

OV THEATRE MAKERS AT THE OLD VIC



**EVALUATION
2022-2023**

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Noël Coward Foundation

Our renowned Education and Community programme works with people aged 6–100+, offering creative approaches to social mobility, mental health and wellbeing.

Through our programmes, we build community, open up access to the arts and train the emerging theatre professionals of tomorrow. We do this through free theatre tickets to Old Vic productions, bespoke workshops delivered at the theatre, in schools, in the community and online, and through innovative employability and training programmes. All our programmes are offered for free.



THE OLD VIC EDUCATION AT

Now in its third year, OV Theatre Makers is a free, six month training programme for young people aged 18–25 from across the United Kingdom.

Participants meet every two weeks and take part in masterclasses led by leading industry professionals, covering a range of disciplines, such as directing, producing, playwriting, theatre-making and movement. Participants explore contemporary theatre-making practices with a focus on sustainability, and the programme provides participants with a toolkit of skills to allow them to begin developing their own work. The programme culminates with a Scratch Night held in a professional theatre venue, where the OV Theatre Makers can share new work they have created in response to everything they have learnt over the course of the programme.

OV Theatre Makers offers a route into the industry for emerging artists who are interested in creating their own work but have not had formal training and may face barriers accessing the arts.

OV THEATRE MAKERS

THE PROGRAMME



Image: Manuel Harlan

RECRUITMENT AND CRITERIA

Applications for OV Theatre Makers opened in May 2022. Applicants were asked to complete a short application form and submit a two-minute video or audio clip. Applicants were encouraged to be creative with their video or audio submission and were asked to include:

- Why they want to take part in the programme
- What theatre they make or would like to make
- What theatre inspires them

Application information was made available through The Old Vic's website and the project was advertised through the theatre's social media channels. 30% of applicants heard about the programme through an email from The Old Vic or via the theatre's website, 27% heard through one of the theatre's social media channels, 23% heard through word of mouth and 20% heard through another organisation they were already connected to.

In total, we received 131 applications from across the UK. Applicants were assessed on the creativity of their video or audio submission, clarity of ideas and their interest in developing theatre-making skills. In addition, applicants could not have completed an arts degree or be in the process of undertaking one. Priority was given to applicants who demonstrated that they faced barriers to accessing the arts or who would be unable to undertake formal arts training through higher education. Applicants with high levels of experience or access to other opportunities were not considered for the programme.

78 people were shortlisted and asked to attend one of four selection workshops. Three took place in person, with one online to support those who were unable to travel to London. Following the recruitment workshops, 21 participants were chosen based on the following criteria:

- Contribution to creative ideas
- Understanding of programme
- Supportive and generous company member
- Clear and original presentation

DELIVERY

OV Theatre Makers was led by Director and Old Vic Education Associate, Joseph Hancock, and supported by Assistant Director, Jade Franks, an OV Theatre Maker alumni from the 2021/22 programme. The Assistant Director role was a new addition to the programme this year, providing administrative support to the project and an additional facilitator in the room to support the participants. In addition, the project was supported by Old Vic Education Associate, Freyja Winterson, who produced the final scratch event. Different members of the Education & Community team supported throughout.

24 & 25 Sep 2022

- Over the launch weekend, participants got to know one another, shared knowledge about how theatre is made and met The Old Vic's Artistic Director, Matthew Warchus
- On the Saturday evening, participants had the opportunity to watch *Eureka Day* at The Old Vic

Oct—Dec 2022

- In the first half of the programme, participants received seven masterclass workshops covering a range of theatre disciplines from the following guest artists:
 - Practitioner 1: Lyndsey Turner (Director)
 - Practitioner 2: Adrian Gardner (Producing)
 - Practitioner 3: Amelia Jane Hankin (Design)
 - Practitioner 4: Liam Francis (Movement)
 - Practitioner 5: Billy Barett (Theatre Maker)
 - Practitioner 6: Dawn King (Playwright)
 - Practitioner 7: Kat Ellis (Production Manager)
- In addition, participants had the opportunity to observe a tech session for *A Christmas Carol* at The Old Vic and attend the press night for the show

Jan—Feb 2023

- In the second half of the programme, weekend sessions were led by the OV Theatre Makers' Director, Joseph Hancock, and focussed on devising new material and planning for the final scratch performance

24 & 25 Feb 2023

- The final scratch performance was held at Streatham Space Project
- A technical rehearsal was held on Fri 24 Feb and the scratch was held on Sat 25 Feb

17 Apr 2023

- A reunion event was held eight weeks after the programme for participants to reconnect and reflect on the programme



'Please continue OV Theatre Makers! It's a wonderful programme. One strength it has compared to essentially any other theatre programme is that it isn't weighted towards any specific discipline — most other young companies tend to focus on one thing (usually acting), and it makes OVTM really stand out! It's a great scheme and I loved being a part of it'

OV Theatre Maker

SCRATCH NIGHT

In a new addition this year, The Old Vic hired Streatham Space Project to host the OV Theatre Makers final event, titled '*...And Tomorrow*'. The Scratch Night was comprised of 17 new scenes, monologues and short films, all of which were devised, written, directed, filmed and performed by the cohort. Participants were encouraged to try new ways of theatre-making and step outside of their comfort zone.

By hiring a studio theatre, participants were able to experience a professional tech rehearsal, some for the first time, and have access to lighting and sound equipment. As a result, the work produced was elevated to a higher standard and participants were able to build a relationship with another venue through the programme.

A big focus of this year's programme was on sustainable theatre-making. Participants met Production Manager, Kat Ellis, who spoke to them about the Theatre Green Book, a best practice guide for making theatre sustainably. The OV Theatre Makers were encouraged to hire or borrow props and costume and avoid ordering items at the last minute. When items did need to be purchased, participants were asked to consider how they could have a second life beyond the show to reduce wastage.

Alongside the performance, participants created a gallery in the theatre's second studio space. This multimedia exhibition included photography and written exhibits to help audiences get to know the participants and understand their journey in fun and interesting ways.

The Scratch Night was recorded by a professional filmmaker and all participants received a copy of the recording as a record of their work.



Image: Old Vic staff

THEATRE TICKET BURSARY

For the first time in the project's history, each participant was given a £100 ticket bursary to spend on tickets to cultural events. This bursary was offered in addition to free tickets to see three shows at The Old Vic: *Eureka Day*, *A Christmas Carol* and *Sylvia*. The ticket bursary was introduced in acknowledgement of the fact that theatre can be hard to access for people from lower income households and particularly during a cost-of-living crisis.

Participants were encouraged to use the bursary to experience art forms they wouldn't normally engage with to develop their cultural literacy. The Project Director and Assistant Director noticed a dramatic difference in the way participants were able to speak about theatre as the programme progressed as a direct result of the theatre ticket bursary. Some participants drew inspiration from shows they had seen when developing their Scratch Night performances. Through the bursary, participants were able to see the following productions:



Image: Manuel Harari

- *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Phoenix Theatre
- *ALiCE*, Sadlers Wells
- *Baghdaddy*, Royal Court
- *Blackout Songs*, Hampstead Theatre
- *Blues for an Alabama Sky*, National Theatre
- *Cabaret*, West End
- *Carmen*, London Coliseum
- *Charlie Russell Aims to Please*, The Other Palace
- *Daddy Issues*, Seven Dials Playhouse
- *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead*, Barbican
- *Hakawatis*, The Globe
- *Holm*, Jacksons Lane
- *How Not To Drown*, Theatre Royal Stratford East
- *Imaginary Natural Beings*, VAULTS Festival
- *Improv comedy show*, The Comedy Store
- *La Maupin*, Lion and Unicorn
- *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons*, Harold Pinter Theatre
- *Little Scratch*, New Diorama
- *Mother Goose*, Duke of York's Theatre
- *The Mousetrap*, St. Martin's Theatre
- *Not One of Those People*, Royal Court
- *One Woman Show*, Soho Theatre
- *Orlando*, Garrick Theatre
- *Othello*, National Theatre
- *Paradise Now!*, Bush Theatre
- *Perfect Show For Rachel*, Barbican
- *Plato's Symposium*, Bloomsbury Theatre
- *PunchDrunk: The Burnt City*
- *RAH*, Kings Head Theatre
- *Ruination*, Linbury Theatre
- *Sockpuppet*, VAULTS Festival
- *Standing at the Sky's Edge*, National Theatre
- *The Boy with Two Hearts*, National Theatre
- *The Cherry Orchard*, The Yard
- *The Crucible*, National Theatre
- *The Doctor*, Duke of York Theatre
- *The Lehman Trilogy*, Gillian Lynne Theatre
- *The P Word*, Bush Theatre
- *Wicked*, Apollo Victoria Theatre

'I have REALLY learnt the value of surrounding yourself and constantly being exposed to lots of different art forms and mediums'

OV Theatre Maker

ACCESS

Support with travel and accommodation costs was on offer to all participants who required it to ensure that this was not a barrier to participation. Participants also had the option to attend access performances at The Old Vic to ensure the theatre trips were inclusive.

In addition, we provided BSL interpreters for one participant who is Deaf for both the recruitment workshop and across the programme to ensure there were no barriers to them taking part. The recording of the Scratch Night was also captioned to make it fully accessible.

'For me, personally, the high standard of inclusivity and accommodations of my disabilities and needs by everyone involved in the project was so helpful. It enabled me to access a course I would otherwise not have been able to fully participate in. This project has definitely opened doors for me. This project has given me the opportunity to actually achieve something great. I am truly grateful for the flexibility, patience and care that the staff showed throughout the course. I have never had an experience like this before and I am so blown away by this service provided by The Old Vic'

OV Theatre Maker



Image: Old Vic staff

PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

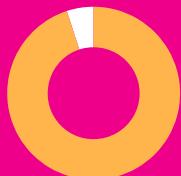
BREAKDOWN



11/20
of participants had never
been to The Old Vic before



20/20
of participants had never
taken part in an Old Vic
Education & Community
project before



19/20
of participants said that
taking part in OV Theatre
Makers had given them the
skills or experiences that
would help them with their
next creative steps

ASSESSING QUALITY OF THE PROGRAMME

- 20/20** strongly agreed or agreed the experience gained was excellent
- 20/20** strongly agreed or agreed the Scratch Night was excellent
- 20/20** strongly agreed or agreed the support from Old Vic staff was excellent
- 20/20** strongly agreed or agreed the Theatre Ticket Bursary was excellent
- 19/20** strongly agreed or agreed communication throughout the project was excellent
- 19/20** strongly agreed or agreed the workshop leaders were excellent at creating a welcoming and inclusive environment
- 19/20** strongly agreed or agreed the workshop leaders were excellent at helping me acquire new theatre-related knowledge and skills
- 19/20** strongly agreed or agreed as a result of this project, they felt more connected to a community
- 19/20** strongly agreed or agreed they feel better connected to networks and know how to access opportunities that can help them pursue a career in the creative and cultural industries
- 18/20** strongly agreed or agreed overall, this project was excellent
- 18/20** strongly agreed or agreed the project's structure and organisation was excellent
- 18/20** strongly agreed or agreed the launch weekend was excellent
- 18/20** strongly agreed or agreed the weekly workshops were excellent

ASSESSING QUALITY OF THE PROGRAMME

- 17/20** strongly agreed or agreed they feel confident about their abilities and skills
- 17/20** strongly agreed or agreed the application process was easy
- 15/20** strongly agreed or agreed during this project they did something they didn't know they were capable of
- 14/20** strongly agreed or agreed the project was tailored to their needs
- 13/20** strongly agreed or agreed as a result of engaging in this project their mental health and well-being has improved

PARTICIPANTS

When asked 'how likely would you be to recommend this programme to a friend' — The average score was

96/100

0 being not likely at all — 100, extremely likely

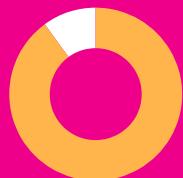
When asked 'to what extent you feel that The Old Vic is an inclusive environment' — The average score was

94/100

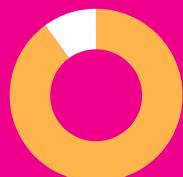
0 being not very inclusive — 100, very inclusive

PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

BREAKDOWN



18/20
of participants said that this project had inspired them to visit more creative and cultural organisations like The Old Vic



18/20
of participants that set personal goals for the project achieved them

BEFORE TAKING PART IN THE PROGRAMME

4/20

strongly agreed or agreed they felt connected to The Old Vic

17/20

strongly agreed or agreed they felt comfortable and welcome at The Old Vic

11/20

strongly agreed or agreed they felt confident working in a theatre environment

16/20

strongly agreed or agreed they were good at making creative contributions

11/20

strongly agreed or agreed they regularly attended the theatre

8/20

strongly agreed or agreed they were good at networking

AFTER TAKING PART IN THE PROGRAMME

19/20

strongly agreed or agreed they felt connected to The Old Vic

19/20

strongly agreed or agreed they felt comfortable and welcome at The Old Vic

18/20

strongly agreed or agreed they felt confident working in a theatre environment

18/20

strongly agreed or agreed they were good at making creative contributions

17/20

strongly agreed or agreed they regularly attended the theatre

12/20

strongly agreed or agreed they were good at networking

*The final survey was completed by 20 out of a possible 21 participants.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

RELIGION AND BELIEF



Christian



Muslim



Non-religious
(Atheist, Humanist etc.)



Another religion not listed



Prefer not to say

Other religions mentioned were:
Agnostic and Spiritual.

*The equal opportunities form
was completed by 14 out of
a possible 21 participants.

DISABILITY

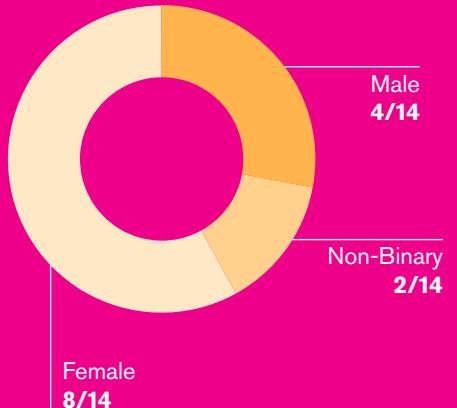


Of those who identified as having a disability:

1/3 Mental Health

2/3 Social or behavioural issues including:
Neuro diverse conditions such as Autism,
Attention Deficit Disorder or Asperger's
Syndrome

GENDER



In addition, 12/14 identify as the
same gender as the assigned at birth.
1/14 identified as Trans.

ETHNICITY

Black or Black British:
African

2/14



Mixed: Other

1/14



Mixed: Middle East
and North African

1/14



White British: British,
English, Welsh, Scottish,
Northern Irish

7/14



White: Other
African

1/14



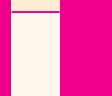
White: Traveller, Roma,
Irish Traveller, Nomadic,
Other Traveller African

1/14



None of the above
backgrounds

1/14



Other terms used were: Afro-Caribbean and White and
Brazilian British and Portuguese.

CARING RESPONSIBILITIES

1/14

13/14

Yes

No

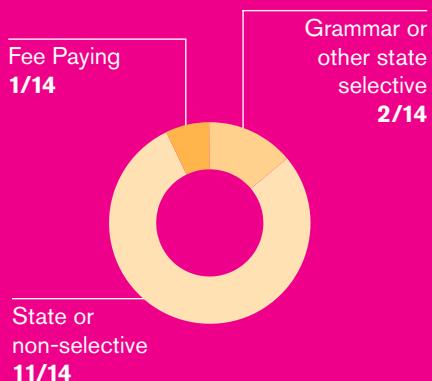
One participant is a secondary carer.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

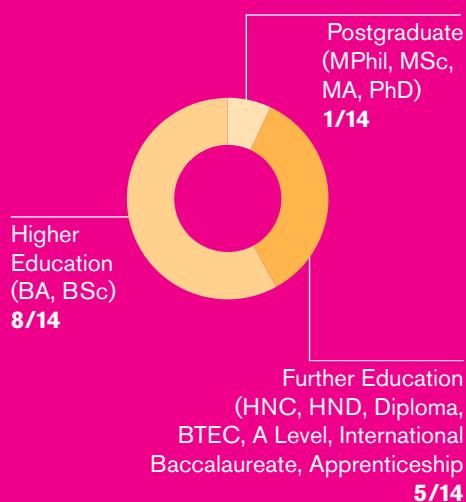
LOCATION

- 1/21 Barnet
- 1/21 Brent
- 1/21 Bristol
- 1/21 Derbyshire
- 1/21 Gravesend
- 1/21 Hackney
- 1/21 Hammersmith and Fulham
- 1/21 Hampshire
- 1/21 Haringey
- 1/21 Lambeth
- 1/21 Lanarkshire
- 1/21 Newham
- 1/21 North Lincolnshire
- 1/21 Oxford
- 2/21 Redbridge
- 1/21 Salford
- 1/21 South Glamorgan
- 1/21 Southwark
- 1/21 Tower Hamlets
- 1/21 Westminster

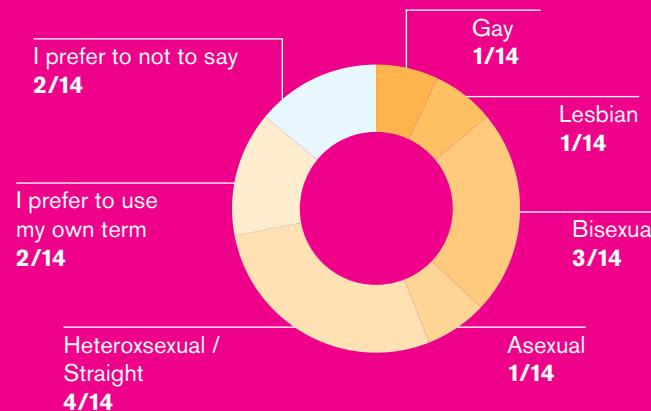
EDUCATION



QUALIFICATIONS



SEXUAL ORIENTATION

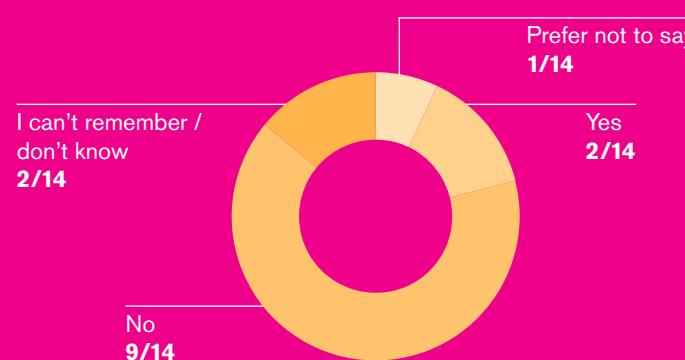


Other terms used were: Sexually Fluid and Queer.

AGE

1/14 13/14
18 19–25

FREE SCHOOL MEALS



TRAINING

Across the OV Theatre Makers programmes, participants build a toolkit of theatre-making techniques to help them in the creation of their own work through industry led masterclasses and by collaborating with each other. 18 out of 20 participants strongly agreed or agreed that the weekly workshops with industry professionals were excellent, and all 20 participants strongly agreed or agreed that the experience gained overall was excellent. Participants noted that OV Theatre Makers is unique in its multi-disciplinary approach to theatre-making, and that they had enjoyed learning about roles they had never previously considered.

All 20 participants strongly agreed or agreed that the Scratch Night was excellent, and some commented that they intended to develop their piece further or collaborate with people they had met as part of the programme.

'I have met likeminded people I will continue to work with and learn from, and I have more confidence in elements of my creation that I didn't before.' OV Theatre Maker

18 out of 20 participants also achieved their own personal goal by the end of the programme. These goals ranged from building confidence, to trying a new discipline for the first time, to creating their own work. Finally, when asked if they would recommend this programme to a friend, on a scale of 0 (not likely at all) —100 (extremely likely), participants gave OV Theatre Makers a net promoter score of 96.

ACCESS TO THE ARTS

OV Theatre Makers increases access to the arts through masterclasses with industry professionals, bespoke support and free tickets via a theatre ticket bursary. At the start of the programme, 11 out of 20 participants said that they regularly attended theatre, which rose to 17 out of 20 by the end of the programme. Participants highlighted the impact the theatre ticket bursary had in allowing them to see work they normally would not be able to access due to the cost of tickets or the limited arts offering in their local area.

In addition, participants developed a strong relationship to The Old Vic. At the start of the programme, only 4 out of 20 participants felt connected to The Old Vic, which rose to 19 out of 20 by the end. When asked to rate The Old Vic as an inclusive environment, on a scale of 0 (not very inclusive) —100 (very inclusive), participants rated the theatre at 94. 18 out of 20 participants also reported that they felt inspired to visit more creative and cultural organisations like The Old Vic after taking part in OV Theatre Makers.

The programme also had an impact on participants' future career choices. As a result of taking part in this programme, 19 out of 20 participants reported that OV Theatre Makers had given them the skills or experiences to help them with their next creative steps. 19 out of 20 participants also reported that they felt better connected to networks and knew how to access opportunities that would support their pursuit of a career in the creative and cultural industries. In addition, 11 out of 20 participants reported feeling confident working in a theatre environment at the start of the programme, rising to 18 out of 20 by the end.

'Thanks so much for the opportunity to participate in this project — it's been inspiring and empowering, and I can't wait to continue my journey in theatre-making' OV Theatre Maker

[OV Theatre Makers] encourages you to try out multiple disciplines, whereas a lot of places encourage a choice of one.'

OV Theatre Maker

'The ticket bursary was a huge draw to the programme with the cost-of-living crisis'

OV Theatre Maker

COMMUNITY

Participants highlighted the importance of being connected to a community of fellow artists and expressed an interest in continuing to collaborate with the people they had met through the programme. 19 out of 20 participants reported they felt more connected to a community as a result of the programme.

This year, for the first time, six past OV Theatre Makers were invited back for a special session where they supported this year's cohort in developing ideas for their Scratch Night. Through meeting past OV Theatre Makers, participants were able to see how they could apply their learning to their careers and that their connection to The Old Vic would continue beyond the end of the programme.

At the end of the project, all participants were invited to join the OV Connect Network, an alumni scheme for people who have taken part in an emerging theatre professionals programme at The Old Vic. Those who sign up receive free or discounted tickets to Old Vic shows, exclusive workshops and networking opportunities.

'The most useful thing for me was definitely the community of it all, being able to effectively join a network of other young creatives all at similar stages in their careers. I'd consider myself a relative outsider to theatre, but now I know a number of people within that world, and it makes theatre feel a lot less daunting. If I ever wanted to collaborate with writers, actors, directors etc, I'd know who to turn to.' OV Theatre Maker

Image: Manuel Harlan



THE FUTURE

AGE RANGE

During the recruitment period, a high number of people aged 26–30 were interested in taking part in the programme. The feedback we received highlighted the lack of training opportunities for those aged 26+ across the theatre industry, and the impact of COVID as a reason that many had aged out of opportunities. Going forward, we would aim to extend the age range of the programme to 18–30 in acknowledgment of the fact that those aged 26–30 still face barriers to accessing the arts.

FREELANCE SKILLS

During the programme, participants took part in a 'How To Be A Freelancer' session designed to answer their questions around how to succeed as a freelance artist. Although this session proved useful, participants reported that they would have liked more time dedicated to this area. Going forward, we would aim to weave this into the programme more fully so that participants have the necessary toolkit and know where to find support as a freelance artist.

'Thanks so much for the opportunity to participate in this project — it's been inspiring and empowering, and I can't wait to continue my journey in theatre-making' OV Theatre Maker



Image: Manue Harian

SCRATCH NIGHT

The addition of the Scratch Night this year was a huge success, with all participants strongly agreeing or agreeing that it was excellent. However, participants fed back that they would have liked to develop content for the scratch earlier in the programme, and would have benefited from a more structured approach to content creation. Participants also highlighted that they would have liked more time to test out ideas.

Going forward, the Scratch Night will be interwoven into the programme from the beginning, giving participants plenty of time to consider how they would like to implement their learning into their final performance. Participants will also be asked to consider how they might utilise each of their masterclass workshops in the scratch performance to ensure they can make the most of their learning.



Image: Old Vic staff

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