

ŻFINMALTA
NATIONAL DANCE COMPANY



CALL FOR

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

INFORMATION PACK



MATTEO CARRATONI

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION, ŽFINMALTA NATIONAL DANCE COMPANY

ŽfinMalta – The Maltese National Contemporary Dance Company, is seeking an Artistic Director. As a Public Cultural Organisation, standard government procedures call for a renewal of the tenure of the Artistic Director. “Public Cultural Organisations share a common objective to invest public funding in culture and the arts to foster creativity, social well-being and economic activity.” (Arts Council Malta website, 2020)

The Artistic Director will be a choreographer working in contemporary dance. They will have overall responsibility for the artistic management of the company and for the development and implementation of its artistic output. The Artistic Director will lead the company into its next phase of development with a distinctive artistic vision which honours our mission and values and will create productions of the highest quality within agreed resources. Coherency and excellence will be required across artistic, management and organisational aspects of the company.

The Artistic Director supervises artistic and technical personnel, works closely with the Agency Administrator (Company Manager) and reports to the Board of ŽfinMalta National Dance Company. The Artistic Director will be required to undertake the following duties:

ARTISTIC

- Provide artistic leadership
- Oversee and direct artistic activity
- Create productions of the highest quality within agreed resources
- Research and select artists/choreographers/partners to work with the company whose work they consider creative, innovative, and appropriate to the vision, size and technical specifications of ŽfinMalta
- Negotiate commissions
- Plan seasons based on his or her vision for the company whilst nurturing the developing philosophy within the organisation.
- Have a clear vision for the education and participation and artist development programmes
- Demonstrate an understanding of, and the ability to maintain, the quality of existing repertoire, and to ensure that it is well coached, rehearsed and developed
- Facilitate the artistic vision of each production and programme, in the role of director and/or producer, by working closely with guest directors, designers, choreographers, composers, writers, performers, tutors, technicians and other artistic personnel
- Oversee the artistic development of the dancers (and mentorship of apprentices) through a collaborative effort with the Ballet Master
- Curate creative practitioners' relationships to the company, including dancers, ballet masters and guest teachers, and artistic collaborators
- Undertake responsible international travel to research choreographers and other creative collaborators and to build relationships with venues and festivals.

THE COMPANY

- Create and articulate a programme that expresses the vision, mission and goals of the company working with partners and in consultation with key stakeholders
- Work with the Agency Administrator to develop a sustainable business plan including a 3-year framework that covers artistic production (national and international), education and outreach, audience development and artist development
- Define, in collaboration with the Agency Administrator, the budget for each production and project in order to realise the artistic vision and business plan within budgetary parameter
- Curate and schedule the artistic programme

ADVOCACY AND FUNDRAISING

- Articulate the program and make the case for support from funding bodies and sponsors, with support from the Agency Administrator (Company Manager) and the Producer
- Maintain an excellent working relationship with Arts Council Malta
- Raise the profile of the company by working with venues, festivals and presenters to build relationships nationally and internationally
- Play an active leadership role in audience development in the Maltese Islands
- Be committed to the development and growth of the company's identity, and artistic philosophy
- Act as a company spokesperson for the media
- Attend media calls as required



MATTEO CARRATONI

WORKING CONDITIONS

The Artistic Director will be required to live on the Maltese Islands for the duration of the contract. The company is not able to cover any relocation costs that may be required. Working hours are an average of 40 hours per week with some flexibility, established on mutual agreement with the Agency Administrator (Company Manager) and the Board of ŻfinMalta National Dance Company. The Post of Artistic Director is subject to a probationary period of 12 months, with a review by the Board after 6 months.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Applicants must be able to provide an overall artistic vision and lead the company to fulfil its mission and vision whilst striving for quality and excellence. Applicants should have a proven track record as a choreographer and leadership experience in dance and be purposeful and motivated with excellent communication skills. They will be required to make use of their existing resources and connections to attract local and international interest in the company.

Knowledge/skills/qualifications required:

ESSENTIAL

- Minimum 10 year's experience as a professional artist working within the dance sector including a minimum of 5 years experience as a choreographer and 3 years experience in an arts leadership position
- Demonstrable, recognised expertise in contemporary dance including and not limited to knowledge of and access to networks relevant to the company, technical knowledge of contemporary dance languages and the ability to teach and coach a particular dance practice
- Deep, current knowledge of contemporary dance and a broad network of international contacts that is current, prominent, active and influential
- A track record in high quality artistic decision making
- Experience of supporting collaborative/collaboration processes
- Facilitation skills with the ability to enable others to realise their potential
- Ability to develop international and local artists through choreographic opportunities
- Agile approach to leadership and optimising the operations of the company in a rapidly changing environment
- Ability to create good team spirit and a sustainable working atmosphere amongst all members of the company
- Excellent communication, presentation and debating skills including the ability to represent the company in an official capacity and communicate the company's goals and purpose
- Commitment to the cultural development of Malta in line with the National Cultural Policy
- Knowledge of the current international dance and arts scene

DESIRABLE

- Previous experience of a repertory company
- Experience of commissioning international choreographers and other creatives
- Experience of learning and participation activity
- Knowledge of the dance and arts ecology in the Maltese Islands
- Proven track record of fundraising from public and private sources

To Apply, please supply:

- a CV
- a covering letter max 2 pages A4 explaining how your skills and experience match the requirements of this role,
- a portfolio of work from the last 3 years (including links to a max of 3 works not longer than 30mins each),
- the name and email addresses of three referees, one of them being the current or most recent employer or client

Applications are to be sent to the Chairperson, ŻfinMalta National Dance Company by email on: vacancies@zfinmalta.org

SELECTION PROCESS

Applicants will be shortlisted by the panel members following the application deadline on the 23rd of June 2020 at 12:00 noon (GMT+2).

Shortlisted candidates will be contacted on the 26th June 2020 and will be expected to:

- engage in a max one hour fifteen minute online session with the company dancers, to be held between the 1st – 3rd July. These sessions will be recorded for internal purposes and will be chaired by a board member.
- Attend an online interview 7th – 10th July on Zoom to present their vision and strategy followed by questions from the panel.

Unfortunately, due to time restrictions, ŻfinMalta National Dance Company is not in a position to give feedback to candidates who are not shortlisted.

The new Artistic Director of ŻfinMalta National Dance Company will commence work in Malta from 8th March 2021. However a handover period in the month leading up to this is necessary. The handover period will be discussed with the chosen candidate in due course. Due to Visa issues, this call is open to European Union and British citizens only.

THE COMPANY

ŻfinMalta National Dance Company is a talented and adaptable dance ensemble, with a diversity of creative voices reflecting the many influences that are part of today's Malta. Established in 2014, the company has quickly become one of the country's major arts organisations, at the forefront of a burgeoning contemporary art scene in Malta.

ŻfinMalta offers a space where artists can take risks, contributing to an open and expansive dance ecology in Malta and internationally, and providing opportunities for both emerging and established dance professionals to realise their potential.

Our work invites audiences to contemplate and question our contemporary world, with the ambition to enrich the lives of all who interact with the company, as both audience and participant.

For five years, the company has pioneered fresh thinking about contemporary dance in the Maltese islands and raised the profile of dance exponentially. We work with the best dancers and choreographers from the Maltese Islands and around the globe to create productions that are bold and current and of a world-class standard.

ŻfinMalta productions are always collaborative, engaging choreographers, set and costume designers, composers and visual artists from Malta and internationally, and partnering with other organisations in theatre, opera, music and the visual arts.

The current Artistic Director Paolo Mangiola joined the company in its fourth season and has been instrumental in establishing its place in the region and further afield in the international dance community.

"BEING THE NATIONAL DANCE COMPANY OF THE MALTESE ISLANDS IS A PRIVILEGE THAT INFORMS EVERYTHING WE DO: HOW WE CREATE PRODUCTIONS, WHO WE WORK WITH AND WHERE OUR WORK TAKES PLACE. WE AIM TO IGNITE GREATER INTEREST IN DANCE NATIONALLY THROUGH PRODUCTIONS THAT RESONATE WITH COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY. IN CARRYING OUT OUR WORK, WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR CONTINUED FINANCIAL SUPPORT AS A PUBLIC CULTURAL ORGANISATION."

PAOLO MANGIOLA , ARTISTIC DIRECTOR MARCH 2020

ŻfinMalta National Dance Company creates and commissions extraordinary dance that engages and resonates with audiences, celebrating the spirit of Maltese culture in the contemporary world, and pioneering fresh thinking about dance in the Maltese Islands. We work with the best dancers and choreographers from the Maltese Islands and across the world to create innovative productions. Our aspirations are for everything we make to be of world-class artistic quality; to achieve a high level of visibility with audiences both live and digital; to have a positive impact on audiences and participants; and for our work to change the lives of the artists who create it.



NEIL GRECH

During 2018 and 2019 we diversified our programmes significantly and we remain committed to making work that shows the best that an outward-looking, contemporary Malta can produce. Artistic collaborations with Maltese and international creatives including visual artists, designers and composers, will remain central to our vision, enriching our practice and repertoire. Our proactive approach to partnerships with other Public Cultural Organisations across theatre, opera, music and visual arts provides additional artistic opportunities and visibility for the company, exposes our work to new audiences, is stimulating for the company dancers and staff, and can also be budget relieving. Our new management structure includes producing capacity to enable us to operate optimally and to realise our ambitions to do more work internationally.

During 2018-2019 we:

- Created 18 new productions
- Increased the number of performances from 33 in 2018 to 35 in 2019
- Increased commissions from 1 in 2018 to 4 in 2019
- Provided 16 ticketed and 17 free performances in 2018 and 18 ticketed and 17 free performances in 2019
- Were seen by audiences of approximately 7000 performing Qalbna created by Mangiola for the opening of Valletta 2018
- Appeared in news features on Maltese television 5 times and had 4 productions broadcast
- Presented performances and workshops in 15 venues, 7 in Valletta and 8 in other localities in 2018,
- Presented performances and workshops in 22 venues, 11 in Valletta and 11 in other locations in 2019
- 339 young people participated in our programmes in 2018 and 217 in 2019
- Increased paid participation by young people from zero to 56
- Provided 40 sessions for adult learners, attended by 912 people
- Increased artist residencies from 1 in 2018 to 5 in 2019, benefitting 11 artists
- Grew mailing list from zero in 2018 to 1979 in 2019
- Attracted 36,162 website sessions from over 100 countries 2018-2019, with 86% return visitors and increased session duration
- Attracted 1932 Facebook visits in 2019, peaking at 1000 views and with a daily average of 19 views (figures not available for 2018).

AIMS AND AMBITIONS FOR 2021 - 2023

We aim to increase earned and fundraised income and commissions and partnership activities and to decrease our dependency on government subvention. We plan to become a more sustainable business which can demonstrate and evidence value for public money. Costs will be tightly controlled and earned income further diversified. Our fundraising strategy targets corporate and philanthropic support.

By 2023, we aim to be recognised nationally and internationally as a choreographer led repertory company, producing high-quality, intriguing and thought-provoking performances for larger audiences. We will develop a reputation for discovering and commissioning new and exciting choreographers and for a diverse and adaptable group of dancers, readily able to inhabit different styles and approaches.

Equally importantly, we will be recognised for our civic role, introducing children and adults to dance, nurturing talent and contributing to health and wellbeing particularly amongst older populations. This work will be creatively inspired by and reflect the diverse interests and cultures of communities across the Maltese Islands. We aim to be recognised at home for our contribution to the contemporary arts, engaging the imagination and broadening the outlook of audiences and communities across the country and for fulfilling our international responsibilities as a national company.

We are passionate about developing audiences, enabling people of all ages to experience dance, as well as further integrating the art form to the Maltese cultural agenda. During 2020 we will expand this work with Valletta based marketing agency, Nocemuskata Ltd. We will continue to develop the versatility and skills of our dancers, providing the best possible conditions for them, our Artistic Director and visiting choreographers, to research, create and tour. We want to provide a working environment that attracts and retains talented dancers from the Maltese Islands and worldwide: to do this we need to perform more frequently, increase international touring and provide more professional development opportunities. We will disseminate the repertoire across a wider range of platforms and media to reach larger and more diverse audiences, particularly outside Valletta in places where the cultural offer is poorer. This will include touring, educational residencies, performances in schools, at festivals and in unusual locations. Alongside this, we will contribute to art-form development and to the Maltese dance ecology through our role as creative hub for dance artists.

OUR REPERTOIRE

The ŻfinMalta repertoire features a multiplicity of voices and works, from neoclassical to conceptual, and including a number of full-length works. The company attracts highly sought-after choreographers, who are given the scope to fully realise their artistic ideas while involving the company dancers more deeply as active contributors to the creative process. The company is committed to creating work for young audiences, and all productions come with bespoke workshops and public engagement programmes.

See website for further details

EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATION

ŻfinMalta sees dance as an art form through which anyone can experience or express human creativity and imagination – anyone can dance, and everybody is unique. The Education and Participation programme (E&P) aims to motivate its participants by providing tailor-made experiences for individuals of all ages and backgrounds, with or without an existing relationship with movement, from the uninitiated to professionals in the field of dance and choreography. We aim to spread and share our belief that dance is a means by which anyone can experience, explore and invest their thoughts and energy into creativity and imagination.

The programme is made up of four strands:

- School Participation
- Community Participation
- Dance Education
- Audience Development

GOVERNANCE

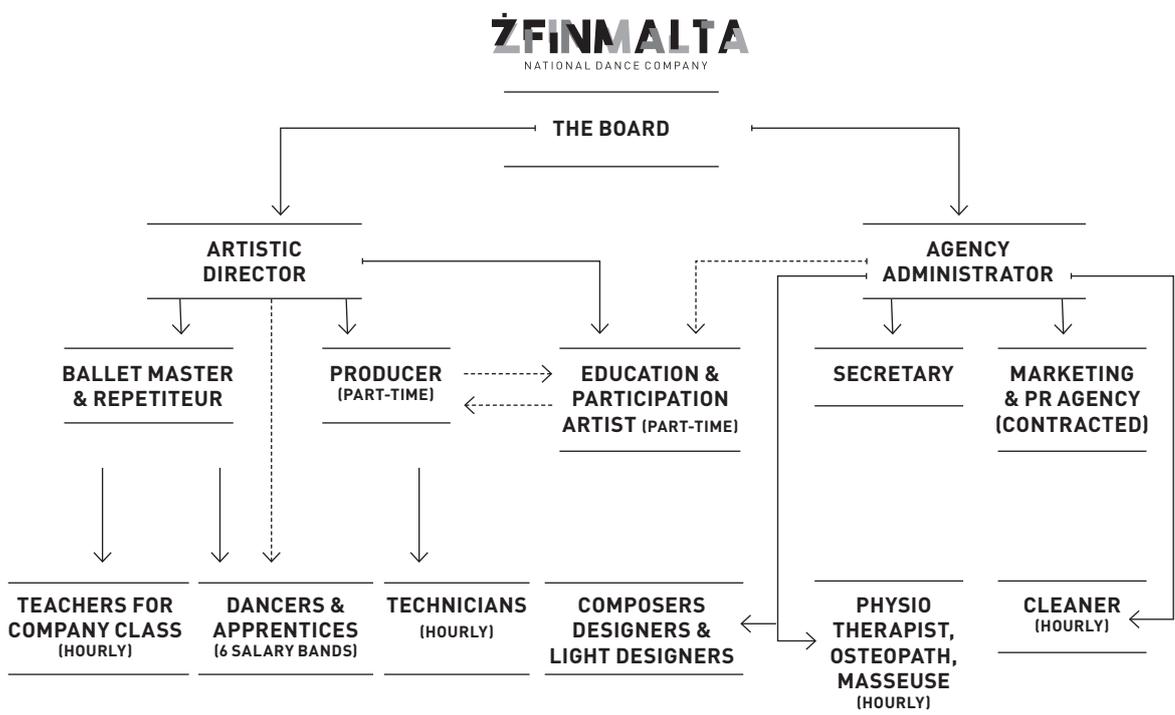
The board members are Alison White (Chair); Joanne Butterworth; Felix Busuttil, Kate De Cesare and Andrea Cassar. Board members are appointed by government for a three-year term and meet quarterly. The board is responsible and accountable for monitoring that ŻM is performing well, is solvent and complies with its obligations.

ŻfinMalta is a Government Agency as stipulated in the company legislation and a Public Cultural Organisation funded by the Maltese Government.

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

Our management structure includes producing capacity to enable us to operate optimally and to realise our ambitions to do more work internationally.

Our dancers are vital members of the ŻM family. We appreciate their loyalty, commitment, skill and contribution and recognise that even with best efforts, we are not always able to provide them with the salary, benefits and working conditions we think they deserve. Open communication is maintained through regular meetings with the dancers as a company, plus individual annual reviews with the Artistic Director and Agency Administrator.



The Agency Administrator is responsible for financial management, contractual and administrative procedures and liaison with ACM, other Government Entities, Public Cultural Organisations and Ministries. The new part-time Producer brings additional capacity and a creative, informed and experienced voice to decision making. This role places creative producing at the heart of operations, managing productions created for different contexts in the Maltese Islands and with responsibility for international tour booking and delivery.

The Artistic Director and Agency Administrator make up the Executive Team, with responsibility for delivering the vision, delegating responsibility including budgets and maintaining an overview of progress toward objectives. A part-time secretary will provide support.

The part-time Education and Participation Artist leads on these areas of activity working closely with the Artistic Director and Agency Administrator.

Freelance staff, including artistic collaborators, company teachers, marketing and PR, are engaged to provide expertise and support on a project-by-project basis.

A new business plan 2020-2023 was completed in April 2020.

FINANCE

AS a PCO, we apply for funding from Central Government annually and work closely with the Arts Council Malta Finance team. Each year when we are notified of the outcome of our PCO application for the coming financial year, we revise the budget as needed.

We prepare budgets on an actual cost basis working with a detailed budget for the current and next financial year and headlines for the subsequent year. Budgets focus on accurate production and project costs and projected income.

ŻM is committed to fair pay for staff and artists. Banded salaries for dancers were introduced in 2018 to reflect seniority and aid retention by allowing for progression. The board reviews salaries annually. The new apprentice scheme is paid. The Dancers Wellbeing Programme includes osteopathy and massage paid for by the company, plus a varied morning class/ practice.

We do not commit to new productions or to projects unless we have the necessary financial and human resources confirmed. The board scrutinises the company's financial health including risk analysis of income and expenditure plus an annual review of financial procedures.

INCOME

Targets for earned income are set 1-2 financial years ahead as part of our overall budget. Performance fees and box office income targets are based on anticipated sales, other earned income is from E&P activity. We are very grateful for an annual government subvention which was €650,000 in 2019. Our total income in 2019 was €718,000.



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