



**ACTORS TOURING COMPANY**

## **ACTORS TOURING COMPANY ANNOUNCES THE DEPARTURE OF JOINT CEO & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ANDREW SMAJE AND WELCOMES AMBER MASSIE-BLOMFIELD AS INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



**ACTORS TOURING COMPANY (ATC)**, the UK's leading producer of international plays today announces the departure of its joint CEO and Executive Director **Andrew Smaje** after 8 years co-leading the organisation, the last six years alongside Artistic Director and joint CEO Matthew Xia.

Smaje will be taking up a new position as Director of Programming at Leeds Playhouse and **Amber Massie-Blomfield**, formerly Executive Director of Complicité, will join as the interim Executive Director later this month, while the search for a permanent replacement begins.

Andrew Smaje said: *"What an extraordinary journey! It's been 8 years but feels much shorter in real terms - a pandemic, an enforced 18-month hiatus and a whirlwind of changes in the wider world that have had significant impacts on small but vital arts organisations like Actors Touring Company. It's been wonderful to play a part in ATC creating its own impact - with work that responds viscerally to the moment we're in. I'm confident that I leave ATC at its most stable, visible and ambitious point for years - the best time to create space for someone else to work with the team to take ATC even further forward."*

Smaje joined in 2016 and his leadership oversaw a prolific period in the programming and championing of new work. His legacy includes 20 productions, all world or UK premieres, which toured to 65 locations globally, from Brixton to Keswick to Hong Kong; most recently the longest continuous tour in ATC's 45-year history with *Family Tree* in 14 regional theatres across the UK; followed by the critically acclaimed productions of *Tambo & Bones* and *The Architect*, the latter being an innovative immersive show on a double-decker bus honouring the 30<sup>th</sup> commemoration of Stephen Lawrence.

During Smaje's tenure, ATC's work has been nominated for many awards including UK Theatre Awards (Best Touring Production), Black British Theatre Awards (Best Production), The Stage Awards (Producer of the Year and Innovation Award), whilst Smaje and Xia have twice been named in The Stage 100.

**Matthew Xia**, ATC's award-winning Artistic Director adds: *"It has been a glorious period of evolution and reinvention for ATC with my joint CEO Andrew Smaje - who I will be sad to see moving on to a new*

*adventure. The achievements of the past 6 years wouldn't have been possible without his passion, wisdom, diligence, care and imagination.*

*“What we have achieved with our small but dedicated team is clear for all to see, from the accolades, awards and nominations for our work, to our new touring partnerships, the restructuring of the company and our fundraising successes. I think it is fair to say that ATC is regarded as one of the most exciting and innovative touring companies in the UK. I wish Andrew all the best in his new role at Leeds Playhouse.*

**Geraldine Brodie**, ATC’s chair says: *“Andrew has been the glue that held ATC together over the last eight years. As Chair, I have been consistently grateful for his wise counsel, superb organisation and commitment to the Company. We will miss him. Andrew leaves ATC in great shape for the future, and with our very best wishes for his new role in Leeds.”*

**Amber Massie-Blomfield** adds: *“I'm delighted to be joining ATC as interim Executive Director at such an exciting moment in the company's history, following the significant success of Tambo and Bones, The Architect and Family Tree. It's a great honour to be entrusted with the legacy of Andrew's brilliant work, and to work alongside Matthew, a director I've long admired, to steer the programme of activity over the coming months.”*

PRESS IMAGES CAN BE DOWNLOADED [HERE](#)

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## Notes to Editors

### **ABOUT ACTORS TOURING COMPANY**

Actors Touring Company is a portable portal to the world. Through our work, we connect global artistic voices to local communities.

Actors Touring Company (ATC) is a “portable portal to the world” We are a touring theatre company with an unrivalled track record in the commissioning, producing and touring of contemporary international plays.

Our work explores ideas of intersectionality, identity and belonging - opening up conversations across borders both geographic and cultural.

Since 1980, we’ve pioneered the touring of new global plays, often in world premiere translations of plays from Australia, Norway, Iran, Israel, and the US – bringing global stories to audiences from Glasgow to Plymouth and Keswick to Ipswich.

[www.atctheatre.com/about](http://www.atctheatre.com/about)

### **ABOUT AMBER MASSIE-BLOMFIELD**

Amber Massie-Blomfield is an arts consultant, producer and non-fiction author. Her most recent role was as Executive Director of internationally renowned theatre company Complicité, where she was recognised on *The Stage* 100 List in 2024. During her tenure, she oversaw major projects including *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* (Barbican and International Tour, 2022 – 23); *Figures in Extinction* (Nederlands Dans Theater and International Tour, 2022-24); *The Dark is Rising* (BBC World Service & Radio Four, 2022-23) and *Can I Live?* (online & grassroots screening events, 2021-24).

She has worked for clients including Pro Helvetia (the Swiss Arts Council), the Barbican, China Plate, Free Word and Pen International. She was Executive Director of Camden People’s Theatre from 2014-2018, receiving a Special Achievement Award at the 2018 Off West End Awards in recognition of her work. As an author, she has written *Twenty Theatres to See Before You Die* (winner of a Society of Authors Michael Meyer Award, Gladstone Library’s Politics Prize and shortlisted for the Theatre Book Prize 2018). Her forthcoming book *Acts of Resistance*, about the political power of art, is published by Footnote Press (UK) and W.W.Norton (US) in June 2024.



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