

# Young Vic

Press Release – Thursday 4 December 2025

Images available [here](#)

## APPLICATIONS OPEN TODAY FOR THE 2026 JMK AWARD OFFERING THE NEXT GENERATION OF DIRECTORS AN EXCITING OPPORTUNITY TO DIRECT AT THE YOUNG VIC THEATRE

- The 2026 JMK Award, in honour of the late, young director James Menzies-Kitchin, returns to the Young Vic Theatre with early career directors offered the opportunity to direct a full-scale professional play in the Young Vic's Maria Studio in autumn 2026.
- Applications are open now until 10am on 12 January via <https://www.youngvic.org/jmk-award>

The **Young Vic Theatre and JMK Trust** are delighted to announce the return of the prestigious **JMK Award** to the Young Vic, as applications open today. Established in memory of the late, young theatre director **James Menzies-Kitchin**, the **JMK Award** provides a vital platform and outstanding opportunity to champion the next generation of talented directors. The winner of the 2026 Award will direct a full-scale professional production in the Young Vic's Maria Studio next autumn as part of the 2026 Season.

The Award has been pivotal in launching the careers of many young theatre makers with previous winners including: Natalie Abrahams, Roy Alexander-Weise, Tristan Fynn-Aiduenu, Polly Findlay, Adam Karim, Diane Page, Josh Roche, Mark Rosenblatt, Thea Sharrock, Bijan Sheibani and Joe Hill-Gibbons.

**Nadia Fall, Young Vic Artistic Director**, said: *"I am thrilled the JMK Award is returning to the Young Vic in our ongoing commitment to champion incredible directors and be a home for the next generation of artists. I know from personal experience how vital it is for young directors to have the space to practise, experiment and meet their audience; opportunities which are so scarce today. This is a fantastic chance for an outstanding artist who wants to really develop their skills and career as a director. We can't wait to hear from you."*

**Emma Baggott & Derek Bond, Co-Chairs of the JMK Award**, said: *"We are over the moon that the JMK Award is returning to the Young Vic. Both the Young Vic and the JMK Award share many values and it makes complete sense that this collaboration is once again reignited. At a time where the industry needs to be carving out more space for young artists to develop their artistic voice and hone their craft we're delighted to be working closely with the Young Vic to facilitate and nurture the next generation of theatre directors. The JMK Award aims to level the playing field, giving all emerging directors the opportunity to pitch a fully supported professional production at the Young Vic. In a world where lack of opportunity is so palpable for those attempting to make a career as a director we hope that this opportunity offers some positivity. We are so excited to hear from you and to read your applications."*

The JMK Award is open to directors aged 18-35, who have some professional training or experience in the performing arts, but who have not directed more than three professional productions.

Prospective directors must detail their vision for the production they wish to direct at the Young Vic, choosing from one of the following plays: **Attempts on Her Life** by **Martin Crimp**, **Girls** by **Theresa Ikoko**, **The Funeral Director** by **Iman Qureshi**, **Black Men Walking** by **Testament** or **All The Little Lights** by **Jane Upton**.

The winner will be announced in spring 2026 ahead of their production opening in the Young Vic's Maria Studio in October 2026 for a 4-week run.

Applications will close at 10am on Monday 12 January 2026. Full application details and further information is available at <https://www.youngvic.org/jmk-award>.

**-ENDS-**

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**About The JMK Trust**

The JMK Trust was established in 1997 in memory of James Menzies-Kitchin, a young director of exceptional promise. The Trust supports the next generation of theatre directors through its annual JMK Award. Many winners and finalists have gone on to shape British theatre, including Natalie Abrahams, Diane Page, Roy Alexander Weise, Mark Rosenblatt and Bijan Sheibani. The JMK Trust is committed to opening up pathways into directing and providing practical, career-changing opportunities to emerging talent across the UK.

**About the Young Vic Theatre**

Founded in 1970 as a space for world-premiere productions and unexpected takes on classic plays, the Young Vic has been one of London's leading theatres for more than fifty years.

Welcoming 100,000 visitors a year, the Young Vic stands out in the nation's cultural landscape for balancing daring commercial drive and artistic flair with genuine grassroots social impact work within our community. This success is seen most vividly in the audience group for which we are famous; the most diverse, lively and engaged in London. This is the fruit of years of building involvement among local young people. We forge deep connections in our neighbourhood through our Taking Part programme, where we engage with over 15,000 people every year via a wide range of projects, from skills-based workshops to on-stage performances.

We believe great art belongs to everyone. Ticket prices are kept low and 10% of tickets are given free within the local community; enabling a unique, no-risk taste of great theatre for thousands of people.

Our unique, fully-flexible auditoria allows us to present great plays by and with the next generation of theatre artists alongside work by some of the world's great directors, actors and designers. We are proud to be a directors' theatre known for launching careers and a combination of youth and genius which makes us one of the most vibrant theatres in the UK.

Built upon the principles of access, innovation, and community, the Young Vic is deepening its roots nationally and internationally. Recent transfers include *Punch*, *Best of Enemies* and *Oklahoma!* in the West End and *Death of a Salesman* and *The Collaboration* on Broadway.

Some theatres present great plays. Some give young artists opportunities to grow. Some build strong and lasting relationships with their community. The Young Vic does all three.

**Artistic Director:** Nadia Fall

**Executive Director:** Lucy Pattison

[www.youngvic.org](http://www.youngvic.org)

**The Young Vic is grateful to be a beneficiary of public funding from Arts Council England.**

**Thank you to the generosity of our donors, partners, and supporters whose support each year makes our work on stage and in the local community possible.**

**We thank Lambeth Council and Southwark Council for their continued support.**