STAMP DAY 3

**Where We’re At No.3**

Curated by Lucinda McClean Bibby from Clapham Omnibus

Chair: Kaya Stanley-Money, Executive Director at Camden People’s Theatre

Speakers: Jennie McCusker - Head of Talent Development - HOME

Ashleigh Walker - Senior Producer - The Yard

Malakaï Sargeant - Associate Director - Theatre Peckham

Hi everyone, good morning good morning and just give a couple of seconds so that I know you can all hear me. Cool, welcome, welcome to the third day of stamp connect, and you are watching one of our really brilliant programming panels with a really great lineup of venues here today they will introduce themselves in a little bit. But to start off, I will just give you a kind of introduction and a little bit of housekeeping. So welcome to stamp connects for those who are joining for the first time stamp is a network of over 50 organizations who work together to take practical collective action to improve the ways in which artists are supported by organizations and valued in society more widely. Stamp connects online is the biggest event we run every year. It's normally held in person at Shoreditch Town Hall, but for obvious reasons, this is the first time that we are doing it online. So all sessions are captioned by authorized to activate closed captions, you can click on the closed caption bottom which is just on the bottom of your screen, it should be kind of next to reactions at the bottom so please do click that. If you need access to that at all. to then view the closed captions. You can also view a full transcript of the event by clicking on the top left hand corner, and that will open a new window for you. So there will be a kind of q&a portion of the panel today. So please please please have a little think of questions that you would like to ask our brilliant panelists. If you have a question you can either put it in the chat box, and I will send this through to Kyle who's already in chat today, or if you would like to, you can ask the question yourself so just let yourself known to me in the chat, let me know that you've got a question and I will make sure that you get a chance to ask that the video. Great. And if you have kind of any tech trouble at all during the panel, just send me a message and I will try and help you if I can. And, and, last but not least, we are going to be recording the session. So, this will go on the stamp website afterwards, it will just be an audio file, but if anyone has any issues with that, just let me know now. Great. I think that's everything. And I will hand over to Kaia who is our chat today.

18:53

Hi everybody, so great to have you all here. And yeah, basically we're just gonna start off with, by introducing our brilliant panel so we've got Jenny McCusker from home in Manchester and Molokai Sargent from theater Peckham and Ashley Walker from the yard, I think we're all pinned, so you can kind of choose how you viewers in gallery mode or. Yes, so hopefully you can see us all, and we're going to start off by just talking a little bit briefly about what all of our organizations do and how we work with artists, and then, as Cindy said we're going to dedicate most of the session to your questions. That kind of follow on from that. So, there should be plenty of time for. Yeah, for us to have. Yeah, have a wider conversation. So I'll just briefly talk about CBT before handing it over so I'm the Kira, I'm the Executive Director, come to people's theatre and Cameron people's Theatre is a small kind of studio space in Camden, as our name suggests, and we primarily work with early career artists who make a contemporary performance which is a very, very broad field but basically we are excited about everything, weird wonderful, you know, different artists who are challenging form who are mixing form who have, you know, there's no kind of requirement of come, you know, to have had any formal training we're just interested in brilliant stories and nice ideas. We program for festival programming model which means that we have lots of opportunities for artists to contact us about their shows, so our festivals are programmed via an open call, so anyone can apply to that and it's a really great way that we often connect with and meet loads of new artists, you know, multiple times throughout the year which is really brilliant. So for example we have sprint festival which has been running for 22 years now, which is quite astonishing but that's a festival of where we kind of take the most risk, I guess so. risk in terms of content and what the projects about but also where we'll program a lot of artists who've never done a any kind of professional performance before or it's the first time that they're working in that way, you know. So it's, yeah, there's always brilliant, and you can see such a huge range of stuff at Spring Festival is awesome. And so that's one of the examples where we kind of have an open call, and then we have a load of artist development programs as well. Again, all, like, all available through an open call so anyone can apply for them. But these include things like our starting blocks program, which is a 10 week residency for solo artists or artists working in very small companies like Duo's and stuff and they spend 10 weeks with us, and they get spaced throughout that like rehearsal space throughout that time and it's kind of designed to try and make the whole process of making the solo show less isolating, so you know you kind of, you're creating your work, but on a Friday we all come together and talk about where we're at what we're struggling with what's going well and but you know after a couple of weeks, it ends up being its own little company in itself so everyone is like a peer network that everyone's kind of supporting each other and popping into rehearsals and it's yeah, it's really great and some of our most extraordinary shows have come through that process. And so that happens every year. And then we also have like a seed commissioning program which is through an open call. And we recently started from. Since, COVID kind of happened we've managed to keep all of that stuff going either working a little bit online or in person, you know, providing rehearsal space in person when we can safely. And, but one of the things that we did, too, when the crisis first happened was we set up these one to one sessions we called the surgeries already hate that hate that word we need a new name for it. But sessions with brilliant kind of industry professionals who gave up like an hour a week of their time and you could book a half an hour meeting with them just to talk about what you're doing and where you're at and that's been really amazing, and something that we're going to just carry on with forever, which is great, and such a nice way, we managed to bring in people from outside of CBT realm so you know people who work more with new writing, or we had someone who works on like strategy and impact, talking about like evaluation and stuff so it was a really great way of like, actually, going beyond like mine and Brian's skill set, you know that we can offer and have chats with you about stuff but actually being able to draw in loads more expertise for artists to connect with so that's been a really wonderful thing that has kind of come through this horrible time that will will continue forever.

23:55

And the only other thing to mention is our digital work so initially we stayed a bit clear of the digital stuff we kind of waited to see what was happening and had a lot of conversations with artists about how they were feeling about this whole thing and what came from it was that they were all making absolutely brilliant work and wanted a platform to present that work so we created CBT digital very much in response to what a large cohort of artists wanted to do and it's been this lovely kind of organic process of turning into we now have at least one event every two weeks and they've anything from a podcast to a audio walk to a you know a shared reading of a new show, and that's, again, been something that we're now looking at as a lot our longer term, exploring what our longer term strategy for that would be so. Yeah, so that's kind of our main learning. I'm gonna hand over to Jenny if you're happy to have our chat about home.

24:54

Yeah, sorry. Hi I'm Jenny, so I'm head of talent development at Sonic Mattox. So, sort of the joys of zoom or doctors fell off the software is fine. Yeah, so I'm head of talent development at home and home is for those of you who may or may or may not familiar with us we're in Manchester, we're a multi art form Art Center. We have so that means we have two gallery spaces, we have five cinema screens all different sizes, and we have two performance spaces, one sort of studio space which is around 220 capacity and larger main auditorium which has about a 450 capacity. So the brief of my team is very much about supporting artists across those art forms. So we are a team of, well they include myself there's four of us or three producers who specialize in theater, film and digital and visual arts, and within that we offer a whole range of artists development opportunities from sort of one off workshops to residences to commissioning a lots of different levels. We do work with artists across the country, but a lot of the work we do does have a focus on the northwest and supporting artists within the Northwest. We support artists are all different career levels. So, you know that being from working with artists or coming out through our engagement work, and how we can sort of give them their first professional opportunity to then more established artists, you know, working with programming to make sure they're kind of on, you know, presenting work on our stages. We, for the past kind of well for the past year have been spending a lot of time talking to artists, and to see what what what the direction of travel looks like for us moving forward. We couldn't wait again we were very lucky that we were able to continue with a lot of our work we switched a lot of stuff online. A lot of our commissioning opportunities we still continued with those because we're very mindful that we wanted to continue to provide those opportunities. And again, we, we did go into the digital realm, and we had a whole new commissioning strand called homemakers, which we kind of started really early on from April onwards and that's kind of continued and we've done. Oh, I think we must have done about 40 different projects now under that strand which has been really, really exciting because we just wanted to make sure that artists could continue to make work during this time. So, yeah that's kind of a bit of an overview, really, it's probably more useful if you want to ask questions about any specific areas. But yeah, so that's home. Great, thank

27:46

you so much. Malika coming over to you.

27:52

Hello, My name is Malika, I'm Associate Director at Peckham, I joined the backend 11 weeks before we went into the first lockdown, which is a real time that tested my producing and artistic abilities. And what's really interesting about it is that we've been open for a very long time, and 35 years this year, but historically kind of have a track record of being like a glorified youth, which is a really interesting sort of legacy to inherit, and then work your way through that in a pandemic. Um, so it's been a really interesting time to just test loads of new stuff, which is basically what we've been doing in the last year and a half, and the way we work with artists is really kind of bespoke, And as part of that testing thing we tried out quite a lot of different stuff. Last year, so we had a is in residence scheme, where we had three eyes and residents for six months, and we were all based in our corner of London in southeast London, and three black were women, one visual artist one poet, and one actor and playwright, and just because we believe that the sort of long term development and support of an artist is, is what's most beneficial. And I guess I'm coming from the sort of interesting perspective, where I've never really had a job before, and all I did was kind of nice about and make plays and stuff. And, and then kind of being on the flip side, it's like, what would I, or people like myself. One is from a venue, and it's that long term support. It's like nurtured, being that cheered and having sort of safety net to fail, and your failure also being celebrated. And so that's kind of what that is in residence scheme, comprised of each of the artists in residence got a grand and a half to kind of spend, how they wanted. They had a space that they could pick out between the three of them throughout that period of time. I offered that sort of dramaturgy over members of our team supported them with like, how to be a good freelancer and make sure you send your taxes on time, all that kind of stuff. And, and yeah there were three RMDs that took place in that time as well. And what's really great about that is one of the eyes, he was working with. So my kitten is that meow and really loudly in the background. And one of the artists we worked with by Billy Bakula recently won. Not one but got shortlisted for the Women's Prize for playwriting. And among other awards as well, and we're supporting them now, after doing an r&d and a preview and a Young, Gifted and Black season last year, and with their first full length production of a trilogy that they're writing so the second in the trilogy, which is really cool and it's kind of exemplary of the way we want to work with our hosts, come join us on this scheme support support natural money, yes yes Space Jam says you amazing come out the other side preview your show, get some good feedback from it, use that to inform your development process, we'll do the hard work and put in a nice application, boom, is your first show. Yes, I think that's kind of really illustrative of the ways we want to work revised alongside all of the other sort of work that we do so we have a young packing program for 17 to 25, which is all about people who kind of already know is that they want to do but want to explore that a little bit more again in that sort of congregation or collective safe space to fail. So currently we have a cohort of 10 young black producers who were training week by week to do all of the vague producing things that we will do budgeting, scheduling, how do you pitch your show how do you create a tool pack, how do you work with artists that sort of stuff. And the young producers will be producing a showcase of the work of our junior Creative Collective and our young creatives collective, as well as final drafts, which is a digital mentoring project that we started in April last year as a response to the pandemic that we're now running for the third time, because people liked it. So they will got set the same brief, which is like a cute little haiku by a poet, and that will kind of going to be responding to this with the young producers producing that showcase and all of that is embedded within our artistic program, which sits alongside stuff like our Pac and previous Festival, which this year is the first two weeks of August, which is an opportunity, which is kind of like an open call as well as like a selecting artists who've already been working with to present new work, whether that is comedy or cabaret, or theatre or spoken word or whatever, just new writing and performance generally. And then we have our six week Young, Gifted and Black season to the end of September to November. Our Christmas show, between the end of November to the end of December. And then there's like a lovely bit of time to February to April, where we're going to be doing next year. Like her open call for all kinds of themed stuff. So it's really great that we've been able to kind of test and play and experiment. That's kind of the direction you want to keep going. That's enough for now.

33:30

Brilliant. Thanks

33:31

so much. Exciting. Okay, Ashley, over to you. Thanks.

33:38

So I'm Ashley I'm the Senior Producer at the yard. The yard is that in a converted warehouse and how it works. So kind of in funny little post industrial rapidly gentrifying corner of kind of like South hacky but we're actually in Tower Hamlets Bora, right kind of next to the Olympic Park. So we were founded 10 years ago. And we're only meant to be open for like three months and it was kind of pop up space and we managed to stay open since then. Yeah, I think, I think, hopefully carve out a bit of space that feels quite unique. So, we're a theater, we present and make plays and also live art, and also kind of everything in between. So we're really interested in kind of genres and forms that's that slip between a kind of British playwriting tradition and contemporary performance and live art in our bar which is next door to the kind of theater space. We, in normal times, host parties and events. Late into the night, and, and a lot of the events that we host kind of have performance threaded through them so you might come to an event with DJs and dancing, and then there's kind of performance art that's happening across the space. And we're interested in. Yeah, the kind of, I guess the, the relationship between like club based or party based cabaret performance and low bar and how that kind of relates to what we think it is. And we also run two community centers so one in Hackney work, and one in East Village which is just in Stratford and then kind of new Olympic neighborhood, and from there we run a program of theater making for children from four through two young people at 19. And we also host kind of other kinds of arts and non asbestos activities for local residents so like subsidize yoga. There's an after school kind of like arts and crafts club for children as well. And during the pandemic we've also shifted to running a kind of worker bee exchange which is kind of like a food bank, but there's also for local residents to share other kinds of things that they have and things they need. And so, yeah, the we do a lot. Basically we're quite small organization we've grown quite quickly. And I think that one of the consequences of the pandemic was a real moment of pause and reflection, I think has been really useful. So, one of the things we realized is we just did loads, and the venue was always incredibly busy with a show on till 10pm And suddenly shifting around and it's a party and that's kind of like all the way through the year. And I think we realized we wanted to do less and we wanted to do what we do better. So we've gotten this period of reflection and kind of refining what our vision is what work we want to make, we want there to be more of a relationship between the parties that happen in the bar and the work that happens in the theater I'm really interested in exploring what that is. And yeah, we realized that we wanted to support artists better so a big change. I'm really excited about is that our Commission's have grown a lot in the last year, almost kind of doubled. And we're going to be commissioning work that happens in the bar space the first time. So rather than be a kind of venue for hire for some really exciting collectives from across London. We're also going to be commissioning artists and collectives to make stuff in that space, which is really great. And we've also done a massive review, supported by two freelance producers, Laura Sweeney and Ashley Beaumont base sort of helped us review our fees in relation to salaries at the yard, and so we've. As of April. As of today, first of April 2021 of these have increased artists, quite significantly. So that's really exciting. It's preacher, as a producer, I'm excited about about that side of things. And I guess, yeah fits into the theme of us doing a bit less but doing it better. And perhaps, you know, I think something that we've really heard over the last year is that artists, Haven't been supported to do their work and they haven't been able to survive. And so we want to make sure when an artist works with us. The fees we pay them are enough for them to make their best work, and they're also supported by an increased sort of act as a budget, and just kind of have a bit more support from that from the staff team as well. And the last year. Element means for us, and I've launched. I think my internet's bad so I hope. Chi maybe just wave, if you can't hear

38:41

it went out a little bit but you're fine at the moment.

38:45

Okay, great. Um, we've launched, we launched this game called Live lab which was their program Varta development for artists of all kind of practices who want to direct theater and we kind of quite a broad understanding of what that is. So we've got kind of Cabaret artists, we've got, you know performers who want to kind of make that transition to leading a team to create a piece of theater. And so they've been getting some teaching from some really amazing artists and then they'll do an r&d with us. And I think that, you know, we want to bring a scheme like that back next year, because I think it feels really important to have something outside of programming and commissioning which is about giving up the space to develop their practice. Yeah, so in terms of where we're at now, we've done loads of reflection, we've got a new vision, we're gonna work on some new values, we've increased our fees. We want to start doing, we really want to get open and start making it happen. So at the moment, the plan is to be open in the summer. Yeah, as you can imagine running a relatively small venue with a bar that's normally full of people dancing and getting up close and personal sweaty doesn't really work with social distancing so we're kind of reliant on on on that lifting, but we've got I'm really excited about the program for next year, we've got some stuff that we were going to do pre pandemic that we've kind of shifted, but we've also got some new Commission's, and as I say kind of stuff that's going to move between the theater and the bar space. And just like investing in, in that bar space as well as the work that happens in our kind of theater auditorium. So, I hope to be able to welcome back to the art this summer. Oh, sorry. Um, and so let's let's go back to your leg as well.

40:40

Amazing, thank you so much, and just a little reminder if anyone who's not muted could mute themselves that would be amazing, just so we don't interrupt the chat too much just yet. And thank you so much for sharing all of that and I think it's so exciting to hear like so many different approaches, and like moments of how you've been reflecting on stuff before we, I'm going to extend the invitation for everyone. Yeah, anyone who has any questions to start kind of posting them in the chat and you're welcome to direct them at a specific organization. But yeah, also just general questions that we can ask for the whole panel. So, before we move into that. I think it will be really useful for all of you to some of you have alluded to this, but just to give us a bit of an overview on how, if an artist wanted to build a relationship with you, how they might go about that and I know that that's probably different for different schemes that you run or different programs that you run, but I think it would be really Yeah, that would be really great to hear a bit more about So actually I'm going to reverse the root and come and come to you.

41:46

Yeah, so we, our aim is always to say hello, we're going to be kind of launching a new launching 42 for too much for, we're going to introduce a new email address. So no matter what kind of your practices whether you want to form parties or plays or anything in between you can get in touch with us and say hi. And in terms of kind of commissioning and stuff, really we those first emails are at the start of a relationship, and so we'd normally, we normally say hello. Find out more about them, have a chat and kind of take it from there over time. It also though have bits in the air that we do specific open calls. So, I can call for live lab. That's a development program I talked about when we do open calls for another program called Live drafts, which is about testing new ideas on the stage so it's kind of like r&d program. So the kind of few points three or four points during the year will be specifically call out for artists to get in touch with us, and where I guess that process between like saying hello, and work being on the stages is much quicker. But otherwise, yeah we're just really open to saying hi, seeing people's work, and kind of building a relationship over time.

43:08

Great, thank you, Malika,

43:13

yeah quite similar, actually, there's an email address, which is really just programming at fit of beckoned okay at UK. If you've got any kind of ideas or things that you want to present, but you're still not sure whether you're at that stage Yeah, our team is super friendly. And we can just be like, maybe you need some space to develop it and we can offer you like a day or something with. So really, like bespoke, there's no real fixed way of doing stuff, because life and no real fixed way of doing whatever, but there's also like a programming request form if you've got like a whole sort of show that you're ready to just like take on the road or whatever. And, and I can drop a link to that in the chat. And if you've ever wanted to take a show to the Camberwell pecking order, and we'd be more than happy to hear from you.

44:13

Wonderful.

44:14

Thanks and Jenny

44:16

Yeah pretty similar again, we have a program in email that people can get in touch with, and we will always get back to people on that email. We also have we also commit to having to open calls a year for various commissions so there will always be an opportunity that anybody can apply so it doesn't rely on that you kind of know who to, to reach out to or, you know, hopefully we can get new artists, and through those open calls. We also run again I don't realize the word but we do run talent development surgeries where anybody and we've been running them for the past few years and anybody can book online. And that's the way of, if you just want to start a conversation or you want some help with kind of an idea or project or you don't quite know where to pitch things that's a really good starting point so they're available to book on our website, and again because we have that cross art form, that is, you know you can book in within theatre, visual arts, or film and digital as well so we have those opportunities, and then throughout the year we try and like the other said build on conversations by offering it might be some space, it might be some seed funding, we have a kind of an r&d program that runs throughout the year. So we try and kind of look at those opportunities where we can so it's a real mixture of sort of curated and kind of open call.

45:47

Great, thank you. And I'm so in terms of those, would you be happy to put your those email addresses, and the links to any of those things in the chat, I think that would be really, that would be really great. And, and from a CPT point of view, we, you, there's our email addresses are available on the website. We also do like a lot of open calls. And I think, similar to how like what Malikai was saying, you know, once, once we start a relationship with an artist normally that kind of starts from a project like a, you know, an artist has got a project that will end up in sprint, or it'll end up somewhere else and, and if that goes well, the way that we develop the relationship with that artist is totally bespoke to how that piece of work needs to develop or how that artist needs to develop so it might be that you've done one night at Sprint and then you, you want to bring that show back and so we have a conversation about doing a slightly longer run, or it might be that that shows completely done for you and you're talking about the next thing and we you know we support that. So I think there's. Yeah, there's definitely focus on trying to be responsive to because, yeah, everyone works differently everyone develops worked at a different pace, and a different, you know, scale and we try and kind of respond to that as much as possible, and hilariously someone's at my door knocking so I'm going to hand over to Cindy to ask the first question and I'm going to run away for 30 seconds is hilarious, isn't it, and I'll be back. So thanks, Cindy.

47:16

And yeah, so the question came through I know Ashley you responded in the chat but just about whether people are looking to program digital work and online work kind of carrying forward into the rest of the year, and it would be great to kind of open that up to all of you, actually maybe we start with you as it was directed specifically to the yard first.

47:38

Yeah, we, we did an honor Festival last May. Your deadline which is really, really, really great fun included like one on one performance over the phone was stating the Kishi party that happened on Animal Crossing if you can believe it. And yeah, it was great and then I kind of focused we shifted to commissioning and programming for when we

48:06

make life work I think the essence of the, what the artist is best and so yeah, never say never with with digital work I think offices now. Yeah, getting back in the venue, policing seminars and live theater and events, we will be, kind of, we're gonna start like filming and sharing work, more consistently which we haven't ever really done before, which I think is a really good thing that's come out of pandemic like recognizing that there are audiences that just can't get to your venue. But we're not so focused on kind of commissioning only digital work, and I'd say,

48:42

Great, thank you. I'm putting you on Molokai, do you have anything that you want to chat about in terms of your digital program going forward, is there anything that's worth kind of mentioning in terms of how you're yeah if you're seeing that as your longer term strategy or anything.

49:00

Yeah. And so last year we had like quite a bit of success, between the lock downs of our Young, Gifted and Black season where five out of six weeks and stuff that we've programmed, which is a mix between live work and digital work happened, and then the bits that didn't happen became digital. So we're working on a new writing project called Scratch that, which was for two writers one was an actor and one is a Podcast Producer who right in the first place, and received mentorship from two director Java tags, Anthony Simpson pikeys associate at the art, and Emily Abood. And that was great. And then we were meant to have a show and then we didn't so then we sent all the actors, USB microphones and recorded it on Zoom commissioning the sound designer to make it all sound beautiful, and then release them as audio dramas. At the end of last year. And that was a really fun, dynamic way of working. And yeah, that whole experience of having that blended program of some workshops being online and then some panel events being online and then a theater show here, whatever is something that was really quite enjoyable. So, yeah, definitely something we're going to continue to do. We don't really have a budget to commission stuff, everything is kind of on a whim with a wing and a prayer at the moment, but it's definitely part of our ambitions to keep working with that sort of hybrid model.

50:43

Yeah and I think similarly from homes point of view, I mean, as an organization, we've always had quite a digital focus, and so we will definitely continue with a hybrid model moving forward. So our push festival which is a festival of Northwest work which happens on an annual basis. We have digital Commission's as part of that. And that will, again, that will continue. We're also looking at the, like our website, what, what, what our website can do, and looking at because there were, we've quickly found with the projects, the whole makers projects which was our digital Commission's that the website had limitations and there was issues with the work that we wanted to do. So we are looking at a different platform and how we can. Yeah, continue with that work but that can't make it work better. We are really mindful of the fact that, in terms of sort of audiences returning that not everybody is going to be, you know, whenever that date, happens that social distancing is released that, you know, audiences are necessarily going to be coming straight back. So, and also artists similarly there's a lot of artists who are not yet ready to kind of come back and start making work in front of an audience, so we're trying to make sure we continue with opportunities to support those artists and audiences so that kind of having a digital output is a kind of key, a key thing that we'll continue to do that.

52:16

Yeah, we're quite similar at CBT, I mean, with the CBT digital thing is that there's been very much artists led and, you know, put together with artists coming to us with ideas. And back in the summer we launched a new kind of strand of commissioning called outside the box, which was our way of kind of throwing the doors open, say what you know what does live mean it didn't have to be digital, at all, you know, it could be in in person outside like whatever we kind of wanted to just ask the question and to see what came out of that and that's been a really extraordinary process. What's been really interesting is that a lot of the projects that we've created have naturally had quite a strong connection with community, like with our community or have been developed in some way in partnership with our community so we've got. So before projects that came from it was like one series of podcasts, and an audio walk. That is launching in may actually, where it's like a verbatim interview with all of these students who used to go to a school that was demolished in Westminster, and is now like luxury flats and it's an audio walk that you can kind of take yourself around you can also listen to watch a visual version of it. And we had like a r&d That was all about that so kind of environmentally focused like live performance, but developed, you know, in a socially distance way, and then a show that's going to be live streamed at the beginning in mid April, and so it was amazing to see the kind of breadth of work that came from that and I think that's certainly something we want to take forward. And similarly to like Jenny was saying, looking into the autumn and like what's happening we're having a lot of conversations with the artists who we might programming that season about how we felt what that hybrid model is how we respond to any restrictions that might come to, you know, that might happen, and might be reintroduced. But it feels like a really exciting point especially because CPT artists are often artists who do kind of work across lots of different forms and it feels like this has opened up a whole other way of like imagining that space which is really great. Thank you. Okay, I'm going to go to your question to everyone. And so this is from Estefan Vista so has the last year enabled you to reach audiences and artists outside of your usual local area and is this something you think you'll continue, and if so, how I'll come to Molokai first.

54:56

Yeah, it's been a really fascinating one actually, we've all young packing program, we kind of lose that in the pandemic, as one of the first things I wanted to do. When I came into well. And yeah, we discussing that at the moment, because we put out a call out for for projects, final drafts, which is for writers at junior creatives, which is 12 to 16. The young creative 17 to 25, and young producers, also 17 to 25, which sits amongst our resident young company which part time employees to the Kickstarter scheme and rep company of actors as well so that kind of all sits amongst a young packing program that will in dialogue with each other. What we weren't anticipating, is to get 120 applications for those programs, but we also weren't anticipating is because we said that the first bunch of sessions for the foreseeable future would be on Zoom is that we've got applicants, and people on the programs now, who live in Gloucestershire, and Bournemouth and Birmingham, and lots of other places that aren't, which is beautiful and fantastic. The question is how do we get them all to London for their young Peckham showcase on the 21st of May. Hmm, pondering that, But it's really great that we managed to engage people with this call out that we didn't necessarily expect to reach so far, you know, to all places across England. Even the Isle of Wight, which is amazing. But generally speaking, It's been kind of difficult to measure. Because theater packing doesn't really have a history of producing work. So we're not able to see whether the projects that we did, online, and then convert it to digital, had the same sort of effect of it is might be able to measure easier. But we'd like the unpacking of I guess that's the only sort of example I could give that something that we started in the pandemic and then that kind of rippling out it's

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great. It's really interesting, Jenny, have you ever found the same thing.

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And, yeah, we have I think we certainly on sort of our Open Access workshops, you know, whereas before when they would happen in the building would be obviously very local artists who would come to those but yeah we've definitely found that it's been. Yeah, access by people across, across the country. And I think, yeah, you know, that's great. And for us, what because our budgets are limited as well. And what's been great is about the people we've been able to ask to deliver work as well, you know, we've been able to reach out sort of across the country and internationally for people to kind of come and deliver deliver work which we just wouldn't have been able to do in the past so that's been really good in terms of connecting artists. I think because a lot of our open core work and things tends to be geographically focused so we do say, sort of, you know, it's for people who are artists making living and making work in the northwest, we've said we don't, we haven't seen that change because we're quite specific about that. But yeah I think certainly, you know, the, we have broadened the reach of home, and certainly the sort of homemakers Commission's has you know that's been viewed across again internationally across lots of different countries. So again, that's a reach that we never would have had by just the by the work that we've had in the building so yeah I think it will, I think that will continue, I think, you know, like I said we are, we will continue to deliver work online for all sorts of reasons. So yeah, that I think it will continue.

58:56

Okay. Thanks, Ashley, do you have anything that you'd like to add to that. Yeah, I

59:01

think I think sort of Yes or No is the answer I mean I think for our artists development programs, and the digital festival that I talked about. We've definitely reached artists and audiences from around the world actually. And, yeah, the cohort for live lovers from across the UK, but I think one of the things that we've reflected on this year is that we want to kind of renew our commitment to working with artists and reaching audiences from my local area. So actually, I think we want to kind of bed in more in Hackney Wick, and reach more audiences in Hackney and Tower Hamlets in new. So we're doing a really exciting project this autumn which is commissioning a local artists gonna make a show for theater, we're working with a group of local young people to do a kind of really embedded like audience development project for that show, to make sure that it's reaching a local audience. And so yeah, I think, I think we, We are actually kind of want to, I guess, think of like Think global, global context global stories, but but really engaged locally.

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Yeah it's been similar at CPT like our digital work has definitely reached a wider group of people and events like this, like stamp connects which would normally be very limited to people who live in London and can come to shortish Town Hall, it's been really exciting that you know that's suddenly opened out to people across the country you know and there's no limitation on that. Yeah, which is quite interesting and I think it'll be, it'll be interesting to see how that kind of develops with our artists development programs when we return to some in person work and whether we explore, I think we, at the moment we feel we'd be quite open to hybrid models where some people are, you know, in person and some people are working online and it, again it depends on how we can support those artists best, you know for starting blocks for example, one of the things you get from that is 10 weeks of rehearsal space and so if that person isn't able to access that can we support them to work in another way, you know, outside of London and outside of CBT and will they get the same or a similar kind of support from that says, yeah, lots of questions no no answers at the moment but certainly as we return to more in person work I think it's going to be quite an interesting process. And, okay, this is also a question to everyone. And how does the access for disabled artists look like in your venues, from access to venues to financial support for personal access needs for artists do you have yet specific support in put in place. Jenny I'll come to you first on that

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yet so we're a fully accessible building, so across all theater gallery and cinema screens. We offer as part of the program. BSL screen BSL interpretation and captioning across, across the program. We also offer that. Across the top didn't work as well so particularly the any workshops and things we always make sure that we ask. And what we're trying to do is actually have, have the BSN captioning as standard so we don't it's not about artists, you know, feeling that art is asking for it that we have that a standard but it, you know, we always make sure that if we can't offer it standard that we do have, you know that we do. I tell us what you need and we'll and we'll make that happen. We do have a specific access and support budget built into the talent development program. And that's really really broad it can be sort of, yeah, again, to pay for additional any additional support that an artist needs to participate in a project. It can also be broader support as well in terms of caring support or childcare support and things. So we do have that built in, built in, and that's something that we've sort of really ring fenced within the budget as well. So yeah, so that's kind of what we are, we also work with, we have in residents. Danke, which are a disabled artists networking community who worked with us on the world that they, they run, they're an independent company, and they run a lot of different workshops and events and networking for artists within the region but across the country as well. And so we, We worked with dunk, particularly on when we were Umbria because we did reopen and a lot of venues haven't reopened during the pandemic we did reopened. Towards the end of August. So we worked with Dan just to make sure that all the kind of covered security stuff that we're putting in place didn't kind of, you know, That it was still fully accessible and things. So we worked closely with, with that group to make sure that we kind of were thinking about everything. So, hope that helps.

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Thank you, Ashley. Yeah,

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I think this is another change Julian in during the pandemic we've, we've always been at ground level. Accessible venue in that sense, which is particularly notable for the fact we host club nights because actually a lot of clubs, right, down, down, step. So, that's something that's always been exciting. But we are based in a, in a warehouse with kind of, you know like dressing rooms tacked on the end so there's definitely some work to do and kind of, in terms of the venue being accessible for people who have, who use doesn't have necessities. And we are building a building a new venue, which is gonna be open in a few years which will be which is really exciting. But yeah, I think the big change during the pandemic has been, we've got a budget to support artists to make applications to open calls for the first time. And we've also got a kind of access and well being budget for all of our artistic projects, whereas before it was a bit more kind of case by case, now we're kind of really ring fencing budget to support artists with whatever they need to take part in programs or might work with us. So, yeah, there's a really what that budget to grow and there's a lot of work to do there but I'm quite excited that we've started to really. Yeah, make it real, make it possible for people to apply for and be part of opportunities.

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Okay, thanks, Malika,

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yeah. And similarly, is something that we're like in the process of re looking at and applying to funding for specifically just widening access, generally speaking, but in terms of like some of the physical things in the building, there were these awful awful doors that you had to push really hard to get in, which was just awful. And when she got replaced during the pandemics, we now have lovely beautiful slightly electric doors, which means that the rest of the venue is now fully accessible because the doors are the only thing holding us back. Ironically, which is great. We also offer support were for artists on like funding applications as well. With our producing team and myself, and, and then in terms of audiences come into shows if there's like, we have an option when we're booking tickets, if there's any access needs so if you've got chronic pain, then we're not going to see you on, you know, uncomfortable chair throughout an hour and 20 minute performance, That kind of stuff. And as with everything with us, I guess it's quite bespoke so we try and cater to people's need as much as possible for visually impaired people. We have like a yellow strips on the stairs and stuff just helps guide people we have quite a lot of ashes, we also managed to open between August to October, and we've like doubled the amount of ashes on shows which for COVID security reasons, but also in terms of access needs is really quite beneficial, and something that we're going to keep doing. But yeah, there's still quite a bit of work to do for us.

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Thanks, and yeah, CPT, we have been able to nearly complete our capital redevelopment works which are ongoing at the moment so our building is going to be much more accessible. We're also going to have sliding doors which is very exciting. But just in general the space. If you've been to CPT the foyer is very compact and often very busy, and it creates a great atmosphere but that can be very inaccessible to a lot of people. And, yeah, not the best environment so the foyer is going to be far more open and the access to the lift is much easier. So hopefully the whole experience is going to feel more inclusive anyway. We've also been kind of strategizing around how we can present more inclusive, inclusive and accessible performances, and there's a lot of our artists are at very early stages of their development or they'll be doing a work in progress and we've been exploring with a number of different partners like extent who are visually impaired company, how we can start to integrate more inclusivity, inclusive practice into people's work in general. Because, yeah, rather than everyone feeling like they need to have this like huge access budget to be able to make their work inclusive is are there creative ways that we can make our work more inclusive, as well. And we also have dedicated funds to support artists who need any support with application processes we accept applications in all different forms, from video to having a phone conversation. And we can provide support, but actually writing those applications as well. If that's needed. And we've got two more questions that I'm going to jump out so. One is, do you feel there is, there's a leaning towards to prioritizing marginalized groups of people at the moment, and I'm not sure if that's in relation yeah if that's a response to the pandemic or were you going, the, was that a direction you were going in already. Ashley is that something that you've come across.

1:09:34

Now I think it's been part of our reflection this year as well. We have gone on a process of learning about racism at the guard and in our society more generally, and kind of come up with a series of actions we're going to take to be an anti racist venue and one of the, you know, big things is prioritizing work, and commissions to artists who identify as black or brown or from any kind of communities experienced racism, so that's going to be a big focus of the next setting in the next kind of five years which is our vision, and hopefully beyond. If we yeah, in a new venue is really exciting, and, and yeah so the other group that's really quite underrepresented in the yard at the moment in terms of artists is artists that are disabled. So that's the other area of focus for us. Yeah and I think I do see that I you know I hear a lot of that in the sector I think the next few years will be really interesting to see if that really comes through I think that there's been a lot of commitments made in the last 12 months that really need to be

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that we all need to be accountable

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for. And so I'm kind of hopeful that the sector can really step up and start prioritizing the artists that just not seeing, and the communities that are not seen in our theaters enough at the moment.

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Hanks Malika, is there anything you'd like to add.

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Yeah,

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I think, if I can was kind of being doing the work since we opened in 1986. It's always been about prioritizing the underrepresented, the underprivileged and create an equity, that is transparent, throughout our programming. Like when we reopen. We've got an audio drama that takes place on the stage where the touring Theatre Company, which is really cool. We've also got a week long, r&d company based in Bradford exploring how to create a work, a new piece of work for under sevens with autism and their families. We've got a specific Young, Gifted and Black season which is about prioritizing young voices from the black community across the Capitol. And, yeah, the intersections within that so black queer, working class folks like myself, like disabled, black artists who are neurodivergent. Black is who, you know, grew up in a rural countryside spot and then moved to London and realized that never had the black people. And it's always something that we do. It's great that the sector's now like, realize that racism exists. Yeah, great. Let's start to actually do some stuff I'd see I'm curious to see what's coming next and how we can avoid tokenistic gestures in that process.

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Yeah, I totally agree Jenny is there anything you want to add. Yeah,

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just something I'm mindful of the time there. Yeah, I think, again, yeah we want it to look, I think what we spent the last year focusing on is how we can support artists to access our work so I think Sabo could send we really want to encourage you know artists for diverse artists from from everywhere to apply, but we looked at kind of the way we were doing things have gone well that's not really, that's not really going to help so we said, just really quickly, we introduced a change to our commissioning process. So we introduced a two step process for those conditions a first step which is a very quick expression of interest, and then we introduced a second step which was about supporting the shortlisted artists to make a fuller application. So, the, there was the artists selected will get a bursary support is only a 50 pounds but just to help them write that application so a bit of money towards that because we know there's a huge amount of unpaid labor that goes into all of these commissions and we want to look to redress that so for any open call there will always be that bursary support for those artists who get through to that second stage. We also built in that they each would have a producer surgery support so for an hour with the producer to support that writing of that application. So again it takes away that that you know that you're just really as an artist, you're really good at writing application forms because that's not what we're interested in. And then we also looked at how we commit to detailed feedback at that point as well so we can kind of make sure that we're, you know we are giving that support as well so that will be that's kind of that process will be across the other thing that we wanted to do was to not always have the decision making sitting with the venue. So we now are embedding artists in all of our decision making. So we work with an artist panel, which is freelance artists who appeared to shortlist with us, and the shortlist in process is very much led by those artists, so we're bringing in different views and it tried to take away that kind of feeling that venues make that decision. So again, that's something that you'll see as a feature of all of our open calls that we work with, and that came out of our conversations with the freelance Task Force, we had a representative on freelance Task Force, and we work very closely, but how do we encourage a wide range of artists to access our work so that's kind of how we've responded to sort of what we, yeah, how we were working.

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Great, thank you. And, and there's a final question I might actually have to come over to the person who asked it which I think is bad, but just the question is about what support can your organization's offer to freelance non artists, arts workers so participation, producers, Ben, if you're there still do you want to just expand on that a little bit and, yeah, then clarify what yeah what do you mean by that.

1:15:40

Oh, hi everyone. I think, yeah, it's just coming from the lens of being a kind of indie producer around some like socially engaged work. I think sometimes in the conversation when we think about supporting the creative sector that sort of like non artists art workers aren't always in the conversation. They're obviously like very entitled to that kind of arts world. So just think about that what support my bed to be in place, or is planned with the organization's just support, kind of, you know, like producers technicians, people that aren't sort of like artists for our artwork.

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Great, thank you. And, well, I guess, from a CPT point of view. A lot of our practitioners that we work with, it's bet like especially from a community point of view, I think we support in exactly the same way as we would any artists in our program. And so they, we would accept you know Applications from any background to put a project together for, you know, one of our schemes and I think we'd be really interested in hearing from them. I think one of the big things that we do is supporting things like stamp and like this. So, TPT chairs the stamp network and we run events throughout the year that are focused on all sorts of different specialisms from writing contracts to like budgeting and finance and they're you know, so there's opportunities for us to connect with lots of different people from all sorts Yeah, all sorts of different specialists in that way. And so, yeah, I think, I think it's been particularly hard for certainly our technical team, I think it's been a really really difficult year, and we've had very little capacity to work there's been, yeah, we know there's been so social support for freelancers of all over all backgrounds but I think from our like our technicians point of view, some of them have been absolutely amazing and like turn their work into, you know started learning everything digital and being able to livestream, but I know that for, in terms of how we're supporting our technicians going forward our biggest thing is to get our building open. And I think that that as much as there's a kind of mix between wanting to provide as much certainty as possible for artists and everyone, you know, putting work back on the stage, but we're so aware that if we waited for certainty, there's a whole group of people who would not be working again and would not be back in our building so we've had to try and find that balance between taking a risk. When of opening, you know with social distancing in place and finding a way of making that working for everybody because otherwise we can't just, You know, stay closed in and wait for that moment where it's all sorted. So that's kind of how we've approached it I'm aware that we've run over so I don't know if any of the other speakers want to have anything to add to that briefly.

1:18:50

Oh, yeah, jumping quickly Hi Ben Good to see ya. Yeah, quickly. We recognize that there's not a lot of sort of entry level stuff, particularly for marginalized producers technicians, etc. So, we just have done a huge sort of job situation, recruitment process that's the one where we've had 10 different roles available for five fit and make roles and then all the sort of behind the scenes stuff so development officer, creative learning assistant. Assistant Producer Operations Assistant is someone in the technical team. And then we also got funding from Jeff patchy to someone who is from Black Hole global majority background to shadow our technical team for you with a full time paid internship, which is great at London living wage, and then aside from that, we have a budget to kind of produce a series of workshops, once our venue is reopened to just bring people together as part of our sort of love local series of stuff, and that will also include like an artist producer date night, which will be like a sort of sober party gathering situation in software space, where it's just like an opportunity for lots of artists to meet their producers, ahead of AIPAC and previous festivals, so some of our participating artists might meet their producers might come along to see their show and hopefully there's some sort of lovely collaborations that happen out there. And so keep your eyes and ears to the ground for that. But that's kind of the starting point for where we want to go in terms of supporting non artists artists. Great,

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thank you. I'm going to bring this to a close now and just to say thank you to all of our speakers and thank you to Cindy for coordinating this whole conversation, and it's been really great and lovely to see you all here I hope it's been useful and interesting, you've got the email addresses in the chat, I'd recommend you copy them now if you haven't done already, because the chat will disappear as soon as we close the Zoom link. And, but just a reminder that the transcript will be available on the stamp connects where on the stamp website in the next couple of weeks, I imagine, along with the audio recording of this so you'll be able to refer back, and thanks for your brilliant questions it's been just lovely to have this chat. So, really appreciate it and have a lovely afternoon for all of you who are going on to other stamp things enjoy, I might see you in those sessions later on. And, yeah. Speak to you soon. Thanks so much. Thanks, Ashley for jumping in there with your little note. All right. Take

1:21:40

care everybody,

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bye bye.