



WNO Directing Fellow

(Weston Jerwood Creative Bursary)

Fixed Term – April 2021 to March 2022

(start date can be flexible but before end of April 2021)

Welsh National Opera is delighted to have been chosen as one of 50 host arts organisations offering Fellowships as part of the **Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries Programme 2020 – 2022. This programme aims to get more people from low socio-economic backgrounds into cultural careers.**

We are proud of our steps towards better inclusivity and now have one of the most diverse Boards in the British opera industry. However, opera is still viewed as elitist and we know that significantly more diversity in our work force is required to start to break down this conception, and to make sure that all people see WNO as an open and accessible option for a career in the arts.

The new role of WNO Directing Fellow is aimed specifically at people who have experienced social and/or economic barriers to employment in opera. You do not need a formal education for this role. You don't need a music or drama degree, or need to speak any foreign languages. You don't even need to have seen an opera. We want to make sure that WNO is current and relevant to the audiences it serves around the UK and we can only do that by telling the story of opera through many different voices.

This Fellowship is ideally suited to a candidate seeking to gain experience in opera by working on productions large and small, live and digital, and we will provide development opportunities, resources, and career assistance during your time with WNO.

About the Person

Could this be the job for you?

- **Do you identify as from a low socio-economic background*?**
- **Are you interested in developing a career as a Director, and learning what that involves within an opera company?**
- **Do you have an interest in the performing arts and what they can offer communities and audiences alike?**
- **Do you have two to five years transferable experience – including unpaid, voluntary and/or independently – in a creative, directorial or engagement role?**
- **Do you enjoy working collaboratively, across departments, and on various scales of project?**
- **Do you like to create projects, tell stories and change and challenge conceptions through your work?**
- **Do you have the right to work in the UK?**

* What is a lower socio-economic background? If you are from a lower socio-economic background you will most likely have been to a state school and might have received free school meals as a child. Household income may have been uncertain when you were growing up and the occupations of close family members are likely to have been in the technical, manual or service professions. You are likely to have been the first in your family to continue formal education post-18. You might have grown up in the care system or been a young carer. Another term people from a lower socio-economic background might identify themselves with is working-class. If you are from a lower socio-economic background you are more likely to face intersecting barriers in society, as barriers are rarely experienced in isolation, so we welcome applications from all diverse backgrounds inclusive of race, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age or disability. You can find out more about socio-economic diversity and the actions we are advocating for in this [Toolkit](#).

This job is part of a wider programme called the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries, which is designed and run by Jerwood Arts. Watch this video to find out more <https://vimeo.com/346095956>. The programme funds a year-long salaried job in arts and cultural organisations, as well as providing links to wider professional and pastoral guidance where it is needed. Please read the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries Programme 'One Pager' which outlines who Jerwood Arts are, how the WJCB programme works and what you will get from the programme beyond the job.

About the Company

Who is WNO?

Welsh National Opera is based in Cardiff, at the iconic Wales Millennium Centre (WMC) in the bustling area of Cardiff Bay. We are residents of Wales Millennium Centre, sharing facilities with eight other thriving and diverse arts organisations, detailed [here](#)



We believe in the power of opera to transform lives. Our mission is to bring the power, drama and raw emotion of opera to as wide an audience as possible.



WNO *Tosca* Mary Elizabeth Williams. Photo by Robert Workman



WNO *Carmen* Giorgio Caoduro. Photo by Richard Hubert Smith



WNO *Can Sing*. Photo by Kirsten McTernan

As a national company with international status, we sit at the heart of music-making in Wales and play a valuable role in the communities we serve in England. We work with our partners to discover and nurture young operatic talent, and provide the springboard for international careers.



WNO *Les vêpres siciliennes*. Photo by Johan Persson

Touring is our lifeblood and we strive to present the highest quality work across our artistic programme, entertaining and inspiring audiences at our operas and concerts and providing transformative experiences through our youth and community work.

Building on our 75-year history and our roots in the communities of South Wales, we aim to demonstrate to future generations that opera is a rewarding, relevant and universal art form.

More than any other company, WNO opens up the world of opera to everyone. We are seeking a Directing Fellow who will work to help us achieve this, but also to challenge us on different ways to open up opera to new groups.

You can find out about some of the other people you'd be working alongside at WNO [here](#)



WNO Youth Opera, Birmingham. Photo by Simon Hadley

About the role

What will a WNO Directing Fellow do?

Starting in April, the Fellow will work regularly with the WNO Youth Opera group, assisting on a new production of ***Cheryomushki***, directed by Daisy Evans. During our Autumn 2021 Season, you will work on our new production / new commission ***Migrations*** (directed by Sir David Pountney) learning how to assist on a truly large-scale production, involving full chorus, large cast, dancers and children (details [here](#)). The Fellow will also work with WNO Producers to curate, plan and participate in additional participatory events around these new productions. The Fellow's programme of work during the Spring 2022 Season is subject to consultation, based on what WNO is able to programme during that Season, and what you would like to work on and achieve during your last few months of contract.



Directing for opera involves a range of different techniques, and we will support you to develop your skills and ability in commanding large-scale forces, establishing pace when working with music, understanding the physicality of the art form and responding to the nuance of performers. The Fellow will gain a unique insight into the workings of a large-scale touring company, working alongside visiting Directors who will provide insight into their craft during the creative process, and will receive structured mentoring from WNO's Staff Director Caroline Chaney.

Our Fellow will also have the opportunity to devise and deliver projects while working alongside WNO's Programmes & Engagement Department (see [here](#)), as well as hone your directorial skills in workshops with our three WNO Associate Artists. Your programme of work will include a mix of hands-on practical work, observation, discussion with experienced practitioners and an introduction to further opportunities.

The Fellow will have a network of peers within the organisation, including contact with and support from Board Members, and will work with departments across the company. You will be line-managed by WNO's Head of Artistic Management Kathryn Joyce and will be invited to join WNO's Inclusion Task Force.

In addition, further support networks, professional development assistance and mentoring will be provided by Jerwood Arts, as part of the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries Programme 2020-22.

Location: In the current Covid-19 climate, WNO is supportive of remote working when possible, although you should expect to spend the majority of your time in Cardiff, to make the most of the opportunity and to be able to attend relevant rehearsals and performances.

About the criteria

Who can apply?

This Fellowship has been created specifically to foster new relationships with, and to create a launchpad for, creative practitioners who have traditionally encountered barriers in securing opportunities within the opera industry. We also welcome applications from all diverse backgrounds, inclusive of race, colour, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age or disability.

Applicants must have two to five years transferable experience; this would ideally be in a directorial capacity but can also be from other demonstrative creative roles, and can include unpaid, voluntary, independent or freelance ventures.

Applicants must have the right to work within the UK.

In addition, the following skills, knowledge and experience are either essential or desirable:

Essential:

- An ability to inspire and lead artists into delivering creative performances
- Ability to work quickly and efficiently, sometimes under pressure
- Excellent communicator with good inter-personal skills
- A flexible and adaptable approach, a team player
- Self-motivated with the ability to work efficiently and effectively under pressure
- Self-reliance, dependability, discretion and punctuality

Desirable:

- Basic ability in music reading
- A strong approach to the study and preparation of scores or other production materials prior to rehearsals
- Experience of working with young people and in schools and communities
- Good level of experience of Microsoft Office packages
- Ability to speak Welsh

About all the rest

Key information and important dates

- **Job title:** WNO Directing Fellow
- **Reporting to:** Kathryn Joyce, Head of Artistic Management
- **Location:** Cardiff, and on tour around England and Wales as required.
- **Salary:** £22,000 per annum payable monthly by credit transfer to bank.
- **Contract type:** full-time, fixed term of 12 months.
- The offer of an appointment is subject to receipt of two references that are satisfactory to the company.
- The appointment is subject to a probationary period of six months.
- Termination of engagement during the probationary period is by one month's notice on either side. Termination thereafter is by three months' notice on either side.
- Normal office hours are 10am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, with a one hour lunch break, but it should be understood the job involves regular work outside these hours and therefore there is a need to be flexible in working outside normal office hours and at weekends.
- Holiday entitlement is 25 days per annum (pro rata during first year of employment).
- Sickness benefit during the probationary period is at the statutory minimum. Entitlement after completion of the probationary period (26 weeks qualifying period) is a maximum of 13 weeks at full salary and 13 weeks at half salary, inclusive of statutory sick pay in both cases.
- The Company offers a contributory pension scheme

Application deadline:

12noon on Friday 19 February 2021

Interview dates:

w/c 15 March 2021

Interview address:

Welsh National Opera, Wales Millennium Centre, Bute Place, Cardiff, CF10 5AL or online via Zoom depending on COVID restrictions.

Start date:

April 2021 (with an element of flexibility)

To apply:

Download and complete the following documents and return to recruitment@wno.org.uk

How to apply?

1. Download and complete the application form – wno.org.uk/directorfellowship

Please answer the questions included within it; no CVs will be accepted.

2. We are happy to receive the answers to the questions asked on pages **4, 5, 6 & 7** as audio or visual files. These must be either in MP4 format or shared via WeTransfer.
3. Download and complete the data monitoring form.