of theatre production.

Community work has also continued with all our local groups, either remotely or on site and the bar and public areas of the theatre reopened to our local community in August.

The Bush accessed the government’s Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and 90% of the team were furloughed for three weeks or more. The Bush was also successful in its application to the government’s Culture Recovery Fund, which will reflate our reserves and fund the capitalisation and digital capture costs of one monologue this autumn and four new short commissions to be produced in rep in the spring.

Through sound financial management, the theatre at present is in a relatively positive position. However, the challenge ahead is to ensure financial viability over the coming financial year which will require a significant amount of fundraising activity to leverage philanthropy.



ROLE PROFILE – RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

The Bush is seeking to appoint a chair for an initial 4-year term. The appointment will take place in early 2021 with an appropriate hand-over period with the outgoing Chair, if required. This is a voluntary and unremunerated position.

The Chair will be responsible for ensuring that the Bush is run sustainably and in accordance with its vision and aims. They will provide leadership to the Board ensuring that Trustees are properly engaged with the work of the theatre. They will offer support and challenge to the Executive Team and will work closely with them and the Trustees to prepare our new five year plan, spanning 2022-2027.

The Chair must share a passion for our artistic work and our commitment to being an equal, diverse and inclusive organisation.

In addition, the Chair will be:

- An experienced leader, with strong interpersonal skills, who is able to inspire trust and collaboration across a team of professional staff and volunteers;
- A clear communicator with an open and inclusive style and with experience of chairing meetings efficiently and effectively;
- Expected to have a capacity for fundraising, to be eager to bring new networks to the Bush and be committed to making the Bush a personal philanthropic priority (at whatever level is appropriate to personal circumstance);
- Willing and able to act as an ambassador for the organisation and to represent and promote it with funders and stakeholders at the highest levels;
- Excited about the challenge of balancing financial and non-financial metrics for success, particularly in giving proper consideration to both artistic ambition and long-term fiscal responsibility;
- Committed to maximising the talents of the staff team and supporting them to achieve their goals;
- Able to attend events and performances in the evening as well as be available to speak on the phone during the day, as necessary, on an ad-hoc and regular basis;
- Expected to have knowledge of corporate and charity governance and as its leader will be required to ensure that the Board fulfils its responsibilities for the proper governance of the Bush Theatre in meeting the requirements of the Charities Commission and all statutory reporting;
- Required to ensure that the Board's composition includes the necessary expertise and is sufficiently diverse to act effectively for the organisation.

TIME COMMITMENT

It is suggested that the Chair would ordinarily need to commit to the equivalent of two to three days per month to perform their duties. However the time commitment required in 2021 may be slightly greater – not only at the beginning of the Chair's tenure as they familiarise themselves with the work of the Bush – but in response to the ongoing challenges posed by the pandemic.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply, please send your CV and a brief statement (maximum two A4 sides, or equivalent) describing your suitability for the position to the nomination committee at chair@bushtheatre.co.uk with “Chair of Trustees” in the subject line. Please also send us a completed equal opportunities form, [which you can download from our website](#).

We want you to have the opportunity to really tell us about yourself and explain to us why this opportunity is right for you. All applications will be judged on content, not on format.

We have outlined some options below:

- A written letter or statement
- A Bush application form
- Short video or sound file

All applications should address the following questions and please attach a basic CV:

- Tell us a little about yourself and why this position interests you
- Tell us what experience you have had that means you meet the role profile and include practical examples
- Tell us what you would bring to this role and the Bush
- Tell us about a work of new writing that inspires you

You can upload a video or sound file with your equal opportunities form and CV to us using the [WeTransfer](#) service. When using this service send your file to chair@bushtheatre.co.uk with “Chair of Trustees” in the subject line.

Alternatively you may post your application to:

Nomination Committee
Bush Theatre
7 Uxbridge Road
Shepherd’s Bush
London W12 8LJ

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS 22/03/21
FIRST INTERVIEWS 12/04/21
SECOND INTERVIEWS 19/04/21
IDEAL START DATE SPRING 2021

If you need any of this information in a different format or would like to suggest a different form of application please contact our Theatre Administrator, Jessica Pentney, by phone on **020 8743 3584** or by email: jessicapentney@bushtheatre.co.uk

We actively encourage people with different backgrounds and skills to join us and positively impact our teams and working practice. We are particularly keen to receive applications from people of colour and disabled people. All disabled candidates who meet the minimum criteria will be invited to interview.

Your application and any associated personal information will be stored and processed in accordance with our Data Policy and destroyed after six months. We will keep your equal opportunities form for a period of up to 6 months, after which point the data will be anonymised and aggregated for monitoring purposes. If you are engaged by us, the information you supply will be kept securely and form part of your record with us.



CURRENT BUSH TRUSTEES

Simon Johnson (Chair)

Country Manager, Books UK, Amazon

Mark Dakin

Technical Director, Royal Opera House

Simon Dowson-Collins

General Counsel, HarperCollins UK

Nia Janis

Co-director, Playful Productions

Nike Jonah

Consultant on strategic development projects for the creative and cultural sectors

Lynette Linton

Artistic Director, Bush Theatre

Kathryn Marten

Chief Development Officer, National Theatre

Raj Parkash

Solicitor, Retired

Stephen Pidcock

Solicitor, Clintons

Catherine Score

Solicitor, Retired