



# NEW VIC

## **Punjab to the Potteries: Call out for South Asian Writers**

Appetite and New Vic Theatre are looking for South Asian writers or writers with a significant relationship to Punjab to undertake research and develop up to 30-minute short new plays that explore the journeys of those who have migrated from the Punjab area to the Potteries, or more broadly on the experiences of South Asian communities in the North Staffordshire region.

The Potteries is the name given to Stoke-on-Trent and areas around including Newcastle Under Lyme that have been shaped by the pottery industry.



Baldev Bansal holding a baby in Stoke-on-Trent, 1964.

## **About:**

‘Punjab to Potteries was an idea that came about when sorting out old photos at home, looking at them sort of inspired me in a way as it opened an abundance of questions of what it must of been like living in a small village in Punjab and travelling half way around the world to Stoke on Trent in the early 1960s to settle, how hard or difficult the journey was, leaving family behind, learning a new language, adapting to a new culture, education and work, food, the list is endless. There must be countless stories and memories as well as many more photos in numerous households of people and families who took a similar journey’ Val Bansal

**Punjab to the Potteries** builds on Appetite’s and the New Vic’s work with the area’s communities. Our relationship with Val and others began in 2017 with **Settling** by Sam Ivin, an archive photography exhibition delivered in partnership with GRAIN Projects which documented through personal photography the stories of those who have migrated from around the world, including South Asia, to establish lives in the Stoke-on-Trent area. For more information about the project but specifically Baldev Bansal visit: [Baldev Bansal — Settling \(settlingstoke.com\)](https://settlingstoke.com)

We now wish to build upon this by commissioning engaging, new plays that will explore and platform these stories further and bring them to local audiences. For the first stage we would like to commission a series of up to 30-minute plays which will be shared with a live audience as part of a play reading event at the New Vic Theatre.

## **The Brief:**

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

- Writers of South Asian heritage or with significant and demonstrable ties to the Punjabi community. You do not need to be based in the local area or region.
- Significant professional experience of writing for performance for stage, audio, or other contexts.
- Experience of undertaking research including interviews would be desirable
- Experience of working with communities and an understanding of how to work responsibly with personal testimony and stories.
- We are keen to hear from professional writers.

## **Timescale:**

This is indicative timescale of the project:

- Deadline for Expressions of Interest: **Thursday 10 November, Midday.**
- Successful applicants invited to interview: **November**
- Research period with on-site engagement with the community of interest: **December, January, February.**
- Research and preliminary ideas shared with team: **February 2023**
- Script developed: **end of Feb – end of April**
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Draft : 28<sup>th</sup> March**
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft : 17<sup>th</sup> April**
  - Final Draft: 30<sup>th</sup> April**
- Play reading event: **anticipated to be May – and to be designed together**

## **Details & Fee:**

Commission Fee: £4000 + expenses up-to £1000

(Inclusive of community engagement research on site up to 10 days)

Appetite and New Vic Borderlines teams will support writers with engaging with local South Asian communities however would expect the research period to be self-led.

New Vic Borderlines department has a rich history of working with communities to create documentary plays and community engagement with a wide range of people: locally, nationally and internationally.

Working with the New Vic Education department there could be opportunity to deliver a workshop session with community members within the research and development period as part of the partnership with the RSC 37 Plays project.

The play reading event will have an additional budget for the event.

We hope to commission two writers.

## **How to submit an Expression of Interest:**

Please submit a written CV and a statement, max 500 words, outlining why this opportunity appeals to you and how would approach the research and writing process to [askus@appetite.org.uk](mailto:askus@appetite.org.uk) by the deadline outlined in the timescale information.

Your application will be considered by a panel consisting of members of the Appetite and New Vic Theatre teams and members of the local South Asian community.

## **About Appetite:**

Appetite aims to get more people in **Stoke-on-Trent** and the **Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme** to experience and be inspired by the arts. We do this by working with local people to co-create world-class, unforgettable arts experiences in and for their communities.

Appetite began in Summer 2013 as a programme for Stoke-on-Trent, kicking off with an inspiring Taster Menu of art and since then has presented a feast of family-friendly, breath-taking cultural events in places and spaces across Stoke-on-Trent enjoyed by thousands from across the city. Working with our community decision-makers **Supper Club**, for over nine years we have brought a range of experiences to the city one includes: The Big Feast 2022 on Fri 26 & Sat 27 August.

In 2019 the Appetite programme was supported by Arts Council England to expand into the neighbouring Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme. In 2022, Appetite became one of the new Creative People and Places National Portfolio programmes with funding until March 2025.

The Appetite programme is funded by [Arts Council England](#) and is led by the [New Vic Theatre](#) in partnership with [Partners in Creative Learning](#), [6Towns Radio](#), [Staffordshire University](#), [Newcastle Business Improvement District \(BID\)](#), [Go Kidsgrove](#) and [Keele University](#). Appetite also works closely with [Stoke-on-Trent City Council](#), [Newcastle Borough Council](#), [Staffordshire County Council](#) and [Aspire Housing](#).

Appetite is part of the [Creative People and Places](#) National Portfolio programme, initiated and funded by Arts Council England. Creative People and Places is about more people taking the lead in choosing, creating and taking part in art experiences in the places where they live. There are 33 independent projects, each located in an area where people have traditionally had fewer opportunities to get involved with the arts. [Creative People and Places | Arts Council England](#)



## **About the New Vic Theatre**

**‘Staffordshire’s New Vic proves what a regional theatre with ambition and imagination can do’.** The Guardian

The New Vic is unique. The first purpose-built theatre-in-the-round in Europe and a ground-breaker in the integration of professional theatre-work with an extensive community and education programme, we make theatre that is valued by local audiences and recognised nationally. In the last few years we have toured shows 'made at the New Vic' nationally and transferred our first show to Broadway in New York with *Around the World in 80 Days* achieving the accolade of being the New York Times Critic's Pick of the Week.

We believe in the power of theatre to change lives. We also believe that everyone should have access to great theatre and on average 180,000 people visit the New Vic each year.

The New Vic has forged a national reputation for producing first class theatre - usually 8 or 9 in-house productions annually. We have a full in-house creative team, including costume, scenic workshops, lighting, sound and design. Our theatre-making is nationally recognised, particularly our work for young people and their families.

Our extensive community and education programmes reach over 25,0000 annually, with award-winning New Vic Borderlines, and New Vic Education departments ensuring we are key to the cultural life of the region. Alongside this the theatre leads Appetite, an Arts Council England Creative People & Places programme, to engage more people in North Staffordshire in the arts.

The New Vic is a registered charity with a turnover of £3.5 million and operates thanks to a unique partnership between Arts Council England, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, Staffordshire County Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council.

**“The New Vic...is doing everything a regional theatre should”** - The Sunday Times for Marvellous (2022)

**“The company’s storytelling, under Heskins’s direction, is masterly”** Selected as one of The Observer’s best Christmas family shows of the year The Observer for Beauty and the Beast (2021/22)

**“This delightful promenade show uses pretty-as-a-picture design, undercut with creepy asides, to bring ETA Hoffmann’s famous tale alive”** - The Guardian for Coppelia - A Mystery (2021)

**“Sumptuous staging of the Mark Twain classic that offers a feast for the senses”** - The Stage for The Prince and the Pauper (2019/20)