

# EXETER PHOENIX

## PERFORMANCE PROGRAMME POLICY



Artwork by Darren Shaddick.

## WHO WE ARE

Exeter Phoenix is a vibrant, world-class multi-artform venue in the heart of Exeter's city centre. Each year we host hundreds of events and artistic activity spanning many disciplines. Live music, theatre, cinema, contemporary art, DJ events, dance, comedy, talks, creative courses, classes and workshops, family events... and everything in between.

We are not just an events venue. We nurture a thriving arts scene through our Creative Hub, supporting artists, musicians, theatre companies, filmmakers and creatives at every stage of their career and practice. As well as presenting work, we also thrive on developing new talent by giving artists the tools to experiment, take risks and realise their best ideas. Through the Creative Hub, we have helped launch the careers of award-winning filmmakers, developed quality work that has gone on to tour nationally, and provided a support network for those looking to embark on creative endeavours for the first time.

## OUR VALUES

Our values guide our decisions and actions and demonstrate our commitment to the members of our community and to each other:

**Communication** – Communicate in a positive, honest and productive manner within our organization and with our public

**Teamwork** – Create the best results by working together, with trust. We endeavour to celebrate the contributions made by everyone

**Diversity** – Promote inclusiveness and impartiality and provide fair access to all through our programme, venues and activities

**Innovation** – Implement unique, creative and cost-effective solutions that enhance and advance our offering to the community

**Integrity** – Adhere to the highest standards of ethics, stewardship and public trust, internally and externally

**Respect** – Demonstrate a high regard for others and value the healthy exchange of ideas and opinions

## PERFORMANCE PROGRAMME

Exeter Phoenix is home to a diverse programme of performance, comedy, cabaret, dance and spoken word. We are proud that our stage hosts award-winning plays alongside works-in-progress, and internationally renowned companies alongside emerging talent from the South West.

Everyone is welcome in our theatre, and we strive to provide a diverse and accessible programme, presenting predominantly single showings (not runs) of work in all stages of development from both local and national artists, and particularly seeking out work at the forefront of contemporary practice. We strive to provide something for everyone, no matter your theatrical tastes, age, experiences or budget. Alongside our performances, we also offer a variety of support to artists and theatre-makers including workshops, scratch nights and associate artist schemes.

The performance programme has 3 seasons per year. Spring season runs January – April, summer season runs May – August, and autumn season runs September – December. We aim to announce our programme of events two months prior to each season launch.

## WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

- Live performance, including new plays, performance art, physical theatre, radical adaptations, family shows, comedy, cabaret, contemporary dance and spoken word.
- Award-winning and critically-acclaimed shows.
- Innovative, imaginative, and extraordinary performances.
- Risk-taking and experimental new work made with a bold, interdisciplinary approach.
- Ambitious work that can challenge, provoke and offer fresh perspectives.
- Performances with accessibility at their core (please let us know if you are writing access elements into your budget).
- Work that offers meaningful and accessible interpretation and participatory activities, targeted at a range of audience groups.
- Diverse voices and stories that can connect us to underrepresented communities.
- Local and (inter)national touring artists.
- Emerging local talent and works-in-progress. See our Scratch Night call-outs [here](#).
- Single showings (not runs).
- Shows that are adaptable to different venues (please bear in mind that we are a multi-art form venue, not a dedicated theatre space).
- Edinburgh Previews (during June / July) in our Workshop space.
- Outdoor performance (during our summer [Theatre in the Park](#) season).
- Work in all stages of development (we have three versatile performance spaces to accommodate different needs, which can be adapted to bespoke seating layouts, including in the round, thrust, immersive, etc).

## PERFORMANCE SPACES

Full technical specifications for each space can be found [here](#).

## Auditorium

**Capacity:** Seated end on. The full capacity of the Auditorium is 270, and for dance shows it is a reduced capacity of 154 (raked seating). Cabaret seating is 150. Seating is retractable.

**Seated dance / performance:** Max 10m x 8m playing area. 6.5m high.

**Seated theatre / music:** Max 10m x 6m. No wing space. No rear cross over. Fire exits U/S/L and U/S/R must remain clear for emergency exit.

**Backstage / Access:** Ground floor. 1 Dressing room for up to 8 people, separate toilet with adjoining single shower room. Please let us know if a second dressing room is required as we may be able to offer an additional room on the first floor.

Projector and screen available. Induction loop in place. Free Wi-Fi throughout the building.

Aerial performers please note that we cannot suspend people from our rig.

## Studio 1

**Capacity:** Seated end on. The full capacity of the Studio is 90 (bear in mind that the seating is not raked and sight lines can get tricky beyond 70). Cabaret seating capacity is 50.

**The space:** 7.2m wide by 16m long. 3m high.

**Seated theatre / music:** 7.2m wide by 3m deep playing area.

**Dance Floor:** Wooden sprung floor.

**Black box space:** Window blinds and curtain track with black drapes.

**Backstage / Access:** Situated on the first floor. The Meeting Room will be reserved as a dressing room space, separate toilets also available on the same floor. Lift access available.

Projector and screen available.

## The Workshop

**Capacity:** Seated end on. The full capacity of the Workshop is 40. Cabaret seating capacity is 30.

**The space:** 6m wide by 7m deep, including audience. There are blackout blinds on the windows.

**Backstage / Access:** Ground floor. The upstairs Meeting Room will be reserved as a dressing room space. Nearby toilets available on both the ground floor and the first floor.

Projector and screen available.

Please note that the sound and lighting provisions in this space are very basic and we do not provide a venue technician to assist. A member of staff will show you how to switch the equipment on and off, but you will need to provide your own operator for the show.

## WHAT WE REQUIRE

For the best chance of getting programmed, please provide as much information about you / your company in your proposal as possible (please do not send entire scripts).

- A production pack, including a synopsis, history of the company, previous reviews / accolades, images, video links, and details of any proposed wraparound activities.
- Technical rider and risk assessment.
- An indication of which performance space would best suit your show.
- An indication of where the production is in the process of securing funding.
- Whether the production includes BSL, captioning or audio description. Please bear in mind that we strive to make our events as accessible as possible, therefore we strongly discourage artists from enforcing a no re-admittance policy, and encourage family shows to be \*relaxed performances.
- Our family offering is focused on school holidays as we do not currently have the demand for term-time performances. Please indicate whether you would prefer October / February / May half-term or Easter for indoor performances or Summer for outdoor performances.
- [Access rider](#), if applicable. Venue access information can be found [here](#).
- If your production is currently following the [Theatre Green Book](#), please confirm whether you fit into one of the following categories: Basic / Intermediate / Advanced, and briefly outline any sustainability targets that align with our [Green Phoenix Project](#), in particular to help improve our carbon footprint and aim towards achieving net zero over the next 5 years.
- Target audience, key demographic and marketing aims, including any outreach plans.
- Content warnings and age guidance.
- Which season you would like your production to feature in (we generally aim to programme 6-12 months in advance).
- Details of any other venues you are planning to tour to in the South West (please bear in mind that other performances within a 30 mile radius cannot take place within 21 days of an Exeter Phoenix performance).
- Why you think your production is a good fit for our [performance programme](#).

- We generally book on a box office split basis. Please specify if a minimum guarantee is required (this can only be considered for shows in the Auditorium).
- If you are submitting an EOI to ACE, please allow us sufficient time to review and respond as we cannot do this at short notice.

Please send this information to:

**Katy Danbury** – Performance Programmer – [katy.danbury@exeterphoenix.org.uk](mailto:katy.danbury@exeterphoenix.org.uk)

*Due to the high number of proposals that we receive, Exeter Phoenix is unable to respond to every sender nor acknowledge the receipt of proposals. The programming team will contact the sender of any proposals that we are interested in taking forward – if you have not received a response within 12 weeks you should consider it unsuccessful on that occasion; please be aware that we are not able to support all the proposals we receive.*

## MARKETING

From us, you can expect:

- **E-newsletter inclusion** to targeted groups of subscribers and performance bookers.
- **Organic social media** posts on Facebook & Instagram – although please bear in mind that we have an extremely busy and diverse programme to manage.
- **Inclusion in our seasonal social media ads** – If you have budget, we can also run individual ads from our channel and share the data with you (although we understand you may wish to run them from your own channels!)
- **Post sharing** – reciprocal post-sharing, when the schedule allows it (please do tag us!)
- **Ticket and sales promos**, e.g. Discounts, special offers, giveaways to generate interest. We operate a multi-buy ticket deal across the theatre programme as standard: £2 off each ticket if you book three tickets or more across the performance programme in one transaction.
- **Cross-selling** with relevant events at point of sale by our box office team.
- **Flyer & poster display** – if you are printing flyers or posters, we have space to display these and exit flyer similar events. We can also arrange local distribution for you as part of our regular fortnightly runs (included), or a wider / more targeted distribution (Prices from £12 an hour, on request and availability dependant).
- **Digital poster display** – We will create a digital poster for your show and display it on large screens around the building, 4-6 weeks ahead of your show date.
- **News** – if you have content that is suitable for our blog or Creative Hub newsletters (which go out monthly to those interested in growing/ developing careers in the creative industries), do let us know and we can include this. This is content-driven marketing rather than sales-driven marketing. We love to feature: rehearsal diaries/ blogs / interviews / ‘making of’ content.

- **Facebook events:** We set one up for you by default, or you can add us as a co-host if you would prefer.
- **Press Release** – Inclusion in seasonal press releases to our press contacts.

We are also able to advise on additional marketing activity you may want to carry out including:

- Identifying groups you could target.
- Making introductions / sharing relevant contacts.
- Advising on paid print ad and digital display opportunities (e.g. Digital screen network in Exeter city centre).
- Advising on target groups for any paid social media marketing you have budget for.

### **From you, we would appreciate:**

- **A short meeting** (this can be done via Zoom) prior to the season launch to discuss marketing assets and strategy in more detail, including key messages, demographic, production aims and any local outreach plans.
- **ALT text:** To make the online promotion of your show as inclusive as possible, we request that you include **image descriptions** to accompany all of your promotional images in order for them to be accessible to blind and visually impaired people. You don't have to write an essay and describe every single detail of the image. Just pick out a few key details that paint the picture. Please be mindful of punctuation as people will use screen readers.
- **Videos** don't need to be audio described, as long as they are audio led. However, the video should send the same message, both audibly and visually. If it doesn't, try to add a description of what happens in the video either as part of the caption or in a follow-up comment on social media. To make them fully accessible, videos should have **subtitles** where possible. There are lots of free apps available which make adding subtitles to your videos really easy – so just have a Google.
- When you're using **hashtags** on social media you should capitalise the first letter of every word. This allows the words in the hashtag to be read out correctly by screen readers, which many blind and visually impaired people rely on to navigate social media. This also makes them easier for everybody else to read, i.e. #ExeterPhoenix
- **Please send your posters / flyers to Christina to sign off** before sending them to print. They will need to include the Exeter Phoenix logo, show title, date and time of show, website link and telephone number to book tickets. If your production is supported by ACE please do not forget to include their logo. We suggest that you do not clutter the design with excessive text.

- All **print copy** provided for public display should be of a **size and font** that does not contravene the Disability Discrimination Act. This should be no smaller than a 12-point font on the smallest piece of print. Sans-serif (which means without the decorative line) fonts are generally preferred for people with learning differences. We recommend that you avoid decorative or overly stylised fonts, which are often difficult to read even for users without visual impairments or reading disabilities.
- **Keep us up to date** with new marketing assets e.g. trailers, rehearsal / production photos, vox pops and reviews: Fresh content is much more likely to get you better social media coverage!
- Let us know about any **local marketing** you are doing – so we don't cross over each other. Are you from Exeter or do you have connections to the area? Let us know!
- **Share with us your marketing insights or success stories**, so we can work better together!

## TECHNICAL

An in-house technician will be provided by Exeter Phoenix in-kind, to provide technical support for Auditorium and Studio shows. This includes a get-in / show-call / get-out.

The technical questionnaire sent to you alongside the contract, will form as part of your contract. We cannot contract the show until we have received this information from you.

A same-day get-in will be required. On occasion, if absolutely necessary, we may be able to accommodate a get-in the day before when our busy programme of events allows. This will be recharged accordingly.

The full tech spec for your performance must be sent to our Technical Manager at least **a month prior to the performance date**. Please specify if this is will be an issue. If you need a pre-rig, please specify this well in advance so we can confirm what will be possible. Please bear in mind that a pre-rig will be recharged to the artist / visiting company at £200.

Any technical equipment that needs to be hired (outside of what Exeter Phoenix can provide) or any additional hours / staffing will be recharged to the artist / visiting company.



## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **\*Relaxed Performances**

[Relaxed performances](#) allow people with learning differences or other sensory and communication needs to access theatre in a relaxed environment. They are also suitable for those with dementia, or for anyone who can find traditional theatre environments stressful.

Typically, this will involve keeping the house lights up, so it's not too dark, reducing the volume of sound effects and music, and allowing people to move and make noises during the show, including allowing them to come and go as they please.

If possible, we encourage all our family offerings to be relaxed performances and ask visiting companies and artists to take mindful measures to ensure that the performance is a welcoming and safe space for people who can't always control when they move or make noise.

If you are able to provide an access guide containing pre-show information this would be a huge bonus. We can provide an example, if needed.

Please let us know if you require a quiet breakout space for audience members during your performance, as we will need to make sure we have an appropriate space available.

We have 8 child-friendly ear defenders available at box office should any audience members require them.

### **In-kind Support**

Once programmed, the Exeter Phoenix offers marketing, box office and some technical support in-kind. On occasion, we may be able to offer further in-kind support, such as space for R&D workshops and rehearsals, particularly if they involve the local community. However, this offer is conditional and requires flexibility, as availability is limited and we need to prioritise paid booking requests to hire out our spaces.

### **Parking**

There is very limited parking available at the venue. Please let us know well in advance if you would like to reserve a parking space, but do bear in mind that parking might not always be available. As you approach the venue parking is to the left of the building – you will need to collect a parking permit to display from the box office. The loading bays are at the back of the car park, by the building.

## Wi-Fi

Our Wi-Fi is a fast, open public network with no password. Just press connect on Exeter Phoenix Public in your phone / computer's network settings.

## Food

We have a wide selection of food available on our café menu, which caters for all dietary requirements. Please note that only food purchased on the premises may be eaten in the café area. If you would prefer to venture out for your lunch / dinner, we recommend the following local eateries:

- Dinosaur Café (Turkish and Mediterranean), 5 New North Road, EX4 4HH
- Al Farid (Moroccan), 3 Cathedral Yard, EX1 1H
- The Flat (Pizza), 142 Fore Street, EX4 3AN
- Goto (Japanese), 38 New Bridge Street, EX4 3AH
- Herbies (Veggie / Vegan Friendly), 15 North Street, EX4 3QS
- Old Firehouse (Pizza), 50 New North Road, EX4 4EP
- Red Panda (Asian Street Food), 29 Gandy Street, EX4 3LS
- Tyepyedong (Noodles), 175 Sidwell Street, EX4 6RH
- Topsham Brewery & Taproom (Pizza), 1 Maclaines Warehouse, Haven Road
- Sacred Grounds (Vegan), Mccoys Arcade, Fore Street, EX4 3AN

## Coffee

We have a selection of hot drinks available in our café. However, if you would prefer a speciality brew then we recommend the following coffee shops:

- Crankhouse Coffee Shop, Basement 130 Fore Street, EX4 3JQ
- The Glorious Art House, 120 Fore Street, EX4 3JQ
- The (Tiny) Tasting Room, 11 Martins Lane, EX1 1EY
- The Exploding Bakery Café, Central Station Buildings, 1B Queen Street

## Hotels

We may be able to access a discount rate for you at the following hotels (this varies depending on the season):

- The Bendene Townhouse, 15-16 Richmond Road, EX4 4JA
- Townhouse B&B, 54 St. David's Hill, EX4 4DT
- Mercure Rougemont, Queen Street, EX4 3SP
- Mercure Southgate, Southernhay East, EX1 1QF

We strongly advise touring companies to NOT book non-refundable accommodation.



Artwork by Darren Shaddick.

We look forward to receiving your proposal!