

## **PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION**

### **CGO Institute launches new online Diploma in Creative Producing**

**Led from Scotland by producer/coach Chris Grady, the innovative 16 week course is geared towards aspiring theatre producers based across the UK and internationally**

**In a time of unparalleled change and challenges for live events, the course is particularly looking for a diverse intake across race, gender, age and location to help shape the future of theatre and produce a different future**

CGO Institute has announced its new 16 week online Diploma in Creative Producing, geared towards shaping and inspiring the next generation of creative theatre producers.

At its core is a Diploma accessible and welcoming to all aspirational creatives, irrespective of class, race, gender, sexuality, geographic location and access support needs. Its aim is to build a cohort which reflects the audience that theatre needs in order to secure its future in these unprecedented times.

Taking in its first cohort on 2 November, the course is a mix of teaching, seminars, masterclasses, mentorship & group/individual exercises delivered via the Cloud. Broken down into 6 core modules, the course focuses both on practical skills of fundraising, budgeting, contracting and maintaining wellness alongside an exploration of the industry's landscape and ecology. It is headed up by Scotland-based producer/coach **Chris Grady** (who has over 30 years experience in theatre and festivals including internationally as Head of Licensing with Cameron Mackintosh) with guest lectures from an international faculty members including **Guy Chapman** (Managing Director Target Live), former Artistic Director of Theatre Royal Stratford East **Kerry Kyriacos Michael MBE**, Joint Artistic Director of Bhumi Collective **Mohamad Shaifulbahri** and Saudi Arabian producer **Soha Khan**.

An intensely responsive and practical course, the Diploma will look at the challenges and changes of producing live work in the current climate and ask what theatre will look like in a post-Covid landscape. An undergraduate degree and previous experience in the industry are not necessary to undertake the Diploma; anyone who has a passion and hunger for creative practice - from school leavers to those looking for a mid-career shift- are encouraged to apply. The first cohort will be made up of a maximum of 14 students based in Scotland, across the UK and internationally. The course will be delivered in English, with closed captioning available and open discussions around individual access requirements.

Talking about the new Diploma Chris Grady says:

"Future theatre-makers are scared - the world is uncertain and some are wondering whether they can be the producers and fashion the change that they want to see in the world, and if that is possible how to make the first steps. In early June I led a workshop for 16-23 year olds for the Youth Arts Leadership group of the Mousetrap Foundation. The joy for theatre was there, but so many questions about how to start raising money, how to write a budget, how to be noticed, how to get inside the room, and if I become a producer how do I deal with rejection. There are some rules and many tools which can be acquired by the producers of

the future working together. This Diploma will be about collaboration and shared learning. The aim is to have a Cloud based, international classroom of people who want to be the inventors, facilitators and employers of the future. I am not the future, but the faculty and I can help to support and inspire the future producers and theatremakers. I cannot wait.

"Two years ago me and my partner returned to Scotland to live. Both of us had been here in the 1980s, and over recent years we have spent more and more time running workshops, making theatre, and coaching creatives across the Country. We have been embraced into the community of theatremakers, musicians, festival programmers and student bodies that we have been working with. It was quickly clear that some form of producer training was needed and as lockdown happened and all my other work disappeared, it seemed the perfect time to wake up one morning and draw together 40 years of experience, a wealth of other mentors, and start our own Diploma. I am excited to be working with a faculty including Julie Ellen, Nick Williams, Alice McGrath, Kate Taylor, Kath Burlinson, and Callum Smith from the arts in Scotland and then an international faculty of diverse creatives and practitioners.

"This week, 12 weeks after writing the first page about the course, we have started receiving applications and making early offers. Now I need help - to reach out to the widest possible network of aspiring theatre-makers and potential producers to make sure they know that there is a course which could be what they need. I am delighted to speak with anyone about the options and pathways which exist, and see whether CGO Institute Diploma in Creative Producing is what they need.

"I was rightly described as a 'cis white dude' recently on Twitter and I would add to that old and English. I am not the future of producing, but I do know how to inspire and teach future producers. I know how to hold a room of diverse opinions and reach out to mentors and experts who can help each creative to build their own confidence, knowledge and experience in their chosen artform. I learn every day I am in the classroom. The international nature of the arts and the alumnae from courses I have created and led in the past, help me match the needs of a new producer with the wise energy of someone else around the globe. The many voices of the faculty of teachers from the UK, USA, Saudi Arabia, Singapore and Australia bring their knowledge of race, gender, sexuality, and diverse audiences and artists. If there is a voice missing, we will find it to help each person studying the Diploma to find their light."

Applications are open now for the Diploma in Creative Producing at [www.chrisgrady.org](http://www.chrisgrady.org). The course is delivered in two 6-week blocks from 2 November 2020 to 19 February 2021, with a 4 week study break 14 December to 10 January. The cost for the course is £2400, which can be paid in instalments. People who feel they will benefit from the course but are unable to afford the fees are encouraged to apply regardless and the CGO Institute will work alongside these successful applicants to help access funding.

### **Media Details**

For interviews and more info please contact Ruth Marsh on [ruth.marshpr@gmail.com](mailto:ruth.marshpr@gmail.com) / 07824468396.

## About Chris Grady

**Chris Grady** is a creative life support coach working with sole traders and small businesses, across the creative arts and the wellness industry, nationally and internationally.

Alongside this he works with associates in China, Saudi Arabia, Japan and Korea on the development of new training and development paths for theatre producers and theatremakers

He has previously run, built, marketed, and created theatres and festivals over 30 years. He has worked in senior marketing and management for the arts in Bristol, Plymouth, Edinburgh, Buxton, London, Stoke, Cardiff, Keswick, Bury St Edmunds, and internationally as Head of Licensing for Cameron Mackintosh.

Chris created, and ran until Aug 2018, an MA in Creative Producing for Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts in London with expert lecturers for a small cohort of emerging theatre and event producers. He is now consulting with the University of the West of Scotland and developing training programmes from his new base in Blackness.

Based in Edinburgh and London, he is on the Board of Metta Theatre, The Production Exchange, the Authentic Artist Collective and Stagescripts Ltd. Chris has published *Your Life in the Theatre* – a self-help career guide for the arts. He was commissioned to write an e-book *The Anatomy of Your Creativity* targeted at the business manager and leader in need of some creative support and inspiration.