



## **Fierce would like to meet... an Assistant Curator (Performing Arts) Funded through the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursary Programme**

Fierce is delighted to announce this new opportunity as part of the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursary. This Fellowship is supported by the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries 2020-22

### **An introduction from our Artistic Director, Aaron Wright**

We're excited to offer this rare opportunity for a paid traineeship in Performing Arts for an aspiring programmer/curator. This job is designed for someone early in their career who has been 'working for between 2 and 5 years' and will last for a minimum of 12 months, though we anticipate extending this period. Therefore you might be a fairly recent graduate, or have completed an apprenticeship in the preceding years. You might have a part time job already, or maybe you've been working full time for a couple of years: in the arts, or not in the arts. There are many barriers to engaging with the arts and so we realise that the chosen candidate won't necessarily have huge in-depth knowledge of live art. We don't expect the person we're looking for to have expertise of the arts and culture industry (we can teach you that!) but you must have passion for and ideas about the kind of art Fierce presents.

This role is designed for someone for whom economic disadvantage has been a barrier to developing a career in the arts. It is offered as part of the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursary Programme. This is an important scheme that has been running for ten years now and is actually how I got my first job in the arts back in 2010. There will be a programme of mentoring and professional development alongside the responsibilities of the role.

It's an exciting time to join Fierce as we grow the organisation to prepare for our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fierce Festival as well as delivering a new showcase of performance created in England that will happen at the Edinburgh Festivals in August 2021. Fierce is celebrated internationally as a leading presenter of live art. You can read more about the actual things you'll be doing in the role in the job description below.

We're looking for someone who loves art and loves artists. Our definitions of art are very broad and we realise you might not have attended many performances in your life previously. However, you should have engaged passionately with some form of experimental, or alternative culture or subculture, on your own terms. That could mean you love DJs and might even have thrown your own parties or club nights. Perhaps you love experimental fashion designers and make your own clothes or religiously read *The Face* or *Dazed & Confused* or a whole host of online culture blogs. You might be an avid fan of "arthouse" films that you've watched online. Maybe you love unusual drag artists or maybe you've attended an art gallery and had a really profound experience or just find a particular artist totally fascinating when you've seen them speaking. Maybe you've written reviews on your own blog or for a student publication; you might even be a hit on Tik-Tok for your highly creative content. Or maybe, just maybe, you're a huge fan of live art, performance art or experimental theatre. It takes a long time to write a good job application and so we would say, that for this particular position if

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your passion is really Shakespeare, plays, visual art, circus, orchestras or opera, then this probably isn't the right job for you.

'Curating' can be a daunting word, but in an age of infinite information or "content" curation has become absolutely vital to make sense of the world around us. Without it, we would all become very overwhelmed very quickly. The definition of the term curator comes from its origin in the Latin word 'cura' which means 'to take care'. It will be your responsibility to take care of the art and artists invited to present performances and projects at Fierce, during their time with us as well as the audiences who come to Fierce too. The writer Michael Bhasker defines curation as 'acts of selecting, refining and arranging to add value'. Art curator Maria Popova says 'The art of curation isn't about the individual pieces of content, but about how these pieces fit together, what story they tell by being placed next to each other, and what statement the context they create makes about culture and the world at large'. In this respect Fierce has always been a provocateur and a bit of an outsider, platforming alternative viewpoints and different types of art that you wouldn't see elsewhere. Therefore a good person for this job might actually be a bit of a provocateur or an outsider themselves. They might understand what it means to not see themselves represented within mainstream culture, and they might have opinions that are in contradiction to the status quo.

It is my biggest privilege in life to curate Fierce Festival and I take this responsibility very seriously. We expect to receive a lot of applications for this role. So if you're serious about it make sure you read everything here carefully, and try to cover everything we ask for in your application. I'm offering to have short conversations with people before they apply in case you have any questions or concerns around eligibility or want to know more about the working culture at Fierce, or our political stance on important issues such as Black Lives Matters or Trans-Rights (but don't feel you have to do this – it's only if it's helpful). I can do these chats on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> Feb, Monday 15<sup>th</sup> Feb and Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> Feb: drop me an email on [aaron@wearefierce.org](mailto:aaron@wearefierce.org) to schedule a time. We're really looking forward to reading your applications.

Good luck!

**Aaron Wright**  
**Artistic Director, Fierce**  
**(he/they)**



## **Working Culture**

We want all Fierce employees to feel comfortable and able to be themselves at work. Our working culture is built on Fierce's core values of Trust, Joy, Disruption and Rigour. As the Fierce team grows it is important to us that we maintain a caring working environment. Our working culture is fluid and all team members have agency to influence it.

We are committed to being an inclusive workplace where all employees feel able to be their whole selves, free of (micro)aggression. Particularly, in this moment, we highlight our commitment to anti-racism and trans rights. We are available to talk to anyone who wants more information about this, particularly if it may make them feel more comfortable in applying to work at Fierce. You can read more about our work in this area and how we are holding ourselves accountable here:

<https://wearefierce.org/about/accountability/>

From our programme to our working culture, we aim to be as accessible and inclusive as possible. We are committed to making application processes as accessible as possible and are happy to provide information in alternative formats and answer any other questions you may have regarding this opportunity. We actively encourage and welcome access documents.

To arrange a phone call or video call to discuss Fierce's work around anti-racism, trans rights, or to confidentially discuss access requirements, or request information in alternative formats, please contact our General Manager Catherine Groom at [catherine@wearefierce.org](mailto:catherine@wearefierce.org).

With this round of recruitment, we will implement the Rooney Rule meaning that we will offer interviews to all candidates who meet the basic eligibility criteria who are Black, from the African Diaspora, from the South, East and South East Asian Diaspora, who are ethnically diverse and who experience racism. Therefore, our interview panels will be representative of a spectrum of protected characteristics.

## **Terms and Conditions**

Salary: £19,500, 3 days/week pro-rata.

Period and hours of work: Fixed-term contract April 2021 – April 2022 (with intention to extend beyond this)

**Hours:** This is a part time post of 3 days per week, we are happy to discuss flexible arrangements for your working pattern so that you are able to combine fulfilling the requirements of this role with other commitments. However, we are unable to accept applications from people still in full time education at the start date.

**Holiday:** 18 days per year (equivalent to 30 days if this was a full-time post), including 6 days during the 2-week winter break when the office is closed. Bank holidays are additional to this allowance.

**Line Managed by:** Artistic Director, Aaron Wright



**Location:** The role will be based at the Fierce office, Albert House, 12-26 Albert Street, Birmingham B4 7UD.

In the short-term we expect all work to be done from home in light of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Under normal circumstances, there is flexibility to work from home but some attendance in the office will be required; if you are not currently based in or near Birmingham, a contribution to relocation costs are available through Weston Jerwood, if required.

This role may require some national and international travel, the costs of which will be covered by Fierce.

## **Job Description**

### Research and Programming

- Researching international arts programmes, reading brochures and making recommendations of contexts to visit.
- Keeping informed of UK live art developments including attending shows and events and researching emerging artists through attendance at degree showcases and other key contexts.
- Attending Live Art events nationally and internationally with the Artistic Director to research future programmes.
- Organise international research visits for the AD and AC including booking travel, accommodation and tickets and arranging schedules and show timetables.
- Keeping logs of all performances and projects seen by Fierce.
- Curating the public talks, conversations and workshops programme for Fierce 2022 with guidance from the artistic director.
- Helping to curate late night Club Fierce events alongside the Artistic Director.
- Representing Fierce at Live Art UK networking events and meetings.

### Hosting and Events

- “Meeting and Greeting” and hosting artists visiting the city for residencies and other projects.
- Helping to programme and deliver Fierce FWD local artist development events including looking after visiting artists delivering workshops and the hosting of artist dinners.
- Giving talks about Fierce’s work in mixed settings including as a guest in various University modules.
- Hosting public talks and conversations at Fierce Festival.
- Attendance at all Fierce events to support the production team, welcome artists and be a public face for the organisation.

### Communications and Digital

- Contributing content for Fierce social media including ‘Artist of the week’ features and other artist opportunities.
- Writing blogs for the Fierce website on development of projects and programmes.
- Answering artist related email correspondence and programming enquiries.
- Writing copy for Fierce events and artistic projects for the Fierce Festival brochure and website etc.



- Preparing and uploading content from the Fierce Archive to the Fierce Website.
- Managing and maintaining industry contact and delegate lists.

#### Project Delivery

- Support the Executive Producer on Fierce events such as 'Club Fierce' and our special events at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery.
- Attending partner meetings to build relationships with other organisations, funders, venues and more.
- 'Weeding' and better organising the Fierce archive housed at the Library of Birmingham.
- Administering selection processes for artist open calls including the biennial 'Artists Behind Bars' event.
- Helping with writing of applications for funding in relation to presentation of artist projects and Fierce commissioning.
- Researching venues and conducting site visits for Fierce projects.

#### About You

Essential	Desirable
Passion for and some knowledge of live art which could include (night)club culture, performance art, cabaret, socially engaged art, participatory projects, experimental theatre & dance.	Experience of using; Mailchimp, Wordpress, social media and related scheduling software.
An interest in curating, programming and festivals.	Understanding of how to conduct relevant research for the role.
A desire/commitment to working in the live art/experimental performing arts sector in the long-term.	Experience of running or working on events, this could be as a volunteer or producing your own events or parties.
Care deeply about audiences and making live art accessible to as many people as possible.	
Ability to communicate effectively and appropriately. Ability to follow direction.	
Excellent organisation skills with the ability to prioritise and manage workload.	
Ability to think creatively and have exciting ideas for Fierce's programme.	
Ability to work collaboratively as part of a small team with a 'can do' attitude, with enthusiasm and willingness to get stuck in and take initiative.	
An understanding of (and ideally lived experience of) the progressive politics that informs much of Fierce's work.	



Be open-minded, respectful and inclusive of ideas.	
Strong IT skills including experience of using Microsoft Office programmes.	
Commitment to inclusivity, anti-racism and trans rights and care centred approaches.	

**Eligibility:** to be eligible to apply for this role you must:

- Not be in full time education;
- Be based in or near Birmingham, or be willing to relocate;
- Be from a lower socio-economic background, or low income/working class background.
- Have provided everything required for the application process: cover letter (covering the four bullet points below), CV and equal opportunities monitoring form.
- Unfortunately we are unable to accept applications from people who don't already have the right to work in the UK (either as a British Citizen or with the appropriate visa) as we don't have the relevant license to offer sponsorship through the UK's Visa and Immigration system.

This role is designed for someone for whom economic disadvantage has been a barrier to developing a career in the arts. It is offered as part of the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursary Programme. There will be a programme of mentoring and professional development alongside the responsibilities of the role.

The role is also designed for someone early in their career in the arts (we define this as 2-5 years in work).

We understand that class and privilege are hard to define and may be measured in many ways. Some indications that someone is from a lower socio-economic background might include:

- Eligible for free school meals at secondary school;
- At age 14, their parents'/carers' occupations can be described loosely as unemployed/never worked; routine manual and service occupations (eg. van driver, cleaner, bar staff); semi-routine manual and service occupations (eg. postal worker, security guard, receptionist, sales assistant).
- Being the first person in a family to attend higher education (university or equivalent) and receiving a full maintenance grant or special support grant if you studied at University. You do not need to have gone to university to apply for this role though.

This is not a comprehensive list and we welcome your own interpretation of your situation, however if the above descriptors don't apply we would encourage you to read this article first as it's quite revealing: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/jan/18/why-professional-middle-class-brits-insist-working-class>

**How to apply:** Please submit the following to [catherine@wearefierce.org](mailto:catherine@wearefierce.org) by Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March, 10.00am.



- An up-to-date CV (don't worry if it doesn't have loads on it but **DO** include any voluntary experience).
- A cover letter of no longer than two sides of A4 or video/voice note of no longer than 5 minutes, which includes your name, address and contact details, that responds to the Job Description and About You criteria and also covers the following points:
  - Please tell us a little about your life and career journey and why this opportunity would help you overcome barriers faced by economic hardship.
  - Why you would like a career in live art and why you would like to work at Fierce.
  - Why you're the best person for the job.
  - Tell us specifically about an artist or project idea you think would be a good fit for the Fierce programme.
- A completed Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

You must submit all three documents to be eligible for the role.

If you've never written a covering letter before or need a few tips, you can read our advice here: <https://wearefierce.org/fierce-top-tips-for-applying-for-jobs/>

We will not penalise applications that are a few minutes late but please be respectful of other applicants by not submitting applications hours or even days later.

### **Pre-Application Conversation**

To have a pre-application chat with our Artistic Director, email [aaron@wearefierce.org](mailto:aaron@wearefierce.org) to schedule a 20 minute slot on either Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February, Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February, Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February or Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February.

**Interviews: First round** Interviews will be held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> of March. We will let you know by the end of the day on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March if you have been invited to interview. We will let you know when we invite you to interview who will be on the panel and we will send out copies of all interview questions in advance.