ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

SIRENS

LEEDS PLAYHOUSE

APPLICATION INFORMATION PACK

If you require this Recruitment Pack in a different format, please contact the HR & Learning team on 0113 213 7280 or recruitment@leedsplayhouse.org.uk

LOTTERY FUNDED | Supported using public funding by ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

Leeds CITY COUNCIL

THE LIZ & TERRY BRAMALL FOUNDATION

QUICK FACTS







3 THEATRES
5 MAIN REHEARSAL & STUDIO SPACES

c193,000
AUDIENCE PER YEAR

OVER 19,500 PEOPLE
CONNECTED THROUGH PLAYHOUSE CONNECT

10M
TURNOVER

+

- Restaurant & café
- Two bars
- Conferencing and events
- Public gallery space

THIS SHORT FILM WILL HELP YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT WE'RE ALL ABOUT.

WHO WE ARE



Leeds Playhouse is Leeds's home for bold stories and shared humanity. For more than 55 years, it has been one of the UK's leading producing theatres - an award-winning cultural hub where people gather to tell and share stories, and to experience world-class theatre. Many of its productions transfer to the West End, tour nationally, and travel the world.

Born from the city itself, **Leeds Playhouse** was fought for and built by people who believed a city without a theatre is a city without a heart. That spirit still drives everything it does: making ambitious theatre that represents, entertains, challenges and connects – across three spaces, one city, and many voices - and helping shape the cultural life of the country. From big names to artists and communities often unheard or ignored, the Playhouse seeks out the best companies and artists to create pioneering, relevant work in the heart of Yorkshire.

Alongside the work on its stages, the Playhouse works creatively with the people, artists and communities of Leeds through its innovative, sector-leading Playhouse Connect programme. Through its three strands, People's Playhouse, Playhouse Ensembles and Furnace, Playhouse Connect develops audiences, removes barriers to access, creates opportunities for communities to share their voices on stage, and supports the development of artists across Leeds and Yorkshire. The programme builds lasting relationships with refugee communities, young people and students, older people, and people with learning disabilities, ensuring the Playhouse remains a truly inclusive and representative cultural space.

As a registered charity, **Leeds Playhouse** relies on the support of valued partners to make great things happen. It's work also makes a significant contribution to the region's economy, sustaining jobs and driving the wider economic life of the city. The Playhouse is grateful for the continued support of **Arts Council England**, **Leeds City Council**, **The Liz and Terry Bramall Foundation**, and the many charitable trusts, business partners and individuals who continue to support the vital work of the theatre.

THE ROLE

WHO ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

We are looking for an Assistant Director for our upcoming productions of *Sirens*.

Leeds Playhouse is keen to welcome applications from artists who are from communities consistently under-represented in UK theatre. This may be because of barriers arising from ethnicity, sexuality, gender, having caring responsibilities, and being deaf and/or disabled.

Given the subject matter of *Sirens*, we are particularly keen to hear from artists who are from the Global Majority or identify as LGBTQ+, Disabled, working class or are from a low socio-economic background.

In keeping with the aims of our Furnace programme to support local artists, we strongly encourage applications from those based in Leeds or within 25 miles of Leeds Playhouse.

WHAT'S THE DEAL?

- You will receive a fee of £3,600.
- You will be contracted as self-employed and be responsible for paying your own tax and National Insurance contributions.

DATES AND TIME COMMITMENT

- The Assistant Director will be required throughout the rehearsal process, technical rehearsals and previews up to and including Press Night. They will also undertake a half-day preparation session with the director before rehearsals begin. This will include some weekend and evening working, and some days may be longer than a standard 8-hour day.
- The contractual agreement is for 15 February 2027 to 18 March 2027, a total of 4 weeks and 4 days.

SIRENS

A LEEDS PLAYHOUSE PRODUCTION



Sirens is a witty, intimate and deeply human new play by **Leeds Playhouse's** Artistic Director, **Tom Wright** – a warm, tense story of ordinary people thrown together in extraordinary circumstances. Set in 1942. Beneath an East London pub, Charles, a guarded landlord, risks everything in a secret liaison with Dwight, a young American GI. But desire and loyalty can no longer remain hidden.

As enemy bombers darken the skies above, a motley collection of friends, family and strangers rush below for shelter. Trapped together, tensions flare and allegiances shift – yet amid the claustrophobia and chaos, unexpected connections begin to flicker into life.

This is set to debut on 15 March 2027 and run until 3 April 2027.

Insights from Tom Wright –

"For years my plays came out of things that were happening right now, to me and my friends in the queer community. Then I wanted to look back and explore queer history and how it continues to shape us today. I didn't want more stories of queer trauma, though. I wanted stories of resilience: the people who were making it work despite the odds.

Then I came across a story from the Blitz. Supposedly, people were having sex in the blackouts. With death so close, the old rules loosened, and sexuality got looser too. I knew there was a play in that.

SIRENS

A LEEDS PLAYHOUSE PRODUCTION



Insights from Tom Wright continued –

I had the idea for ***Sirens*** during lockdown, and I didn't notice the parallel at first. My characters were stuck in a pub cellar, and so were we. I watched people react in completely different ways. Some just wanted it to end so they could get their old lives back. Others said, "When this is over, I'm changing everything, because life is short." Those questions about what we do with the time we've got are at the heart of the play.

It's 1942. Charles, a guarded landlord, seduces Dwight, a young American GI, for what should be one secret night. Then the sirens go, and the cellar fills up. What follows is a farce: funny, sexy and full of surprises. It's about what queerness can offer everyone when it stops hiding, and how it can inspire the people around it to live more freely.

I'm writing and directing, so I need an Assistant Director who'll be honest with me. That means someone who'll watch with fresh eyes, tell me when something isn't landing, and keep asking "why?" You might be a great fit if you can see the hidden queer histories around us, if you're interested in where drama and comedy meet, and if you care about making a rehearsal room where intimacy and big existential questions can live alongside the laughs.

If that sounds like your kind of room, I'd love to hear from you."

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Working in collaboration with the Director and Creative team to realise the artistic aims of the production
- Attending, supporting and participating in production meetings and creative team meetings, rehearsals, technical rehearsals and preview performances.
- Completing pre-production research and preparation.
- Supporting the Director with the creative delivery of the production through until Press Night.
- Running rehearsals and warmups when required.
- Working with the Director and Stage Management team to create rehearsal schedules.
- Contributing to keeping the cast and creative team moving forwards positively, embracing changes and working collaboratively and inclusively.
- Overseeing any understudy/cover rehearsals and ensuring that the understudies/covers are ready to perform to a professional standard throughout the run of the production.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

- A Team player who enjoys collaborative working.
- High level of organisation and attention to detail.
- Demonstrable alignment with core culture and values of **Leeds Playhouse**.
- Excellent organisational and time management skills, with the ability to prioritise competing demands, manage multiple tasks simultaneously, and consistently meet deadlines.
- Ability to work effectively both independently and collaboratively across teams.
- Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to build and maintain positive working relationships with the cast and Production Team.
- Experience of supporting projects or initiatives.

EXPERIENCE & KNOWLEDGE

- Early career/established director: experience working on a professional production. (can be of any scale as a director, associate director, assistant director or similar).
- Knowledge of production process and good practices.
- Demonstrable understanding of the themes and of the show and inclusive language pertaining to its themes.
- Knowledge of and interest in the themes and vision for the show.

EMPLOYMENT TERMS SUMMARY

CONTRACT

This a fixed-term freelance contract.

Any offer we make is subject to:

- Receipt of 2 satisfactory references
- Proof of eligibility to work in the UK
- Completion of a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check*

PAY

Total fee of £3,600.

HOURS

Full-time, rehearsals run from 10am - 6pm, with the possibility of including some Saturdays and extended hours.

LOCATION OF WORK

Your main place of work will be Leeds Playhouse. You may be required to work permanently or temporarily at other locations in the Leeds City Region. You may be asked to work temporarily in other locations in the UK.

*In line with the Playhouse's Safeguarding Policy, any appointment will be made subject to a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Disclosure information will be treated in the strictest confidence and shall only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process. Only relevant information will be taken into account. The Playhouse will not discriminate unfairly against any convictions or other information revealed.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for this post please complete the online application form and diversity monitoring form which can be found on the job opportunities page, under the job role you are applying for. You'll be asked to also send your CV/summary separately to recruitment@leedsplayhouse.org.uk with the Email Subject "Sirens Assistant Director". Data from your diversity monitoring form will not be shared with the recruitment panel.

If you would like to request any adjustments to enable you to apply for this post or to fully participate in an interview, please contact recruitment@leedsplayhouse.org.uk

Please read the job description carefully before starting your application to ensure that you meet all of the essential criteria and are able to provide evidence in your application to support these areas. Only relevant information will be considered when shortlisting candidates.

Your application will be retained securely for 6 months before being destroyed if you are unsuccessful, and for up to 12 months if you are successful.

The deadline for completing your application is 12pm noon on Friday 11 December 2026.

SUMMARY OF THE STEPS:

- Read through the Job Pack.
- Complete the Application Form and the separate Inclusion and Diversity Monitoring Form.
- Answer the application questions in the Application Form, or in another format.
- Send us a Summary of your directing credits (This can be in the form of a CV).

AS PART OF THE APPLICATION FORM, YOU WILL BE ASKED TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:

- Why do you think you might be the right person for this opportunity? Think about the 'Who are we looking for?' section above and your connection to the themes of the show when answering this question.

If you would prefer to answer this question by making an audio or video recording (in English or BSL, lasting no longer than 2 minutes) please submit this alongside your CV/Summary and indicate this in the Application Form. We're interested in what you say rather than how you say it.

HOW TO APPLY

PLEASE ALSO SHARE WITH US:

- DBS: Successful appointment will be subject to a satisfactory enhanced DBS check for the [child or child and adult] workforce. Please confirm whether you currently hold an enhanced DBS certificate and/or are subscribed to the DBS Update Service.

- **Access requirements:** Please share any access requirements you have to enable you to apply for this post or to fully participate in an interview,. Information you provide will not form part of the decision-making process.

- Complete our Inclusion and Diversity Monitoring Form

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- We will create a shortlist from everyone who has submitted an application.
- If you are shortlisted, you will hear from us by email or phone. You will be invited to an informal interview. The interviews are currently scheduled to be held on 21 and 22 December 2026.
- If you are not shortlisted, we will let you know soon after the application deadline.
- After the interviews we will let all candidates know whether they have been successful or not.

INTERVIEWS FOR DISABLED CANDIDATES

Leeds Playhouse is a member of the Disability Confident scheme. Subject to capacity, we will interview candidates who identify as disabled who demonstrate that they meet all the essential criteria for the job.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Leeds Playhouse is committed to promoting equality and opportunity in its employment practices. In particular, the company aims to ensure that no potential or actual employee receives more or less favorable treatment on the grounds of race, color, ethnic or national origins, marital or civil partner status, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, or religious beliefs. Disabled candidates will not be treated less favorably on the grounds of their disability.

THANK YOU

LEEDS PLAYHOUSE

FIND US AT

PLAYHOUSE SQUARE,
QUARRY HILL, LEEDS LS2 7UP
LEEDSPLAYHOUSE.ORG.UK
0113 213 7700

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS
All photographs are copyright Leeds Playhouse unless otherwise stated.

Page 1: *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, photography by Brinkhoff/Mögenburg; *I Wanna Be Yours*, photography by Robling Pix; *In Dreams*, photography by Pamela Raith
Page 2: *Oliver!*, photography by Robling Pix