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Co-creation Symposium

Can we all just agree on what co-creation is?

MEET THE SPEAKERS

In our morning session we will hear a series of case studies from speakers across a range of sectors who will share their practices around co-creation. Our speakers are: **Naomi Alexander** (CEO and Artistic Director, Brighton People's Theatre), **Bez Martin** (Head of Participation, Anna Freud Foundation) and **Ned Glasier** (Consultant and former Artistic Director of Company Three).

Naomi Alexander

Naomi Alexander is the CEO and Artistic Director of Brighton People's Theatre, a charity which she founded 9 years ago. Brighton People's Theatre brings people together to be part of something bigger than themselves, through theatre. All the work is co-created through conversations and workshops with hundreds of people in the city. Their latest production, *Born and Bread*, was commissioned as part of the Brighton Festival 2024.

Naomi also works freelance as a mentor, producer and most recently as a researcher. In 2019 she was awarded a Clore Fellowship for Theatre and as part of this she undertook research into the skills, qualities and responsibilities needed by artists to lead co-creative practice effectively. She has just launched a podcast based on this research called *Let's Create: Do we know how to?* Prior to this she worked in community development for 20 years. She brings all this know-how to her co-creative practice as an artist.



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Bez Martin

Bez Martin is a JNC qualified youth worker graduating from St Martin's College in 2000. She has worked across both voluntary sector and local authority, recently spending 17 years at Leicester City Council as the Manager of their Rights and Participation Service. There Bez managed the Children's Rights and Advocacy offer for children part of child protection processes and who are looked after, she managed participation for the Social Care and Early Help department managing formal youth and parent participation projects, supporting young people and parents to engage in council scrutiny and service design, delivery, and evaluation. Bez was also responsible for the creation of a departmental participation strategy for the children's department, including workforce training.

Bez introduced the rights-based model of participation to social care applying the Lundy Model to the children's department back in 2018. This led to both Bez and Leicester leading the way nationally in the implementation of rights-based participation structures. Bez has since supported the Greater Manchester Authority in the development of their participation approach, including their workforce training across all their local authorities as they implement a single children's plan.

Her work is nationally award-winning most recently winning a Children and Young People Now Award in 2021 for the Recruitment and Professional Development Award for Was Not Heard and How will you hear me participation training resource for professionals. Her work is also the recipient of a British Youth Council Innovation Award and a Young Advisor Best Partnership Award.

Bez is now the Head of Participation at Anna Freud, a UK wide mental health charity for children and young people, supporting the engagement of young people, parents, and carers in shaping the planning, delivery, and evaluation of mental health research and services. Bez led Anna Freud to launch their new participation approach this year, adopting the Lundy Model of participation with the vision to embed a rights respecting approach to participation practice across the work of the centre.

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Bez is leading work with Professor Lundy, Queens University Belfast, Barnardo's, North West Youth Focus, National Youth Agency, Royal College Paediatric Children's Hospitals and the National Lottery, to create the first UK and Ireland National Community of Practice for Leaders in Lundy. This will see practitioners with experience in applying the Lundy Model of Participation meeting for several gatherings to create a national set of resources and share good practice.

Ned Glasier

Ned Glasier is a leading voice in co-creation and work with young people whose process is rooted in listening, collaboration and exchange. From 2008 he was the founder and artistic director of Company Three, a multi-award-winning theatre company working with teenagers in North London. His work at Company Three included Brainstorm (National Theatre/BBC), When This Is Over (Yard Theatre) and The Coronavirus Time Capsule (online).

He was the inaugural ArtWorks Fellow at the Barbican Centre and a CivicFutures fellow. His work with Company Three won awards including the Peter Brook Award for innovation and The Stage Community Project Award.

Having stepped down from his role at Company Three in 2024, Ned now works as an artist, consultant and trainer, supporting organisations to work in more purposeful and democratic ways with young people and communities.

www.nedglasier.com

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Our afternoon session will begin with a video case study from **Alan Lyddiard** (Artistic Director, The Performance Ensemble) followed by a panel discussion with guest speakers where we will have an opportunity to consider all we have learned so far. The panel discussion will be chaired by **Corey Campbell** (Creative Director, Belgrade Theatre) and our panellists are: **Ned Glasier** (Consultant and former Artistic Director of Company Three), **Adaya Henry** (Artistic Director, Women & Theatre) and **Yamin Choudury** (Artistic Director and Joint Chief Executive, Hackney Empire).

Adaya Henry

Adaya Henry is the Artistic Director of Women & Theatre the company has been making deep work about things that matter for over 40 years.

"We create theatre, reflecting the language and lives of ordinary people, working across arts, health, and community sectors. Based on research we create sharply observed pieces of original and exciting theatre. We work with communities in multiple settings to explore specific themes around social issues and specialise in platforming experiences and stories that are often overlooked. We work next to, not above, communities ensuring that the stories told are authentic and relevant to social issues of today."

Find Adaya on social media:

X: [@naomi_ontheatre](#)

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Alan Lyddiard

Artistic Director of The Performance Ensemble, Alan Lyddiard is an award-winning theatre and film director, producer, and writer working across the UK, Europe and beyond. He is best known as an advocate of the community arts movement, international collaborations, and ensemble theatre practice.



“I am 72 years old and feel like I am an emerging artist again, writing applications and starting again after 40 successful years as a theatre director. I am finding new partners, developing new methodology and trying to re-establish myself, re-inventing myself a little.

I don't think the desire to create work and discover new things from that work ever goes away which is why I started The Ensemble – I want to explore new ways to create theatre. This takes time and a re-evaluation of old thinking.

Having run one Ensemble Company for over 10 years I still want to work within that methodology. The aim is to work together over a long period of time, creating work and developing it over years. I made a version of “Animal Farm” that stayed in the Northern Stage repertoire for 12 years. That's the way I like to work. Creating work that never stays still, always looking for more depth, more nuance, more clarity.

The Performance Ensemble is an emerging company for older performers from many different backgrounds and cultures. I want to work with performers, in what I call, ‘the space between professional, amateur and community arts practice’, concentrating on the relationship between us all and our shared knowledge and experience. When you are older you have many things to share and each of us will learn from the other. This takes time.”

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Yamin Choudury

Access is at the foundation of Yamin's creative and professional practice. His lived experience and unconventional journey into arts and culture, has shaped Yamin's belief that we should all have the ability to experience the transformative power of arts & culture; to be impacted in how we think about ourselves, our society and our environment.

For over a decade Yamin has focused on creating vital platforms, pipelines and roadmaps for diverse, representative and emerging stories, ideas, artists, audiences and participants.

Since March 2018, Yamin has been responsible for conceiving and leading a new artistic and business plan to revitalise The Hackney Empire Theatre, a 1,200+ seat theatre in London's East End, rebranding the venue for a contemporary audience and industry. In this time, he has led an unprecedented financial and critical turnaround for the organisation; building new relationships and developing a diverse and compelling programme that has engaged 100,000's of new audiences. The education and participation programme that Yamin created at Hackney Empire in 2012, is now acknowledged as one of the most significant, transformative and impactful programmes in the Capital.

As of 2023 Yamin joined The London Borough of Haringey, in one of the most senior job-shares within a local authority in the country. Within 5 months of his appointment, he was jointly responsible for mobilising the team that was awarded London Borough of Culture for 2027; a programme that will feature 100's of artists, support 1,000's of participants, and engage over 300,000 audiences.

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Corey Campbell

Corey Campbell is the Creative Director of the Belgrade Theatre, having previously been the Theatre's Co-Artistic Director for 2021. In 2023 Corey, and CEO Laura Elliot, launched the Belgrade Theatre's restructure and new co-creation model which led to the organisation receiving an uplift in ACE funding during a time where the industry overall was seeing a decline in funding.

Corey is an Honorary Member of the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire for his contribution to the arts and for his realisation and adoption of the future form programme through the process of heutagogy.

Corey was also the Artistic Director of Strictly Arts Theatre Company, formerly supported by the Belgrade's Springboard talent development programme. Through productions such as Green Leaves Fall and the critically acclaimed, Edinburgh sell-out show Freeman, Corey has used a collaborative, devising process to bring stories from real people to the stage, building long-lasting relationships with audiences through targeted workshops and outreach programmes, with a particular focus on African and Caribbean communities.

Corey's flagship production for the Belgrade in his tenure as Co-Artistic Director has been SeaView, a new digital television series created, produced, and filmed in the West Midlands using a unique Writers Room project which involved local emerging writers from the region. SeaView was created using theatrical devising techniques, from an original, pre-pandemic idea by Corey. It celebrates a Black working class aspirational family and all the things they come up against on their journey to achieve great things. SeaView premiered at the Belgrade in 2021 and is now streaming on Amazon Prime.

In 2022 Corey directed the new drama, Fighting Irish, which was a sell-out success and marked Corey's final project for the Belgrade as Co-Artistic Director for UK City of Culture 2021, before he moved forward to commence projects as Creative Director. Most recently, Corey devised, directed and starred in the acclaimed Belgrade Theatre production, Big Aunty in April 2023.

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