

PHOENIX
DANCE
THEATRE

Phoenix Dance Theatre
Artistic Director
April 2023



Phoenix Dance Theatre has an incredible history spanning more than forty years. Following a recent strategic review, we also have a robust forward strategy and positive organisational culture that are underpinned by a clear set of values. We are now seeking a talented and ambitious Artistic Director to drive the artistic vision of the company for the next four years.

We are looking for someone who can grow with us, a strong leader with passion, talent, imagination and resolve. Your experience of choreographing new work, collaborating with dancers and other creatives, and developing programmes for touring will be critical. We also need someone who leads with empathy and who understands how to build positive working cultures that enable teams to thrive. We are proud of our heritage as a Black British dance company and are particularly keen to receive applications from Black artists and those who are interested in creating work that both speaks to, and gives a voice to, the Black British experience.

Salary: Level 5, £40,000+

Hours: 35 hours per week (43 hours on touring weeks)

Location: Phoenix Dance Theatre, LS2 7PA

Contract type: Four years, fixed term

Expressions of interest: Midday Wednesday 17 May 2023

Interviews: Week commencing 22 May 2023

We are keen to speak with anyone who would like an informal/confidential chat about the role.

Please contact Jennifer Coleman-Peers, Chief Executive

(jennifer.coleman-peers@phoenixdancetheatre.co.uk) or Delia Barker, Chair

(delia.barker@phoenixdancetheatre.co.uk).

For queries about access, or if you would like this information in an alternative format or large print, please contact Niamh Bell, Operations Assistant (niamh.bell@phoenixdancetheatre.co.uk / 0113 236 8130).



A message from our Chair, Delia Barker

“Thank you for your interest in applying for Phoenix Dance Theatre’s Artistic Director role. This is an exciting time for Phoenix as we are at the beginning of a new chapter for the company. Last summer, following the end of our 40th anniversary tour, we embarked upon a strategic review and detailed stakeholder research project. We asked ourselves, our audiences, peers, supporters and communities deeply reflective questions about the place Phoenix holds, both in the contemporary dance sector and wider society. In addition, we sought insight from the sector on best and next practice in relation to organisational structure, culture and company practice. We also undertook a thorough Trustee recruitment and selection process to ensure that identified knowledge and skills gaps were filled.

“Our aim through this process was to ensure that Phoenix has the focus, resources, culture, resilience, energy and agility to deliver another incredible 40 years of dance.

“One of the key insights that emerged through this work was a collective sense of Phoenix’s story being one of *opportunity*. For that reason, we have committed ourselves to redefining contemporary dance so that everyone has the opportunity to transform, and be transformed, by extraordinary dance. We are applying this lens to everything we do, from our Learning and Development activity to the professional pathways we create via our commissioning to the way we support our staff team.

“When it came to considering the search for our new Artistic Director, we asked ourselves what we could do to support the development of great artistic talent. We recognise that there are many barriers that prevent people from minoritised groups progressing to the level of AD, and that even when those barriers are surmounted further barriers can prevent individuals from thriving in the role. We are therefore looking to appoint based on talent – we are looking for someone with a strong track record of creation and delivery but not necessarily the typical credentials for securing an AD role.

“Our new touring and production cycle runs over two years, which will enable us to re-engage with our local communities whilst also returning to main stages. With this four-year appointment our new AD will oversee two rounds of the production cycle. They will be provided with training and support, including an Artistic Coach, to enable them to grow and develop during their time with the company. In return they will deliver an exciting, truly contemporary programme that engages existing and new, young audiences. At the end of the four-year term, they will pass the baton to the next Artistic Director and will be able to take their incredible experience at Phoenix on into the next stage of their career.

“Towards the end of this job pack you will read the job description and person spec. These are important but, ultimately, we are looking for talent, energy, ideas and integrity. We are working hard to build a culture of collaboration, empathy, respect and healthy challenge whilst always striving for excellence. We are looking for someone who is excited to join and contribute to that nurturing environment.

“We know that the research shows that job descriptions and person specs can themselves be a barrier to people applying. Please don’t hold back, if you think you have the potential to be Phoenix’s next great AD, even if you don’t meet 100% of the criteria, I would welcome your application!”

About Phoenix Dance Theatre

A proud history

We are proud of our heritage as a Black British dance company born in Leeds. There are few contemporary dance companies that have had the impact Phoenix Dance Theatre has had over its more than 40-year history.

Phoenix is the longest-standing contemporary dance company outside London, one of few mid-scale contemporary dance companies to employ a permanent company of professional dancers, and unique in being co-located with a ballet company.

Local, national & international leaders in dance

We tour nationally and internationally whilst retaining our position as one of the key cultural organisations in Leeds. The company has pushed boundaries and taken risks since its inception and we're not about to stop now.

We believe that great art should be accessible to everyone because it changes lives, and that great art is created through diversity.

We recognise that Black British Caribbean artists and administrators are still underrepresented in the UK dance sector, that people still face barriers to career development and progression because of their ethnicity, gender and class, that work is not sufficiently culturally inclusive, and that audiences do not reflect the diversity of Britain today.

We work each day to be a force for change. We are audacious in our efforts to create opportunities in contemporary dance both on stage and off for those who may otherwise not find a home for their passion, ideas and talent.



We are relentless in our pursuit of quality, equity, engagement and involvement. We strive for our work to be nothing short of extraordinary. We seek to continually defy expectations, as our founders did more than forty years ago.

Building the future of dance

Phoenix Dance Theatre's Learning and Development Team are committed to changing lives through dance. The department delivers over 1,000 workshops each year reaching over 6,500 people with the aim to empower, engage and inspire through exceptional dance provision.

Our provisions range from regular weekly classes as part of our Saturday School and Illuminate Dance programmes, prevocational training in the Phoenix Youth Academies based in Leeds, Gateshead, Doncaster, York and Sheffield, to bespoke schools' packages working on cross-curricular or performance led projects.

Trustees

Our Board of Trustees is Chaired by Delia Barker. The Board brings a diverse range of experience, knowledge and skills:

Diane Alison-Mitchell
Feimatta Conteh
Louise Katerega
John Nicholls
Pippa Plumtree-Varley
Luella Jean Rebbeck

Josh Rivers
Bobsie Robinson
Lauren Van Zyl
Errol White
Chris Wright

To find out more please visit www.phoenixdancetheatre.co.uk.



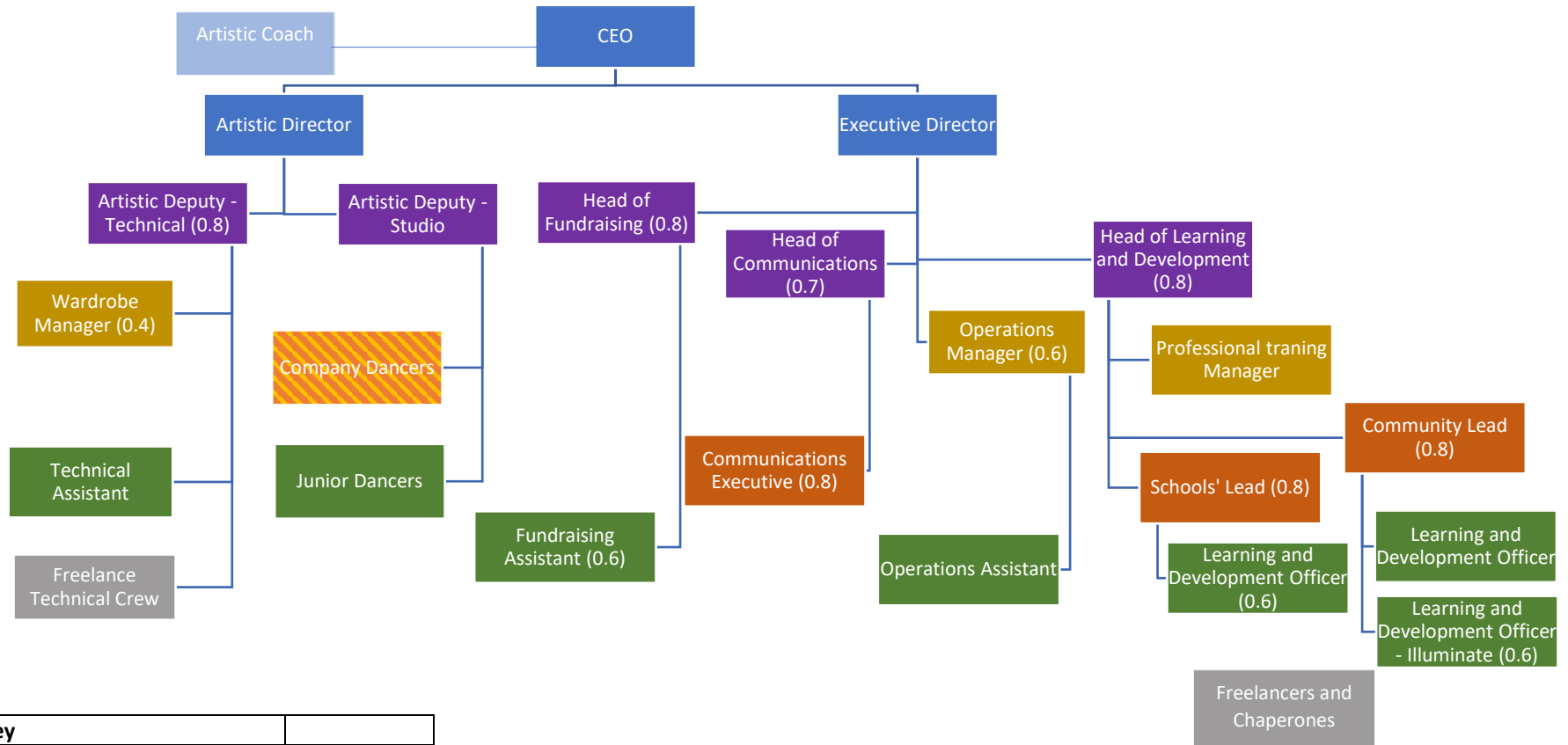
Values

Our values underpin everything we do and help define the culture we actively work to create:

Value	Rationale
Rooted	We are proud of our heritage as a Black British dance company born in Leeds. It is from this foundation that we reach further and do more each year.
Representative	We seek to be inclusive in our practice, to provide equity of opportunity for our audiences and communities, and to increase representation of the Black British Caribbean community and other under-represented groups in the contemporary dance sector.
Culturally relevant	We seek to be relevant to audiences, existing and new, and to create work that speaks to the culture, dreams, challenges and aspirations of the communities we engage, involve and represent.
Collaborative	We deepen our audience engagement, expand our creative output and broaden our reach by working side by side with partners across the sector and beyond – locally, nationally and internationally.
Open	We are open and transparent in our communication and engagement, are curious and seek active dialogue with our audiences, communities, and partners. We seek to work in an empathetic way and to promote the health and wellbeing of those we work with. We continually seek to learn and grow.
Leading the way	We are bold on behalf of the people we represent and work with. We use our platform to provide opportunities, advocate, nurture talent, amplify voices, celebrate success, and challenge the status quo. We continue to defy expectations and move the boundaries of what is possible.



Phoenix Dance Theatre organisational structure



Key	
Level 5 – Senior Leadership	
Level 4 – Head of Department	
Level 3 - Manager	
Level 2 - Professional	
Level 1 - Assistant	

Artistic Director Job Description

Job purpose – why do we need you?

Phoenix has a clear organisational vision and purpose; drawing on this you will develop and implement the artistic vision for the company, building on the company's strong foundations to create an exciting, boundary-pushing programme for the next four years. You will develop your own practice and build your skills as an Artistic Director, contributing to organisational leadership, management, strategy, and development in the process.

Key internal relationships – who will you be working with?

- Reports to the Chief Executive.
- Member of the Senior Leadership Team alongside the Executive Director.
- Line manages two Artistic Deputies.
- Company Dancers, Junior Dancers and those on Professional Placement.
- Supported by the Artistic Coach.

Key external relationships – which relationships will you manage?

- Choreographers and other commissioned artists.
- The Board of Trustees' Artistic Advisory sub-committee.
- Partner organisations.
- Key funders.
- Key sector contacts/influencers.
- Key venues.

Main responsibilities – what will you do day to day?

- Provide inspirational leadership to the wider company as part of the Senior Leadership Team, upholding the company's values and always with a focus on the company's vision and mission.
- Devise and produce outstanding and thematically cohesive programmes for our touring and production cycle, to include mid-scale UK touring, community tours, main stage productions, a digital programme and festival tours.
- Develop annual delivery plans and budgets for the company's artistic output in collaboration with the Senior Leadership Team/Artistic Management Team and in consultation with the Learning and Development Team (to ensure artistic plans align with/are supported by our education output).
- Choreograph new work, select existing rep and commission, brief and oversee new choreography from other dance artists including seasoned professionals and new voices.
- Deliver commissions for other organisations as appropriate to support income generation.
- Commission, brief and oversee work from other contributing artists, including musicians, designers, and composers.
- Develop collaborative partnerships with other companies, independent artists and organisations locally, nationally and internationally that help us to broaden our reach and innovate our artform.
- Work with the Artistic Deputy (Technical) to ensure the devised programmes can be delivered within the technical capabilities of the relevant venues and with the available wardrobe, set and lighting resource of the company.

- Recruit, audition and appoint dancers and junior dancers to the company and manage and monitor the process of casting and re-casting, ensuring high artistic standards and a commitment to diversity are maintained throughout.
- Work with the Artistic Deputy (Studio) to manage the class, rehearsal and touring schedule.
- Join the company on tour from time to time as appropriate.
- Manage the Artistic Associate programme, providing support and guidance to the selected candidate.
- Provide exceptional line management to the Artistic Team, ensuring all staff have annual performance reviews and agreed targets and development plans.
- Use your knowledge of safe working practices to set a positive and supportive studio culture.
- Lead and manage project teams (including team members and freelancers/commissioned artists) to collaborate, plan and deliver on productions.
- Work with the Artistic Deputy (Studio) and Head of Learning and Development to manage the dancers' time in delivering education work, including workshops while on tour and at base, lecture demonstrations, and studio visits.
- Work with the Operations Manager to ensure appropriate contracts and agreements are in place for all work.
- Attend all Board of Trustee meetings, provide regular reports on activity for the Board, undertake quarterly budget reforecasts and provide any other reporting requirements as needed for funders/the Board.
- Ensure thorough evaluation is undertaken for each project/production and that learning informs future developments.
- Work with the Head of Fundraising to package and pitch our artistic output to potential funders and to help steward relationships with existing funders.
- Work with the Head of Communications to ensure appropriate marketing and communications are put in place to maximise ticket sales and engagement.
- Act as a spokesperson and advocate for Phoenix as required, including speaking to the press/media as directed, securing speaking opportunities at conferences, representing the company at local, regional and national network meetings and delivering post show talks.
- Ensure effective handover to the incoming Artistic Director at the end of your tenure to ensure artistic standards and positive working culture are maintained.

Artistic Director Person Specification

What are we looking for? – Essential

- Significant experience as an artist or choreographer working with professional dancers.
- Capable of developing a clear artistic vision and strategy that builds on the foundation of the company strategy and that inspires and motivates the team and our audiences.
- Keen understanding of the UK contemporary dance sector and how it fits within the national and international context.
- Experience of touring and an understanding of the needs and requirements of a touring rep company.
- Good knowledge of the work of current contemporary dance choreographers and an understanding of how to find and develop relationship with choreographer within the framework of the company.
- Experience of leading an organisation, team or collective.
- Ability to support the development of dancers and to work with them to advance their practice.
- Ability to work collaboratively across an organisation and to build effective working relationships with key stakeholders both internally and externally.
- Experience of managing budgets and producing detailed financial and activity reports.
- A demonstrable passion for the arts/contemporary dance and for making an impact for marginalised/minoritised communities.
- Commitment to the vision, mission and values of the company.

What are we looking for? – Desirable

- Strong reputation as an inventive and exciting artist/choreographer.
- Experience of line managing staff and/or freelancers and consultants.
- Experience of working in a rep company.
- Experience of working with a charitable Board of Trustees.
- Experience of supporting fundraising and marketing campaigns/activity.
- Experience of acting as an ambassador/media spokesperson.

What are we looking for? – Personal Qualities

- Excellent communication skills and the ability to engage and move an audience.
- Excellent organisational skills and the ability to manage a complex workload.
- Ability to work under pressure.
- Very high degree of attention to detail.
- Strong networking, relationship building and influencing skills.
- Collaborative and inclusive.

Terms and conditions of employment

- Level 5, £40,000+
- 35 hours per week, Monday to Friday (43 hours on touring weeks)
- To be based at our Quarry Hill HQ
- Annual leave entitlement 25 days per annum plus 8 bank holidays
- Part of the workplace pension auto enrolment scheme (following completion of probation period)

Benefits

As a charity we are limited in the additional benefits we can offer team members, but we strive to make working for Phoenix as rewarding as possible. Current benefits include:

- Time off for volunteering – we offer all employees up to two volunteering days per year. These days must be arranged in consultation with your line manager and care must be taken to ensure it does not detrimentally impact on the delivery of your role.
- Employee Assistance Programme – we offer all employees access to an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), delivered by Health Assured – the UK and Ireland’s leading wellbeing provider.
- CharlieHR perks – Charlie have partnered up with NextJump to offer their customers Perks. With Perks you'll benefits including exclusive discounts and rewards at over 30,000 brands.
- Gym membership – a contribution towards gym membership is available (paid monthly via payroll).



How to apply

Please refer to the person specification and submit:

- a short, written expression of interest (maximum two sides of A4) OR video application of up to 5-minutes in length
- your CV
- contact details of two referees who would be willing to comment on your suitability for the role

to Niamh Bell, Operations Assistant (niamh.bell@phoenixdancetheatre.co.uk) by midday Wednesday 17 May 2023.

Please also complete our Equal Opportunities Monitoring form available here – www.phoenixdancetheatre.co.uk/equal-opportunities-monitoring-form. This is for monitoring purposes only and is important for reporting to our funders. It will be detached from your application and the data shared will be treated confidentially.

Data Protection

All applications will be processed in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). The information that you provide as part of your application will be used in the selection process only. All information about you will be securely held and access restricted to colleagues directly involved in dealing with the selection process. Unless you are appointed your data will be kept for 12 months and then destroyed.





Photo credits:

- P1. *West Side Story: Symphonic Dances* from the wings: Photo Jude Vidal
- P2. *Family* production image: Photo Foteini Christofilopoulou
- P5. Phoenix Youth Academy class: Photo Scott M Salt Photography
- P5. *Harmonica Breakdown* production image: Photo Foteini Christofilopoulou
- P6. Company Dancers in rehearsal for *Requiem* ahead of World Premiere, May 2023: Photo Point of View Photography
- P11. Phoenix Youth Academy dancer: Photo Scott M Salt Photography
- P12. *The Rite of Spring*: Photo by Tristram Kenton
- P13. *Windrush: Movement of the People*: Photo Richard Moran

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