

Shoot/Get Treasure/Repeat  
(SYC), 2024, Mark McNulty

# STORYHOUSE



Young  
Company  
Director



Storyhouse, 2017, Becci Lane

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# Welcome from the CEO

Storyhouse is one of the UK's foremost cultural charities; its home in Chester incorporates a library, theatres, and a cinema. It is also an acclaimed theatre producer and runs the country's most successful regional open-air theatre in the city's Grosvenor Park, as well as the innovative Moonlight Flicks open-air cinema each year.

Storyhouse plays an important part of cultural life in Chester and continues to be a beacon of inspiration for many other cities and towns for the role it has played in social and economic regeneration, its successful and unique integration of world-class theatre, cinema, and library facilities, as well as its bold, exciting, diverse, and award-winning programming.

It is also a great place to work. We offer a flexible and supportive working environment, value experience as well as skills and qualifications, and work to ensure everyone in the organisation is aware of our equality and diversity commitments. We want to support all staff to fulfil their potential and enjoy a happy and healthy workplace.

We hope you decide to join us,

Annabel





Chester Disability Pride Parade, 2023, Mark McNulty

# Our Story

You can find a bit about who we are on our [website](#), discover more about our innovative home and how it came to be in [this case study](#) by Arts Council England, or read about our renowned library in this [blog](#) by the DCMS's library team.

Above all, Storyhouse is a creative community. As a diverse cultural organisation, our home is one of the country's most successful cultural buildings housing a cinema, theatres and a library. Last year we welcomed 735,000 people through our doors. We are both a community hub and combined arts producer.

Our library attracts international recognition, known for its seamless integration, and boasts the longest opening hours of any UK public library.

In 2022, we supported 5,465 young people to connect and create, ran 200 free rhyme-time sessions, created 499 magical performances indoors and outdoors, sold 101,461 theatre tickets and hosted a total of 1,031 cinema screenings.

Visits are roughly split into thirds between event attendances, library users, and wider participation. We enjoyed the support of over 14k volunteer hours and 1,328 different individuals were involved in making and supporting our work.

Grosvenor Park Open Air Theatre, which we founded in 2010, is the UK's largest regional open-air theatre, welcoming over 25,000 every summer.



# This House is Your House

We've become a vital part of the region's cultural landscape and a place of safety and support for the community - especially for young people, giving them a space where they can reimagine their place in the world.

Over 40 community groups use us as a base for creative activity each month, including LGBTQIA+ and disability groups, refugee integration activities, mental health support sessions, and groups combatting social exclusion by age.

We work extensively with young people and provide a range of different programmes, from youth theatre and our young company, to young leaders, young programmers, and our many schools and education programmes. Throughout our work we collaborate with local partners throughout to ensure we are reaching the people that would usually have the least opportunity to participate.

Across everything we do, we work to give people the power to build their own creative communities through inspiring stories and shared creative experiences: [this house is your house](#).

As we blend theatre, library, restaurant and cinema services, we share inspiring stories and stage creative events which empower people to nurture their creativity and bring together communities. Through our work, we hope to build a more connected, inclusive and creative community network.

The more open we are to the true and rich diversity of our communities, the more vividly we fulfil our purpose. More engagement from more of our communities will make more of Storyhouse.

We are committed to creating a team which is representative of our communities and to bringing together those with a variety of skills and experiences to help shape what we do and how we work.



A Midsummer Night's Dream, 2023, Mark McNulty

# Our Strategy...

Storyhouse is about to enter an exciting new phase in our evolution as we look to develop our programmes, based on a new strategic plan, to deliver world class arts and meet community needs.

Our Vision:

**Here at Storyhouse, culture is owned by everyone.**

Our Mission:

**We work every day to be a creative home for our communities.**

Our Values:

**LISTEN CLOSELY.**

True empathy takes effort. So we work hard to understand different points of view.

**LOOK AROUND.**

Opportunities can be spotted by anyone, anywhere, at anytime. So we always have our eyes, ears and minds wide open.

**SPEAK UP.**

Not everyone's stories have been told. So we use our voices to amplify those that haven't been heard.

**STAND UP.**

Debate and discussion make things better for us all. So we don't shy away from a challenge.

**REACH OUT.**

Diverse perspectives solve the hardest problems and make the best decisions. So we seek them out, and invite them in.



A Midsummer Night's Dream, 2023,  
Mark McNulty



# Our Resources

Storyhouse is a medium-sized charity with approximately 140 staff and a gross revenue of over £6 million per year. The charity is financially stable, with a number of steady revenue streams, including a 20-year lease and contract for services with the local authority (Cheshire West and Chester) and NPO funding from Arts Council England for 2023 to 2026. Revenue from commercial activities is also essential to the charity's financial stability, and over 57% of its revenue is earned.

Storyhouse runs two wholly owned commercial trading subsidiaries: Storyhouse Production Company Limited - creating and staging Storyhouse Originals theatre productions - and Storyhouse Catering Company Limited - providing a range of catering, retail, cinema, receiving theatre and commercial services.

Despite our financial stability, like all other charities our resources are being eroded by rising costs caused by inflation and higher energy prices, and as a result of the continued cost of living crisis, demand for free-to-access services (such as warm spaces) is increasing.



# Our Building

The original parts of Storyhouse were constructed as an art deco Odeon cinema in 1936, and have been restored, extended and renovated into a library, two state of the art theatres, a cinema, restaurant, and two bars.

The larger theatre is an 800-seat proscenium arch stage. With state-of-the-art facilities, its auditorium spreads across three tiers: stalls, circle and gallery. This same theatre converts into a 500-seat thrust stage (with the audience wrapping around three sides of the stage). In this format, the auditorium spreads across two tiers, with intimate seating putting the audience right in amongst the action.

On top of the building sits the Garret Theatre and Bar. This 150-seat black-box theatre is a flexible, fully-equipped performance, rehearsal, or workshop space. It is designed to be full of work made by local creative companies, individuals, and community groups, as well as a space we hire to companies and individuals.

The 100-seat boutique cinema is designed to honour the original Odeon's history as a cinema in 1936. With red velvet, soft, sunken seating, it is a beautiful event space.

The library spreads right through the building, with a dedicated family-friendly area (with wet play, storytelling room, and arts and crafts) in The Den and extensive book-stocks covering the walls throughout Storyhouse offering opportunities for studying, learning, and research.



# The Role

Storyhouse is delighted to be seeking a Theatre Director or Company to work with the Storyhouse Young Company on their 2025 production on a freelance basis.

This is an exciting opportunity to develop an ambitious, thought-provoking and timely piece with a group of emerging young artists.

We are interested in meeting bold creatives with innovative ideas to take ownership over this project and put their stamp on this production.

The director will rehearse an existing script which will be performed to the public at the end of the training programme.

The role will be based at Storyhouse, Chester and will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure criminal records check through the Disclosure and Barring Service.



# About Storyhouse Young Company (SYC)

Storyhouse Young Company (SYC) is a free training scheme for 18–25-year-olds who are interested in developing their performance skills.

SYC plays a vital role in fostering a vibrant and thriving arts scene in the Chester. SYC is committed to nurturing local talent and providing opportunities for aspiring actors. Our free acting programme provides a unique training opportunity for young people in the borough to develop their skills, gain exposure and potentially kickstart their careers.

Each year, Storyhouse conducts auditions to select a group of talented young actors from a variety of backgrounds who will form the core company for a production. It is important that the text chosen for the SYC production is sufficiently challenging, critical and reflective of our Storyhouse programming. In 2023, SYC performed 'The Trials' by Dawn King and in 2024 they performed 'Shoot/Get Treasure/Repeat' by Mark Ravenhill.

SYC company members are also offered the opportunity to audition for our Trainee Actor Programme to gain real-world experience by participating in the professional acting company at Grosvenor Park Open Air Theatre during the summer season.

Funding for the SYC programme comes from the Backstage Trust.

# About SYC (continued)

SYC runs from January 2025-May 2025 and consists of two phases:

Phase One: 16-weeks of training with a facilitator

Phase Two: 4-weeks of rehearsals with a director

Phase Two Rehearsals will take place Monday-Friday evenings from 28 April-25 May.

## Key Dates:

9 & 10 December: Auditions

13 January: Phase One begins

28 April: Phase Two begins

19 May: Show Week



# SYC text and production requirements:

- The running time should be 60-90 minutes
- The text should be suitable for 18-25 year olds
- The text should be suitable for a cast of 12-16 actors
- We invite you to be creative about the performance space, stage type and technical elements
- Be mindful that you may be working with a limited budget



# Role and Responsibilities

## You will

- Direct a Storyhouse Young Company (SYC) production that is both ambitious and accessible
- Research and select a text that is suitable for SYC (ages 18-25 and between 12-16 members with a range of experience)
- Plan and deliver engaging rehearsals that are fun, challenging and creative, utilising relevant acting techniques and practices that enrich the actor's learning experience
- Work with the Children & Young People Programme Manager and Assistant Producer to bring the show to life
- Attend production meetings and liaise with the technical team
- Mentor and support the Assistant Director in sessions to ensure they are developing their skills and feel supported
- Work with the Pastoral Support Lead to identify any young people who may benefit from further support
- Ensure that SYC is accessible for a range of young people with diverse skills and experience from a variety of backgrounds
- Ensure that Storyhouse safeguarding policies and procedures are adhered to and upheld
- Identify progression routes for young people following on from the course, this may include our Trainee Actor Programme or opportunities elsewhere
- Act in accordance with Storyhouse's policies and procedures, and undertake any training as required by Storyhouse.
- Act as a role model for other staff and contribute to the life of the organisation as a whole
- Carry out any other duties as may be required as part of the Young Company Director's role.

# Skills & Experience

A passion for working with young people from a range of backgrounds and with a breadth of needs, experiences and abilities

Ability to work as a team, in collaboration with both staff and young people

Excellent communication skills and the ability to communicate with a range of people and ages

Well organised

Knowledge of safeguarding and child protection

Passionate about creating opportunities for young people to thrive

Awareness of the issues affecting young people's lives

Experience directing mid- and small-scale productions with young people

Experience working with a production and technical team on theatre productions

Experience working on scripted productions

Experience facilitating sessions with young people

Experience collaborating with other creatives

Experience motivating and supporting young people

Experience working with a diverse range of young people and supporting any access requirements

Experience working with an Assistant Director and mentoring and supporting their development

# The opportunity

Title: SYC Director

Reports to: Children & Young People Programme Manager

Contract: Fixed term, freelance

Fee: £3500-£4000 (depending on experience)

Total fee inclusive of planning, preparation and travel and includes 4 weeks of rehearsals, 3-4 visits into weekly training sessions (may include auditions), planning meetings with line manager and Assistant Producer, at least 3 production meetings (prior to rehearsals starting), and at least 2 meetings with the facilitator to ensure the content of the training is relevant.



Trainee Actors, 2024, Mark McNulty



# Application Process

We welcome applications from both individuals, companies or other collaborators. We are open to new proposals, practices and ways of working.

Applicants are asked to submit a cover letter (no more than one A4 page) expressing interest in the role and a CV demonstrating relevant experience to Emma Hutt (Head of People) at [peopleteam@storyhouse.com](mailto:peopleteam@storyhouse.com).

We are particularly interested to learn about your ambitions for the SYC 2025 production, including the script you want to direct and why. Please outline this briefly (no more than one paragraph) in your cover letter along with any experience that you might wish to highlight.

The deadline for applications is 27th October 2024.

Interviews will take place at Storyhouse on Monday 4th November. You will be asked to present your production idea in more detail in the interview. Other questions will be sent in advance.

For an informal discussion about the role or support in the application process, please contact our Head of People, Emma Hutt, at [peopleteam@storyhouse.com](mailto:peopleteam@storyhouse.com).





# GDPR

## Personal Data Notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent.

The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

STORYHOUSE