

THEATRE SEARCH

Spun Glass Theatre launch 'Theatre Search' in response to Covid-19

British Theatre is revered globally for its innovation and quality but stage doors are currently shut with no set date for reopening. Many may never reopen. The track and trace system suggests that local lockdowns may be needed in the future and it's possible that some theatres may reopen only to close their doors again a few months later.

Even before Covid-19 hit, there was a growing sense that something needed to be done to help diminish the cracks that were appearing in the ecology of touring theatre. In order to support independent producers and develop a more sustainable sector, Spun Glass Theatre are developing 'Theatre Search' - a free, shared resource for independent producers and touring arts companies to help rebuild the industry. This exciting and vital project will be available from September and has been made possible by emergency funding from Arts Council England.

The innovative database will usefully show which UK theatres and venues are open, which have unfortunately closed and when some might be looking to programme work, helping new productions to be created and tours to be rebooked. 'Theatre Search' will include reopening dates and programming windows and will be updated on a regular basis to ensure it is as current as possible.

'Theatre Search' is supported by four project producers with regional responsibilities working with venues. These are **Sarah Crompton-Howes**, Senior Producer at New International Encounter and Executive Producer for Other Ways Productions; **Steven Atkinson**, Founder of Long Acre Arts, Roots and Co-Founder of HighTide; **Sarah Sayeed**, former Education and Outreach Director for Peshkar Productions and curator on Sound Travels for Google Curate; and **Fleur Mellor**, Co-Producer and Choreographer for Peter Corry Productions and board member for Theatre & Dance NI.

Artistic Director Jessica Cheetham comments: *The task of rebuilding partnerships and rebooking tours that have been cancelled as a result of Covid-19 is mammoth and extremely overwhelming for many people, jeopardising their mental wellbeing. There will be a huge loss of high-quality productions and community projects as producers struggle to navigate the new landscape. At*

the moment, each producer and tour booker curates their own venue list for projects and sets up tours on the understanding that each venue is open and trading. As these lists will become obsolete as theatres close, this new resource will offer clear information to help producers as well as venues.

Emerging producers will benefit from the elimination of some of the unpaid work needed to set up projects. 'Theatre Search' will also provide increased access to the industry for producers who cannot sustain working without getting paid.

Venues will also benefit from this new resource, receiving better, more targeted communications from producers. This allows them to focus on connecting with their audiences and building confidence in returning to theatres, rather than taking time to explain the same programming slots to hundreds of independent companies.

Prior to Covid-19, Spun Glass Theatre were working on an ambitious plan for theatre and community arts projects for a mobile arts space in Hastings, East Sussex with theatre design consultants Studio Three Sixty. They were also mentoring emerging producer Lizzie Franks as they continued their long-term partnership with Living Record Productions on their award-winning binaural sound projects.

Spun Glass Theatre aims to be part of the growing movement to change the balance of touring theatre and initiate positive change to benefit artists and venues alike. 'Theatre Search' can be used by the whole industry, during this crisis and for years to come.

Notes to Editors

Twitter	@spun_glass #TheatreSearch
Instagram	@spunglasstheatre
Facebook	@spunglasstheatre
Website	www.spunglasstheatre.com

To receive access to 'Theatre Search' free of charge, sign up here:

<https://mailchi.mp/c26a7db89fbe/resourcesignup>

Venues are welcome to send information about a closure/programming window via the Spun Glass [website](http://www.spunglasstheatre.com). Any information provided is incredibly valuable to the success of the project.

Spun Glass Theatre

Spun Glass Theatre are an award-winning production company, experimenting with crossing theatre and popular performance forms to create radical, anti-elitist performance. They devise original productions based on classic texts and work directly with communities to bring creativity out of traditional arts spaces.

They have a strong record for creating innovative children's work including *Princess Charming*, a cabaret for kids exploring gender stereotypes, co-produced by Ovalhouse.

They work in partnership with independent artists and theatre companies to combine artist-led audience development, fundraising and project management with each artist's vision and form, creating more space for great art to be made.

All enquiries, high res images and further information:

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