STAMP DAY 2

Where We’re At No.2

Curated by James Pidgeon from Shoreditch Town Hall

Chair: Michael Norton – Producer, artist projects at Arts Admin

Speakers: Sue Emmas, Associate Artistic Director, Young Vic

Anthony Gray, Head of Programme, Fuel

Taio Lawson, Associate Director, Kiln Theatre

16:45

Think that's everyone in Hello everyone, so for this slightly late start. And my name is James. I'm director of shortage town hall and I just wanted to welcome you all to stamp connects and for the purposes of captioning. I'm on a white man with a beard, and slightly longer hair than usual, I think, like all of us. Wearing round framed clear framed glasses that was said for in front of an orange wall, and welcome to stamp connects, for those of you who are joining for the first time stamp is a network of over 50 organizations, based in London who work together to take practical action to improve the ways in which artists are supported by our organizations, and valued more widely in society and complex, it's the biggest event we want every year. It's normally held in person it should extend to all of you I think we're doing it. But of course this is the first time that we're hosting the event online for very obvious reasons. And before I hand over to Michael who's chairing today's discussion. And, and, and introduce and let him introduce the panelists who aren't just going to check in. Everyone mute themselves because I'm getting some feedback. And, if that's all right. Great. Perfect, thanks very much. And I just wanted to run through a little bit of housekeeping, so all sessions are captioned via auto AI ad to activate closed captions, please click on the closed caption button at the bottom of your screen, or that can be found by clicking on the three dots at the bottom of your screen, then click View closed captions. And you can also view a full transcript of the event by clicking on the top left hand corner, which will open a new window. Please only use the chat function to post your questions to the panel which Michael will be managing later on in the session and. Please also keep yourself on mute like I've just said private session that would be great if you have any trouble with the tag, or with Zoom at any point, and then please do. Please do a direct message me. So James, on the chat function, and I will do my best to help you out. We're going to record the session with a view to sharing the audio file on the staff website afterwards. If anyone has any concerns about that and please also private message me on the top and I can talk to you about lions details. Then the last thing just to say is that the session is being BSL interpreted by Laura, and Laura and lower M is based on interpreting first we've spotlit her so hopefully everyone can can see her, and we will have a moment just halfway through the session, where we'll take a pause to swap over between the two BSL interpreters. Great. It's really lovely to see you all. Thanks so much for joining, and I'm going to hand over to Michael.

19:57

Thanks, James. Hi everyone, my name is Michael Norton. I am a white man with a beard, got some brown uncut COVID hair, and I'm in a room with some plants and Bridget, cross in the corner. Yeah, so, thanks for joining us today.

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Today,

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we'll the conversation is called where we're at, and I'm gonna be kind of slightly participating on panel as well, in that I work for an organization called artsadmin that I'll be speaking to you about in a moment. But the focus, you know, I, we were talking about developing this idea and why we wanted to call it, where we're at, or what to call this programming conversation, and for those of us that work within organizations or festivals or venues, it's, it's been a challenging year. So we thought that the best way to support artists right now would be to give as clear and as honest have a perspective of what it means to be on the side where slot side of developing programs for artists. And what we're hoping that looks like in the future or what that looks like now, and how we're adjusting it. So I'll just tell you briefly about our timing and then I'll introduce our panelists so I work in an organization called artsadmin. We are a producing organization. We represent artists projects on all scales, we work mostly in kind of site specific work contemporary performance on local, national and international level. I work in the artist support team so we develop projects of support from bursaries to One to One support sessions that are free, and if you can look into them to workshops that we run, about every month. And just are constantly thinking about ways of how we can be supporting artists more, and we can talk more about that as this session unfolds, but I wanted to turn it over to our panelists here so we, we have three people who are joining us from from three different organizations that I think is a really nice picture of sort of what it looks like to be in the landscape of performance and theatre in this year in London so as Sue, I was wondering if you might want to start us off and just introduce yourself. Let us know a little bit about where you work and what you're up to.

22:51

Then thank you. I'm Sue Ms. I'm sitting in my bedroom, there's a mirror behind me, I'm a white, middle aged woman with black rimmed glasses and a sort of blue top, that's patterned. My pronouns are she, her, I work for the Young Vic Theatre in Waterloo in London, I'm the Associate Artistic Director from some of them names on here I know that you know the Young Vic, but maybe everybody doesn't necessarily, it's on the courts in Waterloo, it's got three auditoria, the main house which seats about 450 to 500, the smaller space which is the Maria which seats about 150 and then the Claire space which seats about 16. I guess in terms of, you know, it's hard to talk about what you've been doing because it's been so different in so many different ways. We've programmed some work over 2020 The unforgotten which was celebrating. Specifically, black people in history who've been maybe not as recognized as they should be, hence the name William forgotten, which has been on the outside of the building so we've had a presence, even though we've not necessarily been able to invite people in the space. We also did something called a new tomorrow, which was a whole selection of work written by nine writers directed by our generous associate Jen Tang, just celebrating where people's minds were at, at that time, When we did it, and we also celebrated different September our 50th anniversary, which was very strange standing on the court with people heckling you as we were trying to read out speeches celebrating 50 years of the book, but kind of quite apt Kwame claremorris the artistic director and he's been there since 2018 So again, we've been in a bit of a transitionary period, all through the pandemic, we've been doing, taking part work, which is our work with the local residents schools, colleges, and young people and we've had a whole range of different work online we did under my Barbie do V which is a bit like a Xen, done by young people about their response to where they found them out in their bedroom. And we've also done three films as part of 2020, written by obviously by writers but it was meant to be an in person with community projects like Thames reach and lack of settlement but we moved it online to keep the safety of the participants, and that's films like three films that you can go and see on our website which is amazing. And then for the directors, program, which is got a membership through the Genesis network, right 1500 directors, designers movement drug directors. Lighting designers, producers, we've been doing online work so we used to do probably four things a month we've probably been doing four things a week through the pandemic it's moved in different places. We started with well being, because that felt like what people were asking us to do. And we then moved on to more crafting career. Just recently we did something called Five plays where five directors with five writers made five pieces of work that we are live streaming actually tomorrow. So we've been trying to as much as we can. We've had focus groups as everybody's been doing to ask what people need and how useful we can be. We did something called Creative headspace where we invited all 1500 people on the network. If they wanted. It was only 100 pounds or 100 pounds where you could have at least an afternoon knowing you were paid to look at your practice or to go for a walk or to write something. And so it was really interesting, we asked people only to apply if they felt that they, they needed it, or they'd had financial mental emotional hardship, and it was really brilliant to see that people were very careful about stepping into that space, and there's about 350 people we provide that to, and we also gave bursaries or money to a small number of directors who've been part of our God assistant director scheme that we knew were particularly finding it hard. In terms of what's going forward. We're opening the building in April, and the cook bar will be open again we're getting staff have been in the building, kind of all over the pandemic except in the lockdowns were beginning to get ready for producing, so we'll be announcing our season later in April.

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And obviously I can't tell you all of that because it'll be announced in April and I would get killed by our marketing department, but some of the work we're doing is shows that have existed that we knew we wanted to so I know some of you might know that we've announced Hamlet, with cush jumbo and that was something that we had planned before the pandemic. We've also had to postpone our Genesis future directors award production and that will be going ahead over the summer, and there will be a whole range of different productions that we didn't know about that we have only now commissioned and made since the pandemic, and that will again, like I say, be announced in April. So I think that's me really hope that gives some kind of indication was about five minutes.

28:14

Busy.

28:17

Thanks, that's great. It's a really nice overview we can dive into some of those things and try to understand sort of what's changed about them and how they evolved over time. That's really great, thank you so next I have I have on my screen is Anthony. Anthony, do you want to introduce yourself and tell us a bit about where you're coming from.

28:37

Yeah, sure. What, what, an act to follow. See, bloody hell. So, I'm Anthony. My pronouns are he, him, I'm wearing a purple jumper, I'm a black man with, like, I think, half decent kind of small Afro going on, probably about six weeks ago, Liverpool, my football team lost. And I shaved my head because I was so annoyed with him. So yeah, the growth is coming back. I am sitting in the house that I grew up in, and I am in front of the piano that I haven't touched since I was probably about 20, which was 20 years ago. So that's who I am. I am also the head of program, an independent producing company called fuel. We, what have we been doing, what do we do, we work with work, we work with any and everyone who were really interested in, I think, the way the way that Kate, who is our director Kate and gras, the way that Kate and I essentially work with artists is to find people that we're really excited about and, and kind of push them to really tell us what, what their, their most scary idea is, and then we try and help them fulfill that that mental idea that that they want to bring up. So, you know, why, why shouldn't we have a play in a swimming pool where the audience, know how to conceal themselves drowning and sinking into, into a swimming pool, why don't we explore that. So, so things like that are what we, what we are up to and sometimes they're amazing. So we have brilliant projects such as Bob shop Chronicles that was written by a new Ellen's and toward toward nationally and internationally and then we have equally exciting but slightly smaller on the scale of budget projects such as Rachel young thirst trap which was a small project that that essentially was a project that fit in a box and you sat in a bath and listened to an audio piece which was spoken by the wonderful and amazing Sharon D Clarke so so though that those are some of the things that, that we get up to, um, yeah, kind of like see what have we been doing it's been, it's been absolute madness to be honest it's, you know, a wild pandemic. So we've essentially been trying to make sure that our family of, you know that our creatives are freelancers He, who we work with and on the sector and as a whole. Getting money, and we've been trying to do that in lots and lots of different ways. Some of them have been to, you know, move projects around move timelines around so that we could focus on development ideas that we had coming up in kind of two or three years, but pulling those forward so allowing the artists to work on those ideas right then and there and being able to pay them money to do that so they kept themselves busy and you know we're able to pay bills, um, some of them were setting up something called the Freelancers Task Force which was given a voice to freelancers who make up over 70% of our sector, but when being heard in really important conversations within the sector, making sure that we're bringing on lots of partner organizations who could offer a fee to, to a number of freelancers he could. He could be part of that conversation. What else have we been doing recently we did really small but beautiful project with some lighting designers, who we felt were some of the most hard hit, of our freelancers. You know without without a building to light. There were a lot he just had nothing so, So we came up with an idea where they lit. They designed a show, a lighting. Lighting piece around a tree that was local to them, and were able to, again, garner a bit of a safe audience obviously with, with COVID-19, among, among us.

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That just given them an opportunity to a get some money and BB unable to kind of work on those creative muscles that that they hadn't been using for a while. Um, and then as I said just before our main our main kind of pushes really been working on ideas for digital platforms being able to, to work with different organizations to put different shows on and also work with work with our artists on our development slate to start thinking of ways in which their work can be seen in the not so distant future, so that's, that's what we've been up to.

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Thanks again lots that we can sort of dig around in and understand how it's grown over the last year. Thank you. Okay, and, and last, on our panel, but certainly not least is Taylor Lawson. Tell us bit about your work and what you've been up to.

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I, I am a black dude with sort of dark black circular glasses that match my rather slightly round face, and I am trying to save everyone from seeing my sub B uncapped fro by wearing an orange hat.

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And

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it's like a little yak goes over a little bit of mine. I'm sitting under a window, which is making the top of my head quite hot, so I hope that that's not that's not too offensive image sets you guys would also mean because it lights up here and down here so focused on more contoured, you know I'm saying, I'm afraid to my jaw line there, which has, yeah, that that that disappeared ever knock down the noise that went to me jaffa cakes.

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That's Astina,

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it's like slightly sort of gray, gray top. If I, if I if I sometimes have to speak quietly. My son is napping, and I sometimes I may need to have a little ear out to see if he starts crying and screaming his head off. I associate director of killing Theatre in northwest London in the borough of Brent. We are a silver just under 300 seater capacity theater with one one main house. We do. We have predominantly done new writing although that's not necessarily an essay called refer to ourselves in the writing theater. And we sort of refer to ourselves as proudly vocal, with a, with a very international perspective but I guess being in rent, means that we are on our doorstep. Have you know, in most schools around the borough you know over 100 languages are spoken. There are people from, from a plethora of cultures and backgrounds. So, so, so, you know, being vocal inherently means being international, because we want to we want our theater to be a theatre for all, for everyone to feel entitled, and feel safe in the space that we that we that we run. So therefore, you know, being local is being international, and we went through a capital project. Recently we reopened in 2018. And the whole idea of that project was to open up the theater. Answer sort and to find a way of making a space that was a theater football, making more accessible and more accessible to a wider spectrum of our community, and that sort of puts us in a very interesting position because as we plan to reopen in May, we are one of the few theaters in London that have have experienced a sort of reopening. In recent years, so some learning from that. But also, also stubborn, some trepidation from that, knowing how tough that was. It's going to be a very, very interesting experience for me, even we reopen in May. Today, you just announced cutting season which is very very exciting, very fun. So maybe it would be helpful to take you guys through that where you guys like to hear what's what's, what's coming up, Is that good. Yeah. So, we will open the season with reasons you shouldn't love me written and performed by any trend. It's a first play of the, of course, but she's, she's a sort of season performer as a CO production it's excellent. It's a really beautifully why Coco. Coco, with record of producing this myth Paines plough 45 North women's price for writing as well. And it's a beautiful funny heartbreaking play that's in perspective of a young woman in a wheelchair, and the complications around that. It's, it's, it's gorgeous. We're really excited about that. The second play is a remake of the invisible hand written by an actor, we staged in 2016 as our centers, the relationship between the power of capitalism relations and capitalism and the nefarious impact that it has on on Islam on Islamic communities. So it's going to be interesting to see how that speaks to today and see how audiences received that. So it's about India reversing them redirected originally the creative team as the same as the original creative team in the 2016 production. So yeah, so we'll see what comes out of that show three is NWA trilogy, which I am directing, along with season Acana, and it's a trilogy of short plays performed on as one events in one night. and the plays are written by Moroder feeling. Roy Williams, and so Hello, bonjour. And we were so came out of, of, of a project that we run to try and understand the local history of our Bara, but particularly particular mind of the of migration into the borough, and the impact of migration having the borough, but also to the country as a whole. And so each story centers around specific communities that made home and kill them, and the wider political impact that they had. So for example, play one sort of looks at the Irish community and the emergence of dance halls. Show, show two, written by Roy looks at Trojan records Trojan music and the and reggae music and the impact the cultural impact that Trojan had, and show three years after Halo looks at the grounds of disputes, and the and the powerful leadership that giant that dive into say showed in 1976 and for the subsequent years of the protest.

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That's really cool. And what Bill's done is an adaptation of a bath, written by Zadie Smith, and directed by introducing the first two shows are looking we've been looking at CC different productions. So that's going to be an interesting challenge for us, but we are hoping to be able to take the restrictions away for NWA energy and compose a bigger shows, and it's gonna be really tough, tough to maintain the sort of socially distanced idea and restrictions at that point. So, hoping that those sessions will be alleviated by September. But during the lockdown we've been doing, we've been, I've been trying to stay as busy as we can. We've been able to the fundraising department has been working so hard, it's insane. They are incredible, as they are in every theater organization but whether you're building a company, I'm sure. And we've been really lucky to be able to commission for the 10 writers, through the incredible work that our fundraising team has been, has been doing so to make sure that we can keep offering opportunities to the freelance community. We were really inspired by fuels once and drive to have conversation but if you'd asked community and so through fuel we've been we've managed to keep up with Africans family. We can be continued that agency which is a product, sort of attached to Brent 2020, the London Borough of culture, which is essentially to support young brand based entrepreneurs, between 15 and 25. With develop some of the ideas that they have for social change and they're in the local area, which is just, I can't. Yeah, this is amazing. We've had like numerous podcast confirmations and just just a fantastic thing to see the brilliant local brilliant local young minds just just just visiting. And, yeah, being empowered is just amazing. We've also been doing burning food for all every Tuesday, offering free food so those in our community that need it. And vast else yes we've been we've been tried to create online content. Most recently, something called kink aberrations that discuss some of the less known less or less the sort of celebrated collaborations that happen in theater but are integral to the theatre making process. So for example, the relationship between designer costume supervisor and actor. And what and complications around perceptions of beauty body image, etc, and how and how you and how you find creativity and costume supervision as well as you know, being able to collaborate with the actor to sort of find the right the right vision for the character. And we have also recently recruited a new associate designer who will be mentoring to Resident Assistant designers that we are in the process of, we're in the process of recruiting at the moment, as to be so open open submission and we've had over, 100 applications for that position. And so we'll be going into interviews etc for that pretty soon. So we have been trying our best to keep doing what we, what we want to do, which is, which is you know, tell, tell interesting stories that that puts that puts you know, marginalized voices into the mainstream. And so, whilst it's been, it's been tricky. Through the sort of hard work and perseverance of our team of tenacity of our team, and the leadership of endure every single artists director. We've managed we've managed to, to, yeah, to keep going. And, and hopefully we'll, will we will we will thrive once we open, but before like everyone else where we are. Yeah, this was we are we are anxious to sort of work out how it's going to go and how best to do it. I will stop talking because I spoken for a long time, and I can be quite boring sometimes

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we're just going to do a little B cell swap. Cool. Let's switch back to the gallery. Okay, so lots in there. Thank you. Three for sharing your, the work, and the details of the program. I can say that this year from even from an organizational side, it would feel very siloed I don't know if you experienced this feels very, very much like I don't have as much access to knowing what's going on in the arts world so it's really beautiful to actually sit with you three in here like, oh yeah, you've been working to stuff has been happening also over there. And I guess my thought. First off, When like when we thought about this conversation and what I think about when a lot of my job is that I'm just speaking with artists on a daily basis and One to One settings and what I think is useful is a sense of, of, I'm understanding that there, there is during a pandemic when we're isolated already that there is a sense of kind of a drift to the abstract of like, there's a perception that arts organizations and different people who work in the arts are sort of over here, and then people who are freelancing people who are artists people who have, you know, a challenge to reach them. The limited bridges that were there already like the foyers, of theatres, or the conferences, those have slipped away. And there's, there's much less access than there ever has been to just understanding, um, for those of us that have permanent positions in organizations, what we do, or what we're doing, unless it's to call out, you know like this is sort of the way that we communicate or through blog posts or through potentially showing some work but I guess the, the question is, you know, this, this, this is a big one if you go a day but it's just like, what's it been, what has it been like for you in your organization collaborating and building these projects, amidst that uncertainty and, and, you know, how have you found ways to reach or how are you finding ways to reach out to the community of artists or freelancers that you used to work with, you know, Like we talked a bit about freelance Task Force as an example which worked, I think beautifully. But even that did, there's not an allowance of being together physically. So if any of you just want to chime in on that like what what is the, what have been the challenges of being alone, so much and how are you continuing to develop and grow the communities that you care so deeply about, as demonstrated by your amazing work you've

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talked about so far.

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Now see, I saw you on mute there. Come on, see,

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I thought I just be polite Anthony. I think the first thing is that you got to recognize the privilege with which I have, you know, a job, and therefore, where the different levels of kind of challenge that people have experienced. I mean I think in some ways I've been really lucky because like five times a week, I've been in zooms with artists in in terms of the workshops and kind of discussion groups, and town halls that we've run. And I think that has meant that we felt quite connected and we also started artistic associates, so we've got 15 Artistic associates, some of whom are international, some of whom are based in the UK and that ranges from somebody like Alfie Enoch who's a, an actor to Wendell Pierce, who's also an actor but based in the states to Zana who's a sound designer to cats. Cats shoe bridge, who is a director and so we've had access to quite a lot of people in terms of coming together, and we paid them we can kind of, obviously recognizing their labor in terms of coming to talk to us so we've, we've paid people. And I think what we've tried to do as well as we've had a series called Young Vic demystify and it's trying to get a sense of trying to reduce the opaqueness of not necessarily people understanding what's going on in specific organizations or generally across the sector I think it's been really difficult in terms of all of the stuff that was coming out from DCMS or from UK theatre and so we had various sessions where, you know Jack gamble would come along, who's the associate from our colo and talk about his work that he's been doing in terms of lobbying. We've also had qualms who's had open sessions where people can come and ask you know what's he's been doing and he's been doing a lot of work behind the scenes and appearing on most television programs across the pandemic, sort of talking about what needs to be done from a government perspective. So I guess. It felt like we've tried to keep those conversations open and that doesn't stop people feeling that they don't know or that we're close to them, but we've been trying to gain from it and so I've been doing every Friday kind of one to ones with whoever wants to kind of pitch up within a four hour period which means getting a really strong sense of what people's preoccupations hopes for the future are, and all of that has been really useful.

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I was gonna say Susan what in those, like channels that you've kept open. What What have you learned, or have have things shifted priorities changed. You know what's, what are you seeing is the needs are the ways that you're supporting artists now that are different,

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um, I mean, in some ways I think if you'd asked qualms he'd say that kind of nothing's changed in terms of that we want to be an intersectional inclusive sort of all welcoming fellow with a program that achieves that, but I guess what has changed, I think is that sense of we were beginning to try and make things more transparent and we just need to do that because there is such a sense of, for people to make informed decisions as to what the change is, I think there's also a sense of needing to understand what it looks like now and not not to replicate or continue what exists now, but to understand the structures in order to unpick them. I mean obviously you can just not perfectly down, but I don't believe if we do knock everything down there are delightful government or the DCMS going to Okay, here's an open plan kind of make whatever you want, they'll just go, Oh, well you're not at all down guys you want this to all kind of bunch of idiots, and we're now walking away and we'll just go to the commercial sector. So I think we need to share knowledge and we need to be really we need to be really open. And I think the Freelancers make that work, report is a really strong starting point to do that.

52:07

Great. Yeah, I can see that from my time and the challenge of transparency is just all the more like that was a really big priority of ours that we kind of stated explicitly at the end of 2019 beginning of 2020 and then a lot of that transparency was about interacting with people in person, in about having conversations where there was a sense of lightness to it so so the. Yeah, just the added challenge of that being within reporting and structure is when there's a sense of constant cancellation or like needing to reframe or I can just say from our side that's, that's been. It's taken some really intentional focus and work on how can we remain transparent when we're sort of as an organization, and like, as individuals within our organization dealing with a sense of crisis dealing with a sense of our own, you know home stuff home care home needs, and really caring about maintaining the integrity of a transparent sort of clear agenda that we communicate with our audiences and with artists, challenging.

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I'm

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in here to tell you what we were going to say yeah, um,

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I think I think for for fueling, and for me, just going back to the Freelancers task force that that came from a really random idea that the Kate had, which was having Friday, Friday evening drinks with any Freelancer he wanted to join our zoom conversation. And I remember at the beginning it was, it was really lovely it was really great to see to see some faces, you know people you know and I'm sure everyone's done it in. In this scene, you know, just quickly go across the screen, see if you know anyone and, and it was amazing see those connections happening so, um, for me I think that's been a massive change for us. There has been a moment where, as an organization we just decided to be more approachable, and the fact that it was Kate and I, who would take time out of, you know, for, I'm sure for everyone here that that the last few hours of the week. Sometimes the busiest when you're just trying to tie some things off but to put it, put that time in our diaries to just meet artists, not for any reason than to have a cup of tea or a general around, if you're if you meet, then, that, that was like the first kind of step that allowed us to understand that none of these voices were being heard in those conversations so that's something that we've tried to take through and Kate and I are already starting to think about how that can move on into the, into the real world whenever, whenever that starts opening. So that's one thing, and I think being more, be more accessible is something that's really been at the forefront of my mind since I joined joined fuel a few years ago and we've done some really great work on our website, it was, you know, I can say, it's being recorded so Dale, but it was atrocious, like it was literally the most inaccessible website, and we got a comms person, Gemma who, who essentially spent, you know, the first few months of her career at fuel just working on making sure our website was accessible for all types of all types of different people. So that's been something else that we've really had to push, made sure that that we're able to do in terms of being more open. So yeah, those are just the two things that I wanted to say about

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that that approachability and accessibility I think is a big point I'm wondering

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it.

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Have you found that maybe I make up this story that maybe there's things that are actually make you more approachable during a pandemic click you're talking about that the ability to tune in and. Can you talk a little bit just about who's been, you know like what happened when you opened up to this Friday evening. Zoom or what has, what have been, what is the approach, who has approached you. How is it shifted. Yeah, good.

56:47

Yeah, good question. We, we, it, um, it started off obviously with just people that we knew, we just sent out an email to loads of freelancers that we worked with and that was actors, directors lighting designers sound designers like literally everyone and sorry if I've not mentioned, one of the creative titles you're automating VW. But yeah, we had, we had loads of people turn up on that on the first few actually, um, and essentially it was everyone just going around introducing and you'd have those conversations saying oh my god Michael I've not seen you in three years. What are you, what have you been up to. And then after about two or three weeks of, of it being essentially the same conversation, people started asking for a bit more direction, a bit more of a reason behind these conversations so we started putting in putting questions out and seeing what people wanted to talk about. It wasn't, it wasn't the greatest of moments in terms of themes so obviously Black Lives Matters was a, was a huge thing. At that moment, and I say at that moment because there, there are still people who think it was in that moment. And it's done. But anyway, that's a different panel talk. And we, so we focused on that and that then opened up conversation about, about making sure that there was a manifesto of how black creatives should be treated in a theater and we, we brought a range of different people from, from different avenues who wanted to specifically focus on that manifesto which got released, I think, three weeks ago, two or three weeks ago. And, and, yeah, and once we had to kind of, you know, action, what we were going to do on, on, on, on that the the Freelancers then decided what they wanted to talk, talk about next, and so really it was driven by them. There was a lot of information given as well. They wanted to know what was happening in those conversations. And, and then the idea of them being involved in those conversations was, was brought up, I think now we we've stopped to that, because if it feels that people need something different and people really want it to be meeting in person. So, so now we're thinking of ideas of how we can make sure that it's something that's regular but in person and safe as well.

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Yeah, yeah. Great, thanks and Taylor what comes up for you as we talked about this, about the, you know, keeping on doing what you're doing and the challenges of the separation of the artists and you and,

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Yeah, I think, I think, I'm, I'm, I'm a freelance part time Associate Director of the building. So I am incredibly fortunate to have, have a little bit of a regular income coming from. But I've also felt the impact of as a freelancer in other in other ways. Jobs for falling by the wayside. And so I've had I've had my foot in, in both parties in both camps of course being a very very privileged, member of the Buddhist community having a sort of regular association with the building. So in that capacity, personally, being able to talk to my building. As a freelancer and talk to freelancers, as a part as a, as a member of a small part of the building has allowed me to sort of try to bridge that gap. Personally, also I think it's been, it's been a challenge to keep loving it. I think a lot, a lot of you know, I've personally found it very, very hard to have. I find it very hard to have conversations with people who may be interested in coming into the industry. Knowing how hard the industry is knowing that they open themselves up to what can be a lifetime of points, exploitation and financial difficulty accepts, etc, we all know. And so that has been a big thing that we've spoken about, of how to how to keep the passion alive, amongst the finance community and myself, your family, to keep them loving it to keep ourselves loving. And of course we do but individually, there are times where you question that. So I'll move on because I don't want to get too long but I think as a building, we have, we have been doing, you know, taking regular meetings as part freelance Task Force to hire freelancers to listen to them. And of course you know, this year we have we have the opportunity to, like, other organizations to reevaluate our business plans and look to the future, make sure that this listening and is learning is embedded and entrenched in the new business plans that we, that we are creating the new mission statements the new vision for the theater. And those tweaks that we need to make to make sure that the learning that we've done over the last year, hearing freelancers hearing the quants have been hearing the problems of the industry that makes sure that is, it is a part of our DNA that we are working towards making an improvement that we are working towards making improvement in the industry and being better. We, the other thing that we that like that came up was making sure that we are working with new artists. So trying to set internal goals for each show, to make sure that we are employing a new, new artists all the time, gentlemen, that is not just the same, the same, the same creative team jumping from one from one show to the next to the next the next is really important for us. And also, the other two fronts is, as we've mentioned before, you know, fundraising, I've been working really really hard to make sure that we have, we can raise the funds to commission writers to continue to condition writers to continue to give money to freelancers to do what they want to do. I don't I I don't. In my time of being a theist I don't think we've ever had this many commissions, it's sort of crazy. And that's been, that's been through the generosity of various trusts and foundations and particular organizations who really believe in, in, in what to do, which is, as I said before to sort of bring marginalized voices to the mainstream, and make sure that we are you know making theater for all that we are consistently accessible, and that we are offering opportunities to as a as a diverse range of perspectives as possible. So we are very fortunate to have raised that money in order to continue to the writers that we that we find exciting or new writers to ask that we've discovered in last year. And also this chili these two new resident assistant designer positions that we have are also about trying to diversify the people that are, that are going into being a theatre designer to me that it's not just that the same demographic that the predominant demographic in that in that field that we are giving opportunities to those that, that have had difficulty breaking through, or haven't necessarily seen in a way, a way that they can be a part of the party too, you know, that's cool. I think that's that's meaningful. We've been doing the building.

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I think it's an ongoing process, you know, because I think you know, as you can see it doesn't it doesn't end now just because we're sort of like thinking about reopening the building. The relationship has to, has to constantly be evolving has to constantly be getting better, because as I said earlier, I find it difficult to have. I, in all honesty I I'm I'm not sure how comfortable I would feel, sitting down to my 14 year old nephew or even my daughter, and saying hey you can be a director one day you can be a designer, you know, and that isn't that is insane, knowing that I do this, and that isn't you know that is insane. So so so but you know we know that that something has to, has to shift and has to change and we've got we've got to work incredibly hard to make that happen because I would love to be able to turn to my daughter and say, Oh yeah, you want to go into musical theater Yeah, great idea. Yeah, I can't do that.

1:05:40

Yeah. So I appreciate you bringing it in, because like this, I think the thing that I resonate. Well, the thing that I'm experiencing over years you talk about is like, I have been asking and I've been hearing a lot of people, both who work on the producing side or on the freelance side and also on the, on the artistic side of the conversation of like why do I do this and what is this, you know like that, I think that it can't be understated what it is that to not for many of us, to not be able to touch and see what it is that we are here to do for a year, and the impact that that has on confidence and on clarity. Sometimes I feel a little dizzy, just like with the trying to remember and hold on to something that was, and that hopefully will be again and that like we're in this like suspended period. And I guess I just want to say to all of you who are out there who, you know, work in physical spaces that this is it I'm, it's it's said all the time or maybe you don't hear it but just to say it again, this is an unbelievably difficult and challenging moment, to not be able to do what you do. And that's not, that will not confidence that will knock clarity that will like shift your ability to think like I just talked to artists and freelancers all the time and there's a sense of like, I just don't know which way is up right now and you have every, you know reason to feel that way, this is this is what it is to not have thing you do as an accessible or as for us at least the really terrifying thing is that nothing is concrete, we've had major cancellations, time and time again, like, four, four rounds of major cancellations that happened the last year of projects that have been planned for two years, three years, so that knocks confidence and the sense of security and yeah I'm agree with you today that like it's, sometimes it's a little challenging right now to be like, yeah, go ahead and try this up in industry. But that's I appreciate what the three of you but I hear this, what we're going to turn to questions now I just want to say what I hear from the three of you is that you found ways of bringing artists in and engaging with artists and engaging with creatives engaging with people who work in this industry, and giving them a space to share that and not just do but also to talk, you know here like the town halls and the task force and open meetings and like the receptivity, that is there. So I just want to say an appreciation for that from you three for really bringing that in. So let's bring over to some questions if there are things out there if you're wondering, we didn't talk much about kind of the more like, how do you submit a proposal to us. If you have some more practicals up, or just questions that come up throughout our conversation, you can either chat them or if you want to just shout it out live, we're happy to hear your voice and see your face too.

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So how do submit a proposal.

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Yeah, so, maybe, because it's the three of you, if you like, what's changed in the way that you're looking for work in the last year, how are you finding work. In brief, or what can you, what could you say to clients to help, help her out on

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her journey.

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Well, as, as headed program I'm being more, I guess I'm being more prescriptive, like, I really, I, you know, I think it's been difficult I've worked in other buildings before and there's definitely a sense of, you know, throw a stone or something and we'll we'll come and see you or we'll have a chat. And actually, the amount of work that that takes to put something across, go and have a tea and then for nothing to come from that. I've just seen that later times and I've worked in artist development that's kind of been my background, so with fuel. I'm, we're now working on trying to be really clear on, on, who were looking for, and how do we do that and that's. And we're going to be putting that out quite soon, but essentially, we'll have different ways of doing that so there will be hopefully a commissioning process where and there'll be an open commissioning process where people can put in ideas and there'll be something in the way that you can just put in an idea, and it only takes five minutes to do that. It's not about kind of having to spend half your day putting in an application process that is then given two minutes to be read. So, so that's going to be one way and then there's going to be direct approaches from from Kate and myself. You know we're making sure that we go into see as as many different pieces of work when we can, and following those up and being really honest and same. We liked your show. But, but we're not going to be the right producers for you and here are some producers who would be better for you than us. Or, let's have a conversation and see where this goes. Um, and then also we've got a family of of creatives who we already work with and we're already in conversation with so we'll be taking those forward so those are the kind of three main strands in in how we're going to be doing that and how that's changed

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Sumatera Do you want to add anything to that or I know that sometimes the how things get found is there's no clear it's sort of ABC, so if anything comes up.

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I think it's the thing that I'm asked the most and really understand why which is how do you program, and how do we get to be kind of on the slate and I think it's really hard to describe the process because it's not linear and it's not singular lightly so it's not do this do that and then, you know, you'll find yourself on the main stage and the Young Vic and I think in some ways, again just for complete transparency is we're not set up to receive proposals, that's not the way that work ends up in our spaces there's the Genesis future directors award which is open access, anybody can express an interest in terms of within the parameters of what it is and I think moving forward that's going to change but we want opportunities that are open access for people to express an interest and exactly as Anthony says, trying to make that as light touch as possible. I think that's the real learning is that how much effort thought creativity goes into making some applications for something that as again as Anthony says someone you know cursor goes, that's just not for us. And so it's lighter touch moments and, and this is my big thing so do forgive me as I just think pitching is the wrong word to use, pitching means that you throw something people either catch, or they drop, it's about establishing relationships and not thinking I'm going to make this thing because it fits the Young Vic, or it fits KILM make the work you want to make and find the people that want to make it with you and that's a long process and a difficult process, but just, just really honest getting a piece of paper with an idea on it is will be a great insight into you and it might not be that piece, it might be something in six months, six years time, but it's about that, that kind of exchange of what you want to make, why you want to make it who you want to make it for and why you've got to make it. And that's the beginning of a conversation, not a pitch where you're kind of going, it's a mix between jaws and Towering Inferno, and stuff because it's just a bunch of shit, and it's really useful in terms of the film, well what they will give you is a logline, which is you need to be able to describe your, your project. In a sentence, and that's why the film was actually really useful, that's what they do in terms of short film, and I think probably even the feature is that just be able to describe what you want to make them why. In a sentence, and focus on story, even if it's nonlinear focus on that and emotion not on issues

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theory just to jump in, we're just gonna swap BSM interpretation. Cool.

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So Tara, do you want to add anything to that. That's great advice Sue really clear, supportive language I think for people who are. Yeah, I would love to have a an hour session with you coaching. Coaching an idea. What do you what do you want to add to this.

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I mean,

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I think.

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I think what we've just witnessed is the reason why CMS is a genius. So let's just take a moment. I think similarly to what's, what's you said you know, killin sadly is not set up in the in the in the way to have open submissions in. In that sense, we have a new work associate. Tom right and and suicides of directors in a certain assisted designer and into the artistic team and we work incredibly hard to read as much as you possibly can, each week and have in depth conversations each week. So constantly taking in new things whether we get those new things as usually through three channels out that that are established channels that we know that we can manage. And even then, it's quite disgrace it's stretched, you know, I think we have, we have, as I said before, I think we we are making internal commitments about making sure that we can see more new work, more work by by by a by a varied number of artists and understanding internally how the channels work, how we, how we how we handle these new artists and how, you know, we then get get to meet us how we get to get to know you, etc, and how that relationship is built. So that is clearer, and that is, and that is more defined and also manageable, I think that is that is the big thing that we are on killing is that we don't make promises that we can't see through. You know that if it is a meet for a coffee that is a substance that is for a substantial reason, as opposed to giving people hope that doesn't doesn't amount to anything. And you know, right, it's far better to let someone down early than it is to let them down late, You know, is that is that the fundamental beliefs that we have that killed, you know that India has. And I have to, I think, I think. I think that I've just had a brain fart. I completely toxic, but I suppose both both, both so essentially is that you know, I think, you know, we've, we've, we've been very, very clear as I said before, this is the greatest amount Commission's that we've had since I've been there. And we've been very clear that it's not just about having meetings that it's direct and define the possibilities and opportunities. So you know, it's sufficiently paid, you know, with a with a with a chance to have the chance to make work and I think that, that, that has felt the biggest priority to put money in the pockets of freelancers so that they can keep doing what they're doing. Yeah,

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great. Thank you. Yeah, again, I appreciate you sort of naming the that there is a lot of consideration for what is going to be asking the least from artists, as early as possible in the process. Yeah, this new year

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is another thing that that you know we had a meeting assistant very morning about needing to call a few people because I think one thing that we are, that has been recommended over this year is that if there are submissions made for an opportunity to theater. But it doesn't end there, that theater www stops trying to think of these theaters sort of like, it is individual monoliths, that if there are a group of five people that didn't make it to interview, but are uncovering that possibility, probably, but I still really exciting that we can pick up the phone and talk to, you know, whoever doesn't appear to and say hey these five people. Yeah, listen person for the opportunity that we know that you got that you guys have right thinking of having, you know, we would like we would like to meet, meet these guys and I think that's important for us because if you do invest that time to submit something to ask them we can help you maximize the impact of the time that you've put into to submit something to us by communicating with our with our brethren.

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Yeah, yeah, I appreciate that so contagious yeah Anthony's.

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I've just, I mean I've just realized that you've had three people who are like, we all don't accept open open calls, but there are, there are people there are organizations who do, and I'm not sure if I know there's marketplace sessions as part of as part of stamp, and I'm not sure if some of you know the places where I used to work are going to be there but Barbican run. Open Labs. It's program that I built and ran there for a while, and it's still going on, and that's really, really great way to get in to the theatre team within the Barbican, it's down in the pit theatre, you get a week. It is an open application is kind of a bit laborious if I'm going to be honest, but you do get some really great support. I haven't scrolled over an hour, she's still here so I'm going to name checker but Paula varjak That's how I met her. And that's like a relationship that I, you know, has grown from strength to strength. Whoa, over a number of years of wet shortage Town Hall, as well. Another great organization, who do again except second applications and I know they've got some, some marketplace sessions so definitely check them out. Yeah so, I think, across the standard network, a lot of those people in the marketplace, they, they are you're, you're going to use for, for talking about people who, who do, who do just have that chat with people and we'll try and take on some of those ideas.

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Yeah, great. And I think just to say that it's good to discern like when is there an open call for a specific commission and when is there just sort of a general open door and the second say from an RSM, there's always an open door for an invitation to share, to work that's being shared in particular I think that's, you know, in, in short, the best way, it feels a bit like chicken for the Ag kind of thing but like the best way to get your work, known and presented is for us to know you and to see your work. So just, just sharing that with as many of us, as you can, it's like, it's part of our job to be receiving, you know, invitations and coming to your work, so. Okay, thank you. Well we're I know we're over time. Really appreciate the three of you joining us today and sharing what's, what's been up, hopefully, for those of you that joined us, you get a bit a little better sense of where maybe where we're at, or where we then even, and look forward to meeting all of you in different ways over the next coming weeks and months. So thank you,

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looking at each other in a weird way, I'm really sorry I need to go to my next inevitable zoom but thank you for that that was really nicely Chad Michael so thank you for bringing it in when you did.

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Thanks, thanks for sharing what you did, beautiful to hear about your work.

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And let me see it. I know you're kind of actually here and didn't go to the toilet. Yeah,

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the whole time.

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Yeah, you probably needed we now though, don't you say you've got a run. Yeah, I'm sorry I got to run it's lovely to see you're fine.

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Thanks, Laura.

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Later. Bye. Bye.