

BLind SumMiT



Trustee
Recruitment
Pack

Our BackstoRy

Blind Summit is a theatre company leading experimentation and excellence in puppetry.

For twenty-five years Blind Summit have consistently subverted people's expectations of puppetry: from giant storybook characters in the opening ceremony of **London's 2012 Olympic Games** to **The Table**, a globally successful touring production that completely up-ended audiences' understanding of how puppet and puppeteer communicate.



Mark Down's work as Director and **Master Puppeteer** has drawn plaudits in a series of landmark opera and theatre productions all over the world, including commissions for the **Spoletto** and **Bregenz** Festivals, in Anthony Minghella's production of *Madame Butterfly*, for the English National Opera and the **Met Opera** in New York, and *Peter and the Wolf* for the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the **Hollywood Bowl**. **Blind Summit's** cohort of exceptional makers and puppeteers has also contributed to the creation of some of the most extraordinary spectacles of recent years, including *War Horse* and *Pinocchio* at the Royal National Theatre and *The Lorax* at the Old Vic.

Our vaLueS

Blind Summit has been inspired by the experimental practice of *Complicité*, *Improbable*, *Robert Lepage* but, where we use puppetry as a tool, Blind Summit has taken it a step further: putting puppetry at the heart of productions, as the impetus and driver of our theatre making, rather than

a device in its service. We have also taken inspiration from European theatre makers like *Philippe Genty*, with a more sophisticated visual aesthetic and more complex puppets, whilst adding a much stronger emphasis on the performance skills of the puppeteers, on the need for the kind of puppet character development which is only made possible by puppeteers having performance, as well as manipulation, skills.

What we are aiming for is puppets to be actors. The basic expectation that puppets should appear alive is for us a given. When a puppet acts it appears to think on the stage in front of you. It is alive in a story, not just alive.

Blind Summit occupies a space between these different aesthetics, creating work that is mature, impactful, truly adult and that begins with the puppet. We exist to make highly accessible but genuinely new forms of theatre with puppets at the centre.



FutuRe DireCtion

Programme Aims 22/23

- to make “one big show”: A BUNRAKU TEMPEST
- to make a mid-scale show: A SOLDIER’S TALE
- to expand our education reach in the UK: by becoming a prescribed practitioner on the A-Level Syllabus, in line with the launch of A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO PUPPETRY

A Bunraku Tempest is a modern dress, Bunraku presentation of Shakespeare’s final play, with all lines spoken by Prospero, the “puppet master”, and all parts played by puppets.

The production will tackle the themes of race and post-colonial power structures in the play through the metaphor of Prospero as a puppet master.

This will be our largest and most ambitious show to date with 12 puppeteers, 2 musicians and one “star” actor to speak all the character lines, doing what Blind Summit has become popular for, re-inventing Bunraku puppetry. In addition to just re-inventing Bunraku puppetry, this is a modern interpretation of the Bunraku stage, using the poetry of Shakespeare.

Stravinsky’s **A Soldier’s Tale** is planned to be made and presented at St Magnus Festival, Orkney in 2022, and to be toured in the UK and internationally at festivals and medium sized podiums. A 5-foot tall soldier puppet narrates and dances Stravinsky’s classic musical story, accompanied by a live septet.

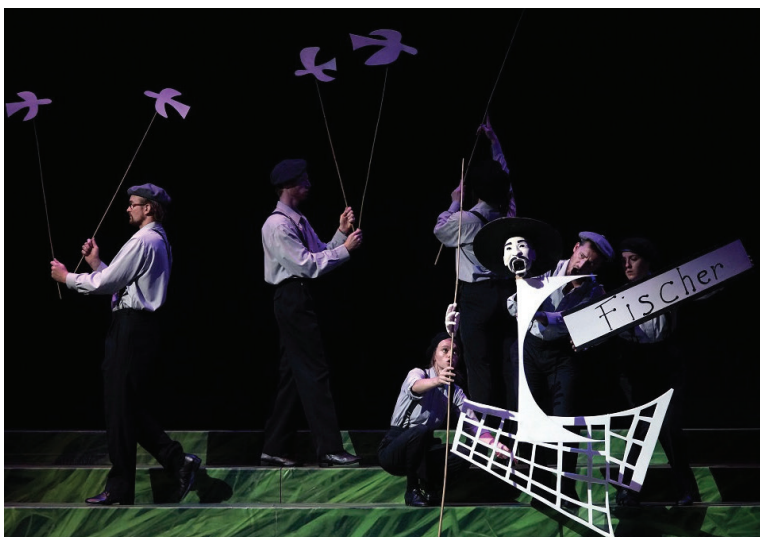
“Blind Summit have proved that puppetry doesn’t need to come with apologies or strings attached”
- *The Guardian*

Page 2 top: Peter and the Wolf, 2019, photo TMAX

Page 2 bottom: Mademe Butterfly, Met Opera, 2019, photo Sara Krulwich

Below: Rossignol, Bregenzer Festspiele, 2014, photo Karl Foster

Right: Mr China’s Son, 1997, photo Martin Sutherland



Invitation to apply

Blind Summit is looking for people with passion, energy and commitment to join its Board.

• Your Role as a Trustee

Blind Summit is constituted as a charity and is governed by a board of Trustees.

Collectively the board is responsible for:

- the overarching strategic direction of the company;
- approving annual budgets and key policies;
- assessing major risks;
- ensuring legal and financial obligations are met; and ensuring Charity guidelines are followed.

• What We're Looking for in a Trustee

- ability to think and act strategically.
- sound, independent judgment.
- a commitment to the work of Blind Summit and alignment with our values, vision and mission.
- an understanding of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.
- an established reputation or profile with a willingness to use your contacts to advance the company's mission.
- a preparedness to offer personal and professional skills and experience to support the work of the staff when required.
- ability to act as an ambassador and advocate for us, supporting our ambitious agenda to become one of the world's most innovative puppet-led theatre companies.

We welcome applications from younger, disabled and/or Black, Asian and/or Ethnically Diverse candidates. We are also particularly interested in people with any of the following attributes:

- Professional financial, HR or legal backgrounds
- Experience of creative direction/leadership (in a venue or independently)
- Experience of leading creative learning or education in the performing arts
- Knowledge and track record of securing public and/or private funds for charities
- Knowledge of the cultural use of Technology/XR/Metaverse
- Experience of championing access and inclusion



Pop Up!, 2021, photo Christian Glaus
Next page: Citizen Puppet, 2015, photo Alejandra Prieto

Terms of Appointment

Time commitment: four board meetings per year plus 0.5 days per month strategic support. Meetings are usually held in London or online.

Term of appointment: three-year term with the opportunity for an additional three-year term

Remuneration: this position is voluntary and does not offer remuneration. Reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed.

Selection Process

Applications will be read by our Nominations Committee who will invite a shortlist to informal interview, either in-person or via video call. It's envisaged that, following an induction process, newly appointed directors will attend their first board meeting in March 2022.

How to Apply

Please email a CV and cover letter (no more than 2 pages of A4) or a link to a video of up to 5 mins duration, addressed to our Board Chair Eddie Berg, setting out your relevant experience, what you could bring to the role, and the main reasons that you'd like to join us.

Applications should be emailed to info@blindsummit.com

Deadline: Monday 10 January 2022

Interviews of those shortlisted will take place late January 2022 and are expected to be in London.

If you would like an informal conversation about the Board position or have any queries about the role, please contact us at the above email address.



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