

ROB WATT

Theatre Director and Dramaturg

T: +44 (0) 7984 176832 • E: info@robwatt.co.uk • W: robwatt.co.uk

An innovative, resourceful, and compassionate theatre leader who embraces the importance of sustainable, inclusive, and forward-thinking opportunities for children and young people to re-imagine the world through creativity and stories. From the arts to commercial projects, my diverse portfolio of accomplishments brings together business, education, and technology.

EXPERIENCE

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

2020 – present

Theatre Centre, London-based, UK wide

Artistic leader putting Theatre Centre at the forefront of creating innovative and quality touring theatre, reflecting the lives of children and young people, with a budget of £.5M pa, 8 core team colleagues, and 24 writers commissioned.

- **Developed Theatre Centre's vision and led the delivery** of our 5-year strategic plan
- **Created and established Future Makers** (co-creation model) embracing access, diversity, representation and inclusion
- **Commissioned and directed our touring productions**, appointing and contracting key writers and artists according to their profile suitability and our needs
- **Facilitated experimentation with form and narrative** – a programme of workshops bringing together writers and young people, assuring production authenticity and quality
- **Built and maintained influential relationships with key stakeholders**, nurturing productive partnerships e.g., the 5-year co-production opportunity with Sheffield Theatres
- **Led the design and delivery** of the newly established annual Teachers' Think Tank
- **Devised and managed the Theatre Centre response to Covid 19** in 2020/2021 – worked at pace to redesign our programme to ensure reach and usefulness.

PODCAST PRESENTER AND PRODUCER

2021 – present

The Blurry Bits, online

Guests explore masculinity, with all its beautiful, brutal, complex nuances. Presented by Charlie Josephine & Rob Watt.

ASSOCIATE

2017 – 2021

Headlong Theatre, London-based, UK wide

Created Headlong Futures, a bold, ambitious project which brought together four distinctive communities across England, creating four unique stories.

- **Established Headlong Futures** – community engagement, creative and production
- **Collaborated with local communities and theatres** to explore cross-generation working, based on different backgrounds and locations (Theatre Royal Plymouth, Bristol Old Vic, Brewery Arts Centre, New Perspectives Theatre)
- **Commissioned Olivier award-winning writer Stef Smith** who fused these stories into a single play called Acts of Resistance, which played at Bristol Old Vic
- **Established key stakeholders** to build strategic, creative and commercial partnerships
- **Led a team of Associate Directors** and assured successful engagement, collaboration and influence

CREATIVE LEAD

2019 – present

The Department, UK and international

Designing and delivering large-scale immersive projects for children and their families. Including an augmented reality spy mission for children, and spoof family gameshows aimed at developing collaboration and humour for MSC Cruises.

EDUCATOR

2015 – present

Freelancing with two companies, inrehearsal and RolePlay, developed resources and delivered workshops on communication, leadership and creativity. Clients included: Facebook, Nando's, McDonalds, Deloitte LLP

DIRECTOR

2010 – present

Selected Credits:

Wish You Weren't Here by Katie Redford (Sheffield Theatres & Theatre Centre, UK Tour); ***Birds and Bees*** by Charlie Josephine (Sheffield Theatres & Theatre Centre, UK Tour); ***Human Nurture*** by Ryan Calais Cameron, (Sheffield Theatres & Theatre Centre, UK Tour); ***There is a War*** by Tom Basden, Institute of the Arts Barcelona, 2023; ***CBEEBIES Rainbow Adventure***, (BBC Studios & Step Inside Productions, UK Tour); ***Acts of Resistance*** by Stef Smith (Headlong & Bristol Old Vic); ***Goosebumps adapted*** by Rob Watt (The Vaults); ***Rallying Cry*** by Apples and Snakes (Battersea Arts Centre, BBC Contains Strong Words, Brighton Fringe); ***George's Secret Key to the Universe*** by Lucy & Stephen Hawking (Workshop); ***Missing Episode*** by Ross Sutherland (BBC 2 & BAC); It's ***Not Too Late to Save the World (and Other Lies)*** devised by the company (Lyric Hammersmith); ***Operation Ghost Raven*** by Rob Watt (The Department & MSC Grandiosa); ***Love and Information*** by Caryl Churchill (Institute of the Arts Barcelona); ***Be Prepared*** by Ian Bonar (Underbelly / VAULT Festival); ***Party Trap*** by Ross Sutherland (Shoreditch Town Hall); ***The Joy of Normal*** by Rob Watt and the Company (Orange Tree Theatre); ***Standby For Tape Back-Up*** by Ross Sutherland (Soho Theatre / Shoreditch Town Hall / UK tour).

VISITING LECTURER

2010 – present

Frequent guest appearances at the **Royal Central School of Speech and Drama**, **The Institute of the Arts Barcelona**, **London South Bank University**, and **City University**. Lectures included: *Directing Text, Approaches to Co-creation, Child Protection, and Dealing with Difficult Behaviour*

ASSOCIATE ARTIST

2017 – 2019

Lyric Hammersmith, London

Artistically leading ***START***, the flagship programme for marginalised 16 to 21-year-olds, an accredited six-week creative course for young people not in education, employment, or training

YOUTH PROGRAMME MANAGER

2011 – 2016

National Theatre, London

Developed and delivered NT's eclectic and inspiring youth programme (budget £1.2M pa)

- Reinvigorated and produced **National Theatre Connections**, the largest UK new writing youth theatre festival (12 writers, 30 leading UK theatres, 40 emerging directors, and 400 youth theatres annually)
- Developed **Young Studio** – a creative home for young theatre makers and artists bringing creative ideas to life through experimentation, and risk-taking
- Harnessed the NT's repertoire for young people and their families to develop skills and experience theatre as a means of exploring the world in which we live

ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, Immediate Theatre

2008 – 2011

Produced and directed all new touring work; maintaining a strategic overview of staffing and budgets, cultivating and sustaining local and regional partnerships

L8R PROJECT MANAGER, Hi8us

2007 – 2008

BAFTA and Royal Television Society (awarded) project with a £500K budget and 3-year plan

PROJECTS MANAGER, Immediate Theatre

2003 – 2007

Led extensive portfolio of participatory projects (£250,000 funding secured), directed 6 London Productions and brokered influential partnerships with key stakeholders

ARTS EDUCATION OFFICER, The Old Town Hall

2002 – 2003

Facilitated community-led arts programmes and managed Associates' team

VOLUNTEERING

Governor, **Addy and Stanhope Secondary School**, Lewisham, 2020 - present • **Mentor**, **All Stars London**, 2021 – 2022 • **Trustee (Chair)**, **Savvy Theatre**, 2019 – Present • **Trustee**, **National Association of Youth Theatres**, 2015 – 2017 • **Trustee (Chair)**, **Theatre Venture**, 2008 – 2010.

VOCATIONAL LEARNING

Sour Lemons, Zesting, 7 Weeks • **International Navigator Leadership Training**, Common Purpose. • Working with Vulnerable Young People, The Unit of Arts and Offenders.

EDUCATION

- 1st Class Ba (Hons) Dramaturgy, University of Leeds, 1998 – 2001
- Idsall VI Form, Shropshire, 1996 – 1998, 3 A-Levels
- Idsall School, Shropshire, 1991 – 1996, 11 GCSE's

SELECTED PRESS

Libby Penn, Judge on the **ACHATES PHILANTHROPY WINNING PRIZE 2020**, ImagiNation

"The Judges were impressed by the innovative approach to turn an obstacle, like the pandemic, into an opportunity to celebrate creativity [...] The project took an integrated approach to help both the audience become artists and create a multi-dimensional piece of work that reached over 6,000 people."

Wish You Weren't Here by Katie Redford

★★★★★ **The Yorkshire Post** – *"This is probably the best two-hander to emerge for many a year"*

★★★★★ **West End Best Friend** – *"Authentic, heartfelt, funny and moving"*

Goosebumps adapted by Rob Watt

★★★★★ **The London Economic** – *"A heady mix of horror and humour..."*

Timeout – Top 10 Children's Theatre to See in Half Term

Birds and Bess by Charlie Josephine

★★★★★ **The Stage** – *"Watt's production, with movement by Yami Löfvenberg, has a kinetic energy"*

★★★★★ **Centre Stage** – *"Simply put, Charlie Josephine's new play, is a revolutionary piece..."*

Human Nurture by Ryan Calais Cameron

The Guardian – *"Its visceral rawness and total authenticity hit you in the gut."*

The Scotsman – *"...a terrifying portrait of an atomised society..."*

The Review Hub – *"Rob Watt's direction is brilliant..."*

What's On Stage – *"Rob Watt's direction is dynamic, fast-moving and full of action and contrasts."*

Standby for Tape Back Up by Ross Sutherland

★★★★★ **The Stage** – *"Consuming, compelling, hypnotic... One of the stand-out shows of the Fringe"*

★★★★★ **Fest Magazine** – *"I've rarely found myself so rapt by a piece of theatre"*

★★★★★ **The Independent** – *"Dizzily clever"*

★★★★★ **The Telegraph** – *"Startlingly original"*

Party Trap by Ross Sutherland

★★★★★ **Time Out, Critics Choice** – *"Astonishingly clever"*

The Stage – Featured in 145 shows that defined theatre in 2016 *"...audacious"*