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PROFILE

Supervisors

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Project Title

Access to Training: Racism and Anti-Racism in Vocational Training for the UK Professional Performing Arts Industry

Abstract

This doctoral project will expand the focus of this emergent area of research in race and theatre training. It will do so principally by conceptually situating spaces, theories and practices of training inside the institutional structures and wider social relations that surround them to develop an intersectional analysis of barriers to accessing and fully benefitting from professional training in performance and related disciplines for people who experience racism. The research will use archival study and oral histories, building methodologically upon the ground-breaking work of Sara Ahmed in the area of institutional diversity politics (2016), to develop a historical and theoretical analysis of the ways in which racism has been reproduced through the structures and processes of formal, professional training in the UK performing arts sector. Shifting to the contemporary moment, the research will analyse the effectiveness of strategies to improve inclusion in the sector through reviews of the policies and practices of training institutions, using survey, interview and focus group data gathered from current and former students. This project will therefore not only rectify a crucial gap in research on actor training and theatre history, but fulfil an urgent need within the conservatoire and wider performing arts sectors to understand the inequalities by which they remain characterised and to contribute to recommendations for effectively reshaping them.

Profile

My current work in theatre is both as a theatre diversity worker and a theatre lecturer. Since 2018 I have been working with the UK's national strategy to develop the theatre workforce in equality, diversity and inclusion. This includes working with *The Stage*, UK Theatre, Creative and Cultural Skills and the Creative Industries Federation on the national Creative Careers Programme. Overseeing Get Into Theatre's strategic development, I channel my desire for promoting equality in theatre. I also work as a lecturer at Trinity Laban teaching on both theatre practice and academic research courses and lead a creative careers module. I also oversee the recruitment of external professional lecturers and assessments. My own background as a Turkish immigrant and initial journey into theatre as I began my career as an actor, is a journey that roots itself in the diaspora that has ignited my passion for my research areas of race, ethnicity and equality in theatre.

Practice

2018- present: The Stage Media with Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation & UK Theatre/SOLT Head of Get Into Theatre

I am a senior leader of the theatre diversity initiative, Get Into Theatre, funded and in collaboration with UK Theatre/SOLT and the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation. I am completely responsible for the start-up and development of the new national theatre careers digital initiative aimed at improving the diversity of young peoples' access to theatre careers pathways.

2016 - present: Trinity Laban, Academic Module Leader/Personal Tutor

I also currently lecture Musical Theatre BA Hons and Foundation students in academic and practical study. I also direct performance projects for BA Hons students and work on all of the participation projects that links youth and the community.

2014 - 2018: School 21, Head of School & Head of Drama

A state funded, arts based free school in Stratford, East-London. After joining as a teacher, I progressed into headship and developed skills in strategy and leadership, continuing my work in theatre, training and outreach along this.

2005 - present: Theatre Director, Freelance

Among all of my outreach and educational work, I purposefully get involved in directing experiences to inject creativity into my leadership. This includes working with young people, training actors or professionals as a director.

2010 - 2017: CPA Studios, Acting Tutor/Director/TIE Lead

I led the acting course on a vocational training course and designed and led TIE projects as part of the outreach programme.

2010 - 2014: Take Flight Youth Theatre Company, Co-founder/Company Director

I was wholly responsible for a small youth company, both in vision, growth and financial sustainability.

2002 - 2010: Actor