

BRIGHTON PEOPLE'S THEATRE

Composer and Lyricist Brief

Composer and Lyricist: The Songbird Cafe

Responsible to: Artistic Director
Works with: Songbird Cafe Creative Team, Songbird Cafe Producer,
BPT Members, Technical staff at Attenborough Centre
for the Creative Arts (Sussex University)

Scope of role:

Working closely with BPT's Artistic Director (AD), the Songbird Cafe Producer and the creative team for The Songbird Cafe (a writer, set & costume designer & choreographer) the Composer is pivotal within the creative team with responsibility for the music and songs in The Songbird Cafe. We are looking for someone to embrace and develop the musical vision and ambition for this production.

The Songbird Cafe is our next full production, commissioned by the Brighton Festival with seed funding for a period of R&D from November 2021 - June 2022. It is a step change for us both in terms of scale and scope and we want to work with a Composer and Lyricist who can enable us to realise this next stage of our artistic journey.

The Songbird Cafe will be a family friendly musical that tours to parks across the city during the Brighton Festival in 2023. Our ambition for the piece is that it goes on to enjoy a tour beyond the city in 2023-24.

The concept has been co-created with our members to get it to the point of securing Arts Council England funding and a Brighton Festival commission. The R&D will see sustained involvement with our members co-creating different strands of the musical:

- working with a writer to co-create the world of the musical, narrative and characters resulting in a complete (60 minute playing time) script
- working with a set and costume designer to co-create ideas for set and costume design, resulting in a fully costed set of plans
- working with a composer and lyricist, resulting in the creation of original songs and some incidental music

- working with a choreographer, resulting in the creation of 1 movement piece

The R&D will take place over 4 weekends at the Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts (ACCA) at Sussex University, where we are an Associate Company. We will have exclusive use of the building for the R&D days and we will involve up to 50 participants in the R&D process.

The purpose of the Composer and Lyricist role is to compose the music and write the lyrics with the writer and the participants. BPT takes a co-creative approach to generating new work, enabling professional artists to collaborate with non-professional artists.

The composer and lyricist will work with a group of up to 12 non-professional singers to co-create original songs and music for the show over the course of the R&D. They will work collaboratively with the other art forms in the development and realisation of ideas for songs and music.

We are looking for a composer and lyricist who is comfortable working across a range of musical styles who has outstanding people skills. Ideally we are looking for someone who has knowledge and experience of writing for musical theatre and working in a co-creative way with non-professional artists.

We place an equal emphasis on the quality of the process for the participants and the quality of the artistic product. The composer will need to be open, flexible and responsive to incorporating ideas from participants and the audience feedback in the realisation of the songs and music, whilst also working to ensure that the music and songs produced are of the highest quality possible, by drawing on their own artistic knowledge and skill.

BPT actively seeks to recruit individuals from less well represented groups in the arts, this includes those from Working Class backgrounds, Global Majority, Deaf & disabled and LGBTQI+ communities.

Payment

This is a freelance contract:

10 days @ £300

- 2 days prep in December - January
- 4 days delivery of R&D workshops 29th January, 27th February, 27th March & 2/3 April in Brighton
- 4 days prep & composing in between workshops January - April

Plus a final fee of £1500 for delivery of developed songs and music after audience feedback from the sharing by the start of May 2022.

Total fee = £4500

There is the potential for this role to be extended if sufficient funds are secured and co-commissioning partners brought on board at the end of the R&D period.

The candidate will need to have their own public liability insurance in place.

Location

The Composer & Lyricist can be based anywhere in the UK, but will need to be in Brighton for the following dates when the R&D is taking place at ACCA at Sussex University: 29th January, 27th February, 27th March & 2/3 April (sharing to invited audience).

KEY OUTPUTS

- To work collaboratively with the AD, creative team, BPT members and Producer within agreed production parameters, contributing to the overall creative vision and ambition for The Songbird Cafe
- To facilitate the co-creative process with a group of up to 12 non-professional singers to generate ideas for songs and music that could form part of the score for The Songbird Cafe
- To arrange one song
- To rehearse one song for the sharing - professional musicians may be brought in if necessary & within budget
- To oversee any recording deemed necessary and/or the live performance of one song for the sharing for feedback from an invited audience
- To actively engage with an invited audience at the sharing of material generated through the R&D process and incorporate ideas and feedback into the final songs and music
- To complete one song and some instrumental music for the sharing plus deliver first drafts of up to 5 other songs or musical ideas that work dramaturgically with the script after the sharing
- To collaborate on writing lyrics for up to 6 songs with the Songbird Cafe writer and through a co-creative process with BPT members

Application Process and Timetable

Job advertised: 13th October 2021

Deadline for applications: 9am 8th November 2021

Interviews: 11th November 2021 (on zoom)

Work commences: ASAP

Work completed: 30th May 2022

To apply please send a copy of your CV with a covering letter of no more than 2 pages of A4 outlining your suitability for this role to: Naomi Alexander, Artistic Director on: naomi@brightonpeoplestheatre.org by 9am on Monday 8th November 2021.

If you have any questions about the role before you apply please email Naomi on the email address above. Please note she is on annual leave the w/c 25th October and will return to work on Monday 1st November.