



ACTORS TOURING COMPANY &

LAMDA

**Appoint
AMEERA CONRAD**

as

Associate Director

Supported by the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries 2020-22.



Matthew Xia



Ameera Conrad



Sarah Frankcom

Today, acclaimed UK touring theatre company **Actors Touring Company** and drama school **LAMDA** announce that they have appointed **Ameera Conrad** as their joint Associate Director as part of the Weston Creative Bursaries 2020 -22 programme, an initiative which aims to promote socio-economic diversity in the arts. This comes hot on the heels of this week's announcement of ATC's first major production in eighteen months - *Rice* written by **Michelle Lee** and directed by the company's artistic director **Matthew Xia**, will be co-produced by and staged at The Orange Tree Theatre this autumn as part of the theatre's re-opening season.

In her new role, Ameera (she/they) will be working with **Matthew Xia** and LAMDA Director **Sarah Frankcom** in the development and realisation of new projects. The two organisations will support and showcase Ameera's artistic practice and offer key professional development to a theatre-maker at a crucial stage of their career. The appointment begins on April 19 and runs for 12 months.

Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries is a programme to empower more people from low socio-economic backgrounds into cultural careers, especially in providing a pathway to leadership roles.. Across the UK there are 50 exciting opportunities to develop a career in the arts, with each post playing an important part in the host organisation.

Ameera Conrad is a theatre-maker from Cape Town, South Africa. She is an Associate Artist for the National Youth Theatre, and is one of the visiting lecturers for Mountview's MA Theatre for Community and Education. Her theatre credits include *In These Four Walls*, *Totally Over You*, *Kate Spencer Did A Good Thing* (all ArtsEd, London), *Pipeline* (Assistant Director - Arcola, London) *The Royale*, *Towers* (both Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London), *The Fall* (Co-Curator - Edinburgh International Festival Fringe, Royal Court, St. Ann's Warehouse, South African State Theatre, Galway International Arts Festival, Melbourne Arts Centre, Festival Arts Bordeaux, Studio Theatre), and *Reparation* (South African National Arts Festival).

She is an alumnus of the 2017 Lincoln Center Theater Director's Lab, and a recipient of the Theatre Arts Admin Collective's Emerging Theatre Director Bursary. She has won a Fleur du Cap Encore Award, Scotsman Fringe First Award, The Stage Edinburgh Award for *The Fall*. She has also won the Filipa Bragança award for best emerging solo performer at the Edinburgh Fringe (2019) and the Western Cape Department of Sports and Culture award for her contributions to theatre in South Africa (2018).

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Ameera Conrad's work focuses on decolonising the canon of theatre, and amplifying the stories of groups marginalised because of their age, gender, and sexuality.

ATC Artistic Director, Matthew Xia says –

"I'm hugely excited to welcome Ameera into the fold at ATC. Firstly, because the partnership of ATC, LAMDA and the WJCB programme will offer such wide-ranging support and artistic development. Secondly, because Ameera is a brilliantly radical and conscientious theatre-maker and cultural activist whose values and principles both align with and will challenge ATC's ethos and work."

LAMDA Director, Sarah Frankcom says –

"In looking for the right candidate for this opportunity, we sought a person with confidence, courage, and a breadth of experience in all areas of theatre making and performance. We are delighted to have found those exact qualities in Ameera Conrad, who will bring a creative activist voice to the work of LAMDA, and thereby inspire our students to launch forth with that same force and integrity."

Background to The Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries

Even before the pandemic wreaked havoc on career prospects in the arts, those from middle-class backgrounds were 2.5 times more likely to end up in creative occupations than their working-class peers. This is a situation which has not improved since records began in 2014. Social mobility is a greater issue in the cultural sector and wider creative industries than across the economy as a whole. The wider creative industries have created over 300,000 jobs over the past five years, yet the number of creative workers from working-class backgrounds has increased by just 33,000. Just as with the impact of the 2008 financial crisis, it is expected that those who are already finding it difficult to make their way in the arts will be the worst hit by the impact of covid-19.

The WJCB programme aims to help towards redressing the balance by funding 50 paid, year-long artistic and creative Fellowships as well as an organisational development programme run by people make it work to embed inclusive practices for the host organisation, with three members of the host team taking part, including a board member and a senior executive.

The Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries 2020-2022 programme is designed and produced by Jerwood Arts. It is funded and supported by Arts Council England's Transforming Leadership Fund, Garfield Weston Foundation, Art Fund, Arts Council of Wales, Creative Scotland, British Council, Jerwood Arts and PRS Foundation.

ACTORS TOURING COMPANY (ATC)

ATC creates dialogue between Britain and the rest of the world – and between the intersecting cultures within our country. It is one of the few UK theatre companies committed to producing plays that come from beyond our shores.

We are passionate about giving voice to the 'outsider within' – the cross-cultural nations within our own nation. We tour our plays right across Britain: creating, developing and sustaining a dialogue between those deemed 'the other' and UK audiences. In the last few years, we have produced first English language productions of plays from Iran, Norway, the US, Germany, Austria, Russia - bringing international voices to school and village halls, studio theatres and main houses: from Barcelona to Glasgow, from Hong Kong to Scarborough. Signature productions include: *The Brothers Size*, *The Events*, *The Suppliant Women*, *Amsterdam*, the ATC debut of Artistic Director Matthew Xia, and *Dear Tomorrow* – letters of hope commissioned from writers around the globe.

LAMDA

LAMDA is a world class drama school and educational charity. We offer exceptional vocational training to actors, stage managers, technicians, directors and designers, regardless of their background or economic circumstances.

We are also an awarding organisation, offering world-renowned qualifications in communication and performance and inspiring the next generation of confident communicators through our examinations in drama, literature and poetry. We believe drama has the power to transform lives. We want more people to share in this experience through training, qualifications, work, productions and facilities.

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