



SPYMONKEY DIVERSITY, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION CREATIVE CONSULTANT INFORMATION PACK

WHY ARE WE LOOKING FOR A DE&I CONSULTANT

Spymonkey are looking for an experienced creative consultant to work with us over the next year to support us in embedding our diversity and inclusion work into the creative process of our next two productions; Hairy and The Frogs.

Following a significant change within our artist-led organisation, not least the unexpected death of our friend, collaborator and associate artist Stephan Kreiss, and founder Petra Massey's continued secondment to Spiegelworld in Las Vegas, we have spent time rethinking who Spymonkey is, what we do and why. This reflection was coupled by the pandemic & the BLM movement, Spymonkey's freelance part-time team reflected on our diversity practice & Action Plan to ensure our work is reflective of a society which welcomes and celebrates the diversity of race, ethnicity and the lived experiences of a broad range of people.

Through 'Spymonkey's Would Like to Meet workshop in 2022 we took some practical steps to engage with artists from the Global Majority for our creative productions and training programmes. We held a workshop paying highly-skilled & experienced performers from the Global Majority to spend 2 days in a creative workshop led by the two of the Spymonkey ensemble, and facilitated by Amrita Dhaliwal, a Punjabi American arts leader, educator and devising artist based in Los Angeles. Amrita joined the team in London with worked with Spymonkey's Artistic Directors Toby Park, Aitor Basauri, Executive Producer Emily Coleman, and Education and Training Officer Natasha Britton, to understand our DE&I work to date and support us on some next steps. She attended our workshops in London as a way of redressing the power balance in the room, to introduce the team and our terms around identity, alongside facilitating discussions during the two days.

Would Like to Meet has been transformative on our work, has impacted our approach to shortlisting & recruiting our bursary places and practically leading our training and education workshops. We really valued working with Amrita as an external person with lived experience of discrimination and an understanding of the work of Spymonkey. As we look ahead, the support of a local UK-based practitioner will best serve our continued application of this learning and continue our commitment to equality through our creative projects.

NEW PROJECTS

In 2023/2024 we will make two new shows; Hairy and The Frogs. Informed by Would Like to Meet and our new Manifesto Theatre of the Funny these productions will allow us to explore new ways of making shows, with new people joining our team of long-term collaborators, working with new co-producing partners and for new and existing audiences.

HAIRY

Laugh-out-loud comedy theatre for hairies aged 6+ and their families.

Slapstick-meets-rock-band-meets-punk-clown-mayhem, HAIRY is a playful and frankly laughable exploration of that most versatile and significant feature of human anatomy.

Hairy is the first show created specially for young people by Spymonkey, the UK's longest-running comedy theatre company. It will have few words and great generous dollops of bold visual comedy.

Hair seems to be everywhere! And sprouting in the most unlikely places! Hair to be styled, waxed, fashioned, shaved, plucked, jeri-curled, dreadlocked and shorn. Hair to be striking, funny, scary, surprising, gorgeous and greasy. Long, short, curly, straight, thick, thin, in-growing, up-covered, unwanted or removed. Where's it going to turn up next?!

One thing is for sure: It's going to get HAIRY!

THE FROGS

405 BCE: Two idiots are mooching around their pad in ancient Athens. Things are desperate: they've lost their sense of humour. And who wouldn't, given the way things are going? Political catastrophe, war, disease, and now their best friend has pegged it. These two - Dionysus, Greek god of wine, ribaldry and good times and his wily servant, Xanthias - set out to the underworld to attempt the impossible: to bring their friend Euripides - greatest playwright of Ancient Greece - back from the dead.

Carl Grose's (Oedipussy, Kneehigh, Grinning Man) artful reimagining of Aristophanes' ancient Greek comedy THE FROGS collides ancient with modern. Like Dionysus and Xanthias, Spymonkey duo Toby Park and Aitor Basauri search for the answers to some pretty thorny questions.

Who's laughing now?

THE NEW ROLE

In order to continue the work we did with Amrita in 2022, to encourage difference and welcome new perspectives through our creative work in the way we have our workshops, we are looking to bring on a freelance DE&I consultant to support us in the rehearsal rooms for Hairy and The Frogs. Through this new creative partnership we would like to achieve the following things:

- Build a new relationship with a creative individual in the UK who is open to understanding our DE&I journey so far, our anticipated next steps and help us plan our longer term ambitions.
- To have a critical and supportive colleague who keeps our responsibility to consider DE&I at the forefront of our thinking during the making of two new shows
- To encourage and facilitate open discussion around themes of race, ethnicity, gender, disability and sexuality in our rehearsal process in relation to the devised and written material generated to ensure our end productions have taken into consideration, and are relevant to, a broad audience
- Help us in our continued discussions around the importance of laughter through an affinity with our Theatre of the Funny manifesto and to continue exploring the boundaries of comedy and discrimination
- Be one of Spymonkey's two points of contact for freelance cast and creatives to share feedback, concerns or complaints of discrimination with. To follow Spymonkey procedures to resolve these issues in a timely manner.
- To hold 'touch base' sessions outside of rehearsals and debrief meetings at the end to share learning and inform future creative processes.

WHO WE ARE LOOKING FOR

- A creative individual with proven experience of supporting artist-led organisations (ideally, but not essentially, theatre companies) to address inequalities in their creative practice. This could be an artist or theatre-maker, a producer, dramaturg, stage manager, DE&I consultant or another creative freelancer.
- Someone who understands the devising process and is comfortable in a rehearsal room
- Someone who likes comedy, funny theatre, has an affinity with our Theatre of the Funny manifesto and is keen to find fun and engaging ways of exploring diversity.

TERMS OF ROLE

We would like to engage someone to attend at least 3 rehearsal days for Hairy and The Frogs, plus additional meetings and prep/feedback on the process.

Dates:

Hairy rehearsals: Tues 30th May - Fri 23rd June 2023

Must be able to attend day one on Tues 30th May and at least two other dates before Fri 23rd June, to be agreed depending on availability and in response to the rehearsal process

Hairy previews on Sat 1st July at Polka Theatre, Wimbledon

The Frogs rehearsals: Mon 27th Nov 2023-Fri 5th Jan 2024

Must be able to attend day one on Mon 27th Nov and at least two other dates before Fri 5th Jan, to be agreed depending on availability and in response to the rehearsal process

The Frogs previews on Fri 12th Jan (tbc) and runs until Sat 27th Jan 2024

Location

Hairy rehearsals will take place at Polka Theatre in Wimbledon, London

The Frogs rehearsals will take place in Northampton or London tbc

Fee

£2,400 plus travel expenses of up to £600 to attend rehearsals.

We anticipate this will be split to attend 3 days in rehearsals for Hairy, 3 days in rehearsals for The Frogs, plus 6 meeting sessions.

This is a freelance contract and Spymonkey assumes the freelancer will be responsible for their own Tax and National Insurance.

HOW TO APPLY

Please send us a two page document or 3 minute video or audio file outlining how your experience fits The Role and Who We Are Looking for outlined above. We'd also like to know why you'd be interested in working with Spymonkey on Hairy and The Frogs.

You are also welcome to tell us any access requirements and things we can do to help you do your best work.

Deadlines for applications is **Fri 14th April at 12noon**

We would like to meet up to 4 people via Zoom on **Tues 2nd May** as an opportunity for us to ask you, and you to ask us, questions and to see if we'd like to work together.

If applying for this role is not accessible for you and you'd like to apply in another way, or if you need any support please email info@spymonkey.co.uk.

We recognise there is a lack of representation due to systemic barriers and we encourage applications from members of the Global Majority and those currently underrepresented in our industry. If you would like to discuss support with an application please contact the team on info@spymonkey.co.uk.