See It First 2026: Open Performance Slot Information

Introduction

The Belgrade Theatre is thrilled to open applications for Midlands-based creatives to perform new work as part of **See It First 2026**, an exciting programme of new work, workshops, and conversations between artists and audiences. We are pleased to bring back this opportunity after last year's successful launch of **The Jag**, where we showcased six sold-out performances of new work**.**

What We're Offering

- Two back-to-back evening performance slots in our basement Jag space
- A paid opportunity to preview work ahead of touring or other performance opportunities in one of the Midlands' top producing theatres
- A chance to be part of See It First, a programme of new work, workshops and conversations between artists and audiences
- The opportunity to take pictures & video of work
- The opportunity to test work in front of an audience. We will also support with gathering feedback if needed

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Fee

The Belgrade Theatre will pay Visiting Companies a fee ranging from £500-£1000. This will be dependent on the stage of development the work is currently at.

Stage of development	Description	Fee
Script-in-hand sharing	Staged with some elements of tech, set/costume and full or partial script. Cast is rehearsed but not necessarily off-book. This could be a first public sharing of the piece or it could have already had sharings in the past (e.g. at a scratch night)	£600
Staged work-in-progress	Fully staged including tech, set/costume, full script, but anticipating potentially heavy changes after this point	£800
Preview of fully-produced work	Performance is a preview ahead of subsequent premiere at another venue (e.g. the Fringe). Work is presented in its intended final form	£1000

We appreciate that some work may not fit neatly into these categories. If this doesn't quite fit your piece, please use the "Other" category in the application and tell us more about where you up to, and please don't hesitate to drop us a line if you have concerns about the fee.

Dates and Schedule

The performances will take place Wed 22 - Sat 25 Jul 2026, with one company in The Jag every day rehearsing and performing twice.

Here is a rough schedule for how the day of the performance may run:

9 am–12pm	Artists arrive. Familiarisation with Jag space and rehearsals without tech.
12pm-1pm	Lunch break
1pm-5pm	Technical rehearsal with a Belgrade Theatre technician
5pm-6pm	Dinner break
6pm	Doors open to audience
6.15pm-7.30pm	Performance 1
7.30pm-8pm	Reset & artist break
8.15pm	Doors open to audience
8.30pm	Performance 2

Performance times still to be confirmed. Schedule is indicative only and rehearsals and breaks to be decided with artists.

Marketing

From a Marketing perspective, we will work with you on promoting your show during your time here. Your show will be a part of our See It First Season, a programme

which brings the best work to Coventry to be shared with Coventry audiences before anyone else.

The Belgrade Communications Team will provide the following support.

- Show/event listed on the Belgrade Theatre website
- Inclusion in See It First press release
- Inclusion in local online listings
- Organic social media support
- Inclusion in See It First sponsored posts on social media
- Inclusion in See It First emails to our database

Box Office

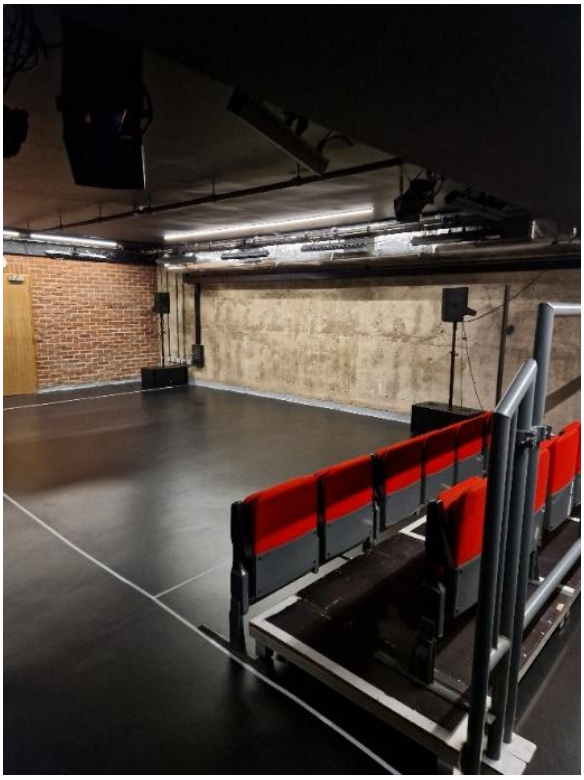
Tickets will be sold through our Box Office for £5. A small number of complimentary tickets will be offered to the company for invited guests.

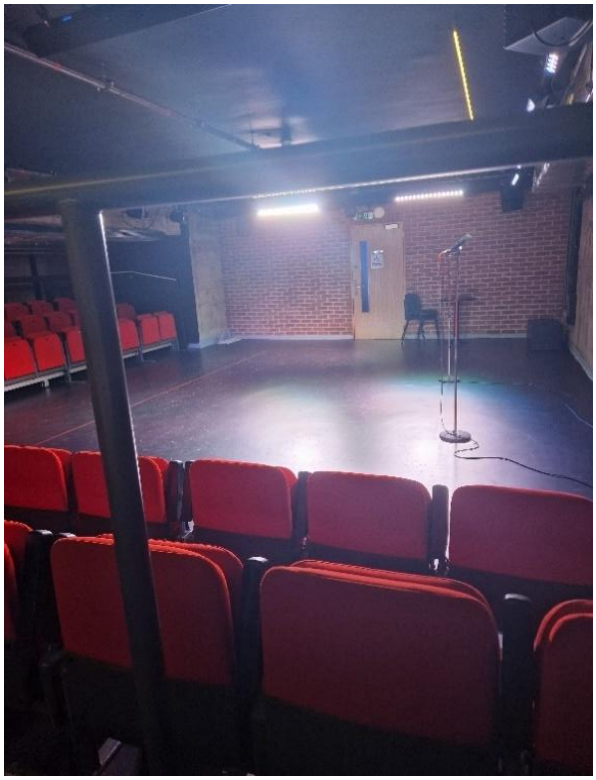
The Jag Basement Space

Please find below key information, specs and pictures of The Jag basement. See schedule for more information about time in the space and technical support.

- Stage Dimensions: 6m x 4m.
- Thrust configuration (seats in front and on stage left). Capacity up to 46.

- Height: 2.4m. Please be aware larger set elements may struggle to access the space due to nature of underground space. Please contact us if you need to discuss this further.
- We are equipped with basic theatre audio and lighting equipment.
- Please note, there are no flying/hanging capabilities and that it is difficult to bring theatre flats into the space as the get-in is through a single door and staircase.
- There are no tabs/curtains.
- There is access to one dressing room which could fit up to four. There are also two toilets reserved for artist use, one of which is accessible.
- There is a lift to allow wheelchair access to the performance space, but access is via a corridor which is 90cm wide at its narrowest point. That means we are able to accommodate most manual wheelchairs but motorised or more specialised wheelchairs may not be able to have access. We'd be happy to discuss solutions to this with artists and audience members, please contact us to have more discussions around this.





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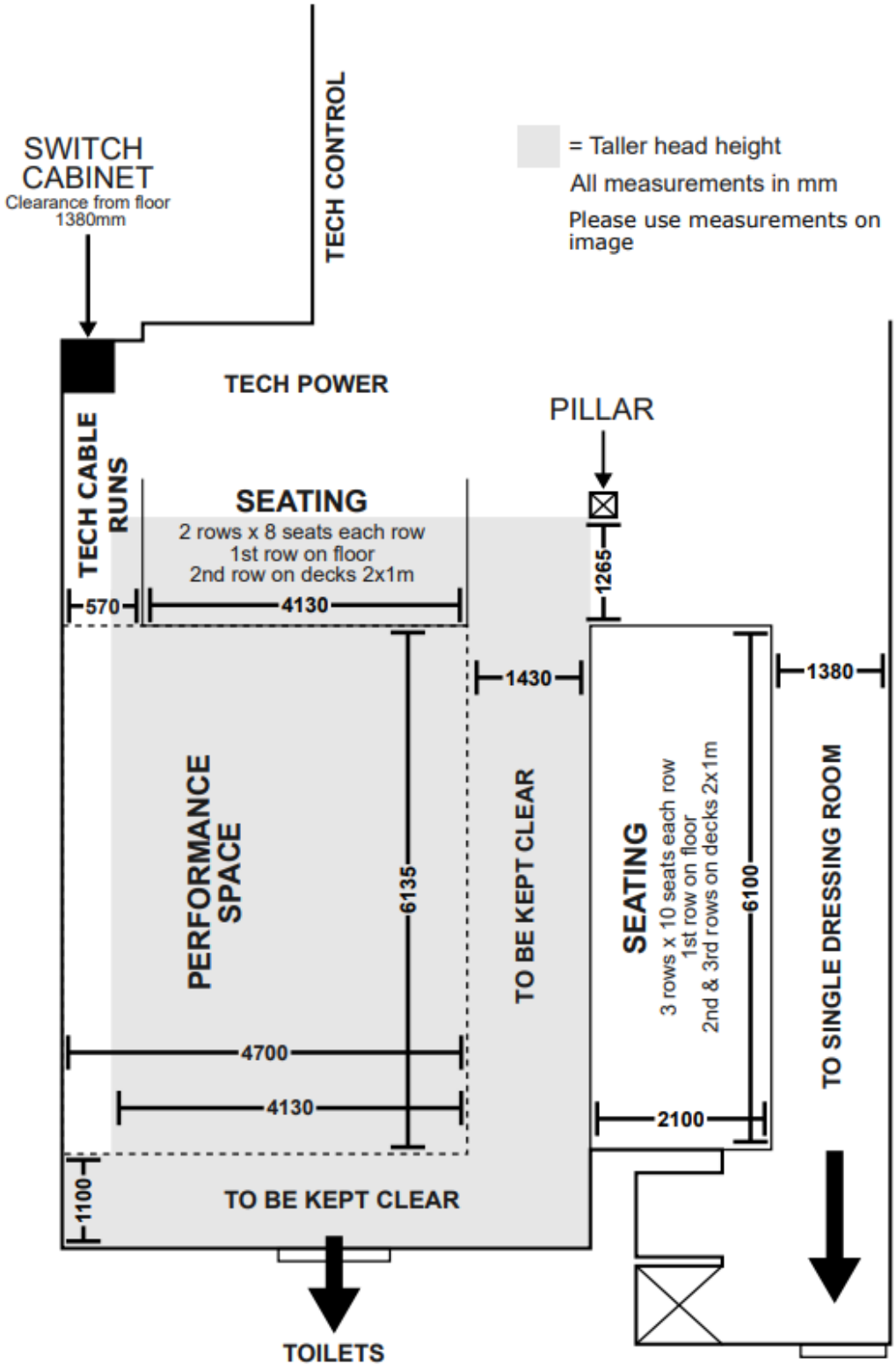
The Jag Basement Plan



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Access

See It First is part of a research project the team at the Belgrade Theatre have recently been undertaking to review how to make our work with artists as accessible as possible. We are committed to making sure we minimise barriers to D/deaf, Disabled & Neurodiverse artists taking up this opportunity.

Working with us, you can expect:

- All artists working with us will be asked to provide their access rider/sent an access requirements form to complete.
- If we cannot practically fulfil a request, we will be honest about this and work with the artist to find a workable solution.
- All artists will be given a specific staff member to handle their access and who will actively reach out to them throughout their project to check in and make any amendments required.
- We have a separate budget to accommodate access needs. For example, this could include BSL interpretation, equipment or cost of taxi.
- Flexibility from our team (where physically possible) in terms of scheduling and communication.

Please note that the Jag in itself is not a fully-accessible space. There is a lift to allow wheelchair access to the performance space but access is via a corridor which is 90cm wide at its narrowest point. That means we are

able to accommodate most manual wheelchairs but motorised or more specialised wheelchairs may not be able to have access. It is also a basement space without windows or natural light. If there are any concerns around this, please get in touch with us to discuss.

What We're Looking For

- Work made by Midlands-based creatives, ideally with a connection to Coventry and the local area.
- New productions (i.e. never been seen in a full production by a public audience).
- Shows that are ready to meet a public audience, at any stage of their development.
- Shows should be no longer than 70 minutes.

We expect creatives applying to:

- Have already secured funding or be in the process of acquiring funding to support the development of the production.
- Have already or be able to independently assemble a creative team, cast actors, and hold rehearsals.
- Provide us with copy and images for on sale
- Be going on to further opportunities (e.g. festival or tour) or planning for this in the future.

We recognise that a range of cultural perspectives strengthens creative practice, and we value the artistic

voices and experiences that enrich our shared cultural landscape.

We welcome and encourage applications from people of diverse backgrounds and experiences, including those who identify as LGBTQIA+, people of the Global Majority, Disabled and Neurodivergent people, and artists with lived experience of migration, displacement, or seeking sanctuary, as well as those who are currently under-represented in our industry. Self-definition is at the sole discretion of the applicant.

This year, we are particularly committed to including disabled-led work within our programme and encourage you to indicate within your application if this applies to your project.

You can contact Emma Worrall, Programme Coordinator, by email at **communityadmin@belgrade.co.uk**. Alternatively, you can call 024 7625 6431 and select option 2.

How to Apply

You can apply in any of the following ways

1. Online form **here**. For longer responses, there is the option to upload a video or audio response rather than written text. You will also have the opportunity to upload supporting files like a script or video.

2. Email your application to **communityadmin@belgrade.co.uk**. Please use subject line: “SEE IT FIRST OPEN SLOT APPLICATION”. Please feel free to attach Word documents, audio or video files. Please make sure you answer the questions from the ‘Application Questions’ document.

3. For any alternative formats, please email **communityadmin@belgrade.co.uk**. We can if needed schedule a phone call and a member of staff can record your application responses.

The deadline for applications is 12 noon, on Mon 6 Apr. We will aim to offer artists a slot by **Mon 13 Apr.**

Further information

- Join the information session on Zoom on Wed 25 Mar at 5pm (see webpage for joining instructions) OR join our regular Artist Network Zoom on Fri 27 Mar at 1pm. Please contact us ahead of the session with any access requirements.
- Download the application form questions and read through before filling in.
- Email **communityadmin@belgrade.co.uk**.

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