

PRESENTING

# PLATFORM

FROM IRIS THEATRE

PLATFORM is Iris Theatre's newest initiative to support breakout mid-career artists taking the next steps in their professional life. At its core, PLATFORM provides a showcase opportunity for creatives to show off a wide array of their work in an as-risk-free-as-possible environment, hosted at the historic Actors' Church in Covent Garden.

But we hope that PLATFORM as an initiative is more than that - PLATFORM should represent a carefully curated selection of artists at the top of their game, working across varied forms and mediums, breaking out into the wider consciousness, and supported along the way by an award-winning company in the heart of one of the busiest cities for the creative arts in the world. To that end, the event is only the beginning - we also want to work with artists - with you! - to celebrate them and create a wider PLATFORM for them to reach new audiences.

If you're interested in becoming a PLATFORM artist, have a read of the rest of this document, and then head on over to our [application form](#).

## **Iris Theatre**

Iris is an award-winning theatre company and charity resident at the historic Actors' Church, St Paul's Covent Garden. We're devoted to creating transformational opportunities for the next generation of theatre practitioners and artists. Our big theatrical event is our annual summer season at St Paul's, usually featuring a Shakespeare and a family show in the grounds of, and inside, the building.

Over the years, Iris has also hosted circus, musical theatre and opera at St Paul's, which was built in the 17th century by Inigo Jones as the parish church to Theatreland. Today, St Paul's continues to serve the theatrical community in its unique location in the West End.

PLATFORM and our new emerging artists scheme, Start, are brand new initiatives for 2020, supporting artists across multiple disciplines. PLATFORM is entirely unfunded and supported only by the donations of our private supporters, including our Legacy Friends, as well as by our incredibly generous resident venue, St Paul's Church Covent Garden. If you would like to support Iris' work, please visit our Support Us page on our website.



## What makes a PLATFORM artist?

We think that PLATFORM artists have a few key markers, but we're open to hearing from anyone who thinks this opportunity would suit them. We try not to be too restrictive on the types of artists we're looking to support - the key thing is that PLATFORM is an opportunity for breakout performance-based talent, ready to take the next leap in their careers.

A PLATFORM artist is someone who:

- has been working in their artform for an extended period of time, and has had some success in doing so
- is working solo or in a group/pair that has worked consistently together over a number of projects or ideas
- creates bold and innovative or unusual work (in any or multiple forms) that can translate to an audience in a performative setting
- has a built up a body of material, shareable over the course of at least 90 minutes
- artists who have a broad selection of work and ideas rather than focusing on one or two specific pieces or projects
- would ordinarily find the prospect of performing in a 250-seat venue adjacent to London's West End too financially risky to be able to commit to off their own back

We also look to ensure that PLATFORM artists represent a range of disciplines, backgrounds and experiences. We anticipate that there will be more 'eligible' artists than we can support in the first 12 months, and so some priority will be given to artists who stand out from the others already in the PLATFORM portfolio.

We select artists both by curating and contacting them personally, as well as by application - there is no difference in weighting between the two groups, but we hope that at least 50% of the artists we support each year are those we've never met before.

A PLATFORM artist might be... a singer/songwriter or spoken word artist who's built up a fanbase online or regionally around the UK or abroad. They might be a musical theatre writer who's never had a concert of selections of their work in London. They might be primarily a performer who also develops their own work in their spare time but haven't showcased it. They've probably never performed in Central London at their own gig to an audience of 200+, but only at variety, scratch or slam nights. Or maybe they're someone completely different - maybe they're you!



## **PLATFORM events**

The cornerstone of the PLATFORM initiative is the showcase night. Roughly six times a year, Iris hosts an artist for an Iris PLATFORM Night, where the artist is able to share a broad selection of their work over the course of one evening. This is hosted at and supported by Iris' resident venue, St Paul's Church Covent Garden, the Actors' Church.

As a PLATFORM artist, you will receive the following from Iris and St Paul's for your event:

- The opportunity to perform your work at a 254-seat venue in the heart of the West End, with a partnership designed to be as low- or no-risk as possible to the artist.
- Full box office set-up, management and support, including ticketing support if third party agents are willing to sell for your event.
- A technician on the day of your performance for your rehearsal and to operate for your performance, as well as a staffed bar and duty management.
- £150 towards digital marketing, spent by Iris through discussions with you. This money will be divided between seasonal marketing of all the events at once, and individual advertising for your personal Iris PLATFORM Night.
- Inclusion in our print brochure covering our wider season as well as our Start schemes and PLATFORM nights.
- Producing support from our executive director and general manager.
- Creative and artistic support from our artistic director.
- As many complimentary tickets for professionals in your industry to see your work as you need (provided this does not prevent Iris covering its costs).

The financial arrangement for these events is simple: Iris will keep the first £600 of sales to cover our costs (that's 40 tickets at £15), and the rest of the money is split between you and us, 60:40 in your favour. If you don't sell enough tickets to hit the £600 mark, we'll just keep the whole box office and not charge you any extra. Any additional proceeds from the event past Iris' costs will go towards further PLATFORM events, our Start scheme, and Iris' other work supporting emerging talent.

The event is designed to be as risk-free as possible for the PLATFORM artist, though any performance always carries some risk. If there's anything Iris can do to further support your event, speak to us - we're always open to creating bespoke arrangements if we can.

## **Beyond your performance**

Following a performance, we want to continue supporting PLATFORM artists. As well as continuing to shout about your work online, we will host a profile for you on our website and where appropriate spotlight you on our blog and newsletter. We hope that over time PLATFORM continues to grow its support of artists, especially as more are added to their number - and we'll work with the first cohort to develop this support in 2020.



## How to apply

Applications for PLATFORM are open all year round and 2020 will see us programme an initial six events throughout the calendar year. Bear in mind that we programme events on an ongoing, rolling basis, so if you're hoping to be booked in soon then you should get in touch as early as possible.

Applications can be made online by filling out [this form](#). If you need the form in a different format, or an alternative application method, contact us using the details below and we'll do our utmost to help.

PLATFORM is brand new, and we're learning along the way. If you'd like to have an informal conversation before applying, or have suggestions about how we can improve or develop the initiative, drop us a line at [office@iristheatre.com](mailto:office@iristheatre.com), or give us a call on 020 7240 0344.