



Appointment brief
Chair
June 2019

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“Civic responsibility are two words that I embrace. I use them because I have to validate why I am in theatre to myself and because I am always asking questions about who we are speaking to. The big question for me with every piece of art we do here is what is its social relevance?”

- Kwame Kwei-Armah



INTRODUCTION

The Young Vic was established to create a new kind of theatre for a new generation - one that was unconventional, classless, open, democratic and cheap.

The theatre was built on The Cut in 1970 and was intended as a temporary space that would last no more than 5 years. The original building closed in 2004 and in 2006, a redeveloped theatre opened on the same site, designed by Haworth Tompkins and featuring three flexible spaces with capacities of 420 (Main House), 140 (The Maria) and 60 (The Clare). The theatre was named RIBA London Building of the Year. In September 2020 we will celebrate our 50th Anniversary year (to September 2021).

Over the last financial year (2018-19) we welcomed audiences of over 200,000 across 15 productions from our home in Southwark to London's West End, to New York City to Bulawayo in Zimbabwe. We sold 39% of tickets for £20 or under, ran a first preview scheme where all tickets are £5 for each Main House production, and we also distributed 10% of our tickets for free to community members, neighbours and schools – a policy we uphold irrespective of box office demand.

Our programming is varied, socially relevant and formally inventive. We produce new plays; reimagined classics; musicals; adaptations of books; short films; club nights; digital projects; and other game-changing forms of theatre, attracting large audiences from many different backgrounds. Our shows are created by some of the world's greatest theatre makers alongside some of the most adventurous of the younger generation. This fusion makes the Young Vic one of the most exciting theatres in the world and attracts what is acknowledged to be, the youngest and most diverse audience in London.

We also 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 by members of our community.

Our Directors Program, the only national scheme of its kind, has been running for over fifteen years and offers young directors a unique opportunity to develop their craft through skills workshops, peer-led projects, paid assistant directing roles through the Genesis Fellow, the Jerwood Assistant Director Program and the Boris Karloff Trainee Assistant Director Program, as well as access to the Genesis Directors Network where over 1200 directors are registered. Twice a year, the winner of the Genesis Future Directors Award stages a show at the Young Vic with full support from our creative, administrative and production teams, enabling us to support and nurture an emerging director as a part of the Young Vic programme.

For many years, the Young Vic has been synonymous with inclusivity, accessibility and creativity. We catalyse debate and channel our work into the digital world, to reach new audiences and continue conversations outside of our four walls. We foster emerging talent and collaborate with some of the world's finest directors, performers and creatives; creating award-winning productions which engage with the world we live in.





Photo: © Johan Persson

THE ROLE

Context

Having led the Board of the Young Vic for almost 20 years, Patrick McKenna will stand down in October 2019 having made an extraordinary contribution to the theatre and its legacy. He leaves in place an able and committed Board, an excellent and hardworking Executive Team, a good financial position and an exciting period of development ahead, including the celebration of the theatre's 50th Anniversary (September 2020 – September 2021). The Young Vic is therefore now seeking an exceptional candidate to join the Board as its Chair.

The Opportunity

The ideal candidate will subscribe wholeheartedly to the creative and civic mission of the Young Vic, enabling it to be the best it can be, and helping the theatre to achieve its mission to transform the lives of artists, audiences and participants in London and beyond.

The Chair will provide leadership to the Young Vic and to harness and direct the Trustees' efforts in supporting the theatre's wide ranging, artistic and educational activities. The Chair will ensure that the Board fulfils its responsibilities for governance and oversees the process by which assets, finances and property are well managed. The Chair also provides support and guidance to key staff, and directs trustee recruitment, skills mapping, and succession planning. The successful candidate will be able to create the right environment for a high performing, united Board of Trustees capable of making sound yet ambitious decisions.

The current Executive team is made up of Kwame Kwei-Armah (Artistic Director and CEO) and Despina Tsatsas (Executive Director). The Chair is the direct line manager for the Artistic Director and leads the annual appraisal process. There is a Senior Management team who report jointly to Kwame and Despina.

Governance

The Young Vic is both a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee, accountable to statutory and other funders. The Trustees – directors in company law – are also the only members of the Company. The directors are expected to comply with their legal, financial and fiduciary duties under company law and as Trustees must also comply with charity law. Even though many of these duties are delegated to the Executive team, the Board sets the context for delegation and for specific delegated powers, the ultimate joint responsibility for every aspect of the Company's operation lies with the Board of Directors.

Summary Role Description

- To play a key role in the development of the Young Vic's vision for the future, contributing to its strategic leadership, sound management and proactive development;
- To act as a positive and passionate ambassador for the organisation, advocating on its behalf, and representing its creative and civic mission;
- To ensure that the Young Vic's principles of good governance continue to be upheld;
- To fulfil duties in line with the organisation's Memorandum and Articles of Association;
- To safeguard the charitable mission and reputation of the Young Vic, acting in the best interests of the charity at all times;
- To chair Board meetings and the Annual General Meeting;
- To work closely with the Chair of the Executive Committee and the Chair of the Development Board;
- To work constructively with, and offer guidance to, the Executive team, and (as appropriate) with senior management and the wider staff;
- To work collaboratively, respectfully and effectively to unite and lead the Board of Trustees, building trust and holding one another to account;
- To ensure the Young Vic maintains its organisational resilience through the development of robust policies, risk management, charitable accounting practices and internal controls – ensuring these are reviewed in line with all regulatory and legal requirements on a regular basis;
- To proactively assist fundraising efforts to support our annual development target;
- To support the company to broker and manage relationships with key stakeholders;
- To attend the Young Vic regularly for Main House and Studio performances, development events, and/or showcases of our work in the community (Taking Part) or the Director's Program;
- To proactively encourage the theatre's approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and in particular to support the delivery of key governance goals to increase the level of trustee representation by March 2022; and
- To encourage environmentally sustainable practice at all times, in accordance with the Young Vic's environmental policy



PERSON SPECIFICATION

The successful candidate will ideally bring all or the following qualities :

- A passion for theatre and the performing arts and the conviction that the arts have the power to transform lives and communities;
- A strong track record of leadership ;
- An awareness of current regional and national challenges and opportunities in the arts ;
- Experience of working at board level, ideally with prior experience in a chairing capacity whether in the commercial, public or charity sector ;
- Access to capital ;
- Excellent relationship-building and communication skills. Willing and able to take on an important ambassadorial role for the Young Vic and represent the theatre across a wide range of external stakeholders including funders, partners and policy makers ;
- Strong understanding of governance and the role of a non-executive Chair, with a focus on leading and developing the Board ;
- Capacity for strategic thinking to support the ambitions and longer-term development of Young Vic ;
- Management skills ;
- Emotional and strategic intelligence ;
- Well networked and willing to use professional and personal contacts for the benefit of the Young Vic and to advance the organisation externally ;
- Understanding of the financial and political drivers at play in cultural organisations and a knowledge of funding in the UK arts sector ;
- Energy and enthusiasm ; and
- A demonstrable commitment to diversity and inclusivity and a commitment to increasing levels of representation on the Board.



FURTHER INFORMATION

Current Young Vic Trustees

- Chair: Patrick McKenna
- David Fletcher (Chair of the Executive Committee); Nicky Dunn, Glenn Earle, Robert Easton, Sean Egan, Ali Hossaini, Rory Kinnear, Kwame Kwei-Armah, Anna Lane, Fiona Shaw, Rita Skinner, Steve Tompkins, Anna Williams.

Young Vic Development Board (reporting to the Full Board):

- Chair: Rita Skinner
- Beatrice Bondy, Caroline Cormack, Annabel Duncan-Smith, Glenn Earle, Linley George, Sophie Hale, Sholpan McKenna, Will Meldrum, Chris Organ, Barbara Reeves, Mark Selby.





Photo: © Brinkhoff Mogenburg

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

Time commitment: The Trustees meet formally 4 times per year on a weekday evening at the Young Vic, with papers provided a week in advance. The Chair is expected to serve for a minimum of 4 years and may serve up to a maximum of four, four-year terms, subject to approval by the Trustees after the first four-year term.

Compensation: This is a voluntary post; Trustees can claim reasonable expenses as necessary.

HOW TO APPLY

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an agency advisor to the Young Vic on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments, using code **EARKB**.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Tuesday 25th July 2019**.

The Young Vic is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes Chair applications from all sectors of the community, in particular those with backgrounds currently underrepresented in the arts.

Access: We are able to offer support and resources to aid access requirements; please state any access requirements on your application.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please **do not** include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

Young Vic



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