



JOB DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION
COMPOSER AND SOUND DESIGNER (Fixed term)

The Old Fire Station is a centre for creativity in Oxford housing two organisations: the homelessness charity Crisis and Arts at the Old Fire Station (AOFS). We share our building. AOFS encourages people from all backgrounds to understand and shape the world in which we live through stories, creativity and the arts, and by connecting with others. ART IS FOR EVERYONE. EVERYONE HAS POTENTIAL.

At AOFS, we

- produce and present across art forms
- help people to be creative
- support artists
- include people facing tough times because of disadvantage
- work with communities across Oxford

In everything we do, we consider

- facing the climate emergency
- unlearning discrimination
- being human friendly
- experimenting and listening
- building financial resilience

We do this by

- good quality relationships
- listening and learning
- encouraging creativity and risk-taking
- offering a public space which is welcoming to all
- working collaboratively online, outside and elsewhere

Essential to delivering our shared mission is the participation of Crisis members (homeless people using Crisis' services) in our work.

Organisational Relationship and Accountability

Line managed by: Lizzy McBain, Creative Director

Works closely with: Becs Morris, Project Manager, Rowan Padmore Writer, Emma Webb, Movement and Assistant Director and other colleagues in Arts at the Old Fire Station and Crisis.

Fixed Fee – £3910

Application Deadline: 10am on Thursday 29th April 2021

Interviews via Zoom: May 2021

Main duties and responsibilities

Key purpose

We are searching for a skilled, self-motivated Composer and Sound Designer to join our Hidden Spire production team, to create the music and soundscape for a promenade performance of a new production *The Drifting*, which will be performed throughout the building of The Old Fire Station in Oxford in October 2021.

Hidden Spire is an Arts at the Old Fire Station project in collaboration with Crisis Skylight Oxford, the Homeless charity.

Hidden Spire sees a theatrical production co-created by artists currently experiencing homelessness alongside professional artists and the general public. This will be the fifth Hidden Spire production.

Key Dates:

April-May

- Writing of the play text using responses from the Creative Collective call out.

May

- Hiring of additional core Creative Team: Set Designer, Lighting Designer, Composer.

June

- Friday 11th June Script Reading
- Creative Team Planning Meetings

July-August

- Design and Composing processes, including summer school with Crisis Members working on specific aspects of the design and score

September

- Set build
- Recording of any pre-recorded music needed

20th September - 9th October

- 12 days rehearsal and 4 performance dates

11th / 12th October

- Get Out

Dates tbc

- Evaluation process involving all team members

About the production: The Drifting

Something has happened. Flood waters have risen. There has been a mass exodus. People have been displaced. Communities are being rocked and new ones are forming overnight.

The Drifting is a new performance which is being written by playwright Rowan Padmore, which will pull together pieces of writing by different members of the community of Oxford, known as the Hidden Spire Creative Collective, which includes professional artists, the general public, and Crisis Members - clients of the charity Crisis who are people with experience of homelessness. Responses to four prompts will be written and gathered throughout March and April, and the initial script will be ready by the end of May.

These prompts are inspired loosely by Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities* and the stock characters in *Commedia dell'Arte* (e.g. the miser, the know it all, the lovers, the cowardly braggart, the mistreated, the servants, the clown, the unrequited love.....), re-appropriating them for modern times.

The performance will take the audience on a tour across the building of the OFS as well as taking in some outdoor sites directly outside the building with vignettes in to different lives situated in large spaces - the theatre, the studio, the loft, the gallery, the cafe - as well as glancing in to small spaces - a lift, a doorway, an office.

Tour guides (the inhabitants) will take the audience (the travellers) in small household groups through the building on a journey, revealing the vignettes to them, at the same time as telling their own story, much like a city guide might.

Tours will be on a loop with guides returning to gather another group once one has completed it. Several tours can take place simultaneously with start times staggered and starting points dotted across the building. Tour guides may complete 2 or 3 tours a night. A signal / sound call can gather everyone in the same place for a finale or group moment when needed, with audience being held in the cafe or theatre, within a theatre set, until everyone is ready.

Vignettes may take the form of a group scene, a monologue, an installation animated by live characters, an installation with pre-recorded sound, a shadow play movement sequence, a song, a spoken word poem, a rap, or an interaction between guide and characters - e.g. a purchase or transaction that is made.

The play will also include at least one or two coming together of audience and performers in the theatre for a choral moment - possibly the finale and the start - which may include film projection and either live or pre-recorded music.

Sound will be key to animating the spaces and many of the performance locations will have their own soundscape.

All vignettes will be created with social distancing of performers and audiences in mind.

Half-masks for both performers and the audience, designed to suit the world of the play, drawing inspiration from Commedia, may be needed at certain moments and can be woven in thoughtfully.

Proposed length of show: between 45mins-75 mins, which allows for 6x 5-10min scenes and a collective moment, plus some holding time (potential for drinks or independent exploration of a set) - e.g. in the café or theatre where needed.

Job Responsibilities

The Composer and Sound Designer's responsibilities will include:

- reading the playtext (including attending a script reading - possibly online) and collaborating with the director, movement director, writer, and set designer to create a vision for sound world of the production
- providing the team and Crisis members with sound samples to illustrate your vision, attending a creative briefing meeting
- working with a film maker, set designer and the director to create the soundscape / music for a short film piece for the opening of the play (this will be made in August by the film maker and Crisis members)
- leading a workshop/s during a summer school in August (possibly online) to generate ideas for elements of the soundscapes with Crisis members and other members of the general public
- sourcing any professional musicians required, for recording and/or live performance
- recording all soundscapes in advance of rehearsals and making changes during the rehearsal period, as required
- sourcing all technical equipment required for the performances / working alongside the tech team
- attending rehearsals and performances and directing the musician team / working alongside the tech team, as required, or working with a musical director should this be preferable
- contributing to an evaluation process with the core team after the production

Line managing responsibilities:

- Professional Musicians (if needed)
- Crisis Member Musicians (if suitable)

Person specification:

- An enhanced DBS check will be required for working with vulnerable adults
- You must be available for interviews (conducted virtually) on Friday 14th May
- Experience of composing / creating sound design for professional productions and managing a budget is essential
- Working with vulnerable adults and / or experience of leading workshops is a bonus but not essential

How to apply:

We are committed to ensuring our organisation, and the stories we tell, reflect our local communities. Applications are encouraged from people who have experienced discrimination.

Please e-mail recruitment@oldfirestation.org.uk with a statement of how you would approach the brief and how your practice is suitable (up to 1 side of A4), a CV and up to 3 examples of your sound work (web links or mp3's) by 10am on Thursday 29th April. Please also take time to fill in the demographics monitoring form.

We are keen to learn more about the barriers to inclusion and it would be really helpful if you could fill in the demographics monitoring form on the website. This is anonymous and is for us to assess how well we are doing in terms of attracting applications from people who experience discrimination (ie. Racism, disability or class among others)

Have some questions?

If you have any questions about the role before applying please email Creative Director, Lizzy McBain, lizzy@underconstructiontheatre.com

If you are invited to interview you will be asked for the following information at this stage:

Two references

Details of any convictions of a criminal offence other than a spent conviction

How we can help you to feel comfortable at interview (for example do you prefer a particular pronoun).

All candidates shortlisted for interview will also be offered a virtual tour of the Old Fire Station building before interview.

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