

## LEGACY (Working Title)

### Artist Brief

*If Lord Berwick left the Park and the Mansion specifically ‘for public benefit’, what does this mean in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?*

Pentabus Theatre and Attingham Park are looking for a **visual artist / designer** to work with us on an arts project in 2020 to explore what Attingham’s ‘legacy’ means for a number of different local communities.

### About us

Attingham Park is the single most generous gift to the National Trust, its mansions and grounds left by Lord Berwick “for public benefit.”



©NationalTrustImages/PaulHighnam

Attingham Park, near Shrewsbury, is one of the greatest estates in Shropshire and includes an impressive late-18th century mansion and collections, landscaped parkland by 18<sup>th</sup> century designer Repton with views across ancient countryside, a deer park, a productive organic walled garden and orchard with farmland of some 4000 acres. The parkland at Attingham is one of the richest and most important nature conservation sites for veteran trees and invertebrates in England and is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Attingham has experienced the highs of huge wealth as well as the lows of benign neglect. Formerly owned by five generations of the Berwick family, it was gifted to the National Trust in 1947 and now welcomes over half a million visitors each year.

Pentabus is the nation's rural theatre company. We tour new plays to village halls, fields and theatres. We seek out communities with least engagement to the arts, telling stories with local relevance and national impact. Our work digs deep into the psyche of the English countryside and the complexities it throws up. Our shows are playful, audience led, provocative and compassionate, offering rural audiences theatre made for them and with them. We connect artists, participants and audiences from the beginning of the creative process, developing ideas together to ensure our work is relevant and meaningful. We are creatively accountable to our audience, responding to them, learning from them, validating their experiences. Based on a farm, we are committed to the creative health of the countryside. The rural world is largely invisible in modern culture and we provide a vital national platform for its voices and stories. We play a critical role in the national theatre ecology, injecting rural narratives into the urban mainstream and nurturing artists from rural backgrounds, giving them opportunities to enter the wider sector. We balance this by working with artists from across the UK and Ireland.

### **The Project – Context and Vision.**

Pentabus Theatre, in partnership with Attingham Park, will develop and deliver a participatory programme of workshops with artists, communities and Attingham volunteers and staff, The workshop programme will address and lead to an artistic output responding to the following provocation:

*If Lord Berwick left the Park and the Mansion specifically 'for public benefit', what does this mean in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and how does the public of today benefit from this generous gift to the National Trust?*

There are many people who already benefit from using Attingham; through visiting and volunteering many have discovered their own personal 'Attingham memory' or 'Attingham moment'. There are also many local people and communities who have never been to Attingham, who are yet to create an 'Attingham memory'. We want to explore how we bring people together to share existing memories and create new ones.

The project is part of the Trust New Art programme and supported using public funding by Arts Council England.

### **Proposed Project Activity**

Pentabus and Attingham will identify two local communities who do not currently engage with Attingham or the arts. These communities will include but not be restricted to a rural community, a community of young people and a community from an urban area of high deprivation.

We will work with three artists – The lead artist will be Andrew Sterry of Pentabus Theatre (socially engaged theatre maker), in collaboration with a socially engaged sound / digital artist and the visual artist / designer. Pentabus and the sound / digital artist will lead the programme of workshops with communities, and the visual artist / designer will work with them to respond to the workshop programme and communities, creating a final output to be shared at Attingham. This will be a process of co-creation. The final output will be a physical response to the work of all artists and community members.

From January to August 2020 we will run 8 sessions with each of the two identified communities, Attingham volunteers and the two socially engaged project artists.

Workshop sessions will take place both in community spaces and at Attingham. Participants will get to know the place, meet NT volunteers and other collaborating artists, and begin to respond to the provocation and the idea of a personal Attingham moment or memory.

This will lead to a visual and creative response bringing together the two engagement processes. It will be a temporary installation either in the grounds or in the Mansion and we are open to the commission in terms of media and materials, within the visual arts. We imagine audio content to be central to the installation.

A production manager will be employed by Attingham and Pentabus to logistically manage community engagement, workshops and the build and presentation of the output.

The output will:

- Respond to the process of engagement.
- Create a legacy reflecting the process of engagement.
- Be sympathetic to the conservation needs of Attingham and the National Trust.
- Take place in two or more environments across Attingham; for example - the stables, the grounds and the mansion.
- Be presented in Autumn 2020 (Oct-Dec)
- Remain in situ for up to six months if not longer.

The aim of this project is to:

- Work with artists to bring different communities together
- Explore the barriers that exist, both real and perceived, that prevent community members from visiting Attingham.
- Work with artists to create an output that celebrates the process, and shares the stories of the participants engaging in the project.
- Work with Attingham volunteers and identified groups to find a new shared portrait/vision idea of Attingham
- Make Attingham more accessible for the identified communities

Community Engagement Aims:

- To engage with communities of little or no engagement with the Arts.
- To provide access to the arts for areas of multiple deprivation, according to the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2015 (IMD)
- To engage with isolated rural communities
- To deliver work which has a legacy – ie there is opportunity for participants to connect to the work and to the National Trust beyond the activity scheduled.

### **The artists' role**

From the beginning of their process, the Designer / Visual Artist will have the opportunity to join the workshops. The Designer / Visual Artist is free to attend any workshop that they feel is relevant.

The project will be led by Andrew Sterry of Pentabus Theatre. Andrew is also an associate at Sherman Theatre. As a writer and director, Andrew makes original theatre and performance with and about the people who are in it. He collaborates with artists, performers and musicians, museums, charities and schools, and creates work in a range of spaces from care centres and day homes to community centres and theatres.

The Designer / Visual Artist will be a collaborator on the project with an understanding and connection to the work being created through the workshop process, as well as being able to respond individually to the form of the work.

We are aware that the output is dependent on a number of factors – the communities we work with, the chosen form of the Socially Engaged Sound / Digital artist, and the material generated throughout the workshop process, so you will need to be nimble and able to react and collaborate with the process.

### **Media & Art Form**

We are open to proposals in a range of media and approach, as long as they are collaborative, and able to respond directly to outcomes in the workshop process.

### **What we are looking for**

We are looking for a Visual Artist or Designer with a strong vision of how to meet the brief. We envisage the artist to be based in the West Midlands or Mid Wales and will be able to reach Attingham, Shrewsbury or rural Wales. Collaborative applications with a socially engaged Sound / Digital artist are welcome.

In particular you will be able to demonstrate:

- Experience of working with communities of place and interest
- Experience of socially engaged practice or participatory theatre contexts
- A collaborative and creative approach with good communication skills

### **Schedule**

Volunteer Introduction to the project via newsletter	June 2019
Volunteer gauge of interest (newsletter)	August 2019
Information session with Pentabus and volunteers	September 2019
Artists contracted to project	October 2019
Initial training session with volunteers	October 2019
Identifying and first meetings with communities - <i>Pentabus and Attingham only</i> .	October 2019
Taster workshops with potential communities	Oct & Nov 2019
Communities confirmed	end November 2019
Discussions and planning of workshop process	October, November 2019
Workshops begin	January 2020
Design research and initial ideas	January 2020
Workshops break for holidays	Easter 2020
Preliminary design proposal	April 2020
Final design proposal signed off by Attingham & Pentabus	July 2020
Recording communities, building and presentation of final output	September - November 2020

## Fee

The artist fee is £3500. Travel and accommodation will be provided additionally. This fee includes workshop attendance at 6 workshops, (alongside Pentabus Audiences and Engagement manager Andrew Sterry and the Socially Engaged Sound / Digital Artist), consideration, planning, design and delivery of final output, alongside the Production Manager who will manage the build and the budget for the production of the work.

## Production Budget

The total budget for materials and design of the output is approximately £5000. This includes any equipment needed to relay verbatim material, if necessary (ie audio equipment). The budget will be managed by the production manager, with the Designer / Visual artist.

## How to apply

To be considered for this commission please send an Expression of Interest by **9am on Friday 30 August**, to include:

- CV no more than 2 pages
- Up to 5 links to examples of your work (please don't send large files as attachments)
- An Expression of Interest statement (2 sides A4 maximum) that outlines why you are interested in working on the project, the approach you would take and any initial thoughts, showing a clear connection to the brief.

Please email your application (subject LEGACY Project) to [claire.tafft@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:claire.tafft@nationaltrust.org.uk)

Shortlisted artists will be invited to interview at Attingham on **Wednesday 25 or Friday 27 September 2019**

For further information or an informal chat about the project please contact Sophie Motley or Claire Tafft on the details below. We are sorry we are unable to give feedback if you are not shortlisted at the Expression of Interest stage and are unable to accept postal applications.

## Contacts

### Joint leads for project

Sophie Motley (Artistic Director Pentabus) [sophie@pentabus.co.uk](mailto:sophie@pentabus.co.uk) 01584 856564

Claire Tafft (Visitor Experience Manager National Trust Attingham Park)

[claire.tafft@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:claire.tafft@nationaltrust.org.uk) 01743 708190.

Find out more about the project at [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/thelegacyproject](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/thelegacyproject) or visit <http://www.pentabus.co.uk/>



Attingham Park NT  
@AttinghamParkNT

Pentabus Theatre  
@PentabusTheatre



ntattinghampark

pentabustheatrecompany



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**