

Title:	Ensemble Director
Line Managed by:	Head of Higher Education/Production Manager
Overall responsibility:	Lead on the creation of the second-year degree ensemble production, ensuring that it aligns with the general and specific learning outcomes of the module
Reports:	None
Hours:	Fixed Term Contract Production & Design meetings from November 2026 Rehearsals 18 January to 6 February 2026 Production week: 8 February – 13 February 2026 Feedback and assessments follow the production
Fee:	£3500

About National Centre for Circus Arts

The National Centre for Circus Arts is a registered charity and an independent Higher Education provider registered with the Office for Students, and is one of Europe's leading providers of circus arts training. For the past 30 years we have provided emerging and professional circus artists, directors and choreographers access to vital space and support to train, experiment and share ideas.

Our diverse range of work includes BA degree-level education in Circus Arts which is supported at either side by a structured training programme for under-18s and professional development opportunities for aspiring and established performers. Adults and young people can enjoy recreational classes and occasional performances. We also run highly regarded workshops, away days and team building events for the corporate community. We continue to develop our creation and production capabilities and are striving forward in both initiating, supporting and creating high-quality work that can tour regionally and nationally.

Our national role increasingly sees us supporting and mentoring circus artists and organisations across the country as we seek to develop and mature our remarkable art form. We have embarking on an exciting new strategy for the organisation which will see more cross-departmental working and an increase in our commercial activities, in order to make us more financially sustainable.

OVERVIEW

Lead on the creation of the second-year degree ensemble production, ensuring that it aligns with the general and specific learning outcomes of the module.

At this point in their training, the second-year students will have focused their studies over the last three terms on their specific circus discipline, alongside physical preparation, performance techniques, and aesthetics. They study critical analysis to merge these different threads of the course and will have been presented with varied opportunities to create work as individuals but also within an ensemble setting, internally and public-facing.

This ensemble piece, and the person chosen to direct it, is expected to help them transition into autonomous practice with the support of the course leaders.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Delivering the production

- Become familiar with the associated module specification NCA202 Circus Ensemble 2 (see attached).
- Work within the rehearsal and production schedule set by the Higher Education and production team and deliver the piece to that timeframe.
- Be available for the fixed dates set for the creation and production week.
- Attend production meetings outside and within the production period, working alongside the Production Manager and technical, design and other creative staff to bring the piece to the stage.
- In conjunction with the Production Manager and other key staff working on the performance, play a key role in ensuring the health and safety of all those involved is assessed and appropriately monitored.
- Communicate with all members of the creative and production team on a regular basis, keeping the production on schedule and on budget.
- Create a concept that is suitable and accessible for a broad range of audience members.
- Abide by all National Centre for Circus Arts' policies and procedures, specifically including those associated with safeguarding and Health and Safety.

Working with students

- Develop a full understanding of the module related to the production, ensuring the production complements students' learning experience.
- Where necessary, work alongside the Higher Education delivery team, teachers and support staff, to ensure the artistic vision can be supported appropriately.
- Work directly with students to foster a creative and educational environment, incorporating their creative propositions into the piece.
- Complete a written academic assessment, with the support of the Higher Education team, of each student's process in accordance with the assessment criteria for the module. This does not include the moment of performance.
- Support students through an intensive, high-pressure process in a way that builds their confidence and resilience as emerging professionals.

Other Duties

- Promote a commitment to the National Centre's Equal Opportunities & Diversity policy, Disability & Reasonable Adjustments commitment and Code of Conduct, along with all other policies that contribute to the operating values and ethos of the organisation as determined in its mission statement,
- Undertake any other duties commensurate with the role that may be reasonably required.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Working within a production process

- Experience directing or creating within a structured production timeline, including rehearsal scheduling and a fixed creation and production week.
- Experience collaborating with either a production manager or technical team and other creatives, not just performers.
- Comfortable making creative decisions within practical constraints such as space, budget and time.
- A track record of delivering a piece of work of high artistic quality to a public performance deadline.
- Strong skills of working within the production environment and the ability to communicate a clear, cohesive artistic vision effectively across a whole team.

Working with and developing students

- Experience of, and commitment to, working with students or emerging artists in a Higher Education or training context, engaging them in the creative process.
- Ability to give constructive written feedback and assessment at a Higher Education level, against defined assessment criteria.
- Skilled at incorporating the creative propositions of a group with a wide range of ability and experience.
- Understanding of how to support a group through an intensive, high-pressure process without it tipping into burnout.
- Experience in directing physical theatre or circus performance is an advantage, though we welcome practitioners from a range of artistic disciplines.