

Anti-racism in the Children's Theatre and Dance sector Open Space event – 22 January 2021

Let's imagine a better future together.

This is a call-out to participate in an open space event, for theatre and dance practitioners who identify as Black, People of Colour, from the African Caribbean Diaspora, Latinx, East Asian Diaspora, South East Asian Diaspora, South Asian Diaspora, West Asian Diaspora (including Middle East), Indigenous people, biracial or have mixed heritage (we use BIPOC+). It is for those who are already working in the children's theatre and dance sector, as well as those who would like to, including artists, producers, technical roles, designers, facilitators and office based roles.

Fee paid for attendance: £50

Date: Friday 22nd January 2021

Time: 11-12.30pm

Register on Eventbrite here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/anti-racism-in-the-childrens-theatre-and-dance-sector-open-space-event-tickets-132864777125>

The session will be held on Zoom and will be co-facilitated by Rhea Lewis and Saffy Setohy.

In Open Space meetings, participants propose, create and manage their own agenda of parallel sessions around a specific theme. The intention of this Open Space session is to work together in order to understand the barriers and imagine better opportunities for artists/practitioners in the children's sector who identify as BIPOC+, and with lived experience of racism.

There will be 18 participants, with a minimum of 12 places allocated on a first come first served basis through this open call. All participants' names and feedback gathered will be kept confidential and made anonymous. Contributions will inform future recruitment, call outs and programming plans in the sector.

Background

A group of organisations and individuals working in the Young Audiences sector (see full list below) have been meeting online to discuss the impact of the COVID crisis on our sector, and look at ways of working together to help it recover and thrive. The lack of diversity in the sector (in particular the lack of representation from people experiencing racism) was highlighted as an issue that needs to be addressed urgently and more proactively. We aim to be a supportive and welcoming sector, but recognise that this is long term work requiring careful attention.

A working group of organisations has been set-up to review and develop some ideas for action. However, given the lack of diversity in the group itself, we feel consultation is required before moving forward with an action plan.

What we want to work towards:

An intersectional approach to increasing and diversifying the visibility, opportunities for, and representation of, professionals identifying as BIPOC+ in the children's theatre and dance sector, both on and off stage.

Following this Open Space meeting, feedback will be collated and anonymised by Rhea and Saffy. The organisations will work with this to draft an action-plan proposal for detailed discussion at a second focus group meeting in February. There are 6 paid places available to attend the second meeting at £150 (some preparation will be required). This meeting will take place on 18 or 19 February (tbc).

Everyone in the first Open Space meeting will be invited to join the second meeting. Rhea and Saffy will select this group against a set of priority criteria, made available to all participants before expressing interest. We appreciate that some people will only wish to join the first Open Space session. This is fine and we welcome all contributions.

About the facilitators

- Rhea Lewis is a creative producer. She collaborates with artists and with communities to create bold projects and productions which are sometimes large-scale, often with a socially-engaged practice or themes at their heart. Rhea is a co-director and co-founder of [Project X](#), a multi-disciplinary, collectively run Scotland-based organisation platforming dance of the African and Caribbean Diaspora. Currently, Rhea is also a Project Producer at [Stellar Quines](#). Rhea's advocacy and facilitation experience includes working one to one with artists, consultation group sessions and events.
- Saffy Setohy is an independent dance artist, choreographer, facilitator and producer. She is a board member of [The Work Room](#), an artist-member led organisation supporting the development of choreographic practice. She is also a member of [ID.Y](#), an evolving collective developing artist support, advocacy and peer networks. Saffy's facilitation experience includes working one to one with artists, running focus groups for parents and carers in the performing arts, and chairing the FST Dance Forum.

Young Audiences companies & individuals involved in discussions so far:

Action Boat (a collective of freelance artists), [Barrowland Ballet](#), [Catherine Wheels](#), [Curious Seed](#), [Frozen Charlotte](#), [Imagine](#), [Independent Arts Projects](#), [Lyra](#), [Red Bridge Arts](#), [Scottish Theatre Producers](#), [Starcatchers](#) and [Visible Fictions](#).

The anti-racism working group:

Marion Bourbouze (Imagine), Louise Gilmour Wills (Catherine Wheels), Geraldine Heaney (Action Boat), Laura Penny (Visible Fictions) and Jo Timmins (Lyra).