

Chair

Saxton Bampfylde

and Trustees

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the Report

WELCOME

Chairing the Board of the Birmingham Repertory Theatre is one of the most exciting and fulfilling roles in British Theatre. I know because I led it from 2005 to 2013 and find myself back for an interim period as we begin the search for a permanent successor.

‘The Rep’ – as it’s known in Birmingham and throughout the theatre world – is an institution in the city. Founded in 1935, it has become a pillar of the theatre sector, serving not only the community in Birmingham and the West Midlands but also regularly transferring productions to the West End and on national tours. It has world-class facilities in its workshops and on its stages and in the crafts and skills of the people that work in them. It brings new work to its audiences and delights them with popular, returning shows like *The Snowman*, part of The Rep’s offer for the last 30 years.



The successful candidate will join The Rep at a moment of renewal. The appointment will come in time to enable the incoming Chair to play an active role in the selection of a new Artistic Director to join Chief Executive Rachael Thomas as leaders of the theatre. Both of those roles will report to the Chair. The new Chair will also play a part in the appointment of new Trustees; there is the opportunity to have real influence over the next stage of The Rep’s development

The Rep is not only a business, but it is also a charity, and it is supported with an annual grant from Arts Council England as part of the National Portfolio. In recent years, we have enjoyed some commercial success – income this year is forecast at £15m – but the pressure is always on the finances and the Chair must work with the board and the executive to ensure financial stability and growth while meeting all of the demands made of a publicly subsidised theatre.

The team at The Rep is enthusiastic and committed and they look for nothing less in the Chair and Trustees. There is real pride in the institution and its work. The Rep has a glorious past (you’ll see the list of glittering names as you read through the pack) but there is the promise of an even more luminous future.

This is your invitation to be part of it.

Ian Squires
Interim Executive Chair

ARTISTIC VISION & MISSION

The Rep was the UK's first purpose-built repertory theatre, the forerunner of the RSC and the National Theatre, and remains the country's longest established building-based theatre company. For over 110 years, it has created and produced new works of theatre, ground-breaking revivals of the classics, and innovative, experimental work, in order – in the words of its founder, Sir Barry Jackson – 'to put before the Birmingham public such plays as cannot be seen in the ordinary way'.

Birmingham Repertory Theatre Ltd was incorporated in 1913 and is a registered charity and limited company governed in accordance with both charity and company law. All Trustees, including the Chair, are Trustees of the registered charity and Directors of the Board of the limited company. The term 'Trustee' is used to cover both. The Rep is owned by a parent charity, the Sir Barry Jackson Trust, named after The Rep's founder.

Today – no longer in Sir Barry's original 1913 building but in our home since 1971 on Centenary Square – that pioneering past is expressed both in the continued production of artistically ambitious new shows and plays, and by nurturing creativity in the community through our nationally recognised talent development and creative learning teams.

We create stories with artists and audiences that provide opportunities for exchange and reflection, challenge and revelation, entertainment and joy. We share our work as widely as possible through regional, national and international partnerships, and in outreach activities. We aim to imaginatively represent the diverse heritages of our city in the stories we tell in order to produce inclusive, exciting and exceptional experiences for all.

Our three auditoria, ranging in size from the 140 seat Door, to the 300 seat Studio, and the 820 seat main House, allow us to develop the craft of theatre-making, and celebrate theatrical expression of all kinds, on our stages. Our talent development programmes ensure we continue to discover and nurture the next generation of stories and storytellers. Our partnerships with schools, artists, adult education centres, refugee groups and community groups offer life-long opportunities for creative expression as well as extraordinary experiences for everyone.



We aim to produce work that is popular in that it will resonate with audiences and have real meaning for people in Birmingham, the West Midlands and beyond. We want to speak to and engage with the widest range of audiences – recognising that 'theatre' should be for everyone, and artistic excellence is for all.

Since the original Rep opened its doors in 1913, the theatre has produced work with some of the UK's – and the world's – most exciting performers, writers, directors and creative teams. Peggy Ashcroft made her professional debut with The Rep; Laurence Olivier appeared in 1926. In later years, Albert Finney, Francesca Annis, June Brown, Michael Gambon, Bernard Hill, Derek Jacobi, Jane Lapotaire, Matthew Kelly, Jack Shepherd, Martin Shaw, Lenny Henry and Stephanie Beacham have all appeared with the Company. Ayub Khan Din's *East is East* premiered in The Door in 1996.

Through our talent development programmes, we continue to invest in and promote emerging artists who, in the years to come, will be able to say, wherever they might be working, they began their careers at The Rep. And while we look into the future and far beyond our base in Birmingham, central to our purpose is the creation of theatre of quality and appeal that the people of the city will feel is uniquely 'theirs'. Once again, in the words of our founder, The Rep continues to create, 'such plays as cannot be seen in the ordinary way' – producing exceptional theatre by, with, and for Birmingham that can speak to the world.



Anu Ogunmefun as Mrs Pevensie, with ensemble. Photo © Mark Senior.

PRESENT AND FUTURE

The Rep has enjoyed considerable acclaim and success in recent years. With our own producing department, production capability, workshops and craft skills, The Rep is capable of creating major shows for its exceptional spaces. As the only producing theatre in the city, we carry the name of Birmingham on tour, into the West End and abroad with shows often made in association with internationally renowned co-producers and creative teams. At the same time, we serve our local community through our creative learning and talent development programmes working with increasing numbers of young people and artists from across the city and West Midlands.

Our turnover is £15m, we employ over 250 staff and engage over 500 freelancers a year. The theatre houses an impressive producing facility with set, costumes and props made on site and we have two trading subsidiaries delivering commercial events and catering.

As an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, our mission is shaped by ACE's strategy, Let's Create. Fulfilling the role of a publicly funded theatre has been embedded in The Rep's DNA for decades: it is an essential part of our identity and part of what makes us unique in the city. However, in common with many other NPO's, The Rep's funding has been at standstill for many years, so, in a time of rising costs, the theatre also needs to generate significant and increasing levels of earned income to ensure it continues to thrive. Holding all its activities in equilibrium, therefore, is essential to the overall viability of the theatre.

Birmingham is the youngest and most ethnically diverse core city in the UK and serving all of the city's communities is part of our mission. It is a hugely vibrant and ambitious city and there are many opportunities for The Rep to demonstrate creative, commercial, social and civic leadership and impact across Birmingham and the broader West Midlands' communities.

The themes of our 2023-26 plans are therefore ambition, growth and sustainability: building on investment in capacity since 2021, the aim is to continue to grow and diversify audiences with inspiring and relevant creative programmes.



Photo © Mark Senior.

CHAIR – ROLE DESCRIPTION

As Chair of The Rep, you will be the spokesperson for the Board and will lead on governance requirements, ensuring that The Rep delivers on its objectives as an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation, and driving forward our model of sustainability, innovation and passion for bringing theatre to our communities and beyond. The Chair will hold to account the Board and Executive for the mission, vision and values of The Rep, show inclusive leadership to the Board, ensure each Trustee fulfils their duties and responsibilities for effective governance, support and challenge the Chief Executive and Artistic Director, and ensure the Board works collaboratively, functions as a unit and works closely with the Executive. You will also act as a key advocate of The Rep externally, developing and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders, whilst also playing a key part in supporting the fundraising efforts of the organisation.

Leadership

- Provide line management of the Chief Executive and Artistic Director and maintain close and regular communication, developing a good working relationship, and conducting individual annual appraisals of the Chief Executive and the Artistic Director according to The Rep's appraisal policy;
- Show strategic leadership to the Board and the Executive, to give clear direction and ensure that The Rep achieves its strategic aims and meets the needs of its audience and its charitable objectives;
- Lead the Board's scrutiny of Arts Council England funding applications and plans and delivery of commitments in line with the Relationship Framework;
- Through working with the Chief Executive, sustain the financial health and strength of The Rep, in particular by ensuring there is a clear and credible articulation of The Rep's business model;
- Through working with the Artistic Director, ensure The Rep's artistic programme, talent development and educational outreach delivers on its strategic objectives;
- Represent The Rep at external events and, when necessary, be the spokesperson for organisation;
- Be a visible, credible and approachable leader and act as an ambassador for The Rep in the city, in the region and beyond to the industry and to the cultural sector as a whole;
- Spend time in Birmingham and be a presence in the city;
- Develop fruitful relationships with other arts and cultural organisations in Birmingham and the West Midlands to help build a greater sense of the concerted cultural offer within the city;
- Foster good relationships with all stakeholders and, in particular, the principal grant funder, Arts Council England.

Governance

- Work closely with the Chief Executive so that board meetings are well planned and address all matters that fall within the remit of the Board; plan the annual cycle of meetings, agree agendas, ensure minutes are kept and subsequently approved by the Board;
- Ensure sound governance according to the law, regulations and company policies and procedures, in particular through ensuring an appropriate board committee structure with fit-for-purpose terms of reference;
- Chair board meetings openly, effectively and impartially, ensuring Trustees work collaboratively to make decisions in the best interests of The Rep and in accordance with its governing documents;
- Maintain communications with colleagues between board meetings;
- Working with the Board, review all risks via the risk register and ensure systems are in place to identify and manage risks as well as to take advantage of opportunities;
- Maintain, update and review the Board skills matrix and ensure the Board has the right balance of skills and experience and, working with the Governance & Nominations Committee, lead on the recruitment of new Trustees;
- Ensure the Board and its members are visible with good relationships not only with the Executive but also with the senior management and staff;
- Attend as an ex-officio member the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee and the Governance & Nominations Committee;
- Conduct an annual review of board effectiveness which should at least include consultations between the Chair and members of the board but, which also, from time to time, should include an externally conducted governance review.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

We are seeking someone with significant personal standing, leadership ability and depth of experience in the cultural or business sector to lead The Rep's Board of Trustees. The successful candidate will have a demonstrable passion for theatre and for The Rep in particular and have the time to make the commitment the role demands.

While leading the Board and representing the theatre in the city and beyond, a key part of the role is the line management of the Chief Executive and Artistic Director, therefore, an understanding of the demands of senior management roles will be essential. It is important that you are passionate about the role art can play in empowering people's lives and that you are willing to invest your time and energy supporting The Rep to build its reputation and profile regionally, nationally and internationally. Previous Chair experience is not essential but would be highly desirable.

Birmingham is a diverse and youthful city, and we are keen that our Board of Trustees represents the city in all its diversity and reflects a wide range of perspectives and people. We are especially keen, therefore, to hear from prospective Chairs who come from diverse backgrounds and can bring different voices into the governance of the theatre.

The ideal candidate will bring all or most of the following attributes:

Personal:

- A demonstrable passion for and commitment to theatre and to The Rep's mission, vision and values, and to the wider arts in general;
- Intellectual curiosity to learn and discover more;
- Drive and determination for continuous improvement;
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to represent the theatre, act as an ambassador, and build positive relationships and develop networks over time;
- Integrity, impartiality, tact and diplomacy;
- A willingness to bring their own networks into play for the benefit of The Rep, and to create new ones;
- Have the time to attend shows at The Rep and elsewhere, be it in London or on tour;
- A commitment to attending meetings and engaging deeply with the organisation and the city;
- A commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion across all the theatre's activities, its governance, workforce, audiences and participants.

Experience:

- Senior strategic leadership experience from a relevant context;
- Previous experience as a Chair is highly desirable;
- Governance, especially that of a large charity, and of working with boards of charity trustees is desirable;
- Conducting external relations acting as a visible representative.

Skills & Knowledge:

- Understanding of the balance between governance and management with a clear appreciation of the Chair's role and the Board's in the former and how they support the latter;
- Excellent leadership skills and the ability to think strategically and lead a group of influential Trustees;
- The ability to evaluate, analyse, scrutinize and where appropriate challenge information relating to the organisation;
- A broad understanding of financial operations and, in particular, to have or to quickly acquire a grasp of charity finances and funding;
- A familiarity with and understanding of charity governance.

We particularly welcome applications from individuals from the Global Majority people as they are currently underrepresented on our Board of Trustees.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT – CHAIR

The Chair of The Rep is appointed for an initial 3-year term, renewable for a further 3 years by agreement with the Board.

The Rep holds four quarterly board meetings a year (though this cycle will be subject to review by the new Chair) plus the board away day and any extra ad-hoc meetings that may be required. The Chair is also expected to attend the Finance, Audit & Risk and Governance and Nominations Committee Meetings, spend time with the Executive, management and staff, attend performances and events and be visible in the theatre and the city.

The overall time commitment for the role is expected to be an average of around 3 days per month.

This is an unremunerated role, and reasonable expenses may be claimed.



Nativity! The Musical, photo © Pamela Raith

TRUSTEES – ROLE DESCRIPTION

In addition to seeking to appoint a new Chair, The Rep also wishes to recruit some new members to the Board and, in particular, we are looking for candidates with the following skills, alongside a demonstrable passion for and interest in theatre and the arts more generally:

- **legal experience**
- **a background in senior level human resources management**

These appointments will chair our newly formed Governance & Nominations and People & Engagement Committees respectively.

We are also open to applications from candidates bringing skillsets other than those mentioned above.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

In addition to the specific skills mentioned above, we are searching for candidates with:

- A demonstrable passion for and commitment to theatre in particular and the arts in general;
- A clear willingness to commit to The Rep and all its works and an alignment to its vision and values;
- Understanding of the balance between governance and management with a clear appreciation of a trustee's/non-executive's role and how they offer both support and challenge to the executive;
- A readiness to engage fully with board colleagues and in the work of any committee to which they are assigned;
- Evidence of good team working and an ability to work with others to achieve common aims;
- Communication and interpersonal skills together with the ability to represent the theatre and act as an ambassador when necessary;
- Previous non-executive board experience is desirable;
- Familiarity with governance procedures, especially those of a large charity would be helpful.
- Their own networks to whom they can reach out to on behalf of The Rep;
- The capacity to attend shows and events at the Rep and to host guests on occasions and the availability to present in Birmingham for board and committee meetings.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT – TRUSTEES

Trustees of the Rep are appointed for an initial 3-year term, renewable for a further 3 years by agreement with the board.

The Rep holds four quarterly board meetings a year (though this cycle will be subject to review by the new Chair) plus the board away day and any extra ad-hoc meetings that may be required. The legal and HR Trustees will chair the Governance & Nominations and People & Engagement Committees respectively. Trustees are also expected to attend occasional performances and events.

The overall time commitment for Trustee role is expected to be an average of around 1-2 days per month.

These are unremunerated roles and reasonable expenses may be claimed.

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

Atif Ali BEM
Andrew Chiduku
Councillor Jayne Francis
John Hornby
Liz James

Ayub Khan MBE (Deputy Chair)
Adrian Lester CBE
Victoria Marsom
Rachel Roussel-Tyson



Ana Villafañe as Ava Gardner and Matt Doyle as Frank Sinatra. Photo © Mark Senior.

HOW TO APPLY

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to the Birmingham Repertory Theatre on this appointment.

Candidates should apply through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **JBQHA**.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

Please mark clearly on your cover letter whether your application is for Chair or Trustee.

We want you to be able to showcase all your skills and experience in relation to this role throughout the recruitment process. For those with access needs, we welcome applications in alternative formats such as video and audio recordings and we are able to offer numerous adjustments at interview stage, including sending out questions in advance, allowing more time for tasks or applications, re-wording questions, providing a BSL interpreter or whatever else you might need. Please contact contact@saxbam.com for further information.

The closing date for applications is **noon on Wednesday 14th August 2024**.

Preliminary Chair interviews with Saxton Bampfylde: w/c 19th & 26th August & 2nd September

Final Chair interviews with Birmingham Rep: w/c 16th September

** 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.*

We want our Rep to be culturally informed and accessible to all, so we encourage you to celebrate and share your own cultural experience and knowledge of our city proudly in your application.

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. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

Due diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.

birmingham-rep.co.uk



The Way Old Friends Do, photo © Darren Bell

Front cover image: *Nativity! The Musical*, photo © Pamela Raith