23 November 2018

Producer

Thank you for your interest in the Octagon Theatre Bolton and the role of Head of Production.

The Octagon is a highly regarded producing theatre with a strong local connection and a national reputation. We produce 8 to 9 productions in year in our main auditorium including classic and new plays, musicals and productions with and for young people. We also make and present work in our studio theatre, outside in our town and communities, and online. The Producer plays a key role in coordinating and supporting our programming and the delivery of our productions.

This is an extraordinary time for the Octagon: we recently began an £11m redevelopment of the theatre that will significantly modernise the building, including the auditorium, backstage areas, and provide new studio and rehearsal facilities.

We recently announced the appointment of Lotte Wakeham as our new Artistic Director. Lotte joins the company in February, and the Producer will work closely with her, the team and myself to plan and deliver her first season, and the first season in the redeveloped theatre. You can read about Lotte’s appointment here: https://octagonbolton.co.uk/news/lotte-wakeham-announced-as-new-artistic-director/

In this pack you will find the job description and person specification, as well as guidance on the process, terms and conditions, and background information. You can also get further information about the Octagon on our website www.octagonbolton.co.uk and a copy of our most recent annual report www.octagonbolton.co.uk/annual-report

I hope that you enjoy finding out more about this opportunity. The closing date for applications is midday on Thursday 13 December. Good luck with your application.

Kind regards,

Roddy Gauld
Chief Executive
Producer
Job Description

Responsible to: Chief Executive and Artistic Director

Purpose of the post

The Producer is accountable for managing the process for conception to realization of our productions, working closely with the Artistic Director (AD) and Chief Executive (CEO).

The Octagon’s programme includes a mix of in-house and co-produced mid-scale drama, musicals and family productions. There will be a period of off-site work before the Octagon building re-opens in early 2020 and there may be future opportunities for off-site or touring productions.

Organisational structure

The role of the Producer is collaborative in nature and will work with all departments and partners to realise the productions, and particularly closely with the Head of Production and Production Administrator.

Main duties and responsibilities

- Work with the AD and CEO to identify producing opportunities and contribute to the development of the artistic programme. This includes:
  - Building relationships with local, national and international partners.
  - Seeking out plays, artists and collaborators, and supporting the development of work from idea to realisation.
  - Awareness and integration of commercial and audience development priorities in programming.

- Develop robust budgets for each production, in collaboration with the AD, Head of Production and Head of Finance; and to manage agreed budgets, and approve relevant expenditure.

- Manage the relationship with co-producing, venue and touring partners including negotiating deals and producing contracts; managing agreed budgets; representing the Octagon at relevant meetings including on behalf of the AD and CEO; scheduling tours and co-productions; and acting as an internal point of information and coordination.

- Manage the appointment and employment of creatives for each production, being accountable for negotiating fees, producing contracts, and coordinating the creative team in support of the show’s director.
• Be accountable for the actor budget for each production, approval of fees and signing of contracts.

• Negotiate, produce and manage agreements for commissions, writers, rights and licenses.

• Collaborate with the Communications Department to plan, integrate and achieve marketing, press and audience development activity.

• Collaborate with the Development Department to ensure that sponsor and funder requirements are met, and contribute to reporting to funders.

• Stay informed of regional, national and international developments in theatre making and share knowledge with colleagues.

• Regularly attend new productions and other relevant events.

• Maintain relationships with regional, national and international companies, artists and collaborators.

• Be an effective representative of the Octagon in all situations, demonstrating the highest level of customer care and promoting the theatre’s work and fundraising.

• Work in the best interests of the Octagon and in accordance with company policies such as equal opportunities, health and safety, safeguarding and IT.

• Participate in work placements, industry workshops and other opportunities to share professional practice with students and participants as part of our creative engagement work.

_The main duties and responsibilities are indicative and not exhaustive. Other duties may be necessary to fulfil the purpose of the post. This job description may be periodically reviewed and revised in consultation with the post-holder._
### Producer Person Specification

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<th>Essential experience</th>
<th>Desirable experience</th>
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| • Previous experience in producing professional theatre.  
• Contracts for theatre productions.  
• Managing budgets.  
• Planning productions for a range of scales and settings.  
• Working with a range of creative individuals.  | • Experience of site specific theatre. |

### Essential skills and abilities

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| • Excellent budget and numeracy skills.  
• Excellent communication skills, both verbal and written.  
• Excellent negotiation skills.  
• Excellent team working and collaboration skills.  
• Strong IT skills, particularly Microsoft Office.  
• Ability to work on own initiative, organise workload, and meet deadlines. |

### Essential knowledge and understanding

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| • A solid knowledge of regional and UK theatre sector.  
• An understanding of producing tours and co-productions.  
• An understanding of audience development.  
• An understanding of theatre programming.  |

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<th>Desirable knowledge and understanding</th>
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<td>• Understanding of funding and fundraising for theatre productions.</td>
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Producer
Summary of terms and Conditions

This is a summary of the terms and conditions.

Salary: Starting salary circa £26k pro-rata, depending on experience.

Pension: The company operates an auto-enrolment pension scheme through NOW:Pensions in line with current government legislation.

Contract: Two years, fixed term.

Hours: 24 hours per week on average (three days). Working hours will involve some flexibility for occasional working at evenings and weekends, and travel away from the Octagon.

Holiday Entitlement: 28 days per annum pro rata (inclusive of Public Holidays), increasing 1 day per year to a maximum of 33 days per annum.

Place of work: Based at the Octagon Theatre in Bolton, but this post will require some regional and national travel.

The Octagon offers a range of other employment benefits including:
- A commitment to flexible working where possible
- Loans for season tickets, bicycles and parking costs
- Complimentary tickets
- Staff café discount
- UK Healthcare cashback scheme dependent upon eligibility

There will be a three month probationary period. Any offer of employment will be subject to the receipt of:
- References that are satisfactory to the Octagon
- Evidence of the right to work in the UK as defined by the Home Office
- A valid DBS check when working with young people
Producer
Application Guidance

Applications should be submitted to recruitment@octagonbolton.co.uk no later than midday on Thursday 13 December. Applications should be made using the application form provided. CVs will not be accepted. We would be grateful if you would also return the Equal Opportunities monitoring form. We cannot accept applications received after the deadline.

If you require the application materials in a different format or have any other access requirements, please contact recruitment@octagonbolton.co.uk.

Interviews are provisionally scheduled to take place on w/c 17 December at the Octagon Theatre Bolton.
The Octagon Story
We are a theatre situated in the heart of Bolton and believe in reaching out to all of the communities that surround us, and we strive to bring wonderful theatrical experiences to the people of Bolton and beyond.

We lovingly bring stories to life on our stages designed to make you laugh, cry and sit on the edge of your seat. Over the course of a year, you might see a comedy or two, a brand-new play, a musical, thought-provoking drama, a historical retelling and more. Off our stages, we help nurture and develop stories of others. Through our work in the communities from our storytelling sessions for under 5s to our drama group for over 50s we believe everyone should have the opportunity to be creative.

At nearly 50 years old we were the first theatre to be built in the North West since World War One. Beginning as the brainchild of a university lecturer and a group of students to build a theatre for the people of Bolton, the Octagon was going to be a little bit different from the usual. With amazing support from the local government, and the people of Bolton who helped raise funds brick by brick, our building was officially opened on 27 November 1967 by HRH Princess Margaret and we opened our doors for the very first time to begin our long journey of telling wonderful stories to the people of Bolton and beyond.

The first story on our stage was Annie and Fanny by Bolton playwright Bill Naughton. A new play written by a local playwright – this was an exciting start to the proud tradition we have held strong for 50 years of supporting new and local writing. New writing has always been an important part of the Octagon story as well as producing plays from some of the greatest playwrights throughout history. The heart of our theatre from the day it was built, right up to the present, is our intimate and flexible Main Auditorium theatre space. It seats between 300 and 390 and unlike most theatres not only does the set change from production to production but the seating alters too and responds to the staging. Usually seen in three main configurations of in the round, end-on and thrust stage every time you come and see a show, you will enjoy a totally different experience.

Throughout the years many changes have happened to the building and the work we do, from the creation of our Studio Theatre in 1987 to the inception of our participation programme which seeks to engage with communities across Bolton. We are continually looking to evolve and develop the work we create and most recently have announced funding for a major capital development of our building, where we will be seeking to not only improve our visitor experience but also the accessibility of our backstage areas and an improved provision for the young people we work with.

We believe in world-class theatre: made in Bolton. Most of our production work is delivered on-site and to facilitate this we have a large workshop where sets are constructed, a small sound engineering studio, a wardrobe department where all costumes are cut, fitted and sewn, and a
prop store where furniture and smaller items are housed. The Octagon’s rehearsal space, The Lab, is where actors work under direction for about four weeks before transferring to our Main Auditorium when the production is ready for its opening performance.

We believe that everyone has a story to tell. Our community, participatory and education work is recognised as a benchmark both regionally and nationally. From a popular Youth Theatre programme to our work with young people with learning disabilities, to groups within our community partner Bolton at Home, we believe everyone has their own story and theatre can be an amazing tool in empowering and building the confidence in people to tell theirs.

**Our vision and values**
Our community will be enriched and inspired by quality, entertaining and thought-provoking theatre productions, and opportunities for people to realise their potential, express themselves and fly.

**Values:**

- **Creativity**
  We are an organisation that creates theatre and inspires others to be creative too.

- **Inclusion**
  We want the entire community to be part of the Octagon and for them to be able to access our work, to feel welcome and safe.

- **Learning**
  We encourage people to grow their abilities and their ideas; and for us to grow and stretch our own too.

- **Quality**
  We seek to ensure that everything we do, especially the work we create and the service we offer, aspires to the highest possible quality.

- **Pride**
  We take pride in our work, our theatre and our town; and we strive to make Bolton proud of us.

**Capital project**
Work is underway on an £11.6m capital project to reimagine the Octagon. The work is being undertaken by Willmott Dixon Construction, on behalf of Bolton Council, who are our landlords. The architects are Feilden Clegg Bradley (for the concept) and JM Architects (for the delivery). We are also working with theatre consultants Charcoal Blue.

On completion, the Octagon will benefit from:

- Improved accessibility for building users front of house and backstage.
- Refurbished public areas with increased toilets and more café/bar covers.
- Improved environmental control and sustainability.
- A modernised main auditorium, with new a seating system and a new scene dock.
- Two new studios: one intended for performances and creative engagement work, and the other for rehearsals and creative engagement work.
- New spaces for learning and events, allowing a mix of creative engagement work, meetings and external hires.
• Fit for purpose office spaces, additional dressing rooms and increased wardrobe and backstage spaces.
• An improved street presence, sitting at the heart of the re-developed town centre.

Construction is due to be completed in early 2020. Until then, the Octagon is operating from several sites across Bolton town centre and producing work in different locations across the town.

**Our programme**
The Octagon produces 8 to 9 main auditorium productions a year: a mix of classic and contemporary plays, new plays, musicals and family work. There is also some scope for small scale producing and touring work in our new studio space. We are fortunate to produce the majority of work in-house, here in Bolton, including rehearsal and an in-house scenery workshop. We also co-produce with other theatres and theatre companies that share our values. Our main auditorium is an exceptional space that is intimate and adaptable.