

THE OLD RED LION THEATRE
LITERARY DEPARTMENT



SUBMISSIONS AND
PROGRAMMING POLICY

THE OLD RED LION THEATRE

The Old Red Lion Theatre is the home of exceptional, ambitious and challenging theatre, ranging from the world premieres of new plays to acclaimed revivals of significant productions from throughout history.

We support the UK's most exciting artists at crucial stages of their careers, presenting work that challenges our audiences and connects us to communities rarely given the opportunity to be seen on stage.

This focus firmly establishes us as one of the most acclaimed Off West-End venues for ambitious, powerful theatre.

www.oldredliontheatre.co.uk

LITERARY DEPARTMENT

The Old Red Lion Theatre's Literary Department was re-launched in May 2018, led by Senior Dramaturg David Loumgair.

The appointment of David Loumgair to lead the Old Red Lion Theatre's Literary Department is a direct response from Artistic Director Katy Danbury to the toughening cultural and economic landscape that both theatres and artists currently face when staging work on the Fringe.

It is a clear statement that the ORL continues to be committed to supporting and presenting ambitious theatre, and David's role is particularly focused on making both the programming and ability for artists to stage work at the Old Red Lion Theatre more accessible, inclusive and diverse.

The Old Red Lion is a venue which has been crucial in supporting the careers of many of the UK's most esteemed artists, and in the past, we have presented new work from artists including Kathy Burke, Joe Penhall, Penelope Skinner, Nina Raine, Abi Morgan, Tim Foley, Naomi Sheldon, Simon Longman and John O'Donovan.

We are always looking to support authentic, diverse voices and plays that challenge our expectations, belief systems and ideologies, presented in artistically ambitious and powerful ways.

If you're an artist with a play that you think the ORL is the right home for, then get in touch with the Literary Department.

You'll find all the information you need about submitting a proposal to us in this document.

WHY BRING YOUR **WORK** HERE?

The Old Red Lion Theatre has an unparalleled reputation across Off-West End theatre for staging challenging, ambitious work, and as such a significant number of our productions have transferred to the West End and Off-Broadway.

We were the home to Mischief Theatre's premier of the now Olivier award-winning 'The Play That Goes Wrong' in 2012, before it transferred to Trafalgar Studios in 2013, toured the UK, and found its new home in the heart of the West End at the Duchess Theatre.

Other recent productions staged at the Old Red Lion that have transferred into the West End include the world premiere of Arthur Miller's first play, *No Villain*, Ned Bennett's revival of Phillip Ridley's *Mercury Fur* and Naomi Sheldon's *Good Girl* (Trafalgar Studios); *Mrs Orwell* (Southwark Playhouse); *Kissing Sid James* (London and Off-Broadway) and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Theatre Royal Haymarket).

The Old Red Lion also has an established reputation of acting as a springboard for artists to start working in larger venues, and the productions we stage have received an immense volume of Offie nominations and press attention which actively support an artist's career progression:

2019 NOMINATIONS:

Best Female Performance: Rachel Harper for *Rattled*

Best Female Performance: Alex Jarrett for *AISHA*

Best New Play: *AISHA* by AJ

Best Director: AJ for *AISHA*

Best Set Designer: Alys Whitehead for *AISHA*

Best Sound Designer: Julian Starr for *AISHA*

Best Lighting Designer: Joseph Thomas for *AISHA*

2018 WINNER:

Best Lighting Designer: Zoe Spurr for *Tiny Dynamite*

2018 FINALIST:

Best New Play: Kenneth Emson's *Plastic*

2017 FINALIST:

Best Set Design: Max Dorey for *Talk Radio*

2016 WINNERS:

Most Promising New Playwright: Tim Foley for *The Dogs of War*

Best Artistic Director: Stewart Pringle for the Old Red Lion Theatre

2016 FINALIST:

Best Supporting Female: Kate Kennedy for *Three Short Plays*

2015 FINALIST:

Best Production: *Piranha Heights*

2013 WINNER:

Best Set Designer: James Turner for *Mercury Fur*

2013 FINALIST:

Best Production: *Mercury Fur*

2012 FINALIST:

Most Promising New Playwright: Luke Barnes for *Chapel Street*

WHAT ARE WE INTERESTED IN?

We're interested in supporting ambitious, intersectional artists who fully engage with the possibilities of live theatre, and who believe in collaboration, inclusion and authenticity.

We're interested in presenting work that will challenge our audiences, and connect us to individuals, experiences and communities that are rarely given the opportunity to be seen on stage.

We're passionate about supporting the production of work that will embrace the intimacy and intensity of the Old Red Lion's space, pushing it to the extremes - and beyond - of what audiences think is capable with a modest venue above a historic pub.

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR PLAY / PROPOSAL?

Your play and production proposal will be read by the Old Red Lion's Artistic Director and Senior Dramaturg.

The play will be discussed at our monthly script meetings, where we intricately, equally and passionately consider every proposal sent to us for consideration of programming at the ORL.

WHAT CAN WE OFFER?

As many artists are acutely aware, Off West-End and Fringe theatres including the ORL are facing some of the toughest cultural and economic barriers the UK theatre industry has experienced in recent history.

Therefore, we regret that we are currently not able to offer any seed commissions, produce any co-productions between external companies and the ORL, or produce any of our own productions in-house.

Please therefore **do not contact us** asking about the potential of co-productions between your company and the ORL, or asking about financial investment from the theatre.

However, whilst we unfortunately can't offer larger-scale opportunities like those above, we are working our hardest to make presenting and producing work on our stage as accessible, inclusive and diverse as possible.

WE THEREFORE:

- Offer **Sunday/Monday programming** opportunities to companies to test and develop new work.
- Regularly host **workshops and events** specifically aimed at supporting the career progression of artists.
- Host **networking opportunities** for artists to meet others who may support the production of their work.
- Offer in-depth, **dramaturgical support** from our Senior Dramaturg and trained, experienced readership team on the development of work being staged at the ORL.

Once programmed, we will share our **funding and marketing guides**, extensive **press list and trusted list of PR companies** with you. **Further in-kind support** can include budget guidance, free rehearsal / audition / events / workshop space (subject to availability), extra accessible performances, flyer distribution via Impact, dramaturgical advice from our Senior Dramaturg David Loumgair, and social media support.

Rest assured that we want to see work on our stage more than we want to see it on the page, so if we can help realise the full potential of your production we will do everything we can to support and nurture your work.

We do not receive any regular private or public subsidy, and it is worth bearing that in mind when approaching us. But, we do have a very enviable track record of helping artists whose work we are excited by reach those who can help realise them both on our stage and beyond.

We have exhaustive contacts both in London and regionally, and an honest love for ambitious, challenging work.

HOW SHOULD YOU **SUBMIT** YOUR PLAY?

We programme full runs of between 3 and 4 weeks, as well as Sunday/Monday shows and the occasional shorter run. For longer runs, we tend to programme up to 6 months in advance, sometimes longer, as it can often be necessary to enable companies to raise the full budget of their production.

Please be aware that we prioritise proposals from companies and artists who are seeking programming for full 3 to 4 weeks runs of their production. We aim to respond to all artists within 2 months of the original submission of their play/proposal.

We are particularly interested in challenging, new work and ambitious revivals of significant plays from history, reflecting important new perspectives on our current society and which the UK stage may not have seen for some time.

Before submitting your play, please take note that we regrettably only have the resources to accept submissions for plays and productions which either:

- Already have a Producer attached to the project.
- And/or already have some funding confirmed.

Please therefore do not submit your play or production proposal should you not have a Producer, or some amount of funding, already confirmed.

Should you not have this, we would recommend attending one of our other opportunities such as a networking event or workshop, which we deliver with the specific aim of helping artists reach those who can support the production of their work.

If you think the Old Red Lion is the right venue for your production, then please get in touch with us. We only accept submissions via the online form on our website, which can be found on our **Production Proposals** page.

Please also be aware that we ask you to include the most recent version of your Production Budget alongside your most recent Marketing Pack when submitting a production to us for consideration.

The full rental costs of hiring The Old Red Lion Theatre will be deducted from the box office takings of your production, therefore it is vital that you have a strong marketing plan to sell the show, and we ask for you to include your Production Budget to ensure that companies have some contingency funding in place should any applications be unsuccessful.

Please allow 2 months for your proposal to be read and processed. **We are not able to provide dramaturgical feedback on script submissions or proposals other than whether we believe it is suitable for our programming.**

PLEASE ALSO NOTE:

- We do not accept scripts written for television, film, radio, treatments or incomplete works, short plays under 45 minutes in duration (av. 40 pages), musicals, plays not already translated into the English Language, or re-submissions of scripts that have already been read by the Literary Department.
- **Please do bear in mind that we cannot meet with writers prospectively.**

We need to see some of your work first, and will approach you for a meeting if we are interested in developing a relationship.

Therefore, if you have a full production, rehearsed reading, scratch performance, festival or other public platform of your work that you would like us to see, **please do send us an invitation via literary@oldredliontheatre.co.uk or info@oldredliontheatre.co.uk**

If the project is of interest to the ORL, then either the Artistic Director or the Senior Dramaturg will do their very best to attend. Please note that we do not have the resources to offer any feedback on your production.

- New drafts and/or amendments cannot be accepted once the literary team is already considering a play/proposal.

TESTIMONIALS OF PREVIOUS VISITING COMPANIES

"Working at the Old Red Lion always makes for an incredible experience. As well as the beauty of the space itself, the close relationship between the theatre and the pub really makes a production feel at home."

The friendliness and support of the pub staff, coupled with the attentive and steady hand of Artistic Director Katy Danbury, make it very difficult to worry about any of the little things which might go awry in the course of putting on a show.

The Old Red Lion was the perfect home for 'Great Expectations', and we're all very excited at the thought of working there again sometime soon."

- TOM CROWLEY, WRITER/DIRECTOR OF THE 2017 CHRISTMAS SHOW 'GREAT EXPECTATIONS'.

"The Old Red Lion was a perfect venue for our play. The space is beautifully intimate and well cared for. It's also so central and has a great following.

You will be in safe hands with Katy and Helen, who were wonderful in helping us with everything we needed, and sorted any problems we had straight away. We were at the theatre for a three-week run, and every day was a pleasure.

The whole show was a fantastic success. The Old Red Lion was worth every penny. Thank you!"

- HOLLY DONOVAN, PERFORMER AND PRODUCER OF NOVEMBER 2017'S 'NO PLACE LIKE HOPE'.

"We thoroughly enjoyed our time at the Old Red Lion Theatre. The venue was incredibly helpful and supportive, and Artistic Director Katy Danbury in particular went out of her way to give us information.

A really lovely place to take a production."

- FELICITY HUXLEY-MINERS, CO-PRODUCER, PLAYWRIGHT AND ACTOR OF MAY 2018'S 'IN THE SHADOW OF THE MOUNTAIN' WITH INSTINCT THEATRE.

"It was an absolute pleasure to bring our production to The Old Red Lion Theatre.

Artistic Director Katy and the team create such a welcoming and supportive environment, which makes the experience so much more enjoyable."

- MARCUS MARSH, PRODUCER OF 'HEDGEHOGS & PORCUPINES' IN OCTOBER 2018 WITH BLUELEAF THEATRE.