

**NEWS RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

## **Bloomsbury Festival launches three new theatre writing opportunities**

- **The annual Bloomsbury Festival (15-24 October 2021) is launching a series of playwriting opportunities as part of their New Wave programme, a year-round platform for emerging talent**
- **Opportunities with bursaries up to £1,000 see three new theatre pieces realised; including an Edinburgh Fringe run, a radio play, and performances at the Bloomsbury Festival 2022**
- **Selected scenes will also be presented at an industry event at the RADA Studios during this year's festival**
- **Submissions are open to students writing pieces responding or relating to the 2022 Bloomsbury Festival theme, BREATHE**

**The Bloomsbury Festival theatre writing opportunities are now open for submissions** from current London-based students following undergraduate, post graduate and vocational programmes in theatre writing, screenwriting, creative writing or other related disciplines.

**The script should respond or relate to the 2022 Bloomsbury Festival theme, BREATHE.** The theme can be interpreted in any relevant context – environmental, personal wellbeing, freedom to speak etc.

**Three scripts will be shortlisted from the entries** and one will be allocated to each production opportunity below. Between shortlisting and the time of the festival the shortlisted writers will be asked to complete a full first draft of their script.

With the support of a professional director each of the three shortlisted scripts will be given a private rehearsed reading, and one scene from each play will be prepared for public performance at an event to be held during the 2021 Bloomsbury Festival at the RADA Studios.

The Three Opportunities are:

- 1. £1,000 bursary plus development to full live production - supported by Macready Theatre, Rugby; sponsored by Cemex UK.**

One script will be selected for development through a process of workshops prior to the 2021 Bloomsbury Festival involving the writer, a professional director and student performers age 16-18 from Macready Theatre Young Actors' Ensemble. A rehearsed reading and performance of one full scene will take place at the 2021 Bloomsbury Festival with the director and student performers. There will then be further development and performances at the Macready Theatre, Rugby before taking the production to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Summer 2022\*. A subsequent full performance at the Bloomsbury Festival 2022 is anticipated but this may be with a different cast and production team, with venue and production management provided by the festival.

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The Lower Vestry  
St George's Bloomsbury  
6-7 Little Russell St  
London WC1A 2HR

The writer offered this opportunity will be awarded a bursary payment of £1,000 (to include travel to workshops in Rugby and London) in order to fully develop the script. A further £100 towards travel and accommodation will be made available to the writer to visit the production if it is presented in Edinburgh. The bursary is supported by the Macready Theatre, its sponsor Cemex and Rugby School Department of Theatre & Performing Arts.

*\* Please note that plans to tour the production by Macready Theatre Young Actors' Ensemble to Edinburgh Fringe will be subject to the wider public health situation as well as the satisfactory development of the project in workshop.*

## **2. Production of a Radio Play for the 2022 Festival with Bloomsbury Radio at the Bloomsbury Institute plus £300 Festival Bursary**

A second script will be produced as a radio play. The recording of the radio play will be supported by professional radio producers and recorded by Bloomsbury Radio for transmission in 2022 at the time of the Bloomsbury Festival.

## **3. A staging of a Production at the 2022 Bloomsbury Festival plus £300 Festival Bursary**

A third script will be shortlisted for a rehearsed reading in 2021, with a slot in the 2022 programme for your own staging at the 2022 Bloomsbury Festival.

**Festival director Rosemary Richards said,** "Bloomsbury Festival is committed to providing new platforms for emerging talent and these writing opportunities enable us to work with new playwrights to develop their work for a variety of production platforms. The last year has seen a very challenging time for theatre and we hope this process, over two festivals, will provide us and our audiences with exciting new theatre writing, and that writers will benefit from the opportunity to stage the plays in 2022. We hope the festival will continue to develop this project in future years."

**@bloomsburyfest | bloomsburyfestival.org.uk**

To apply, please visit <https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/theatre-writing-opportunity/> and fill out an application form.

**Deadline for applications is: Friday 18 June at 5pm**

*This opportunity is being offered by the Bloomsbury Festival in partnership with the Macready Theatre, Rugby and its sponsor Cemex, in association with RADA, Rugby School Department of Theatre & Performing Arts and Bloomsbury Radio (at the Bloomsbury Institute).*

Notes to editors:

**Bloomsbury Festival:** For hundreds of years Bloomsbury has been a catalyst for ideas that have impacted across the world. The Festival celebrates contemporary Bloomsbury; a hotbed of creativity and pioneering development with one of the youngest and most diverse populations in the country. Bloomsbury's strength lies in its vibrant diversity. Famous for its globally renowned academic and cultural institutions, it also includes areas of multiple deprivation, and it is home to 11,000 residents. The Festival is uniquely placed in relationship to residential communities, local institutions and businesses, and the UK arts infrastructure, and works across all three, uniting specialists with residents from all backgrounds and of all ages in an equal exchange of skills and experience

The link with the Macready Theatre in Rugby and Bloomsbury is through Rugby School's founder, Lawrence Sherriff, who invested in property in the Lamb's Conduit area of Bloomsbury 450 years ago, and thus Rugby has a special relationship with the area and with Bloomsbury Festival and is represented on the Board.

A world class local festival Bloomsbury Festival is a distinctive creative programme made by the artists, academics and residents of London's premiere cultural quarter. Each October, the streets, parks, museums, laboratories and public and private buildings of this vibrant historic area host up to 130 events which attract audiences from across London and beyond.

With a unique blend of academic and cultural institutions, businesses and diverse communities, Bloomsbury has been a catalyst for ideas that have had impact across the world for hundreds of years. Bloomsbury Festival celebrates contemporary Bloomsbury; a hotbed of creativity and pioneering development which has one of the youngest and most diverse populations in the country.

Outside the Festival period, Bloomsbury Festival delivers community engagement and arts projects across the year. These include a set of creative development labs bringing together Bloomsbury artists, academics and residents which has led to two commissions in the 2020

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festival. And Festival in a Box, which takes artists into the homes of people living with dementia to provide life-enhancing and joyful cultural experiences for people who are often lonely and isolated.

Above all, Bloomsbury Festival aims to be enlivening, engaging, entertaining, and fun!

Bloomsbury Festival is funded and supported by many organisations and businesses across Bloomsbury and beyond including major funders The Bedford Estates, University of London, UCL, Camden Council and Arts Council England alongside major sponsors, SHM and Bee Midtown.

Patrons:

Her Grace The Duchess of Bedford

The Rt Hon Sir Kier Starmer QC MP