



ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Application Pack

Thank you for your interest in the role of Artistic Director at Sherman Theatre.

I have had the privilege of serving on the Board of the Sherman Theatre since 2018 and as Chair since 2022. During this time I have watched the organisation grow and flourish, becoming one of the UK's most important producing theatres with a clear focus on its role as a civic resource within the City of Cardiff.

I am pleased to be looking ahead to the next iteration of the Sherman's story as we embark on the process of appointing a successor to Joe Murphy, who leaves us to take on the role of Artistic Director at Birmingham Rep.

The Sherman team is a small, ambitious and committed team, which has delivered huge levels of success both on and off our stages. Our new Artistic Director will have the great opportunity to work with this experienced and sector-leading team to take the Sherman to the next level of artistic excellence, deepening engagement with current and potential audiences and communities.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Ceri Davies
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Sherman Theatre is a very special place, making exceptional work for our vibrant communities and audiences across Cardiff, south Wales and sometimes beyond, and providing a warm Sherman welcome for everyone.

I am excited to be looking for a new partner to work alongside me in leading the inspiring and brilliant team of people who are dedicated to achieving the Sherman's ambitious vision. This is a wonderful moment to join the Sherman as we build upon the successes of recent years and develop a new strategy to elevate the work of the organisation even further, deepening engagement with audiences, widening our reach and developing artists for the future.

The sector is facing uncertain times, and yet we are seeing record-breaking audience figures and remarkable responses to our productions, demonstrating a genuine appetite for new writing, with universal appeal.

Our role within our communities has never been more vital and through our commitment to our position as a Theatre of Sanctuary, as a founding member of the Craidd partnership, and through a number of other initiatives, we are all driven to ensure that Sherman Theatre has inclusivity at its heart.

I am very much looking forward to meeting the next Artistic Director with whom I can work to take Sherman Theatre to the next chapter of its story and to ensure that we continue to deliver work of excellence for this vital arts organisation in Wales.

Diolch yn fawr.

Julia Barry
Chief Executive

INTRODUCTION

Imagine a world made more equitable, more compassionate, more unified by the power of theatre. We are driven to achieve this vision every day. We do this by creating and curating shared live theatre experiences that inspire people from all backgrounds across South Wales and beyond, to make a better world. We believe that access to creativity and self-expression is a right and we strive every day to ensure everyone has the opportunity to be enriched by the art of theatre.

For over 50 years Sherman Theatre has been responsible for creating some of Wales's most adventurous and acclaimed theatrical work. The theatre aims to create and present work, in both English and Welsh, that is entertaining, provoking, diverse, and which is enjoyable and stimulating for audiences of all ages.

▶ SHERMANTHEATRE.CO.UK

“

Conceptually brilliant, with complex characters and a fearless cast, Azuka Oforika's debut play is a remarkable examination of women under colonialism with contemporary resonance”



The Guardian on
The Women of Llanrumney



“

Emotional, visceral Welsh language adaptation of modern classic.”



The Stage on *Iphigenia yn Sblot*



With a focus on the development and production of new writing and on nurturing Welsh and Wales-based artists, Sherman Theatre is the engine room of Welsh theatre. The company tells Welsh stories with global resonance through its Made at Sherman productions, all created in the Sherman building situated in the centre of Cardiff. The theatre is a place for everyone, generating opportunities for the citizens of South Wales to connect with theatre through inspiring and visionary engagement.

Each year the company produces between 5 and 8 Made at Sherman professional productions/co-productions, in Welsh, English, and bilingually, alongside 3 productions for the participation programmes (Sherman Youth Theatre and Sherman Players).

Since 2015 the theatre has commissioned and produced work by over 30 Welsh and Wales-based writers, and has co-produced work with: National Theatre; The Royal Court; Cwmni Frân Wen; Theatr Cymru; Theatr Clwyd; Royal Exchange, Manchester; Tron Theatre, Glasgow; Tobacco Factory Theatres, Bristol; Prime Cut; Paines Plough; Òran Mór; Hijinx Theatre; Theatr Iolo; and Neon Candle and Ceriann Williams.

The company tours its work, when relevant, throughout Wales and the UK, and more recently, internationally. It houses two auditoria – the Main House with a seating capacity of 452 and the Studio which is generally configured to seat 100.

Through our sector-leading learning, outreach and participation programmes, we are committed to playing our part in ensuring that South Wales is a vibrant and creative place to live, to work, to go to school, and to grow up.

AWARDS AND NOMINATIONS FOR OUR WORK:

- ◆ Winner of Regional Theatre of the Year – The Stage Awards 2018 and shortlisted for Theatre of the Year at The Stage Awards in 2024 and 2025.
- ◆ Shortlisted in the Theatre category at the 2024 Sky Arts Awards.
- ◆ Best Writer Award for Azuka Oforka for *The Women of Llanrunney* at The Stage Debut Awards 2024.
- ◆ Best Actor Award for Elan Davies for *Imrie* at The Stage Debut Awards 2023.
- ◆ Outstanding Achievement in Affiliate Theatre for *Killology* by Gary Owen, a co-production with The Royal Court, at the Olivier Awards 2018.
- ◆ Best New Play – UK Theatre Awards 2015 – *Iphigenia in Splott* by Gary Owen.
- ◆ James Tait Black Prize – *Iphigenia in Splott* by Gary Owen.

VISION, MISSION, AND CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES

OUR VISION

A world made more equitable, more compassionate, more unified by theatre.

OUR MISSION

To create and curate shared live theatre experiences that inspire people from all backgrounds across South Wales and beyond to make a better world. We believe that access to creativity and self-expression is a right and we strive every day to ensure everyone has the opportunity to be enriched by the art of theatre.

CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES

To promote and encourage art and in particular performing art for the benefit of the public by the development, production and presentation of new writing and theatre, the provision of theatre facilities and the advancement of education of children, young persons and adults by participation in the experience of theatre, drama and the performing arts.

OUR VALUES

GALVANISING: Our work is a call to action to create a better world.

EXCELLENT: We are committed to achieving excellence in everything we do.

UPLIFTING: Our productions should be a source of hope and light.

OPEN: We are always open – always here.

RESILIENT: We are a small yet strong team. Our scale makes us truly flexible, agile and responsive.



[SHERMANTHEATRE.CO.UK/
ABOUT-US/OUR-MISSION/](https://shermantheatre.co.uk/about-us/our-mission/)

ARTISTIC PROGRAMME

Sherman Theatre is committed to commissioning and producing the work of predominantly Welsh and Wales-based writers to create excellent, innovative, and stimulating productions that resonate with, and reflect the communities of South Wales.

Sherman Theatre occupies an important space in the theatre sector in Wales in terms of nurturing a new diverse generation of theatre artists, technicians and leaders, and creating a variety of alternative pathways into the arts. In addition, as a leading cultural organisation, the Sherman plays an active leadership role in the arts sector more widely in Wales.

2024 was another successful year for Sherman Theatre. Throughout the year the theatre continued to make and curate uplifting theatre, which resonated deeply with ever increasing audiences and was met with acclaim. Over 54,000 tickets were sold, a 9% increase on 2023.

The Made at Sherman productions, created at the theatre in central Cardiff, told South Wales stories with global resonance.

▶ [SHERMANTHEATRE.CO.UK/
ABOUT-US/](https://www.shermantheatre.co.uk/about-us/)



IN 2024

5 world premiere productions of plays by Welsh and Wales-based writers

There were 181 performances of Made at Sherman productions

Across Made at Sherman productions and curated visiting company programme, 307 performances were staged at the Sherman

7 Made at Sherman productions in total, all created within the building





There were 2
tours across Wales
in 2024: IPHIGENIA
YN SBLOT and
LITTLE RED RIDING
HOOD / YR HUGAN
FACH GOCH



Sherman Theatre has long been committed to promoting the Welsh language by making work in the Welsh language and bilingually, encouraging staff members to use and learn the language, and encouraging participants to use the language in ways which work for them.

On our stages, we are committed to making work which represents innovative and contemporary use of the Welsh language, through recent productions and co-productions.

We foster a culture where everyone is encouraged to use their Welsh language skills, whatever their level.

SHERMAN THEATRE LITERARY DEPARTMENT

The launch of the Sherman Literary Department in 2021 signified the foundations of a strategic, long-term approach to writer development. Offering a cohesive programme of work that provides a clear progression pathway that individuals can enter at different stages of their writing career, the work of the Literary Department has quickly established itself as a vital function at the heart of Sherman Theatre's artistic process.

The long-term aim is to establish a permanent Literary Department to create world-class, bilingual new writing

at Sherman Theatre. This will ensure that Sherman Theatre continues to help to build a dynamic and resilient Welsh theatre sector as an engine room of Welsh theatre fuelled by the creativity of its communities.

In 2024, Sherman Theatre continued to be at the heart of theatre in South Wales: developing and nurturing Welsh and Wales-based writers at all stages of their careers; supporting emerging companies and theatre-makers and serving as an inclusive creative space for the whole sector.

▶ [SHERMANTHEATRE.CO.UK/
THEATRE-MAKERS/](https://SHERMANTHEATRE.CO.UK/THEATRE-MAKERS/)



Craidd is a collaboration between 5 Welsh organisations to drive meaningful and sustainable change, improving representation of, and opportunities for, Deaf and disabled people (including neurodivergent and learning-disabled people) across Wales' mainstream theatre sector. The aim is for access and inclusion to be at the core of theatre in Wales.

The organisations involved are: Sherman Theatre, Theatr Clwyd, Pontio Arts, The Torch Theatre, and the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama.

Craidd will stage its first production in spring 2026, led by Theatr Clwyd. Sherman Theatre will produce the Craidd 2027 production and it will be directed by Sherman Theatre's Artistic Director.



YOUTH THEATRE AND CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT

Sherman Theatre's Youth Theatre and Creative Engagement programmes continue to help to create engaged young citizens who are motivated to make a positive impact on the world.

Through the Creative Engagement programmes the Sherman worked with or interacted with 1508 children and young people from across South Wales in 2024.

Sherman Youth Theatre is not simply a place where young people come to develop their acting skills, it is where they learn about all elements of theatre-making, from design, to stagecraft, to marketing, as well as developing confidence, communication skills and the importance of team working.

Sherman Players, an amateur company for anyone aged 18+, also offers an opportunity for creative development. There are regular opportunities for members of Sherman Players to learn

about the craft of theatre-making through performance in the Sherman's professional programme of work. There are also regular Apprentice Actor opportunities for people considering a career in performance but who are yet to undertake any formal training.

Sherman Theatre continues to work to further help bring Cardiff together through year-round community engagement work. Through a range of ongoing initiatives and a uniquely warm welcome, the Sherman remains a vital civic resource and a place for everyone.

In November, as a Theatre of Sanctuary, the Sherman hosted a hugely successful Sanctuary festival which saw increased reach and participation.

The theatre hosts a number of initiatives to support the community. On a daily basis it serves as a warm space and is also a donation point for Cardiff Food Bank. Each Friday it is a host venue for Chatty Café, established to tackle social isolation. And on the first Saturday of each month it hosts the local branch of Repair Café Wales.

In 2024, the Sherman Creative Engagement team actively engaged with over 348 people through community projects and events.

▶ [SHERMANTHEATRE.CO.UK/
JOIN-IN/](https://www.shermantheatre.co.uk/join-in/)

SHERMAN THEATRE IMPACT

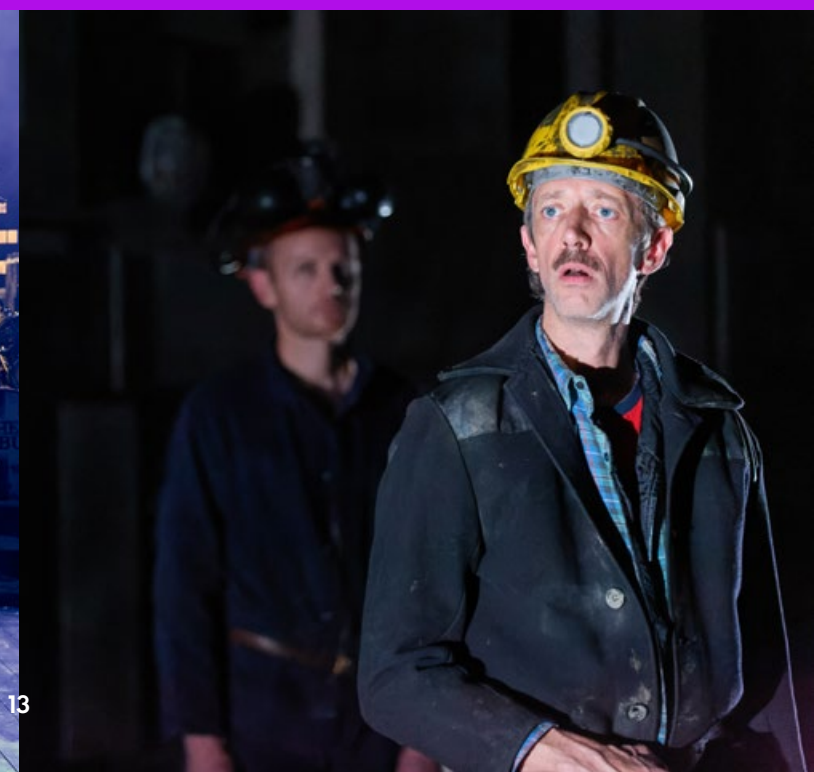
Throughout 2024, audience numbers continued to increase with record ticket sales for the modern era of Sherman Theatre. In particular, MADE AT SHERMAN productions saw further growth of audiences for new Welsh writing.

Over 54,000 tickets sold in 2024

Record-breaking runs of ODYSSEY '84 and A CHRISTMAS CAROL

A CHRISTMAS CAROL – highest grossing and most attended show in the Sherman's recent history

ODYSSEY '84 – highest grossing and most attended autumn MADE AT SHERMAN Main House production





Over 14,500 children experienced exceptional theatre at the Sherman during Christmas 2024.

2 sell-out runs of MADE AT SHERMAN productions of new plays by Wales-based writers in our Studio, THE WIFE OF CYNCOED and THE WOMEN OF LLANRUMNEY.

In 2024 the Sherman continued to ensure that exceptional theatre is in reach of everyone through an accessible pricing policy and Pay What You Want tickets.

The theatre works hard to ensure that people have wider access to the arts alongside a wider range of opportunities for engagement.

1,602 people accessed theatre through the Pay What You Want scheme.

The creation of accessible entry points to the work, development of a broader spectrum of engagement opportunities, alongside bespoke activities that focus on depth of engagement, using learning gained from consultation with audiences and participants has resulted in an increased number and diversity of members participating in an increasingly broad range of opportunities.

OUR COMPANY

The company currently has a core staff of 22 (21.5 FTE). There are two additional posts supported by restricted funding (1.5 FTE) which comprise the Literary Manager and Literary Associate. The team is supported by a team of up to 25 casual team members working across Box Office, Front of House, and Production.

We employ over 250 freelancers each year and have a dedicated team of 75 volunteers who support the organisation as front of house ushers as well as across other areas of our activity.

We have a committed Board of Trustees who provide a diverse range of skills and perspectives to ensure rigorous governance and a financially healthy organisation.

OUR BUSINESS

Sherman Theatre has an annual turnover of around £2.5m which is made up of core public funding and earned income.

As a key client of Arts Council of Wales, we receive £1.1m per year from ACW which makes up around 45% of our turnover. Box Office income makes up 21% of turnover, with 9% through trading activities, 8% from fundraising activities and a further 17% from a variety of other income streams.



JOB DESCRIPTION: ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

MAIN PURPOSE OF ROLE

The Artistic Director is responsible for developing and realising the artistic vision for Sherman Theatre and, with the Chief Executive, for ensuring that the theatre fulfils its strategic and artistic aims whilst remaining financially stable and responsive to its audiences. The Artistic Director and Chief Executive both report directly to the Board and work in partnership to deliver the company's mission.

REPORTS TO

Chair of the Board.

RESPONSIBLE FOR

Head of Production & Planning, Creative Engagement Manager, Literary Manager, freelance creative teams and artists.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Chief Executive, Head of Marketing and Communications, Head of Finance & Administration, Head of Fundraising, Programming and Planning Manager.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Artistic Leadership

- ◆ Set the theatre's artistic vision and standards of excellence, and work in collaboration with the Chief Executive to curate and deliver an artistic programme that reflects our core values, inspires confidence and enthusiasm in staff, artists, our target audiences, the wider sector, and funders alike.
- ◆ Work with the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team to ensure this vision is embedded across every aspect of the organisation.
- ◆ Curate an accessible, relevant and ambitious programme for Sherman Theatre that strengthens the artistic identity and reputation of the theatre with existing and new audiences in Cardiff, South Wales, across the UK and internationally.
- ◆ Lead the realisation of all the company's productions and co-productions to the highest possible standards, directing and/or creating an agreed number of productions and co-productions and assembling and supporting creative teams.
- ◆ Support, develop and commission new, emerging and established Welsh and Wales-based writers to tell a diverse range of stories that reflects contemporary Wales. Nurture them so that they can maximise their creative potential, and ensure a high standard of dramaturgical input to new plays commissioned and produced by Sherman Theatre.
- ◆ Elevate and develop the Welsh language theatre practice through artistic programming and produced work.
- ◆ Champion inclusivity and diversity across the organisation, to encompass creative teams and casting, as well as audience development initiatives.

- ◆ With the Chief Executive, proactively seek out opportunities for creative collaboration and co-production, and the further life of Sherman Theatre productions using existing and new artistic relationships with artists, theatre makers, writers, companies, and producers.
- ◆ Develop and create artist development initiatives, including the Literary Programme, Introduction to Playwriting, and the Company in Residence initiative, to ensure that Sherman Theatre remains a significant provider of relevant and excellent opportunities for emerging theatre-makers, with a specific focus on developing talent in Wales.
- ◆ Oversee and support the delivery of the work of the Creative Engagement team ensuring that the Sherman's work for young people and communities is firmly embedded within the artistic vision of the organisation
- ◆ Monitor, maintain and enhance the quality of all artistic activities within the Sherman and stay abreast of artistic developments and best practice in theatre in Wales, across the UK and internationally, engaging in critical debate to raise standards.

Leadership and Management

- ◆ Together with the Chief Executive, formulate, develop and implement the company's artistic vision, policy and objectives and to develop the company's Strategic and Business Plans ensuring the resource of the theatre is utilised to its full potential.
- ◆ Together with the Chief Executive and Head of Finance & Administration, to ensure that the artistic programme is adequately budgeted for, that artistic plans remain consistent with agreed budgets, and that the artistic programme generates sufficient income to contribute to the ongoing financial viability of Sherman Theatre.
- ◆ With the Chief Executive, develop, maintain and lead positive and effective professional relationships with principal funders and key stakeholders, keeping them informed of artistic and strategic forward plans and playing an active role in securing funding.
- ◆ Take an entrepreneurial approach to seeking out opportunities for partnerships which will enrich Sherman Theatre's programme, reputation and reach, developing effective working relationships with Welsh producing and receiving theatres, UK and international venues and companies, and other groups or individuals who can help further the aims of the company.
- ◆ Working closely with the Chief Executive and other key staff, embrace and promote the ethos of sustainable development and identify and implement measures to lessen the environmental impact of the company and its work.
- ◆ With the Head of Fundraising, inspire new sponsors and donors through the expression and delivery of a compelling artistic vision, and contribute to funding applications for production or artist development initiatives.
- ◆ Alongside the Chief Executive, fulfil the role of a civic figure within the City and County of Cardiff and ensure that Sherman Theatre and its staff play a full part in the social, cultural and educational life of the City and County of Cardiff and, where appropriate, support and respond to local, regional and national policies and initiatives.
- ◆ Promote and advocate for Sherman Theatre and its activities, acting as the key spokesperson for the company at appropriate artistic forums locally, nationally and internationally, with key stakeholders, press and media.

- ◆ Maintain an overview of developments and best practice in the theatre industry and of associated arts/cultural trends, and contribute to the cultural debate.
- ◆ Together with the Chief Executive, provide strong, inspirational leadership through creating a positive working environment that fosters a culture of respect, creativity and curiosity, and effectively lead and contribute to all appropriate internal meetings of the theatre.
- ◆ Ensure that the Board is consulted and informed on all artistic developments, proposals, achievements and key strategic issues, attending Board meetings and assisting the Board to engage with the work of Sherman Theatre.
- ◆ Support activity to promote the Theatre's profile and reputation, working with the Chief Executive to develop strong relationships with press and other media. Maintain an overview of the Company's brand identity/profile and give approval for core corporate, marketing and promotional materials.
- ◆ Provide leadership and support for all areas of compliance, for example in Health and Safety, Safeguarding, finance, data and employment.

This job description is a guide to the nature of the work required of the Artistic Director. It is not wholly comprehensive or restrictive and may be reviewed with the post holder and the Board as required.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL

EXPERIENCE

- ◆ Strong track record of developing and directing successful professional productions and co-productions, and of programming work of artistic excellence in theatre spaces of different scales and to a range of audiences.
- ◆ Experience of working with writers and of commissioning, developing and directing new work.
- ◆ Experience of developing ambitious, whilst realistic, artistic and strategic forward plans, including developing and working to agreed budgets and deadlines.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- ◆ The ability to develop a clear, confident and compelling artistic vision, which will retain, grow and diversify Sherman Theatre's audiences.
- ◆ Proven ability to work collaboratively, to develop, maintain and strengthen creative relationships and to develop a strong network of relationships across the sector.
- ◆ Demonstrable ability to provide dramaturgical support to writers.
- ◆ Demonstrable knowledge and understanding of a range of creative engagement, participation, outreach and community work.
- ◆ An effective and innovative leader with excellent communication skills and the ability to focus, inspire, empower and motivate others, to delegate responsibility and to manage performance.
- ◆ Excellent advocacy and presentation skills with the ability to articulate the theatre's artistic vision to inspire and engage a wide range of stakeholders.

- ◆ Knowledge and understanding of the funding climate across the sector and experience of working with key funding bodies.
- ◆ Strong artistic, strategic planning and resource management skills and some knowledge and interest in the business of running a theatre.
- ◆ Sound understanding of the link between programming and audience development, and the ability to translate this into artistic strategy.
- ◆ An interest and understanding in emerging technologies and the ability to keep abreast of how technology can enhance the live theatre experience.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- ◆ Imaginative, enthusiastic and artistically ambitious with the motivation to elevate artists, build audiences, and widen access.
- ◆ A commitment to the values of Sherman Theatre, which includes the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- ◆ A genuine commitment to the theatre's work with young people, its work as a Theatre of Sanctuary, and more broadly its work with and for communities.
- ◆ An understanding of the cultural environment of Wales and its significance to the work of Sherman Theatre.
- ◆ An understanding of the importance of the Welsh language and a desire to engage with the opportunities of working in a bilingual nation.
- ◆ An entrepreneurial flair, with the drive to explore new ideas, take creative risks, and respond quickly to a rapidly changing environment.

- ◆ Generous and genuinely interested in the work of other theatre-makers, with a commitment to attracting and growing new artistic talent.
- ◆ An awareness of the key social, political, and financial issues affecting the theatre and cultural sectors, understanding the Sherman Theatre's position within these discussions.

DESIRABLE

- ◆ Experience of leading a building-based organisation.
- ◆ Experience of working in Welsh.
- ◆ Experience of working in other languages.

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR: CONTRACTUAL DETAILS

SALARY

£65,000 per annum

TERM

The post is offered for a fixed term of five years, subject to successful completion of a 6-month probationary period, renewable by mutual agreement between the Artistic Director and the Board of Directors.

HOURS

This is a full-time post. The hours of work for senior staff are not fixed but the post holder will be expected to work the hours necessary for the proper performance of the duties that come within the scope of the post.

HOLIDAYS

25 days per annum, plus the 8 recognised bank/public holidays, with days accruing for length of service up to a maximum of 27 days plus bank/public holidays.

PERIOD OF NOTICE

6 months (The notice period during the probationary period is 1 month)

PENSION

Sherman Theatre operates a qualifying workplace pension scheme.

RIGHT TO WORK

The successful applicant will be required to provide documentation under the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006.

REFERENCES

All offers of employment are subject to the receipt of satisfactory references.

RELOCATION

The post-holder will be expected to live within commutable distance of the theatre.

START DATE

It is hoped that the appointee will be in post from September 2025 or earlier. If necessary, an agreement would be negotiated between Sherman Theatre and the Artistic Director as to how previously contracted work would be managed.

NON-CONTRACTUAL BENEFITS

We encourage all staff to see as many shows as possible and to be involved at all stages of the production process for Sherman Theatre productions. Every staff member is invited to attend Press Night for Sherman Theatre productions, along with complimentary tickets to most shows. We also offer a staff discount in the Café Bar to all staff members.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply, please send a CV and covering letter stating why you think you are suitable for the role to our recruitment consultant, Helen Sprott, Managing Director, AEM International Limited, at hsprott@aeminternational.co.uk.

Letters should be no longer than three pages. All applications will be acknowledged. Applications can be submitted in English or Welsh language. If you require any support with this process, please contact Helen via her email.

The deadline for applications is **5pm on Thursday 27 March**

Please ensure that you complete Sherman Theatre's Equalities Monitoring Questionnaire which can be accessed via shermantheatre.co.uk/about-us/jobs/

If you would like a confidential conversation about the role, please contact Helen via email.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Sherman Theatre is committed to being a diverse and inclusive space where everyone is treated equally with respect and feels empowered to have their voice heard and represented. We are also committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination among our workforce and to identifying and removing barriers that prevent individuals from engaging with us.