

THEATRE PECKHAM

IMPACT REPORT 2024/25



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EMPOWERING CHANGE THROUGH INCLUSIVE
THEATRE IN THE HEART OF SOUTHWARK

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DESIGNED BY:



SUMMARY:

We're excited to reflect on an incredible year of growth and resilience for Theatre Peckham. We continue to excel in our goal to provide inclusive performing arts experiences, opportunities and training for young people, through a diverse variety of programming and community outreach.



In 2024 - 2025 we have strengthened our Young Peckham programme, engaging with 127 young people, the success of which is reflected in the continued relationships and engagement from our alumni coming back to support their peers. We're particularly proud of the partnerships we have established and grown with casting agents, RADA, Guildhall, AKTA, and National Theatre to platform our young people on stage and provide them with tangible routes into the creative industries.

"[THEATRE PECKHAM] REALLY HELPED ME GROW IN SO MANY AREAS AND ALLOWED ME TO DEVELOP A GROUP OF FRIENDS FOR LIFE." - REP PARTICIPANT



This year, our Ambassadors have stepped up more than ever. The local community continue to co-curate Peckham Fringe and remain excited and engaged by what we are building here, understanding Theatre Peckham as a force for change.

We've also worked closely with professionals across the industry, creating pathways into the arts through mentorship and placements for our young people, with 75 young people gaining paid employment.

Our work at Canada Water Library Theatre has significantly boosted local creative activity and community engagement. Since taking on its management in 2023, the venue has flourished - generating vital income, while providing essential free rehearsal space for local artists and school participation.

These are just some of the many achievements that reflect the collective legacy we are building at Theatre Peckham. Our continued efforts demonstrate an ambitious commitment to deepening our impact as we move into a new chapter and look forward to our 40th year in 2026.

**"THIS COMPANY IS DOING
AMAZING THINGS FOR THEIR
COMMUNITY AND I'M SO LUCKY
I GOT TO BE A PART OF THEIR
TEAM." PEARL, WORK
PLACEMENT STUDENT**

MEET RYAN DENTON

In autumn 2023, Ryan Denton joined us from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama on a work placement supporting our Artistic Director, Suzann Mclean by carrying out administrative tasks and stage management responsibilities on our REP Production of The Farm and our festive production Rapunzel. His passion and enthusiasm for the work enabled him to shadow current industry stage managers and work alongside freelance production staff. One year on, Ryan came back as a paid freelancer in the role of Assistant Director and Company Stage Manager for 2024's festive show, building on the skills he had learnt in the previous year, directing and supporting the Company to ensure smooth running of the production. This experience was invaluable in not only developing skills and understanding but the confidence to share his abilities and successes within interviews.

"THEATRE PECKHAM PROVIDES A FANTASTIC STARTING BLOCK FOR CREATIVE INDIVIDUALS TO GAIN HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE, UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESSES INVOLVED IN DELIVERING LIVE PERFORMANCE. NOT ONLY IS IT A SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT BUT ALSO PROVIDES FANTASTIC OPPORTUNITIES TO NETWORK AND COLLABORATE WITH ARTISTS CURRENTLY WORKING IN THE INDUSTRY."



Alongside the festive production, Ryan founded a theatre company 'Ordinary Stories Theatre' which champions community and connection through creativity in rural areas of the UK. After successfully gaining Social Enterprise funding from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, his company has a website and is soon to register as a Community Interest Company.

In January, Ryan toured to secondary schools across the UK as an Assistant Stage Manager with the National Theatre's production, The LeftBehinds, directed by Ned Bennett, a friend of Theatre Peckham. Ryan continues to work with us, on a freelance basis, around his other arts, theatre and stage management projects.

OUR PROGRAMMES

TP Academy (Ages 3 - 16)

Each week, our Academy works with over 400 children and teenagers, many of whom return year after year. Through training in performance and backstage skills, students build confidence, explore creativity, and grow in a supportive space. Every participant gets the chance to perform on our main stage. Members also access cultural activities such as trips, discounted or free tickets, public showcases, and casting opportunities.

Young Peckham (Ages 17 - 29)

Around 100 young people take part in Young Peckham each year. The programme supports those from underrepresented backgrounds to build skills and access routes into creative work. Opportunities include actor training, technical theatre, producing, and youth leadership. Participants take part in tailored workshops and gain experience that helps them move forward in their creative paths.

Outreach

We develop partnerships with schools to support local young people to engage with the arts, develop new skills and build confidence. Through participatory programmes lasting 12-30 weeks young people are encouraged to explore key themes through a range of activities, breaking down barriers to accessing arts engagement.

Peckham Fringe

Peckham Fringe is a festival of culture. It provides artists and companies with a supportive setting to test out new work. We believe in pushing the boundaries of traditional performer spectator experiences, allowing artists to further develop their practice while engaging with live audiences.

Young, Gifted and Black

Young, Gifted and Black is a multi-disciplinary season that celebrates the stories and experiences of London's young Black British community. This season is a platform for cultural insight and an opportunity for learning and growth, highlighting the reach and legacy of the African diaspora.

Festive Production

Our annual in-house Festive Production brings together a cast of young people and professionals. This unique format attracts family audiences, schools, and theatre-goers who come from near and far to experience the authentic joy that resonates from our stage.

Poetry Foyer

In partnership with Poetic Unity, this monthly event invites young people to perform their words in front of an audience. It's a space for expression, sharing, and growth.

IMPACT DATA

2024

winner of Music & Drama Education's
Excellence in Musical Theatre award

"THE PEOPLE, THE FRIENDSHIPS. THEATRE
PECKHAM IN GENERAL IS PRETTY SICK!"
REP PARTICIPANT

72



young people gained experience through our work
placement and volunteering



699

young people engaged through Young
Peckham and Academy



12191

hours of engagement
through our Academy

5546

hours of free masterclass workshops
for our Young Peckham members



5546

hours of free masterclass
workshops for our Young
Peckham members

73

productions across our venues
performing

166

performances

1144

hours of free rehearsal
space to artists
developing new work in
the creative industries

YOUNG PECKHAM

Young Peckham continued to provide over 100, 17-29 year olds with free training in acting, arts leadership and producing. Through hands-on weekly training delivered by industry professionals, young people concluded each programme with a performance or event to showcase their learnings providing them with the skills, experience and networks to develop careers in the creative industries.

2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

127 participants

36 created and received a show reel

36 got professional head shots

+50 attended a professional casting

9 students progressed into drama schools, higher education, or further training - an outstanding result given that top drama schools accept less than 1% of applicants.

15 progressed in the sector in paid roles ¹

12 recieved paid experiences through Theatre Peckham ²

1 Jack Petchey award

Guided by our Artistic Director's pedagogy - rooted in the belief that every individual has the potential to succeed and that the arts are a powerful catalyst for personal and social development - our work creates nurturing, empowering environments where young people build confidence, explore their identities, and gain real-world experiences. Through this approach, they cultivate personal growth, social awareness, and a lifelong love of the arts.



'THEATRE PECKHAM WAS A GREAT BOOST IN MY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND I HAVE MET PEOPLE THAT I WILL CONTINUE TO CONNECT WITH AND WORK WITH.' - FUTURE LEADER

¹ Not all YP share when they receive employment

² Achieved through our Academy, Futureland and Positive Futures programmes

MEET LLANURA BEQIRI

'I'M NOT SOMEONE WHO LIKES TO ASK FOR HELP OR ADVICE AND I FEEL LIKE I NEED TO DO EVERYTHING MYSELF, BUT AT THEATRE PECKHAM IT'S GENUINELY BEEN LIKE, NO, YOU CAN, YOU CAN ASK FOR THINGS. I THINK IT'S PUSHED ME TO PUT MYSELF IN THOSE SPACES THAT OTHERWISE I DON'T THINK I WOULD BELONG IN.'

Llanura first attended Theatre Peckham in 2023 during our annual Theatre Works Unconference. She took part in a day of workshops, including panel discussions, acting, and prosthetics, and was particularly inspired by Theatre Peckham alumni Montel Douglas, who led the acting session. After finishing her GCSEs, Llanura returned to do her work placement, shadowing Suzann McLean. Although she worried at first that she was just a "random 16-year-old that was getting in the way," she quickly realised that wasn't the case, saying, "the environment is really conducive to just support."

Her placement involved supporting auditions for Theatre Peckham's festive show, including reading lines with auditionees. Although she hadn't seen herself as an actor before, she found a lot of joy and confidence in the experience. Suzann suggested she join Theatre Peckham's Young Peckham programme, and



soon after, Llanura attended her first session with the Young Actor's Company, directed by Montel- A full circle moment. As Drama wasn't offered at A-level at her sixth form, this gave her a chance to keep engaging in theatre - this time outside of school. She felt nervous at first, so she brought a friend from her GCSE Drama class along. They started going together, practicing lines during lunch breaks and building their friendship. Learning from her peers and connecting with other young people from the local community has helped Llanura grow in confidence and build a strong group of like-minded friends. She said a highlight of the programme was being in rehearsals and working together towards something as a group. The care everyone had for the performance and for each other made a big difference and helped create a brilliant final show.

Llanura has a real passion for the arts, and through Young Peckham, she feels more confident to "go and grab opportunities" that she now knows are within reach. Her ambition is to become an Artistic Director in Ballet or Theatre. She's excited about future opportunities to stay involved at Theatre Peckham - She has joined the Young Ambassador arts leadership programme and is keen to begin working on the front of house team.

"ALTHOUGH I HAVE BEEN AT THEATRE PECKHAM FOR A LONG TIME, I HAVE LEARNT MORE ABOUT THE THEATRE OVER THE LAST FEW WEEKS OF THIS PROJECT THAN I HAVE OVER MY LAST 12 YEARS. LOOKING THROUGH THE DEEP DEPTHS OF THE PHYSICAL ARCHIVE AS WELL AS COLLECTING AN ANECDOTAL HISTORY OF TP HAS BEEN FASCINATING AND I'VE ENJOYED EVERY STEP. AS WELL AS EXPLORING THEATRE PECKHAM'S HISTORY I HAVE GAINED A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF ARCHIVING AS A WHOLE FROM THE ABSOLUTE EXPERTS WHO HAVE BEEN SUPPORTIVE AND INTERESTING THROUGHOUT. FINALLY, THE TRAINING WE'VE GOTTEN IN ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWING AND THE TECHNICAL PROCESS OF RECORDING WITH INDUSTRY-GRADE TECHNOLOGY HAVE GIVEN ME SKILLS THAT I WILL TAKE FORWARD INTO EVERY ASPECT OF MY CAREER."

- JOE



AMBASSADORS

"IT HAS BEEN IMMENSELY SATISFYING TO CO-CURATE THIS YEAR'S PECKHAM FRINGE. AS A COLLECTIVE WE PITCHED AND FOUGHT FOR THESE STORIES TO BE TOLD, AND WE WANTED TO BRING THE BEST CONTENT, VARIETY AND ENJOYMENT YOU CAN GET YOUR HANDS ON, RIGHT ON YOUR DOORSTEP." - BEA

The Ambassadors are a group of local community members who advocate for Theatre Peckham and feed into decision making. It is made up of alumni, parents and local residents all of whom want to have an active say in ensuring Theatre Peckham is serving the local community.

Creative Control

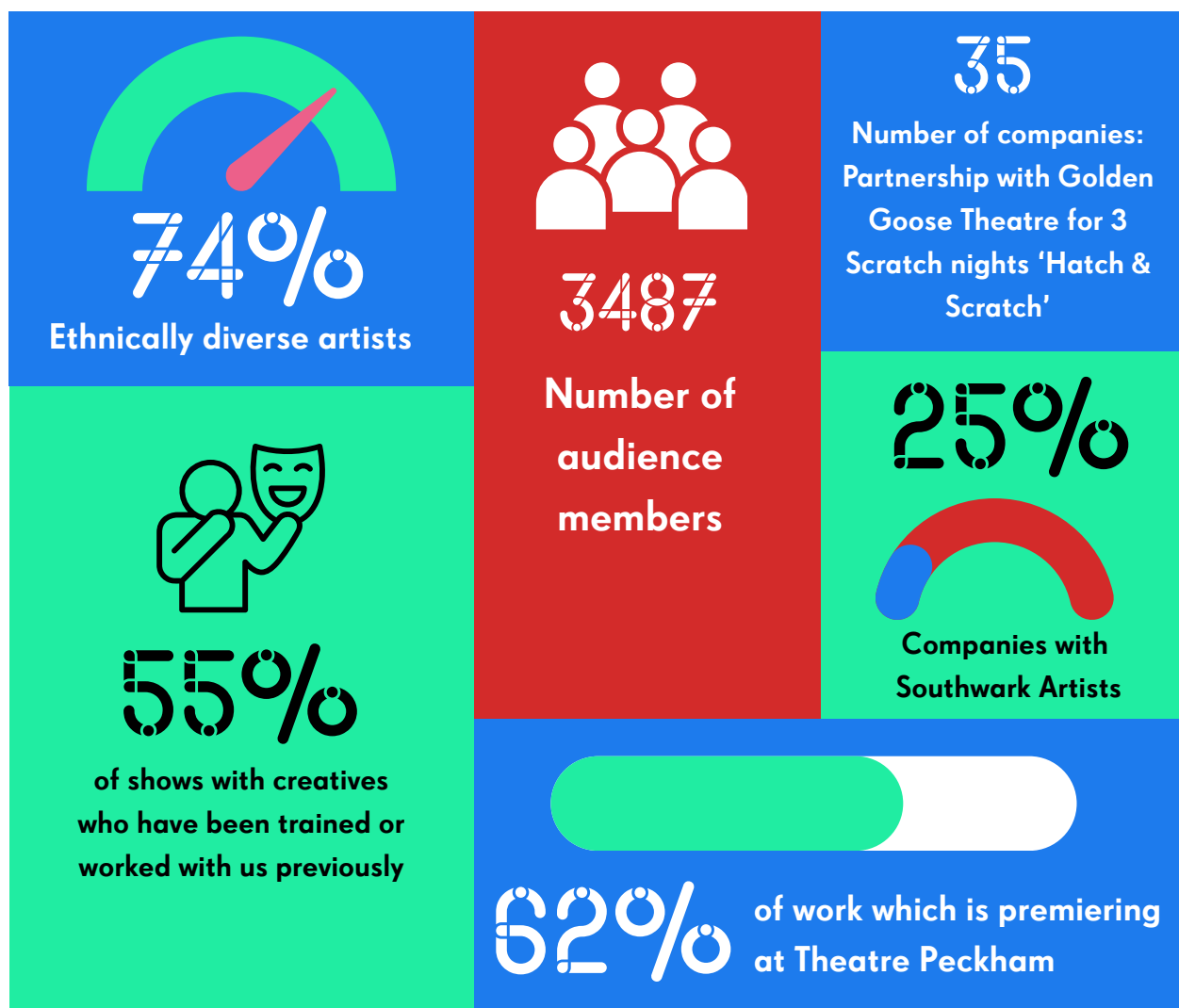
All Peckham Fringe submissions are read by the Ambassadors and our shows are selected by them. This ensures our programming is made by and for our hyper-local community, and we are curating and providing the kind of opportunities and theatre our community wants to engage with.



"I FEEL SO HONOURED THAT I GOT TO BE PART OF THIS YEAR'S FRINGE AND TO SHARE MY WORK NOT ONLY WITHIN A SUPPORTIVE LOCAL COMMUNITY BUT ALSO WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE TP TEAM." - MONIQUE

PECKHAM FRINGE 2024

Festival took place between 1st May and 8th June



Reach and Reputation

Our Ambassadors set up a stall at the Peckham Rye Park Fete in September. This was the perfect timing to promote our Academy, the annual festive show and our Young Gifted and Black season. They engaged with every local member of the community, putting Theatre Peckham on their radar, and spreading the message that our doors are always open to them. They volunteered their time and flyer for our run of shows, speaking to local businesses about how they might be able to support or promote our activities.

MEET BEATRIZ BROWN



"IT'S THE MOST REWARDING AND JOYFUL VOLUNTEERING I HAVE EVER DONE."

Beatriz (Bea) has been a Theatre Peckham Ambassador for four years, with over a decade of experience in arts education and youth engagement. Bea became an Ambassador to support a holistic space where everyone can access the arts, develop their creativity, and explore challenges. Whilst Bea has shared her knowledge and experience in the sector, volunteering has also supported her own professional development to think creatively about strategising and applying learning within her own work.

During her time as an Ambassador, Bea has seen the organisation's ambition expand, guided by a leadership team with a clear vision. She has witnessed Theatre Peckham take bold steps, such as building partnerships with Spotify and Nike for the Watch Me music video, while staying true to its values.

Bea believes the organisation's strength lies in its diversity - across staff, trustees, and Ambassadors - which drives forward richer conversations and stronger decision-making.

A standout moment for Bea was taking a friend's five-year-old to see Pan!, their first theatre experience. Watching the child's delight throughout the show reminded her why being part of Theatre Peckham matters.

ON OUR STAGE

For the 6th year, our Young, Gifted and Black season - which celebrates the stories and experiences of London's young Black British community - returns and goes from strength to strength. This year we saw the return of I love Acting but F*** the industry provided young people from our programmes with a platform to further develop their work.

We expanded our reach in the season through Power of Representation, an event partnering with Netflix and the Sickle Cell Foundation, focusing on Sickle Cell awareness. The event included workshops, a panel, and foyer activations. We platformed the way we can use theatre and art to raise awareness and conversations about topics which affect our community.



SHOW SPOTLIGHT: PAN!

PETER'S COME OUT TO PLAY

For just over two weeks in December 2024, our Christmas show brought culture and joy to the stage. It was powered by the community, with young people at the heart of it. They saw it through from beginning to end, showing what can happen when they're trusted to take the lead.



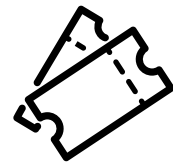
4 ADULTS CAST

30 YOUNG PEOPLE CAST

72 AUDITIONED

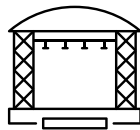


3 OF THE CREW WERE
ALUMNI OF THE TP
PROGRAMMES



4381 OUT OF POSSIBLE
5252 TICKETS SOLD

83% CAPACITY FILLED



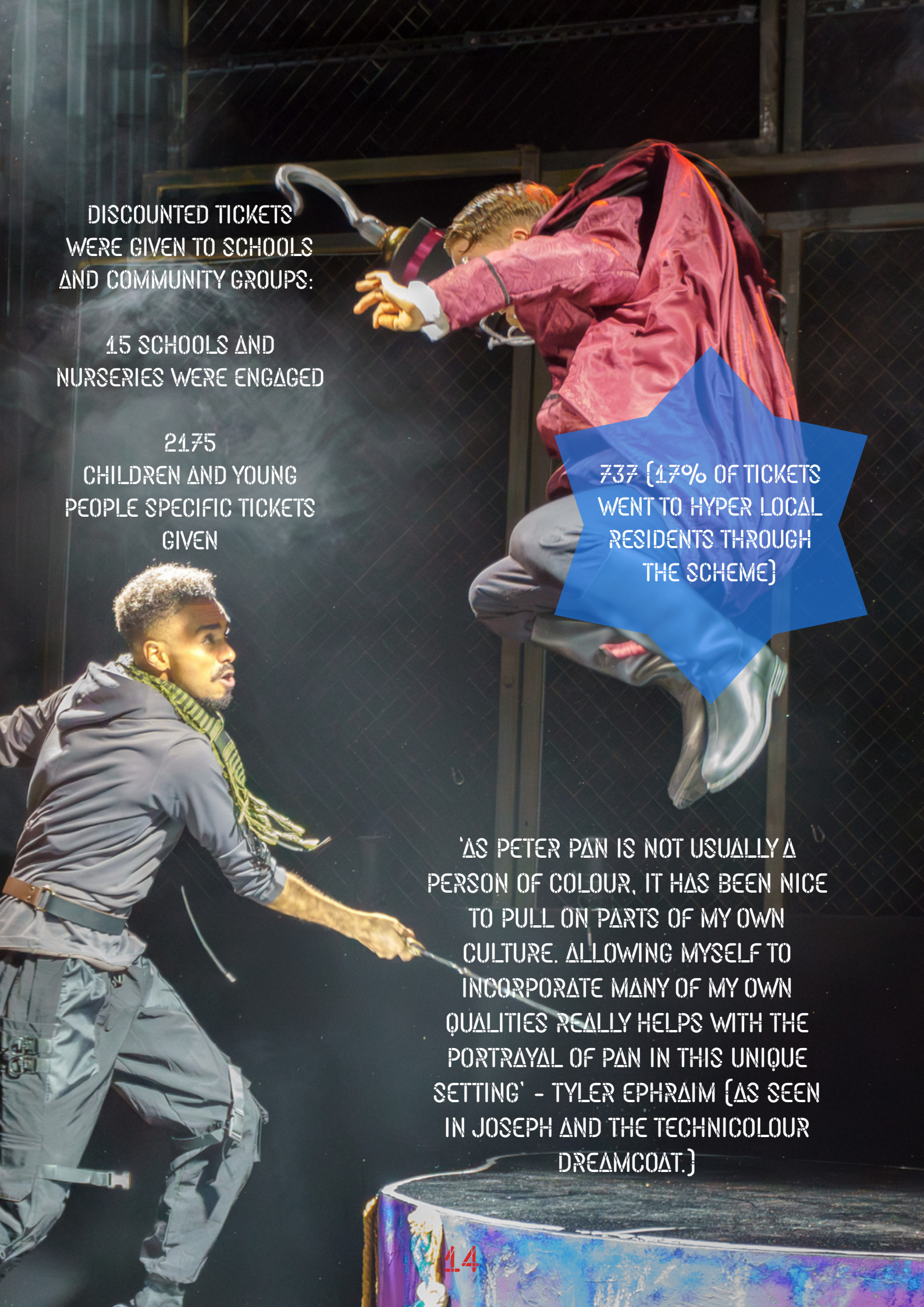
26 PERFORMANCES

'GREAT SCRIPT, GREAT DIRECTION, GREAT LIGHTING AND SET - AND THE ACADEMY STUDENTS REALLY DID YOU PROUD. WHAT AN ACHIEVEMENT.'

- LUCY RICHARDSON, ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

"I HAVE IMPROVED ON SINGING AND DANCING AT THE SAME TIME, SINCE BEFORE THE SHOW STARTED, I HAVE USUALLY RAN OUT OF BREATH QUITE EASILY. THE REHEARSALS HAVE TAUGHT ME HOW TO CONTROL MY BREATHING WHEN SINGING AND DANCING AT THE SAME TIME" - NASYA, YOUNG COMPANY MEMBER, AGED 11

'THIS EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN HUGE FOR MY SON, HE HAS GROWN IN SO MUCH CONFIDENCE NOT JUST AS A PERFORMER BUT ALSO AS A YOUNG MAN. ESPECIALLY AT SUCH A PIVOTAL AGE THESE EXPERIENCES MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE AND HAVE LEFT HIM FEELING ACCOMPLISHED IN FULL OF PRIDE WHEN HE HAS FACED A LOT OF PERSONAL ADVERSITY THIS YEAR.' - PARENT



DISCOUNTED TICKETS
WERE GIVEN TO SCHOOLS
AND COMMUNITY GROUPS:

15 SCHOOLS AND
NURSERIES WERE ENGAGED

2175
CHILDREN AND YOUNG
PEOPLE SPECIFIC TICKETS
GIVEN

737 (17% OF TICKETS
WENT TO HYPER LOCAL
RESIDENTS THROUGH
THE SCHEME)

'AS PETER PAN IS NOT USUALLY A
PERSON OF COLOUR, IT HAS BEEN NICE
TO PULL ON PARTS OF MY OWN
CULTURE. ALLOWING MYSELF TO
INCORPORATE MANY OF MY OWN
QUALITIES REALLY HELPS WITH THE
PORTRAYAL OF PAN IN THIS UNIQUE
SETTING' - TYLER EPHRAIM (AS SEEN
IN JOSEPH AND THE TECHNICOLOUR
DREAMCOAT.)

SHOW SPOTLIGHT: PAN!

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE



8-16 YEARS OLD

80%

Black Asian or ethnically
Diverse

56%

Southwark

15

13%

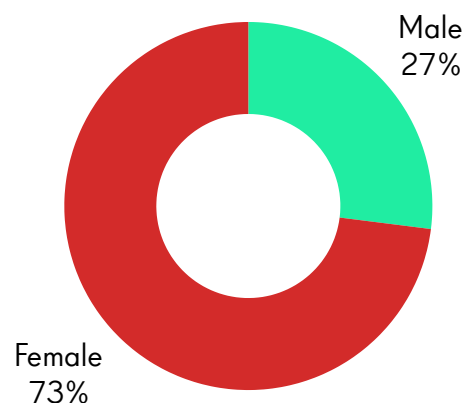
Neurodiverse

84 HOURS

Total hours engaged for
rehearsals (per child)

26 HOURS

Total hours performing
per child



At the end of the show, we
asked the young people to
rate how confident they
were out of 10 as a...

8.5 PERFORMER

7.5 SINGER

7.6 DANCER

7.9 ACTOR

'OF ALL THE SHOWS WE'VE SEEN, THIS IS THE ONE MOST ENJOYED BY MY DAUGHTER. SHE CAME OUT OF PRESS NIGHT, QUOTING FROM THE PLAY AND A FEW DAYS LATER SHE WAS REMINDING ME OF SCENES THAT MADE HER LAUGH. THE YOUTHFUL CAST, ACCESSIBLE DIALOGUE AND REFERENCES TO TIKTOK DANCES AND PLAYGROUND SPEAK, MADE THIS A REAL WINNER WITH HER FAVOURITE CHARACTER BEING JOHN WHO WAS PLAYED BRILLIANTLY BY VIOLA ATIGAH (AGE 14)'

- AFRIDIZIAK THEATRE NEWS

83%

of young people achieved their goal to feel that they had improved most in their dancing abilities.

100%

of parents strongly agreed that they felt proud of what their child has achieved.

100%

of parents shared that they felt participating in PAN helped their child develop as an artist/creative.



CANADA WATER LIBRARY THEATRE

In April 2023, we took over running the space. Canada Water Theatre (CWT) is a community-focused theatre and a platform for emerging artists to develop their creative ideas, rehearse, and strengthen community connections. At CWT we host events, performances and rehearsals. Through our Incubate programme we provided free rehearsal space to local artists who need space to develop their talent. Our focus on developing artists and future talent builds positive relationships with emerging artists - we give them the resources they need, and in turn they develop work which reflects their community.

We fold new productions into our programmes and seasons. We also work with local theatre schools and community groups to provide discounted venue hire making it more accessible for groups to meet and run activities supporting culture to flourish in Southwark.



FUTURE LEADERS

'I SEE THEATRE PECKHAM'S REP COMPANY AS THE IDEAL SPACE TO DEVELOP MY SKILLS, AMPLIFY MY VOICE, AND CONTRIBUTE MEANINGFULLY TO THE INDUSTRY.' - FUTURE LEADER, ADIEL BOBOYE

Future Leaders encapsulated the development opportunities we provide our young people to support them progress into the creative industries. This includes work experience opportunities, paid facilitator roles, internships, and leadership opportunities through our Young Peckham programme and beyond.

Through one-to-one support and group mentoring, we've helped young people identify career pathways and gain real-world experience to explore them confidently.

Participants engaged with a wide range of creative professionals across disciplines - design, technical theatre, producing, directing, community arts, project management, marketing, fundraising, and more - broadening their understanding of the creative ecosystem.

Every young person took on defined goals and responsibilities, contributing meaningfully to projects and organisational success. They weren't just participants - they were key players and leaders.

We design our opportunities around each cohort, enabling young people to feel seen, supported, and confident in pursuing their ambitions on their own terms.

65% of participants have completed at least 80 hours of training or experience. With 36 participants still in progress, programme retention is projected to rise to 88% with those not completing being due to securing jobs in the industry which clash with training. 75 young people have secured paid experience since joining the programme - clear evidence of the bridge we build between training and employment.

85% of participants are from the global majority

17% disclosed a disability, neurodiversity, or long-term illness

51% live in the bottom 30% of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), with 28% in the bottom 15%

IMPACT

49%

of participants progressed through multiple programme touchpoints, including moving from volunteers into paid roles

100%

formed at least three new connections, often citing peer relationships as central to their growth

MORE THAN TWO THIRDS

of those employed have found roles at Theatre Peckham or with our partners, showing the strength and sustainability of our employment pathways.

MEET AKAI COLEMAN

"THEATRE PECKHAM HAS ALWAYS SUPPORTED ME AND MADE ME FEEL AT HOME!"

Akai joined Young Peckham's Originate programme seeking to 'step out of his head' and 'connect with like-minded actors' to support his artistic journey. By the end of the course, he auditioned for Guildhall Drama School (a partner on the programme) but ultimately chose to pursue his training and career through another route. This decision paid off: in 2024, Akai shot to fame starring in Netflix's Supacell.

His time with us opened further doors, including an audition with Des Hamilton (Casting Director of Top Boy) whom he met at a casting event we hosted. Following a closed group discussion and panel, Des assured Akai he would keep him in mind - and delivered on that promise - casting him in a production in 2024.



In 2024, Theatre Peckham's Academy launched a new Acting for Screen class. Drawing on his on-set experience, Akai stepped into the role of Assistant Tutor, developing facilitation skills and becoming a role model for younger students. He also joined our Welcome Team, securing flexible employment that fits around his acting commitments.

Recently signed by Curtis Brown, Akai continues to build towards a full-time career as an actor.

THEATRE WORKS

Our annual un-conference for young people underrepresented in the theatre industry. In June 2024, 126 students from Chestnut Grove Academy, Charter East Dulwich, and the local community took part in a full day of hands-on industry experience.



We delivered 10 workshops in partnership with leading drama schools, Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts and The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, across key creative disciplines - including sound, lighting, stage management, stage combat, directing, writing, acting, applied theatre, costume design, and set design - led by professionals from across the sector.

We spotlighted alternative pathways into the industry through our Academy, Young Peckham, and Future Leaders training programmes.

We also partnered with ALT. Productions to deliver a panel discussion chaired by our Artistic Director, featuring our alumnus Rasaq Kukoyi, who shared their career journey and insights into breaking into the industry.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT

"LAST YEAR I GOT INTO THE BRIT SCHOOL WHICH HAS BEEN A DREAM OF MINE FOR A VERY LONG TIME; I WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GET IN IF IT WASN'T FOR THEATRE PECKHAM. THEATRE PECKHAM HELPED ME GROW MY LOVE FOR THEATRE AND PERFORMING ARTS, IT WAS SUCH A PROFESSIONAL PLACE THAT HELPED ME CONTINUE MY PROFESSIONAL CAREER." - SKYLA FOURILLIS MOSE, WORK PLACEMENT

As the landscape of Peckham continues to change, it remains vital for Theatre Peckham to stay an affordable and accessible space for long-standing families in the community who rely on the services we provide. With rising costs and increasing recognition of the quality of our work, we're seeing more affluent families - many of whom previously attended private stage schools - turn to Theatre Peckham for high-quality training at a lower cost. While this reflects the strength of our offer, it also creates challenges. Classes fill up faster, and families who have been with us for years but face financial barriers or cash flow challenges may miss out on places. Preserving the diversity within our classes and ensuring continued access for those who need it most is essential to our mission.

We play an essential role in providing early access to the arts for young people, creating meaningful entry points that invite them into the theatre as both audience and active participants.

By engaging young people from the earliest possible point, the organisation not only sparks creative ambition but also nurtures a deep, lasting connection to the space and its wider

community. This early exposure lays the groundwork for legacy - empowering young people to carry forward the vision and values set by those who came before them. Community outreach and the Academy are critical to this mission, acting as catalysts for building creative communities rooted in access, opportunity, and continuity. Through this approach, Theatre Peckham ensures that the young people it invests in today will become the cultural changemakers of tomorrow, continuing and evolving the legacy of the organisation into the future.

We were able to offer fee support of 50% to 139 students and 2 fully paid bursaries

67% Black Asian or ethnically diverse,

83% from Southwark

17% have a disability or additional needs

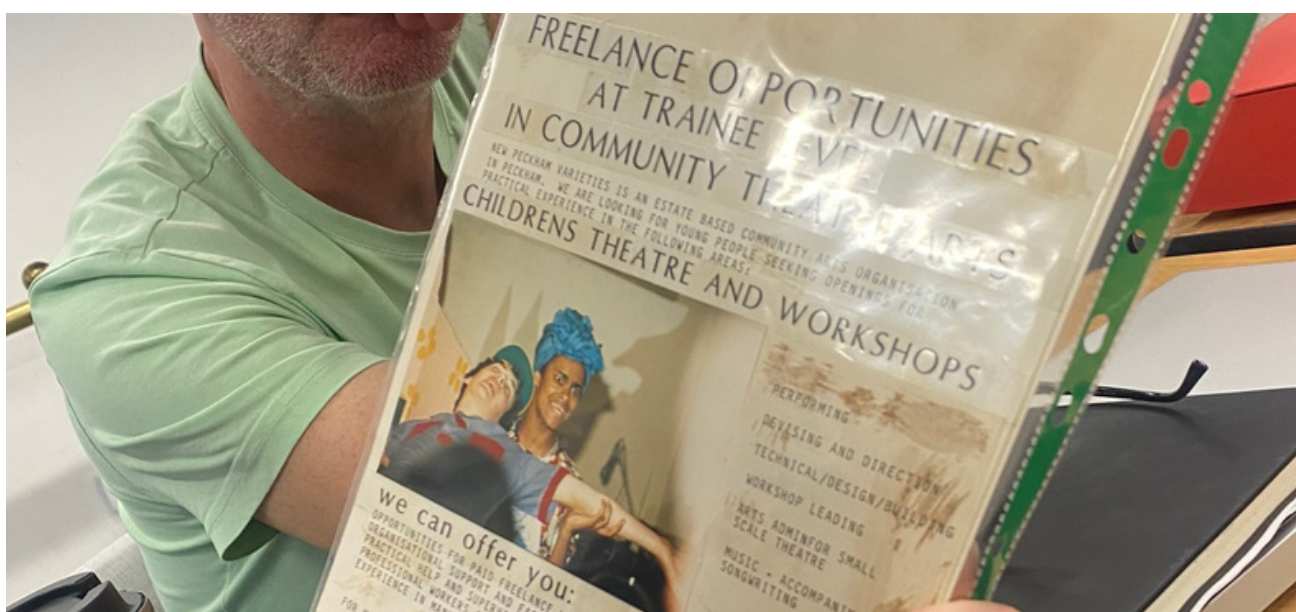
75% live in the bottom third LSOA

HERITAGE CHAMPIONS

"THEATRE PECKHAM FEELS LIKE IT'S ALWAYS BEEN A PART OF OUR LIVES. THE HOUSE FAIRY IN 2018 IS ONE OF MY BEST MEMORIES AS ALL THREE OF MY CHILDREN WERE IN IT. JOSH AS THE HOUSE FAIRY, GLORIA AS THE COBWEB FAIRY AND DAYONNIE AS THE BABY. DAYONNIE IS THEATRE PECKHAM'S YOUNGEST PERFORMER." - MARIA

Ahead of our 40th Anniversary in 2026 - we want to collate, reflect on and celebrate how the community has changed and shaped the local culture focusing on its relationship to place, objects and its people. We put out a call out for Heritage Champions - people local to Peckham - to receive expert training in collating oral histories and archiving our histories in the lead up to our anniversary.

Our Heritage Champions received specialist training from archivists Alan Crookham and Victoria Lane, gaining essential skills in identifying, preserving, and accessing archival materials. This included learning how to catalogue items from Theatre Peckham's rich history - such as programmes, flyers, reviews, and photographs - which can now be found on our website celebrating the organisation's legacy. They also helped gather oral histories from our culturally diverse community and alumni, engaging 30 individuals through focus groups and a further 200 through informal interviews, Vox Pop videos, and written stories. Working collaboratively with Young Ambassadors, Young Producers, and a commissioned artist, the Heritage Champions played a central role in shaping creative responses and public events that honoured and extended Theatre Peckham's legacy for future generations.



SPOTIFY AND NIKE PARTNERSHIP

In summer 2024, we ran WE MOVE, a week-long dance camp for girls aged 8-14, led by professional dancer and choreographer Alisha Nadine, formerly of the Olivier Award-winning Boy Blue Entertainment. The camp focused on street and contemporary dance, building skills in coordination, rhythm and confidence. Each day, the group worked towards a final routine, filmed to share with friends and family, while also taking part in dance games and creative exercises designed to spark joy, movement and connection.

The project was all about creating space for girls to be bold, try something new and feel good in their bodies. It brought in many young people who hadn't accessed Theatre Peckham before, giving them the chance to explore their creativity in a space where they felt seen and supported.

One young girl stood out. At first, she found the sessions tough - she hadn't danced since lockdown and often got frustrated when she couldn't get the moves right. But she stuck with it.

She practiced at home with her mum, watched herself in the mirror, and kept showing up. Week by week, her confidence grew. By the end of the programme, not only had she mastered the routine, but she stepped up to lead the Q&A, encouraging others in the group to share their experiences too.

Her story speaks to why programmes like WE MOVE matter. With the right encouragement and a welcoming space, she reconnected with something she loved - and found her voice in the process.

[WATCH HERE](#)



BUILDING RESILIENCE: LOOKING FORWARD

"WORKING WITH PEOPLE FROM THE COMMUNITY TO CREATE WORK FOR THE COMMUNITY, BY THE COMMUNITY."

As we approach our 40th anniversary in May 2026 we are focussed on building on our core principles, and developing our work and programmes further.

Over our 39-year history we have seen the life-changing power of the arts on young people's lives by building confidence and developing social and interpersonal skills. We've witnessed how a sense of purpose and ambition can carry young people into successful careers in adulthood, both in and outside of the arts.

We'll be working in partnerships within the local community and the arts sector to deliver theatre and increase opportunities for our community and young people. Continuing to put Theatre Peckham on the map through challenging the sector and cultural landscape.

Our restructure will enable us to work more closely with young people and the community, by leaning into a truly collaborative work space which plays to individuals strengths therefore increasing efficiency. It empowers team members to take more responsibility within their roles to lead on projects.

Our resilience to withstand cultural change, funding cuts to art spaces and growing discussions on EDI in the creative industries each year, does not deter us from our goal, making us more determined than ever to show up for our community and young people. Our values are mirrored in our community and we invite them to participate, perform and have a greater stake in a community theatre in the heart of South London.



WE HAVE 3 MULTI-YEAR PROJECTS TO CREATE SUSTAINABLE CHANGE AND PLATFORM UNDERREPRESENTED VOICES:

RACE EQUITY

Exploring racism in schools and creating safer and more inclusive school environments for Black children in Lambeth and Southwark. The project is rooted in the strength of collective experience working within these communities and extensive networks that enable meaningful engagement with key stakeholders. A community-led approach has been taken from the start, focusing on amplifying the voices of students, parents, educators, and community leaders to develop practical, locally relevant solutions. The goal is to produce outputs that complement and enhance existing frameworks, offering hyper-local insights and fostering cross-sector collaboration.

ELEVATING SPOKEN WORD THEATRE

A research project led by young people to define the term “spoken word theatre” and develop a new genre of theatre. Building on Poetic Relief, a partnership to develop spoken word with Poetic Unity and the Black Cultural Archives, this project aims to make space for an emerging art form and encourage creatives to use spoken word within theatre and grow a community for the genre.

FUTURELAND

In partnership with Words of Colour, this multi year project working with schools in Southwark will engage young people from underrepresented backgrounds in literacy, oracy and creativity. Over three years, nearly 200 students will participate in 10 creative play sessions, learning to express themselves through different creative writing mediums. On completion, they will devise a final performance, showcasing their new skills and visions for a better future. This new initiative is a brilliant example of our past outreach work - by engaging young people in creative activities they find a space they belong, they are encouraged to pursue the arts. Our best example of this is award-winning actor, and Theatre Peckham patron John Boyega who was invited to Theatre Peckham following workshops at Oliver Goldsmith - a local primary school.

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR LETTER



As we reflect on this impactful year, I'm filled with hope, determination and gratitude. Theatre Peckham continues to thrive because of the people who make it what it is, our young people, our artists, our partners, our audiences, and our community. Together, we are sustaining its legacy and shaping a powerful future.

At the heart of our work remains a simple and powerful belief, that creativity can transform lives. When young people feel seen, supported, and celebrated, they step into their full potential, and the impact of that transformation is felt far beyond the walls of our theatre.

As we move closer to our 40th anniversary we're looking ahead with clarity and bold ambition. eyes are fixed firmly on a future where Theatre Peckham leads with purpose, joy, creativity and courage.

What gives me the most hope about the road ahead is knowing we're building it together. The impact of our work goes far beyond performances and applause. It lives in the quiet breakthroughs, the young person who finds their voice for the first time, the friendships that last beyond the productions, and the artistic growth shaped by rehearsal, rewrites, and owning the stage. Those moments stay with people, and they're what makes Theatre Peckham special.

To everyone who has walked through our doors, taken part, performed, volunteered, worked, or simply just believed in us, thank you. You make Theatre Peckham what it is.

Dr. Suzann McLean MBE

THEATRE PECKHAM

IMPACT REPORT 2024/2025

DESIGNED BY:

