

CRIPtic Arts Romeo & Juliet: Assistant Director Job Description

The production

Trailblazing disabled-led company CRIPtic Arts returns to the Barbican with a bold reimagining of Shakespeare's classic exploring independence, autonomy and finding your person when you know you don't have long left.

Juliet is bored. She is under the care of parents who believe there is no life for her, a disabled woman who uses a ventilator to breathe, outside the walls of their home. Under their 'protection' Juliet feels her life slipping away. To her, that is a tragedy. With her future managed by others, will she ever experience love, adulthood or freedom?

Then she meets Romeo, disabled, confident and independent. In a society which controls them, their relationship becomes a joyful act of rebellion. No longer a distant dream, love is present, immediate, urgent, risky and above all alive. But how does this tragic love story change when our star-crossed lovers know they're here for a good time, not a long time?

Exploring breath through Shakespeare's abridged language, this vital production furthers CRIPtic's award-winning work in disabled-led theatre.

We are looking for an Assistant Director to work with Director Jamie Hale to bring this production to life.

Key Details

- **Schedule**
 - Pre-show production meetings, estimated 2 days total, beginning January 2027 (Online)
 - Rehearsals: 15 March - 30th April (holiday week w/c19 April). 6 weeks work, 4 days in the room plus 1 remote day each week, 10am-6pm
 - Tech week: w/c 3 May, w/c 10 May 2027, 10am-6pm
 - Show days: 13-15 May 2027, with a 3-performance run
- **Location:** Graeae Theatre Company / Barbican - London
- **Fee** (ITC rates)
 - Pre-show meetings: £278
 - Rehearsal fee: £5,048.00 (8 weeks total)
- **Contract:** Worker status
- **Travel and accommodation:** Must have a London base. We offer ITC commuting costs threshold.

The role

The Director runs the room. They work with actors on intention, verse and delivery, and take the final decisions on blocking, design, text and access.

You will support all of that and lead the access infrastructure. You are in the room every rehearsal day and every remote day (unless on agreed leave). You will be asked to give notes, to hold and consolidate intentions, delivery and blocking with performers, and, if the Director is absent, to lead the day at short notice based on their written plan. You are encouraged to bring your own thinking to the Director privately and to shape the piece through that.

You are likely to be asked to lead on company elements such as warm-ups, check-ins, and cool-downs.

You may also be asked to be a script-in-hand stand-in for any roles where sickness absence prevents attendance at rehearsals or performance on the night.

We are looking for an Assistant Director to work with our director, Jamie Hale to bring their reimagining of Romeo & Juliet to life. As Assistant Director, your duties will include:

Script and record of decisions

- Keep track of script changes noting what changed and why, and ensure actors keep to cuts
- Keep a decision record in the system provided: a diary of the work done and a log of what was decided. The Director has a significant memory impairment it is also how decisions stay retrievable for them. You will sometimes remind the Director what was decided, and flag when a new instruction sits at odds with an earlier one
- Keep direction-focused rehearsal report forms as indicated by the Director's system
- Compile tech and performance notes in the Director's system, and deliver the ones they ask you to deliver

The company

- Run warm-ups/cool downs
- Manage line running with performers
- Be first responder when a company member is struggling, with clear boundaries, and share welfare concerns with the Director immediately
- Set and share the weekly remote day agenda with performers, in consultation with the Director & Stage Manager, and attend 1:1 calls, line running and production meetings on remote days
- Co-lead on managing doubling tracks and noting transitions
- Keep actors to their deadlines (e.g. off-book, movement learned), manage lateness and attendance
- Agree the content of calls with the Director & Stage Manager
- Be prepared to step in on any rehearsals or performances where a performer is unavailable due to sickness (script in hand). Please note we will have a swing for Romeo & Juliet.
- Once the show has opened, the Director may hand the oversight of the remaining two performances to you. This will be agreed after the first performance.

Blocking and second eye

- Take all blocking notes and share them with the Director at the end of each day
- Work on blocking with performers, consolidate the work, and bring any substantial changes back for approval
- Report on sightlines from seats the Director, a wheelchair user, cannot reach

- Hold the production's vision, testing directorial decisions against it and saying when something is not serving it

Access architecture

- Keep an awareness of the BSL Performance Interpreter's position in every scene, (we will have a stand in for blocking if the Interpreter isn't present), with a focus on lighting states and sightlines
- Keep an eye on captions during tech, noting any errors & edits that need making & reporting to DSM for rehearsal reports or directly to the caption designer when appropriate
- Working with the Audio Description consultant, keep an awareness of audio description in script and sound design, assisting with embedding edits for the Director's approval

Sound

You are first ear, particularly as the Director is partially Deaf. You will be asked to listen to the proposed sound, and to form a view and give it. The Director will answer significant questions and approve final drafts.

Fights and safety

Run all fight and safety calls between the Fight Director's visits and through the run. You can stop the room on any safety concern.

Role requirements

Essential

- Assistant directing at professional scale. No directing experience required
- Systematic record-keeping under time pressure using a system provided to you, with the ability to recall prior decisions on demand and to notice when a new instruction contradicts an earlier one
- An understanding of access as integrated practice rather than a bolt-on
- Working knowledge of BSL provision in performance: including sightlines, lighting, positioning as a staging decision
- An understanding of audio description as a creative element
- The confidence and judgement to lead blocking with performers, fix what does not work, and know what to bring back
- A settled manner as first responder for someone in distress, with clear boundaries, and the willingness to manage attendance, escalate early, and stop the room on safety
- Readiness to take the room at short notice on the Director's written plan

Desirable

- Experience of Assistant Directing or working on a Shakespeare play, and *Romeo and Juliet* in particular
- Experience working with mixed disabled and non-disabled companies
- Experience directing or working with for wheelchair-using performers: sightlines, reach, turning circles
- Writing capability to draft very minor audio description script edits and additions for approval

- Experience with fight work, including running fight calls, being Fight Captain
- Experience of research by practice, or documenting a process for research, including consent and data handling
- BSL to any level

How to apply

To apply, send the following to team@cripticarts.org:

- CV / portfolio (2 pages max)
- Cover letter explaining why you'd like to work on this production (no more than one page / a short video / voice note of the same length)
- A redacted extract of your own rehearsal notes from a previous production. Two or three pages is plenty. Redact names and anything confidential. Here, we want to get a sense of how you think and note things. If you do not have access to notes from a previous show (e.g. because they were physical copies, or because you no longer have access to them, just let us know.

Application deadline: 12pm Weds 21st October

Interviews: w/c Monday 26 October (Online)

CRIPtic Arts is disabled-led. While this role is not reserved for a disabled person, we particularly welcome applications from disabled people. Adjustments are available at every stage of recruitment and throughout the contract. Tell us what you need and we will work out what support we can offer.