



MTM:UK Annual Conference 2009

Full Biographies

Pippa Bailey

Creative Producer/Director - Total Theatre Awards

Pippa is a freelance producer/director working across a range of disciplines. Last year she produced the opening event for the launch of the Cultural Olympiad in Dover, produced the Total Theatre Awards at the Edinburgh Fringe, participated in Mobile Lab – a team of 25 critics and commentators exploring theatre criticism across 10 European Festivals and was a creative advisor during the Arts Council's theatre assessment led by the national office.

Having spent her early career in Australia as performer, director and TV reporter, Pippa came to the UK in 1998 to work as Artistic Associate on The Museum Of – a series of temporary museums on the South Bank. She then became Artistic Director at Oxford House, a new build art centre extension to a community centre in East London. She now acts as a consultant, is an associate director for The World Famous - company of innovative pyrotechnicians and is in the process of producing a large international participatory project to make new music theatre.

Andy Barnes

Executive Producer, Perfect Pitch Musicals

Andy Barnes is an independent theatre producer based in London.

He is particularly interested in the development of new musicals and is always looking for new projects and creative artists to work with. He has produced musicals at venues such as Trafalgar Studios, Arts Theatre, Hackney Empire, Menier Chocolate Factory, Kings Head & Birmingham Rep.

Andy originally trained as a Detective with the Metropolitan Police, a career he pursued for 14 years before being bitten by the producing bug with his first production, a modern revival

of the classic soul, funk musical, *The Wiz*. The production at the Hackney Empire was described as "*seriously funky entertainment*" by the Evening Standard and "*sheer pizzazz*" by Time Out, and was back at the same venue, by request, a year later.

Leaving the doors of Scotland Yard for the steps of the Central School of Speech & Drama, Andy completed an MA in Advanced Theatre Practice. Following this he attended the New Producers Workshop run by S.O.L.T and started producing full-time. Andy received the prestigious Society of London Theatre Producers Bursary in 2006.

A number of productions have followed; *Departure Lounge* at The Arts Theatre and the Edinburgh Festival in 2008 won the MTM Award for Best Music and received rave reviews including "*excellent entertainment*" from Metro, and The Stage who said, "*Joyfully crass, the production has all the rowdy energy of a group of teenagers let loose on the Costa del Sol.*"

Other productions include; *Days of Hope* at the Kings Head starring David Burt and Siobhan McCarthy; *Dr. Foster* at the Menier Chocolate Factory, produced in association with the RSC Fringe, starring Zubin Varla & Rachel Pickup; *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* at the Gene Frankel Theatre, New York and *Dreams Come Out to Play* at Birmingham Rep and Tour.

Andy is also Executive Producer of Perfect Pitch Musicals Ltd, a company he created for the development of new British musical theatre. Established in 2006, the company presents an annual West End Showcase at London's Trafalgar Studios, which last year starred Suranne Jones, Sally Ann Triplett and Julie Atherton.

Clive Belgeonne

Empowering Educators / Manchester University

Clive Belgeonne is a lecturer at Manchester Metropolitan University and Project Manager at the Development Education Project where he is currently working to embed global learning into teacher training. He lectures on sustainable communities to Youth and Community students. He is a qualified 'Global Trainer' who has facilitated training with a wide range of educators in the UK and Europe, having taught in the UK, Latin America and Africa.

Clive co-ordinated the international 'Learning for Sustainable Cities' Project resulting in the recent publication of teaching materials for both Primary and Secondary schools.

He has a particular interest in participatory learning methodologies and critical literacy; he is a member of the advisory board for the Open Spaces for Dialogue and Enquiry and Through Other Eyes initiatives. He is chair of the Northwest Education for Sustainable Development Forum and a member of the Northwest Sustainable Development Advisory Group. He is developing a project called 'The Living Debate' for Lifeworld's Learning.

Clive is a parent governor at a secondary school and a community governor at a primary school. He helped set up a local environmental action group and has been a Woodcraft Folk leader. He enjoys the guitar, world music and cuisine.

David Benedict

Theatre Critic & Columnist, *Variety* Magazine

Culture critic and broadcaster David Benedict is UK theatre critic/columnist for *Variety* and associate editor of www.theatrevoice.com.

After reading drama at Hull University, he worked as an actor and director and was artistic director of the national lesbian and gay theatre company Gay Sweatshop. He has since been arts editor of *The Observer* and *The Independent* and has written interviews, features and reviews for *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *Sunday Times*, *Financial Times*, *The Wall Street Journal Europe*, *New Statesman* and *Attitude* and programme notes for the Royal Opera House and BBC Proms.

He wrote and presented a film with Rufus Wainwright about Verdi for *The Culture Show*, a BBC2 profile documentary on Matthew Bourne, and has adapted *Company*, *Pal Joey* and *On Your Toes* for Radio 3. He has interviewed Sondheim for *The Times Magazine* and *The Independent on Sunday* and his Sondheim revue *Good Thing Going* with Maria Friedman, Daniel Evans and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra played Cadogan Hall in August 2007.

He appears regularly on BBC radio and his lecture *Oklahomo!* was commissioned by the National Film Theatre and presented at the Toronto International Theatre Festival. David sings bass with Coro, double winner at the 2007 International Polyphony Competition.

A. K. Bennett-Hunter

Producer and Consultant

Ken Bennett-Hunter has over thirty-five years experience of theatre as a stage manager, production manager and general manager. He has worked in both the West End and in the funded sector including the National Theatre, English National Opera and Opera North. For six years he was Administrative Director of the Theatre Royal Stratford East.

He has been Executive Producer for productions at Strindberg's Intima Teater and the Royal Dramaten Elverket Theatre in Stockholm, the TMA Regional Theatre Awards ceremony and opera improvisation company, Impropera, who regularly appear at the Leicester Square Theatre.

As a consultant, his clients have included the Abbey Theatre in Dublin and London's South Bank Centre and he has contributed to management training courses in Finland and South Korea.

He is editor of the Association of British Theatre Technicians journal *Sightline* and a commissioning editor for *The Stage* newspaper.

From 1995-1998 he was president of the Theatrical Management Association.

Bill O'Brien

Director of Theater and Musical Theater, National Endowment for the Arts

Bill O'Brien was appointed as the NEA's Director of Theater and Musical Theater in July 2006. O'Brien designs and directs national leadership initiatives, such as the musical theater component of American Masterpieces: Three Centuries of Artistic Genius. He develops partnerships to advance the theater field, recommends panelists, and manages the review process for theater and musical theater applications.

Prior to his appointment, he served for seven years as producing director and managing director for Deaf West Theater (DWT) where he received a Tony and a Drama Desk nomination for producing the Broadway sign language production of Big River and received three Ovation Award nominations for his work on the production of Big River at Deaf West (as producer, sound designer and lead actor). That production went on to win three Best Musical awards (Ovation, LADCC and Backstage Garland) and the cast of Big River was awarded the 2004 Tony Honor for Excellence in the Theater. Other productions he produced for Deaf West include A Streetcar Named Desire (Ovation Award -- Best Play) and Oliver! (Ovation Award -- Best Musical). He has appeared in Deaf West productions of True West (Austin) and Big River (Backstage West Garland Award for Lead Actor, Helen Hayes Nomination for Outstanding Lead Actor).

His advocacy efforts on behalf of the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act of the U.S. Department of Education helped garner Deaf West Theatre the Secretary of Health and Human Services Highest Recognition Award for "bridging the gap between the deaf and hearing worlds through theatre."

In addition, O'Brien has served as executive vice president on the executive board of the National Alliance for Music Theatre and as a task force member, conference speaker, and grant panellist with Theatre Communications Group, both national service organization for the theater and musical theater fields.

O'Brien also performed onstage in 48 states in numerous national touring and regional productions, was an American College Theatre Festival Irene Ryan Acting Competition National Finalist and has recurred in all seven seasons as Kenny (Marlee Matlin's voice/interpreter) on NBC's Emmy and Peabody award-winning series The West Wing.

Laiz Chen

Open Space for Dialogue and Enquiry / Nottingham University

Laiz Chen is a Brazilian educator, academic, activist and practitioner of critical pedagogies. She is currently working on a PhD and teaching at the University of Nottingham in the Department of Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies (School of Modern Languages and Cultures) and in the Centre for the Study of Social and Global Justice (School of Politics and International Relations).

Laiz is part of a project called 'The Living Debate' for Lifeworld's Learning and has been involved with a number of educational projects on global citizenship education working with NGOs and Development Education Centres, co-facilitating sessions with teachers, trainee

teachers as well as with governmental and non-governmental groups across the UK and abroad.

She has helped develop, pilot, and embed the Open Spaces for Dialogue and Enquiry (OSDE) Methodology in higher education and has co-developed and delivered the OSDE facilitator's course. She has also been a contributor to the Through Other Eyes (TOE) Project on indigenous knowledge, having supported its development from the inception.

In her spare time, she is a floral artist and can be seen in the skies flying her paraglider or parachuting.

Jannette Cheong

Independent Consultant/Advisor, and 'Building the Future' Forum Facilitator

Jannette Cheong works as an independent consultant on international collaboration and development initiatives. In addition, to facilitating the China-UK Musical Theatre Forum – 'Building the Future', Jannette is currently working as a consultant to the World Bank.

Previously, Jannette was Head of International Collaboration and Development of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) from 1997 to December 2006. As part of this role she took the lead for HEFCE's international interests, on national committees, and working with partner organisations, to initiate international programmes of collaboration and development at the national level with countries and international organisations across the world, including North and South America, Europe, South Africa, India, South East Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and China. For example, Jannette was instrumental in helping to establish the UK-China Higher Education Collaboration programme, ongoing since 1996. This included projects on e-collaboration, strategic management, quality assurance and other strategic policy and reform interests, as well as high-level meetings between policy makers and heads of institutions in both countries.

Prior to 1997, Jannette was Associate Director for Quality Assessment for nearly five years, also for the HEFCE. Before that, she was one of Her Majesty's Inspectors for Further and Higher Education in the Department of Education and Science (now the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills) for eight years with both district and national responsibilities. She also held an academic post as senior lecturer, and in addition to her previous industrial and teaching work in the UK, she spent two years as a foreign expert teaching in China between 1975-77. Jannette first visited China in 1974 and has travelled to all, but two, of China's provinces over the subsequent 35-year period. Jannette's other interests are writing poetry, painting and hill walking. In 2008 she began writing an original English *Noh* Play – PAGODA, working with award-winning *Noh* composer Richard Emmert and Theatre Nohgaku, based in Tokyo and New York; and Oshima Nohgaku, a traditional *Noh* family theatre based in Fukuyama. PAGODA *Noh* is an official Japan-UK 150 event (<http://www.japanuk150.org>) and is due to premiere in London at SouthBank Centre's Purcell Room on 2 December 2009, and will then tour to Dublin, Oxford and Paris. http://www.theatrenohgaku.org/projects/2008_e.php

Currently, Jannette is working to develop PAGODA into a chamber opera.

Christine Denniston

Writer

Christine Denniston is a writer who believes that writers need to have a lot of lives in order to have things to write about, which explains her unusual CV. While living in New York she was a member of the BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theatre Workshop - the longest established and most successful Musical Theatre writer development workshop in the world. But she has also been a director, producer, artistic director of two small-scale theatre companies, performer, dancer, teacher, event organiser, public speaker, webmaster, e-entrepreneur, mime, and political activist, and has been a guest on both Midweek and Woman's Hour. She trained as a director at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, has a degree in Theoretical Physics from Cambridge University, and another in Economics.

Christine writes book and lyrics. (She believes passionately in book as the secret of a great musical.) She also writes plays and non-fiction. Her book "The Meaning of Tango" has five stars on both Amazon.com and Amazon.co.uk

Tony Gibbs

Chief Executive, National Operatic and Dramatic Association (NODA)

As Chief Executive of the National Operatic and Dramatic Association, Tony Gibbs has been leading the organisation through a period of change since his appointment in 2007.

The launch last year of an ambitious five year strategic plan puts the needs of NODA's members at the heart of all the Association's future plans with the emphasis on modernising the organisation and introducing new services that will support practitioners in their enjoyment of amateur theatre. With a focus on attracting audiences as well as support for members to encourage more young people into amateur theatre, the focus is very much on business services that will lead to long term financial sustainability.

Many of the issues that NODA are now addressing are similar to those in the professional and community sector and are summed up by NODA's new strap line, 'Professional support for amateur theatre'.

Iain Gillie

Producer, The Curve - Leicester

Iain Gillie is Executive Producer of Leicester Theatre Trust, a post he took up in September 2007. Highly experienced in many fields of theatre production across a diverse range of genres, he has an extensive knowledge and understanding of all production processes with particular experience in producing, general management and production management.

He came to Leicester from London where most recently he was Managing Director of Blue Box Entertainment Limited, a theatre general management agency offering management and producing services to commercial and subsidised producers.

Productions as general manager include *Jerry Springer-The Opera*, *Round The Horne Revisited... and Eurobeat*. As production manager he has worked with the National Theatre, The Royal Court, Matthew Bourne's AMP, Thelma Holt, Out of Joint, The Roundhouse and others including a number of international productions both in the UK and abroad.

Nancy Golladay

Librettist Workshop Moderator, BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theatre Workshop

Nancy Golladay has worked as a literary consultant for Joseph Papp and Bernard Gersten, The O'Neill Theater Center, Warner Brothers Films, and The Nederlander Organization, among others. As a faculty member of the BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theatre Workshop, she moderates the Librettists group, a peer-critique program for playwrights striving to develop their skills as musical theatre bookwriters. In 2006-7, the Workshop won awards from The Drama League, The Drama Desk, and the Tony™ Honors for its four-decade history of developing new musical theatre writing talent.

Ms. Golladay also worked as a stage manager for improvisational theatre icon Paul Sills, and as a lighting designer for the Merce Cunningham Dance Studio. She is currently writing an original show based on the life of Edgar Allan Poe. The brand-new BMI Workshop Songbook Podcast is hosted by actor and Workshop writer Jeff Blumenkrantz. Each episode of this 20-part series features a new theatre song plus interviews with the writers and singers. The theme song of the series, "Friday at Four," is taken from the musical *A Class Act* (music and lyrics by Workshop alumnus Ed Kleban). The podcasts can be heard at www.bmi.com/fridayatfour.

Chris Grady

Chair, Musical Theatre Matters (MTM:UK)

Chris Grady is an arts management and project developer specialising in working with emerging artistic practitioners, writers, composers and producers. He chairs the producers' network Musical Theatre Matters (MTM:UK) and is hosting the 2nd International Conference on Musical Theatre in London on March 6th 2009.

Chris is also artistic programmer for the new international festival of musicals at Edinburgh Festival Fringe, entitled Musical Theatre @ George Square, and runs a UK writer collaboration/mentoring programme with RADA, A Month of Sundays.

Chris has just completed two years as a judge on the annual New York Festival of New Musicals created by NAMT and is now the Musical Theatre reader for the Royal National Theatre music and literary departments. He continues to run courses on arts marketing, fundraising, event management and festival management at Rose Bruford Drama School, and is Lecturer in Producing on the MA Musical Theatre at Goldsmiths College.

Previously Chris has been on the management/marketing team for Bristol Hippodrome, Plymouth Theatre Royal, Edinburgh International Festival, Buxton Opera House, and the Pleasance Theatres. He project managed the building of the Theatre by the Lake Keswick, and was for 5 years Head of International Licensing for Cameron Mackintosh Ltd working on productions in Korea, Mexico, Germany, Australia, Russia, Brazil and Japan.

For more information visit: www.chrisgrady.org

Isaac Robert Hurwitz

Executive Director & Producer, New York Musical Theatre Festival

Isaac Robert Hurwitz is the executive director and producer of The New York Musical Theatre Festival (NYMF), which he co-founded in 2004. The largest annual musical theater event in America, NYMF takes over midtown Manhattan for three weeks each fall with a slate of nearly 30 productions and more than 50 concerts, readings, workshops, seminars and other special events.

Created to be an engine for the production of new musicals and a launching pad for a new generation of artists and theater practitioners, NYMF premiered over 175 new musicals during its first five seasons and has launched more than 40 shows to additional productions on and off-Broadway, on tour and in regional theaters across the United States, and in 10 countries worldwide, including *Altar Boyz*, *The Great American Trailer Park Musical*, *Gutenberg! The Musical!*, *Meet John Doe*, *Midlife! (The Crisis Musical)*, *Nerds*, *Next to Normal*, *Rooms*, *Shout!* and *[title of show]*, among others. In 2005, NYMF received the prestigious \$100,000 Jujamcyn Theaters Award for its "outstanding contributions to the development of creative talent in the theatre."

Isaac is a member of the Advisory Committee for New York City Center's acclaimed *Encores!* series, where from 2000 until 2003 he served as Music Associate, assisting music director Rob Fisher on fifteen concert productions and overseeing the score restoration of *A Connecticut Yankee*, *Bloomer Girl*, *Golden Boy*, *House of Flowers*, and other shows.

With a varied background as a producer, director, dramaturg and musician, Isaac has developed new works in venues throughout the United States. For two years, he headed the Rusty Magee Music Project, Ensemble Studio Theatre's musical theatre development program, which he helped establish. He also served as a director-in-residence at EST and returned there in 2005 to produce the world premiere of Carey Perloff's play, *Luminescence Dating*. Isaac received the Westin Award for Musical Theatre from Brown University, where he headed two producing organizations and developed several new musicals. He is an alumnus of the Lincoln Center Directors' Lab and the Commercial Theatre Institute, and a member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers.

Sam Levy

Director of Programming, Summer Play Festival NYC

Sam Levy is the Director of Programming at the Summer Play Festival (SPF), which has presented the work of over 70 emerging playwrights and composers to audiences of over 45,000 people since he joined the organisation in 2005. Now in residence at New York City's legendary Public Theater, SPF also maintains an annual residency for up to two of its writers at the award-winning Donmar Warehouse in London.

SPF playwrights have gone on to receive productions on Broadway, off-Broadway, regionally and internationally. Their work has been presented at institutions such as Lincoln Center

Theater, the Roundabout Theatre Company, Manhattan Theater Club, the Atlantic Theater Company and Playwrights Horizons in New York City; the Royal National Theatre and the Donmar Warehouse in London; and dozens of acclaimed theatres across the United States and around the world.

Prior to joining SPF, Sam was Membership Director at the National Alliance for Musical Theatre, based in New York. Originally from Sydney, Australia, Sam worked for the state government and one of Australia's largest arts festivals before moving to the United States. He has a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre, and a Master of Business Administration.

Neil Marcus

Executive Director, Mercury Musical Developments

Neil Marcus is the new Executive Director of Mercury Musical Developments. He is also an Associate Producer at The Shaw Theatre and devised the Spotlight On...series with Elaine Paige, which comprises of a series of live interviews with the creative giants of the musical, followed by questions from the audience. Alumni include Don Black, Chita Rivera, Michael Ball, Charles Strouse, Elaine Stritch, Willy Russell, Nicholas Hytner, Maria Friedman, Ruthie Henshall and Michael Feinstein.

He presented Maria Friedman Celebrates The Great British Songbook in February at The Shaw and Kerry Ellis joins the series in June.

Other producing credits include concerts for Tony Award winners Liliane Montevecchi and Donna McKechnie and Sundays In Jermyn Street devised with Sheridan Morley when Neil was Artistic Director of The Jermyn Street Theatre in the 90's.

He teaches Musical Theatre History at The London School Of Musical Theatre, Arts Ed and The Guildford School Of Acting. Neil is married with three boys and lives in Guildford.

Kerry Michael

Artistic Director, Theatre Royal Stratford East

Kerry was appointed the Artistic Director and Chief Executive of Theatre Royal Stratford East in September 2004, having been the Associate Director of the Theatre for the previous six years. In his first year as Artistic Director, Theatre Royal enjoyed 73% capacity for its new-writing led policy and in 2007 won an Olivier Award for Pied Piper as well as a further nomination for 'presenting a powerful season of provocative work, reaching new audiences'. Kerry has vowed to uphold the Theatre's commitment to developing new work and to providing a platform for new voices representing the ever-changing communities of the East End of London.

His debut play as Artistic Director was The Battle of Green Lanes written by Cosh Omar - set amongst London's Cypriot community. Other Stratford East credits include five of the last six Christmas shows, various new plays including Jamaica House by Paul Sirett (a site specific performance on the top floor of a tower block in Stepney), new musicals Make Some Noise and One Dance Will Do, co-directing the Jonzi D hip hop show Aeroplane Man, an adaptation of Jules Verne's 20,000 Leagues Under The Sea and the musical Sammy. His

latest directing credit, *The Harder They Come* has obtained wide critical acclaim and popular success, with productions planned for South Africa and for the West End in 2008. Kerry's other directing credits include work on the London Fringe, Edinburgh Festival, the King's Head, the Gate Theatre, a season of new work at Teatro Technis and a residency at the Contact Theatre in Manchester where he worked on a number of projects including producing the British premiere of the late Ken Saro Wiwa's final testimony: *On The Death of Ken Saro Wiwa* By Ken Saro Wiwa.

In 1999 Kerry led the team to re-open Greenwich Theatre with a programme of culturally diverse work and obtained 70% capacity for the venue from a standing start. He is a Board member of Stratford Renaissance Partnership; a Trustee of Discover (which provides creative, play and learning opportunities for children and their carers in Stratford); and a member of Equity's International Committee for Artists Freedom.

Vernon Mound

Head of Musical Theatre, University of Gothenburg

Vernon is currently Professor and Head of Musical Theatre at the University of Gothenburg, (www.scen.gu.se), Artistic Director of Music Theatre for Youth, (www.mt4uth.com), Northern Ireland's only national musical theatre training for young people, and he is also a freelance director of musicals and operas working on major stages across Europe and Scandinavia.

His recent productions in the Gothenburg University were *A Little Night Music*, *Pygmalion* and *Guys and Dolls*, and in 2007 he is directing the students in *Carousel*, *City of Angels* and *Titanic*.

2006 was a busy year for Vernon. His company MT4Uth produced three public workshop productions of musicals and this year it will increase to five. It also has introduced regular training weekends in acting dance and song. Also last year, Vernon directed an acclaimed production of *EVITA* in Darmstadt and his other major production was *Sweeney Todd* in Karlstad which was universally lauded by both press and public. Last summer he directed the Georgian State Opera in Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, and this production is being continuously performed on the company's tour. In Italy, later in the summer, he directed Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*.

His work in previous years includes highly successful productions of *MISS SAIGON* and *LES MISERABLES* which played to full houses in long runs both at the Gothenburg and Malmö Opera Houses. His production of *LES PÊCHEURS DE PERLES* originated in London, was recreated for the State Opera of Tatarstan, and has since had three European tours. It goes on another tour of Europe in 2007.

Other productions include, for the Norwegian National Opera, *ANDREA CHENIER* and *HÄNSEL UND GRETEL*; for Malmö Opera, *NINE*; for Innsbruck, *WEST SIDE STORY* and *SHOWBOAT*; for Karlstad, *ANDREA CHENIER* and *HÄNSEL UND GRETEL*; for Odense, the first independent production of *MARTIN GUERRE*; for the Gothenburg Opera, *MANON LESCAUT*.

As a music graduate of London University, he started his career as a stage manager, and staff director for some of the main UK Opera and Ballet companies, including the Royal

Opera House, Covent Garden, for whom he revived TURANDOT, and staged it at Wembley Arena. He was also the Associate Director for the West End production of CARMEN JONES.

He has always been active in music-theatre education, early in his career leading the education departments of The Scottish Ballet and Opera North. In the last 25 years he has directed hundreds of regional youth productions of musicals in the UK.

He was previously Head of Acting for both The Royal College of Music and Stella Mann College in London. He has been the Associate Director of both the National Youth Music Theatre and YMT:UK, commissioning and directing new musical theatre. In recent years he has been a guest Professor directing many operas and musicals at all the major Scandinavian Opera Schools, and he is a regular guest director at Arts Educational Schools, London.

Jeremy Newton

Chief Executive, Prince's Foundation for Children and the Arts

Jeremy Newton is Chief Executive of the Prince's Foundation for Children & the Arts. Until recently, he was Managing Director of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) and before that was Director of the Louise T Blouin Foundation.

Earlier in his career, he qualified as a Chartered Accountant, was Chief Executive of Eastern Arts Board, Lottery Director at Arts Council England and then, for seven years, Chief Executive of the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA).

He has been Chairman of the English Touring Theatre and is also Chairman of Youth Dance England.

Laurie Sansom

Artistic Director, Royal & Derngate - Northampton

Laurie is the Artistic Director of Royal & Derngate where he has directed *Follies* (TMA nomination Best Musical Production, Whatsonstage nomination, Best Regional Production), *The Wizard of Oz*, *Twelfth Night*, *Soap*, *Time Of My Life*, *The Glass Cage*, *Frankenstein* and *The Prime Of Miss Jean Brodie*. Previously he was Alan Ayckbourn's Associate Director at the Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough where he directed over twenty productions including *Bedtime Stories*, *Fields of Gold*, *I Ought To Be In Pictures*, *Tissue Paper For The Soul*, *Her Slightest Touch*, *River's Up*, three new musicals: *Spittin' Distance*, *The Jonah Boy* and *A Beginner's Guide To Cybershopping* (which he wrote with Loz Kaye) and *Villette* (with Frantic Assembly).

Other work includes J.B.Priestley's *Dangerous Corner* (West Yorkshire Playhouse and The Garrick, West End – Whatsonstage nomination for Best Newcomer), *Hysteria* and *Children of A Lesser God* (Salisbury Playhouse), *All That Trouble That We Had*, *Blue Remembered Hills* and *Second From Last In The Sack Race* (New Vic, Stoke), *Frankie and Tommy*, *2:18 underground* (Lyric, Hammersmith), *Getting To The Foot of The Mountain*, *Musical Youth* (Birmingham Rep), *Alice Through The Looking Glass* (Creation, Oxford), *Electra* (Marlowe Society at Cambridge Arts).

From 1996-7 Laurie was the Arts Council Trainee Director at the Palace Theatre, Watford for Giles Croft where he directed Ayckbourn's *Absurd Person Singular*, *Dangerous Corner*, *Animal Farm* and *Passport To Danger*. Laurie also directed *Going Up* for the National Student Theatre Company and was an award winner at the National Student Drama Festival for which he has worked for the last 10 years.

Tim Seward

Programme Co-ordinator, Mercury Musical Developments

Tim Seward is a professional writer associate and the Programme Co-ordinator of Mercury Musical Developments in the UK, where he has been programming workshops, events and opportunities for writers of new musical theatre since September 2007 – in particular having set up the successful pilot of Writing Lab Xtreme (a regular critique session), which is now about to enter its second iteration.

MMD originated in The Mercury Workshop, established from a core of 11 students who worked with Stephen Sondheim at Oxford University, and the New Musicals Alliance. It now has 150+ writers and runs a varied programme of developmental showcases, workshops, seminars and networking events and co-ordinates numerous professional opportunities for writers and theatre practitioners. Led by Georgina Bexon until February 2009, its activity will continue under new Executive Director Neil Marcus. More at mercurymusicals.com

Tim himself graduated with distinction from the MA in Musical Theatre, Goldsmiths, University of London. His research topics there included William Finn's Falsettos musicals, Finn's *A New Brain*, verbatim theatre, Dr. Seuss' and Friedrich Höllander's *The 5000 Fingers of Dr T* and an extended project on the rise of the hip hop musical.

He is a regular presenter and interviewer for the weekly MusicalTalk.co.uk podcast, with his interviews including Marc Shaiman, William Finn, Steven Sater and Richard Thomas.

He is also a musical theatre writer himself and specialises in musicals that combine live action with electronically-controlled music and projected animation. With collaborator Darren Wayte, was recently a finalist in the Stiles and Drewe New Song Prize 2008. With Darren (under the banner of *toomuchinformation*) he is working on an adults-only musical <furReality>, which combines animation with live action, and is developing *The Loop*, a short musical about a white boy and an Anglo-Bengali Muslim girl in West London, among other projects. More at saward.eu.

James Seabright

Independent Producer

James is an independent commercial theatre producer and general manager. In those capacities he has worked on over sixty shows since establishing his business in 2001, including the premiere English language adaptation of *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho, which toured and played off-West End in 2005, 2006 and 2007, and a series of tours and West End appearances for the cult solo comedy show *Bill Hicks: Slight Return*.

As well as touring shows around the UK and producing in London, he takes a large number of productions to the Edinburgh festival each year under the Festival Highlights banner. These have won a wide range of awards, including Ed Hamell's Herald Angel award in 2007, and the Scotsman Fringe Firsts for What I Heard About Iraq in 2006 and Gone in 2004 (both directed by Hannah Eidinow).

In 2006 Pete and Dud: Come Again played a two-month West End season, and since then the show has toured to New Zealand and in the UK.

In 2007 he launched the UK tour of Potted Potter: The Unauthorised Harry Experience - A Parody by Dan and Jeff, which continues to tour throughout 2008 following sell-out appearances at Edinburgh and Belfast festivals and in London at Trafalgar Studios. Other notable Edinburgh fringe shows in 2007 include co-producing the Stewart Lee devised Johnson and Boswell: Late But Live and heading up the marketing campaigns for the Glynn Nicholas Group productions Eurobeat and Certified Male.

In 2008, new tours included The Quiz by Richard Crane, performed by David Bradley (Whatsonstage.com Best Solo Performance nominated), The Last South by G.M. Calhoun, performed by David Burt and Christian Olliver, The Lady Of Burma by Richard Shannon performed by Liana Gould, My Grandfather's Great War adapted by David Benson and performed by Cameron Stewart (The Stage Best Solo Show nominated), Potted Pirates, Elizabeth & Raleigh: Late But Live, David Benson Sings Noël Coward, and X-Files Improv with Dean Haglund. Potted Potter toured again, and returned to Trafalgar Studios for another sell-out Christmas season. Bill Hicks: Slight Return was invited to festivals in Adelaide and Melbourne. Edinburgh fringe offerings totalled 23 productions including marketing for Steven Berkoff's On The Waterfront and promotions on Footsbarn's A Midsummer Night's Dream.

In 2005 James was profiled by both The Independent on Sunday and The Stage as a leading young theatre producer. James has twice been the recipient of the Stage One New Producer Bursary, in 2002 and 2004. He is under commission to Nick Hern Books to write the latest volume in their So You Want To Be series, about theatre producing.

Chantelle Staynings

Producer, Primavera Productions

Chantelle Staynings is currently producing Stephen Sondheim's 'Saturday Night' at the Jermyn Street Theatre. She is also line producing Out of Joint's national tour of 'The Convict's Opera', which reworks 'The Beggar's Opera' partly by using contemporary pop songs. She was awarded the Stage One New Producer's bursary in 2007 and has been Producer for Primavera since 2006, with previous productions including Sondheim's 'Passion' at the Edinburgh Fringe, 'Jingo: A Farce of War' and Nicholas de Jongh's 'Plague Over England' (prior to its current West End transfer) at the Finborough Theatre and 'The Only Girl in the World' at the Arcola Theatre. A number of events surrounding 'Saturday Night' have been organised to promote musical theatre today, including a panel discussion on staging musicals in smaller theatres and showcases of work by six contemporary musical theatre writers.

Tim Sutton

Freelance Composer and MD

In the past year Tim's activities have included the musical direction of his own score for *The Bacchae* at the Lincoln Center Festival in New York, supervision of the music for *Don't You Leave Me Here* at the West Yorkshire Playhouse, judging and workshop leading for BBC Radio 3's Young Musician of the Year and Choir of the Year, and repetiteur for West End musical *Marguerite*. He gives regular workshops for organisations such as Glyndebourne Opera, Royal College of Music and Barbican.

Composition for theatre, choir and dance includes *Salute the Sun!*, *a Cantata for Freedom*, *The Soldiers' Fortune* (Young Vic), *Women Beware Women* (RSC), *As You Desire Me* (Playhouse), *As You Like It* (Wyndham's), *Knight of the Burning Pestle* (Young Vic/Barbican), *The Skin of Our Teeth* (Young Vic), and *Thought Latching to Thought and Pulling*, Ben Wright's Place Prize-nominated dance work. Tim's choral work is published by Novello Ltd.

Commissions for 2009 include *The Dreamfighter* for the Scottish Ensemble at the Lichfield Festival, and *The Secret Garden*, the Christmas play for West Yorkshire Playhouse. Tim is also an expert magician, and a member of the Magic Circle of Great Britain. You can see and hear more of his work at www.timsutton.net and www.timsuttonmagic.com

Peter Watts

Senior Partner, Bournor Bullock Accountants

Peter qualified as a Chartered Accountant in 1965 and after passing through the usual phases of audit manager and audit partner, began to look after more clients in the music, film and theatre fields. In recent years, much of this work has involved international structures and tax planning.

Peter acted for Robert Bolt during the last 4 years of his life and was his sole executor. The firm still acts for the company which owns the theatrical rights to Robert Bolt's play - *A Man for All Seasons*.

As Trustee of the Elizabeth Emily Biggs Charity, he and his fellow Trustee agreed donations towards the production costs of a new musical, support of a production sponsored by the Bridewell Theatre Company, to assist the Watermill Theatre fund with the purchase of their site and also to Youth Music Theatre:UK to assist with funding its various projects around the UK.

Peter's main interest has always been music and having continued with the piano through the family years, has now restarted organ lessons. Peter has maintained contact with Chris Grady over many years and was involved with New Musical Development prior to becoming a member of MTM:UK.