



# Vital Xposure

## Trustee Recruitment Pack 2019



The Disappearance of Dorothy Lawrence  
Photo credit: Zbigniew T. Kotkiewicz

## Cutting Edge Theatre - Vital Stories

### Contents

Welcome.....	2
About us .....	3
Future Productions and Projects .....	4
Previous productions .....	4
Terms of reference for Trustees .....	7
How to Apply .....	8

## Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee of Vital Xposure.

Vital Xposure's vision is

*To promote hidden voices with extraordinary stories to tell, creating exciting, innovative theatrical experiences for audiences, artists and communities alike.*

Since its formation in 2011, Vital Xposure's practice, under the creative leadership of disabled artist Julie McNamara has grown from strength to strength. We are now looking to refresh our Board of Trustees as we prepare for the next stage in our development.

Vital Xposure is a company that hits a nerve in today's multimedia world; it is a vital theatre company within the cultural ecology of the UK. Julie McNamara's commitment to embracing the stories of people on the political periphery is at the heart of all our work. Vital Xposure's style has a strong visual aesthetic, blending moving images, reclaimed footage and provocative literary narrative.

The company is jointly led by Artistic Director, Julie McNamara and Executive Director, Theresa Veith. A key focus for our activities is to ensure a sustainable future for the organisation – creating a legacy that enables Vital Xposure to survive and flourish

Vital Xposure's finances are stable. The organisation is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) confirmed for the 2018-2022 period. A key priority for the organisation will be to further diversify its funding, to secure the growth and development of the company.

Vital Xposure welcomes candidates from all backgrounds and applications are particularly sought from those with knowledge of disability arts; finance; marketing, communications, fundraising, HR and organisational change.

This pack provides more information about Vital Xposure and sets out what we are looking for in our new trustees and I hope that this encourages you to submit an application to us.

Jonathan Meth

Chair of Trustees

## About us

We make and produce original work that is diverse in scale, subject and medium, which aims to challenge common assumptions, push boundaries and promote equality putting access at the heart of its work.

Our mission is to create exciting, innovative theatrical experiences for audiences, artists and communities alike. All work presents an inclusive experience where access issues do not intrude upon the aesthetic of the productions but are an integral part of the creative process and enhance the enjoyment of our productions by diverse audiences.

We promote the full participation into the arts of Deaf and Disabled individuals and people excluded by mainstream society including LGBTQ individuals and anyone unrepresented because of their race, gender, sexual orientation or social status.

We are passionate about social justice and our plays tell stories of people whose voices have or still are otherwise silenced, based on real-life experiences and historical events.

Our work appeals to a wide range of arts-goers: those interested in new writing and political theatre; women's theatre and those who enjoy high powered, good and challenging new stories:

'These beautifully crafted vignettes ripple with humour and humanity, struggle and desire. As theatre, *The Butch Monologues* is as important a piece of social activism as Dean Bryant's *Gaybies*'

Cameron Woodhead, Sydney Morning Herald \*\*\*\*

'Every time I see a Vital Xposure show I'm reminded that the world disables people, they aren't born that way.'

Audience member, 'Voices from The Knitting Circle',

We are committed to ensuring everyone involved in our work, as collaborator, cast or crew, enjoys a barrier-free environment with us. This commitment extends to audiences viewing our productions on stage or on screen: our audiences know that a Vital Xposure show or event will always include Sign Language, Captions and Audio Description.

Vital Xposure has a strong following within Disability Arts communities and radical theatre in the UK and internationally.

The company was founded in 2011, the following year we became an Arts Council England's National Portfolio. We are grateful for the public investment we have received and we continue to be an NPO for the funding period 2018 – 2022.

We are also thankful to City Bridge Trust and Without Walls for supporting our work.

## Future Productions and Projects

**Medicine's Monstrous Daughters** directed by Penelope Freeman (Touring Spring 2020)  
Two one act plays about two women trapped inside the mental health system, two centuries apart, give us two vivid and vital takes on how we have cast away our disabled daughters for medicine's magical gains. The two powerful stories are woven together across time to expose unpalatable truths on the treatment of people we still deem 'unworthy of life'.

### **Admiral Pullen's Party** (Outdoor – Touring)

Admiral Pullen's Party is an interactive piece of outdoor theatre, for audiences of all ages, creating a stir in the locality to awaken peoples' hearts and minds whilst considering the lives of people with learning disabilities - people formerly shunned from public life.

### **This Is How It Happens** (working title) R&D Project in development (for over 16's)

In summer 2019, Vital Xposure will developed a one-week R&D at Chat's Palace, with Julie McNamara directing alongside Tanaka Mhishi, poet, performer and playwright, who works on issues surrounding trauma and masculinity. A new writing piece exploring issues on sexual consent and clear boundaries; self-respect; mental health and stories of men who have been sexually assaulted.

### **White Pariahs** (working title) A collaboration with Hassan Mahamdallie and Dervish

Julie McNamara and Hassan Mahamdallie of Dervish are planning a creative collaboration (R&D scheduled for Autumn 2019 followed by a national tour Autumn 2021) to explore processes and ideas translating into new work. Current themes around cultural identity and loss are being developed and conversations on people of mixed heritage, identities and loyalties, and stories of white women who crossed the race line and entered mixed relationships.

## Previous productions

### Theatre

#### **The Butch Monologues (2014 - 19)**

A powerful and humorous collection of secret stories exploring sexuality, vulnerability and desire, taken from interviews with butches, masculine women and gender rebels living worldwide

'An excellent piece of theatre and more than that, it's a very tangible vehicle for social change.'

Jude Kelly CBE (Director - Southbank)



Photo credit: Christa Holka | Photo description: A line-up of six butches and masculine-presenting gender rebels, fabulously suited and booted. Their brightly coloured ties stand out. They are grouped in threes against an urban wall.

### **The Disappearance of Dorothy Lawrence (2015)**

It's 1915. Dorothy Lawrence, a young journalist with aspirations to become a war correspondent, joins the frontline in France. She was never seen in public again. The piece investigated the ways society deals with women who step out of line, then or today, 100 years on.

'This is the sort of play that reminds one that often the real theatrical gems are to be found outside the remit of the West End.'

London Economic Review \*\*\*\*

Photo credit: Zbigniew Kotkiewicz | Photo description: Four characters in view. A soldier in WW1 uniform laughs at a makeshift bar. A Chinese looking young woman in red blouse and long khaki skirt pours a drink at the bar as he watches. In the foreground two soldiers in WW1 uniforms are playing cards on upturned crates



### **Let Me Stay (2014 – 2015)**

A tender exploration of the impact of Alzheimer's on family relations. Julie Mc recorded her Mother's songs and stories, filmed and photographed her in all her glory, over many years.

'Magnificently sung, presented with integrity and honesty. It grabs us by the heart.'

Lexie Matheson, theatre review, New Zealand



Photo credit: Kay Fi'ain | Photo description: Julie Mc sits on a bright pink chair staring nostalgically at her mother's face, which is projected onto a curved white background made out of oddly sized packing boxes.

### **The Knitting Circle (2011-13)**

A chilling glimpse into the secret worlds and stolen years inside the asylums. 'Persons fit to be removed' cast out of sight on the fringes of society, were all these people truly Mad?

'An Excellent show. Beautiful, clever writing with subtle landing of the stories....harrowing at times. I am still thinking about it.'

Charlotte Jones, Independent Theatre Council



Photo credit: Emma Wee | Photo description: Nan (played by Hazel Maycock) glares angrily to her left, her face set as she sits holding her knitting needles. Maroula (played by Caroline Parker) stands anxiously in the background

## Film

### **Voices from The Knitting Circle – Documentary (2018)**

An award-winning documentary that presents the voices of people who lived and worked in inside care asylums, which closed in the 1980s. What reverberates is the extraordinary resilience of the human spirit, and the art of laughter amongst the tears.



Photo credit: Zeynep Dagli

‘Despite the hideous acts these individuals were subjected to, *Voices* imbues them with a magnificent fortitude that leaves their dignity forever intact.’

James Zaatka-Haas, Disability Arts Online

Best Documentary over 30 minutes and Best of Festival Awards

Picture This ...Film Festival, Canada’s International Disability Film Festival (2018)

### **Blue Pen – Film Installation (2016)**

A two-channel experimental short film about censorship and the disappearance of dissenting voices. The film paid particular attention to the voices of women journalists in conflict zones. The film was made in collaboration with filmpro ltd.

‘If we don’t know about these histories, if we don’t know about what women have had to go through, then how will we learn our own history, and how will we learn to change the world in which we live?’

Audience Member, Blue Pen Premiere, Hackney Attic

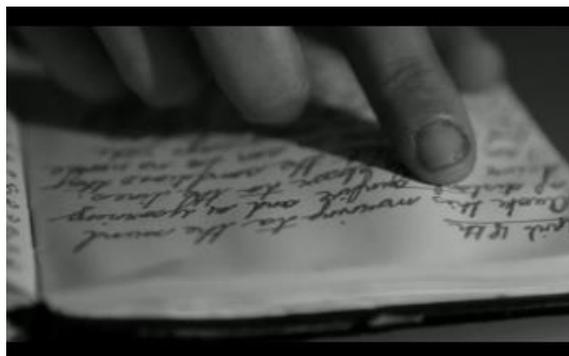


Photo credit: Caglar Kimyoncu

Best Performance Award,

Picture This ...Film Festival, Canada’s International Disability Film Festival, in 2017

## Terms of reference for Trustees

Vital Xposure is a registered Charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee, and legal accountability is held by Trustees who also act as Company Directors.

Vital Xposure is seeking 2-3 new Trustees with a range of skills and experience that meet the organisation's needs for strong governance and are able to devote the time required to play their role effectively. We are also seeking a Trustee willing to take on the role of Treasurer.

Trustees are appointed, following a recruitment process designed to ensure the trustees collectively have the range of skills, knowledge, understanding and experience needed to hold legal responsibility for the organisation, as set out in the Trustee Role Description and Person Specification.

### Role Description

Trustees will be required to:

- Ensure the effective, efficient administration and financial stability of Vital Xposure.
- Provide governance and aspiration for Vital Xposure, ensuring delivery in line with its business plan, strategic objectives and funding requirements.
- Ensure that the Board has put in place satisfactory systems of control in respect of legal, operational and financial risk management.
- Monitor the performance of the Executive team, providing line management support and supervision in line with policies and procedures or delegating this function as appropriate.
- Contribute to organisational procedures (such as recruitment of senior management staff), papers (such as policy documents), accounts and reports as needed (such as by the Charities Commissions, the Companies House and Arts Council England)

Trustees will also be expected to

- Act as an ambassador and advocate for Vital Xposure.
- Be available at times outside of board meetings for sub-committees as required.

### Time Commitment

Trustees join the Board with an initial 3-year commitment, which can be renewed. Vital Xposure's Board meets 4-5 times per year, generally at the company's base in Hackney or nearby in the evenings.

Other time commitments will include ongoing liaison with the Chair of the Board (generally by phone or email), attending key Vital Xposure events, championing the charity in external networks and developing influential partnerships.

### Person Specification

We are looking for people with one or more of these skills:

- Financial Management
- Arts, Innovation and Creativity
- Fundraising and Development
- Advocacy
- Media and Communications

We would like our Trustees to have:

- Sound understanding of and/or experience in the arts or charitable sectors
- Interest, experience or professional background in Deaf or Disability Arts
- Good communication, diplomacy and interpersonal skills
- Passion for social justice and commitment to equality
- Collaborative and open approach
- An interesting sense of humour

### **Further Information**

If you would like an informal discussion about the position then please contact us on (020) 8123 9945, to speak to Theresa Veith, Executive Director, or email [projects@vitalxposure.co.uk](mailto:projects@vitalxposure.co.uk).

Please note that like most trustee roles, this role is unremunerated.

### **How to Apply**

To apply for this role, please supply the following:

- a short introductory statement demonstrating your motivation for this role;
- a supporting statement, explaining how you believe your skills and experience match the requirements of the role, directly addressing the person specification;
- a comprehensive CV including details of your achievements in each role, and including details of two referees (who will not be contacted without your prior knowledge or consent).

We are committed to ensuring our recruitment process is transparent and accessible, if you wish to submit an application in alternative formats, contact us to discuss details.

Once we receive your application, we will send you a separate monitoring form to complete. We will only use the completed form for monitoring purposes and we will keep it separate to the application process (shortlisting and final selection). Our data management procedures are GDPR compliant and we are registered with the Information Commissioner's Officer (ref A8262415).

Please mark your email/letter TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT

Your application should be emailed to: **projects@vitalxposure.co.uk**

Or sent by post to

Vital Xposure  
Empire 2, Hackney Empire  
291 Mare St  
London, E8 1EJ

Deadline for receipt of applications is Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019, and all applications will be acknowledged. Interviews will be scheduled for late September / October.

If you would like this information in an alternative format, please contact Foteini Galanopoulou on 020 8123 9945 or **intouch@vitalxposure.co.uk**