



Home of the Wiggler (2020) - Photo credit: Graeme Braidwood



Micro Productions: Training & Development with Stan's Cafe for Performers and Assistant Directors Autumn 2021

Context:

At **Stan's Cafe** we are delighted to have been awarded a Project Grant by Arts Council England to fund a number of **training and development opportunities** for **West Midlands artists** in **autumn 2021**.

Stan's Cafe has been making original theatre for 30 years. We work collaboratively, devising our performances from scratch in the rehearsal room, working from discussion, improvisation, occasionally some writing and plenty of trial and error.

Over 30 years we have learned that the best training for making art is to make art. Therefore in autumn 2021 we are creating three “**micro-productions**”, which take **performers** and **assistant directors** through a full, genuine making process in a condensed form.

Each production will be made over 5 days and performed on the sixth day to a small audience. The production team for each production will be different, and will consist of an experienced Stan's Cafe Associate Artist working alongside our **Artistic Director James Yarker**, with performers and assistant directors who are keen to start or extend their devising practice as part of this training and development opportunity.

We are looking for:



6 x Theatre Performers who do not have professional devising experience but have a strong interest in extending their professional practice into this area.

6 x Theatre Performers who have 2 - 5 years of professional devising experience (at any point in their career) who believe it would be useful for their professional development to work with Stan's Cafe in this context.

3 x Assistant Directors who feel their devising practice would benefit from working on one of these projects as an Assistant Director alongside Stan's Cafe's Artistic Director.

Personal specifications:

All applicants must be collaboratively minded and strongly committed to a team ethos.

All applicants must also be committed to developing their devising skills including: playing, experimenting, improvising, listening, sharing and thinking seriously about art and life.

This opportunity is open to artists living and working in the West Midlands (defined as Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall, Wolverhampton, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire). All rehearsals and performances will take place in central or south Birmingham.



Time Critical (2017) - Photo credit: Graeme Braidwood

“a company of real artistic innovators who always have new things to say and new ways of saying them”

The Guardian

Each micro production has specific requirements for Performers & Assistant Directors:

All Our Money

The decisions Birmingham City Council takes when setting its budget impact on the lives of more than one million people, but how many of us know how these numbers work or how they came to be what they are?

In **All Our Money** Stan's Cafe sets out to create a funny, gripping and enlightening theatre show from the real-life human drama of this budget setting process.

You won't need maths skills to devise this show but you will need:

- An interest in language/verbal play.
- An aptitude for comedy.

Performers will probably end up playing multiple roles.

Precious Emily

This family orientated theatre show is about lifting up heavy things. It is about heavyweight Olympic silver medallist in weightlifting Emily Campbell preparing for the most important lift of her life and it is about 4'10" Precious McKenzie, growing up in foster care in apartheid era South Africa, demonstrating unquenchable optimism to pursue his weightlifting dream. Of course it is also about us all a lot of the time, even when not attempting the Clean and Jerk.

You won't need to lift heavy weights to devise this piece, but we are looking for:

- Performers with mime/clowning/physical comedy skills.
- An empathy for children.
- The stories and people at the heart of this show mean we are particularly interested in applicants with Black British/Jamaican/mixed heritage or Black South African heritage.

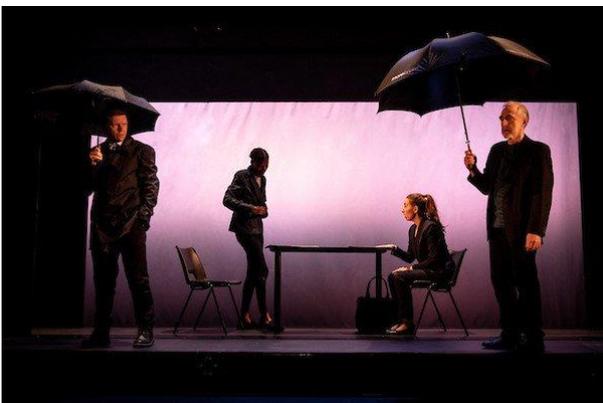
Qawwali [working title]

We are committed to helping artist and thinker Tas Bashir explore his longstanding interest in Qawwali - the devotional music of Islam's Sufi tradition. Together we are seeking to make a performance that helps us understand connections between this ancient music of humble rural origin and contemporary Birmingham.

You won't need to play an instrument to devise this show and you don't have to be religious, but the following would be an advantage:

- Some ability with music.
- An interest in spirituality.
- A cultural connection to Qawwali.
- We are particularly interested in working with performers who share Tas's Kashmiri heritage.

Project partner: Purbanat



The Capital (2019) - Photo credit: Graeme Braidwood

Dates:

Performers will be engaged for 1 week (6 days), Monday to Saturday, as follows:

Precious Emily: Monday 1st - Saturday 6th November

All Our Money: Monday 8th - Saturday 13th November

Qawwali: Monday 15th - Saturday 20th November

Assistant Directors will be engaged for the full week of rehearsals and performances (as above) plus 5 days of preparation time with James, to be mutually agreed, between 20th September and the start of the relevant project.

Fees:

Performers: £515 + holiday pay

Assistant Directors: £1,030 + holiday pay

We use ITC/Equity contracts.

Your Application:

If this opportunity interests you, the person specifications describe you, and one or more of the micro productions excites you, then please apply by sending us:

- Your CV.
- [This application form](#) application form telling us:
 - The role you are interested in (Performer or Assistant Director).
 - Your level of experience.
 - Which micro production(s) you are interested in.
 - Where you are based in the West Midlands.
- The cover sheet also has space for you to tell us how this development and training opportunity, focused on devising practice, fits into your professional ambitions. We want to know how it will bridge you from what you have done so far to what you want to do next. **No more than half an A4 page or a 2 minute audio recording, please.**
- Our [equal opportunities monitoring form](#).

Please email your CV, application form answering all questions and equal opportunities monitoring form to casting@stanscafe.co.uk

Deadline: Tuesday 31 August at 10am

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to a casting or interview in the **week commencing 13 September**, in Birmingham.

- The casting for Performers will take the form of a group audition focussed on devising practice for approximately 1 hour.
- The interview for Assistant Directors will be with a panel and we will send interview questions in advance.

We would like this opportunity to be open and accessible to everybody. If you have any accessibility requirements which you would like to discuss with us, please contact Executive Producer Roisin Caffrey on roisin@stanscafe.co.uk.

In line with our Equity, Access & Inclusion policy:

- We will let all artists know the outcome of their application.
- Our interview and casting panels will represent a diversity of lived experience, including ensuring there is always at least one woman and one Black or Asian person on each panel and being mindful of other protected characteristics.

We look forward to hearing from you.



Just the Price of Flowers (2011)
Photo credit: Graeme Braidwood



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