

Come and join The Stables team!



Creative Producer
IF: Milton Keynes
International Festival
Job Pack

Overview of the Role

The Stables is looking for an experienced Creative Producer to work across the development and delivery of a range of projects, including IF: Milton Keynes International Festival and associated signature events.

The right candidate will have an appetite and aptitude for making the impossible possible. You will need to be able to articulate project ideas to a wide range of stakeholders, bringing cross-discipline teams together to develop new commissions and engage diverse communities.

Your experience will demonstrate ambition realised, detail delivered and life-long memories created.

You will be excited to work on a range of projects - from live to digital and from sonic art to large-scale outdoor spectacles - engaging with nationally and internationally acclaimed artists, locally based practitioners, and companies and communities in Milton Keynes.

A freelance contract will be offered to incorporate the 2023 edition of IF: Milton Keynes International Festival including the wrap up and evaluation / feedback to stakeholders in the Autumn of 2023. The initial term may be extended by mutual agreement. The fee offered will be circa £40k, dependent on experience and availability.

The role requires a flexible approach with some periods requiring greater commitment to ensure the success of projects and delivery. A blend of home office and on-site working is required with a particular requirement to engage in person with stakeholders and communities in Milton Keynes. It is particularly important that the Creative Producer is onsite for the set up and delivery of the Festival in July 2023.

Background:

The Stables

Based in the village of Wavendon, Milton Keynes, The Stables is a registered charity and venue with a vision to engage the widest range of people with music in all its diversity, typically presenting around 400 events, and 200 learning and participation events annually.

The concert programme features all musical genres and has included Glyndebourne Touring Opera, Sheku Kanneh-Mason, Dame Evelyn Glennie, Emma Johnson, and Nicola Benedetti, in addition to Jamie Cullum, Toumani Diabate, Gregory Porter, Amy Winehouse, The Shires, KT Tunstall, Karine Polwart, Seth Lakeman, The Zombies, Eliza Carthy and Joan Armatrading.

The Stables mission is to enrich people's lives with opportunities to access, participate in, create, and experience live music and the arts in general.

The Learning & Participation programme includes work with schools, families and local community groups.

The Stables has now become synonymous with producing large-scale outdoor events, special projects and IF: Milton Keynes International Festival which it founded in 2010.

The Stables is a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) of Arts Council England

<https://stables.org/>



Background:

IF: Milton Keynes International Festival

In 2010, The Stables founded IF: Milton Keynes International Festival in response to Arts Council England's ambition to stimulate the level of investment in the arts in Milton Keynes - one of Europe's fastest growing places. The funding acted as a catalyst to draw in a range of other public and private sector partners and enabled delivery of a multi-site, mixed art form festival of 10 amazing days with an audience reach in excess of 90,000.

"It's summer, and you're hungry for side-splitting comedy, provocative exhibitions, stonking bands, zany street theatre, acrobats, fireworks and all sorts of unpredictable happenings popping up in unexpected places. What other metropolis in Britain could give you such a feat of cutting-edge culture? No, not Edinburgh. These days that's about as unpredictable as a Tupperware party. I'm talking about Milton Keynes..." Richard Morrison, The Times 2010

Since then, the Festival has grown into one of the UK's landmark cultural events and in 2017 it was awarded the accolade of one of Europe's 'most remarkable festivals' by the European Festivals Association. The Festival was assessed and scored by 95 experts prior to going before the International Jury who awarded the prestigious EFFE label and said: *"The Festival has grown its artistic programme to embrace its local infrastructure, landscape and communities to extend its ambition and relevance to international issues and embrace innovative artistic engagement."*

Having had to cancel the 2020 Festival due to Covid-19, the Festival was reshaped and bounced back with 21 amazing days in July 2021, providing visitors and residents more time and space to enjoy the Festival with social distancing measures still in place for most events.

Each Festival is different, responding to the opportunities and challenges we face.

The more typical 10-day Festival last staged in 2018 delivered 266 performance / exhibition days 60% of which were free to attend with 60,000 free attendances. Events and installations took place over 6 different locations with 4 UK premieres presented. 357 professional artists and 500 community participants were involved and 160 volunteers supported the event. 14,000 tickets were sold for the Spiegel tent and for special events and site-specific installations.

Previous editions of the Festival have included work by La Machine, Architects of Air, Akadami, Graeae, La Compagnie Carabosse, Lone Twin, Phare Ponleu Selpak, Wired Aerial Theatre, Au Cul du Loup, Enfila't, Guixot de 8, Deabru Beltzak, Rosemary Lee, Casus, Ilotopie, Kaffe Matthews, Ray Lee, Lucie Lom, Gijs van Bon, Jackie Kay, Miguel Chevalier, Rimini Protokoll, Gravity & Other Myths, Richard DeDomenici, Station House Opera, Compagnie Artonik, Mimbres, Toc de Fusta, Acrojou, Companyia Vavel Circus, Sur Measure, No Fit State Circus & Motionhouse, Group Acrobatique de Tanger, Tombs Creatius, Dries Verhoeven, Schweigman & with Slagwerk Den Haag, Back to Back Theatre, Teatro Container, Luke Jerram, Kinetika, Yara + Davina, Marco Barotti, and Anna Berry.

"For The Birds was one of the most unique and amazing experiences I have ever had. The choice of location was absolutely perfect too. I will not forget that experience." Audience Feedback on For The Birds created by Mark Anderson, Jony Easterby, Kathy Hinde, Ulf Pederson and Pippa Taylor in Linford Manor Park 2018

"The juxtaposition of the moon with such fine trees at the transept crossing was extraordinary. On a warm evening it was all enhanced by the pervasive and gorgeous aroma of the Lime trees in flower throughout the Cathedral, perhaps with the underlying scent of some conifers." Audience Feedback from Museum of The Moon by Luke Jerram installed in the Tree Cathedral 2021.

"To get the Festival to happen at all this year must have required real leadership and the actual pieces themselves are so relevant to everyone now." Stakeholder Feedback 2021

<https://ifmiltonkeynes.org/>

Artistic Direction

The Stables is an organisation that enriches people's lives with opportunities to access, participate, create, and experience live music and the arts. Complementing the year-round venue programme, the biennial International Festival enables us to

- Engage people with music and sound in surprising ways through an international programme of mixed art forms including - but not limited to - physical theatre, dance, contemporary circus, performance art, installations, sound trails concerts and family friendly events.

Key components of the Festival's success have been:

- International and nationally acclaimed companies / artists working in unexpected places and spaces including retail environments, boulevards, parks, lakes, woodlands, disused supermarkets, car parks etc.
- Spectacular opening and closing events
- New and site-specific / responsive commissions
- Free / low-cost outdoor performances
- A Festival Central hub featuring a Spiegeltent, Acoustic Stage, food and drink, installations and family-friendly events
- Digital commissions, projects and broadcasts
- Artistic explorations of local, national and international discourse - eg. climate change, Brexit, homelessness, community cohesion, access and inclusion.

The programme draws inspiration from the unique architectural landscape of Milton Keynes and its reputation for innovation, developing work in temporary spaces or unusual locations. The focus is on engaging people with outstanding and unforgettable experiences working with some of the finest producers, artists and companies in the UK and internationally.

We encourage and embrace collaboration with other arts organisations where objectives are shared and the Festival provides a stimulus in which a Fringe can flourish. We also strive to engage, develop and support local artists through mentoring and commissions.

Previous Festival commissions include:

[Asleep At The Wheel](#), created by Janek Schaeffer, installed in a disused supermarket (2010)

[The Harbour of Songs](#), a CD in response to The Boat Project, various artists produced by Adrian McNally (2012)

[Under The Vaulted Sky](#), created by Rosemary Lee for the Tree Cathedral (2014)

[Magic Carpet](#) by Miguel Chevalier with sonic spheres from Ray Lee, interactive installation in Middleton Hall, centre:mk (2016)

[Breathing Room](#) by Anna Berry installed in Queens Court, centre:mk (2021)

[The Paradis Files](#) - a new groundbreaking chamber opera by Errollyn Wallen, directed by Jenny Sealey with Andrea Brown conductor. The Graeae production premieres and tours Spring (2022)

About Milton Keynes

In 1967 Milton Keynes was born, a designated New Town for a population of 250,000 people. It's unique grid road system and modernist buildings are now hailed as visionary urban design and architecture. Encompassing historic market towns with a history of human settlement from 2000 BC it is much loved by residents, but frequently misunderstood by those who have never visited. With 6,000 acres of green spaces, lakes and over 20 million trees you are never more than a few minutes away from its stunning parks, canals and woodland walks. It has a network of over 200 miles of redway cycle and walking paths now shared with the groundbreaking fleet of Starship delivery robots that become iconic symbols of the innovation that drives a successful business community with over 14,000 businesses thriving at the heart of the Oxford to Cambridge arc and accessible to central London in just 32 minutes by rail. It is home to national and internationally significant businesses and organisations including The Open University, Red Bull Racing, Nifty1ft, Bletchley Park. 2022/23 marks the 250th anniversary of the hymn Amazing Grace being composed in the village of Olney by the Rev John Newton. 46% of the population is under 35 and the proportion of black, Asian and minority ethnic school population has grown from 31% in 2010 to 46% in 2020. It all adds up to a vibrant, diverse and exciting place for artists to explore with the commissioning and presentation opportunities that the Festival offers.

Audience Development and Engagement

We aim to be culturally aware to reflect a diverse population, with a programme that reflects a wide range of interests to reach and engage as broad a range of the city's residents as possible, whilst pulling in new visitors to the city.

To this end, ticket prices are set to reflect our ambition for reach and engagement with a significant free / low-cost strand of work balancing the requirement to generate earned income from ticket sales, sponsorships and trading activity.

'Signature' Events outside the biennial Festival

To assist with profile raising, audience development and sustainability we look for opportunities to present Festival 'Signature' Events, particularly in non-Festival years. These have now become a significant part of our Project Portfolio and include commissions to develop, produce and present:

- The cultural programme for the Rugby World Cup in Milton Keynes - Clash of Drums (2015)
 - The 50th birthday celebrations for Milton Keynes - Feast of Fire (2017)
 - The City Status Bid and Platinum Jubilee Pageant engagement programme for Milton Keynes - Celebrate Milton Keynes (2022)
-

Governance and Management

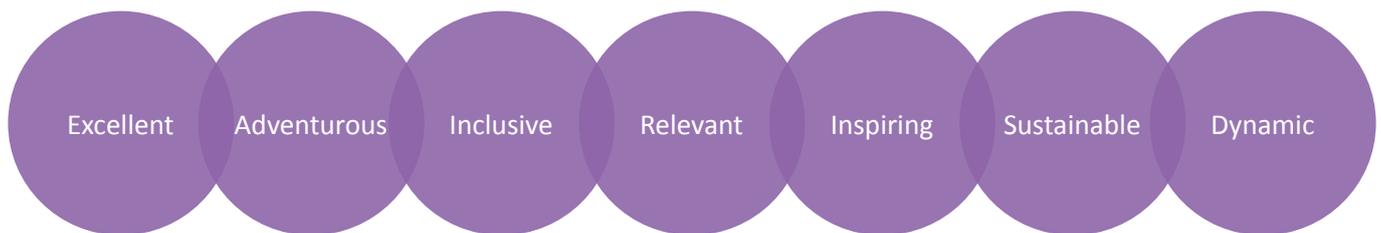
The Stables Theatre is a registered charity and has overarching responsibility for the delivery of projects including IF: Milton Keynes International Festival. It draws upon the expertise of a Festival Advisory Board and ad hoc project groups from time to time.

The Creative Producer reports to the Festival Director (Chief Executive & Artistic Director of The Stables).

Their role requires the post-holder to invest time in maintaining and developing relationships across the city with organisations and individuals in the arts, voluntary, business and political environments. This helps to ensure that The Stables projects including the Festival remains at the forefront of emerging plans and developments across Milton Keynes as well as helping to identify and support emerging artists and organisations.

Organisational Values

Underpinning all our activities we strive to be:



BRIEF: CREATIVE PRODUCER

The Creative Producer will report to the Festival Director (Chief Executive & Artistic Director of The Stables) working closely with The Stables' Head of Programming & Producing, liaising with The Head of Learning & Participation and other project team members as required.

The post-holder will inspire artists to work with us, support and develop emerging artists and engage key partners in the community to support our work.

They will enable, facilitate and resolve logistical issues as they arise, working alongside and offering guidance to the wider team.

Previous experience of producing including work with national and internationally recognised artists and companies - particularly in outdoor contexts / temporary spaces - is important as is a willingness to work closely with The Stables creative and operational teams.

Principal Responsibilities:

Please note that this list is designed to give you an overall view of the role and is not a definitive list of tasks

Programme Development and Delivery

- Liaising with The Stables creative and engagement teams and other key partner organisations to help research, shape and develop Festival projects and 'Signature events' in response to our vision and commissioning briefs
- Being directly involved in project-shaping discussions, commissioning, nurturing creative relationships and programme decision making
- Researching and assessing potential venues and locations for events, negotiating with the land / premises owners
- Liaising with the Festival and artists' production and safety teams to ensure that projects can be delivered safely and within budget
- Assisting in recruitment of key staff and freelance roles for the delivery of the Festival and other projects

Fundraising and Budgets

- Working on the feasibility of projects and programmes, developing budgets, liaising with artists and other delivery partners to ensure that projects are properly resourced
- Identifying additional funding and investment opportunities and working with the executive team to secure additional resources for projects
- Managing complex budgets using The Stables budget systems, liaising closely throughout with the Finance Director

Communication

- Providing regular briefings to the Festival Director, The Stables Theatre Board, Festival Advisory Board and other working groups and project teams, attending meetings as required
- Acting as an advocate for The Stables, the Festival and other projects locally, regionally, nationally and internationally
- Working with The Stables marketing / ticketing teams to ensure accurate and timely information about the programme and events.

Management and Administration

- Leading on and producing a number of specific projects of scale
- Liaising with the project teams to ensure information is up-to-date and communicated in accordance with agreed systems
- Maintaining an overview of project delivery, working within and managing aspects of the budget including the negotiation of fees and other contractual matters as required
- Approving and issuing contracts
- Supporting and managing creative practitioners and producers working on key projects
- Assisting with evaluation and post-production management
- Adhering to relevant policies and values of the organisation, including health and safety, child protection, environmental sustainability, equality, diversity and inclusion
- Support in the recruitment, and line management of festival staff

Other

- Undertaking any other duties that are commensurate with the responsibilities of this post



Required Skills and Experience

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Work Related Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven experience of successful, complex artistic project development / planning, commissioning and producing within a festival context that spans across a range of art forms and diverse cultures with significant national / international profile • Experience of negotiating artists' contracts and visa requirements • Commercial awareness, strong negotiation and producing skills across genres and differing scales of work • Proven ability to work with a diverse range of stakeholders • Excellent communication and negotiation skills – written, verbal and interpersonal • Excellent interpersonal skills, with a proven ability to quickly build and maintain relationships with colleagues and nurture relationships with collaborators • A good understanding of, and empathy with, diverse audiences and an ability to identify appropriate artistic work to engage them • Proven complex budget management skills, and a track record of working within tight financial and organisational frameworks • Proven ability to raise funds and develop partnerships to support large-scale project delivery • Proven interest in, attendance at and experience of a range of music, arts and festival events nationally and internationally • A good knowledge of, and interest in, a wide variety of contemporary professional arts including theatre, dance, circus, outdoor arts, visual arts, music, film, digital and interdisciplinary arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working with / managing budgets in excess of £250k
Personal Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confident, outgoing and enthusiastic personality with an extensive network of professional and personal contacts • Good managerial skills, including line management of staff • Creative thinker with an ability to turn ideas into action • Ability to problem solve quickly and independently • Good time management skills, and an ability to prioritise and work to deadlines • Commitment to innovation, excellence and diversity • Ability to work on own initiative as well as part of an extended team • A project manager with an ability to deliver on the ground 	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good personal presentation • Prepared to take a hands-on approach • A flexible, proactive and positive approach to work with an ability to work early mornings, late evenings and weekends as required • Willingness to support the commitment to equal opportunities, inclusion, health & safety, child protection and other relevant policies • An avid consumer of artistic work nationally and internationally, with a willingness and ability to seek out, travel and attend events to pursue personal and professional development • A strong awareness of Health & Safety legislation and risk management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean, current driving licence and own car Note: The Stables in a semi-rural location

Contract Terms

A freelance contract will be offered to incorporate the 2023 edition of IF: Milton Keynes International Festival including the wrap up and evaluation / feedback to stakeholders in the Autumn of 2023. The initial term may be extended by mutual agreement. The fee offered will be circa £40k, dependent on experience and availability.

The role requires a flexible approach to onsite and home office work with some periods requiring greater commitment of time spent in Milton Keynes to ensure the success of projects and delivery. Engagement in person with stakeholders and communities in Milton Keynes is expected. Flexibility to working outside of usual working hours is essential particularly in the run up to and during festival delivery.

How To Apply

Deadline for Application is Midday on Monday 23 May

Please submit a CV with covering letter that details your interest and suitability for the role with particular reference to how you meet the skills and experience required. Submit your application by email to joana.cooper@stables.org or post to Joana Cooper, The Stables, Stockwell Lane, Wavendon, Milton Keynes, MK17 8LU. If you would like an informal discussion about the role or have any access support requirements please contact Joana by email or phone on 01908 280828.

The Stables is committed to equality of opportunity in recruitment. We value a diverse team and welcome applications from all sectors of the community. We are committed to protecting your personal data. Our Data Privacy Policy for Applicants gives you detailed information on when and why we collect your personal information, how we use it and how we keep it secure. Please see our Privacy Statement on our website (<https://stables.org/data-protection-policy-for-those-who-work-with-us>) for further information.

The Stables is committed to equality of opportunity in recruitment. We value a diverse team and welcome applications from all sectors of the community. Charity No. 1178665

