

MOUNTVIEW

**MOUNTVIEW ANNOUNCE THE PTASZYNSKI PRODUCER -
NEW ROLE CREATED TO FOSTER EARLY-CAREER PRODUCERS IN RESPONSE TO LACK OF
REPRESENTATION AMONGST UK PRODUCERS FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS**

**FUNDED BY FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES FROM FILM, TV & THEATRE
IN MEMORY OF ANDRÉ PTASZYNSKI**



Andre Ptaszynski © Helen Maybanks

Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts have today launched a new role – the Ptaszynski Producer – funded by donations in memory of theatre producer André Ptaszynski. The year-long paid role is aimed at early-career producers, and has been established in response to the lack of representation amongst producers in UK theatre from diverse backgrounds. The Ptaszynski Producer will work alongside Mountview’s Artistic Director to produce around 25 musicals and plays across Mountview’s theatres, and be supported in their professional development with an industry mentor, industry placements and shadowing. They will also support the institution to widen engagement, expand the reach of Mountview’s work and bring insights to the role grounded in lived experience.

The post will create a vital progression route, helping young producers to navigate the difficult period between formal study and established careers – one of the biggest hurdles for talent from historically excluded backgrounds.

André Ptaszynski was one of the great theatre producers, responsible for numerous hit shows, as well as being Chief Executive of the Really Useful Group from 2005 to 2011 and Chief Executive of Really Useful Theatres from 2000 to 2005. From 2017 until his untimely death in 2020, André Ptaszynski was a deeply loved and valued member of Mountview’s Board of Trustees.

A fundraising appeal led by André’s long-term business partner Peter Bennett Jones, and wife, Judith Ptaszynski, has been supported by actors, producers and directors from across film, TV and theatre, as well as friends and family, honouring André’s extraordinary contribution to the industry, and ensuring a lasting legacy is created in his name.

A six-figure sum has been raised to fund the position for three years, as well as supporting two further initiatives at Mountview – the André Ptaszynski Prize for Producing, which will be awarded each year to a graduate of Mountview’s MA in Creative Producing, and the Judi Dench Fund for Access to Drama Training, which André helped to launch in his lifetime.

The Ptaszynski Family commented:

“André was so very generous with his knowledge as a producer. He gave support, advice and time with a light and wise touch to all who asked. We are moved and delighted that his life should continue to encourage others on this unique path of producing theatre.”

Sir Nicholas Hytner commented:

“I first encountered André as a budding, charming producer over 40 years ago, since then he made an indelible contribution to the British theatre. Remembering him in this way could not be more appropriate or important.”

Richard Curtis commented:

“André’s life shows how incredibly productive one producer’s life can be. A good producer lights a hundred fires, causes all sorts of other people to succeed. André’s taste, friendship, priorities and connections created so many new things - this new position, focussing on people from underrepresented backgrounds, will cause all sorts of new and brilliant things to flower in the future.”

Mountview’s Joint Chief Executives **Stephen Jameson** and **Sarah Preece** commented:

“André brought incredible wit, wisdom and generosity, and was an invaluable member of Mountview’s board. Everyone at Mountview owes André a huge debt of gratitude, and we are honoured to be able to continue his extraordinary legacy in theatre through these initiatives in his name. The response from the industry has been incredibly humbling, far exceeding our expectations, and is a real testament to the deep affection and respect held for André amongst his friends, colleagues and peers in theatre.”

Further information about the Fund, including supporters and how to donate can be found [here](#).

Recruitment for the first Ptaszynski Producer is underway, further information can be found [here](#).

For further information contact Simon Millward at Premier simon.millward@premiercomms.com, 07990 507310

NOTES TO EDITORS

Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts

Mountview has been training performance and production artists since 1945.

In 1992 Mountview became the first provider of specialised musical theatre training in Europe. Vocational courses include Acting, Musical Theatre, Actor Musicianship, Stage Management, Lighting, Sound, Scenic Art and Prop Making, Theatre Directing, Musical Direction, Creative Producing, Site Specific Theatre Practice and Theatre for Community and Education. Degree programmes are validated by University of East Anglia and Diplomas by Trinity College London.

Mountview’s new purpose-built £30m home in Peckham, south east London, was completed in 2018 and includes the 200-seat Mountview Theatre (made possible by a £1m donation from Sir Cameron Mackintosh), the 80-seat Backstage Theatre (funded by the Backstage Trust), 23 acting, dance, TV and radio studios, production arts workshops and café bars. There is also dedicated office space for creative organisations including disability arts practitioners Candoco and professional rehearsal facilities used by Akram Khan Dance Company, Sheffield Theatres and Shakespeare’s Globe, amongst others.

Since the move to its new building student numbers have increased by 25%, with over 4000 applications per year for around 300 places from students from 90 countries world-wide.

Throughout Mountview’s 75 years, it has been dedicated to access to drama training and joint CEOs Sarah Preece and Stephen Jameson’s vision built on this core commitment, initiating weekend and evening classes for young people and the community, with over 50% receiving bursaries to cover the costs of participation and delivering free workshops in Southwark schools.

In 2020, Stephen and Sarah launched The Judi Dench Fund for Access to Drama Training providing scholarships, bursaries and wellbeing and welfare initiatives for students. The Fund also supports Mountview's pioneering UK-wide scouting network of 52 organisations who identify talented young people who would traditionally consider drama training inaccessible and providing free auditions and application support.

95% of undergraduates leave Mountview with agent representation and 97% of its students work in the creative industries within one year of graduation. Alumni include Olivier Award winning actors Giles Terera and Rebecca Trehearn, Artistic Director of Donmar Warehouse Michael Longhurst, actor/writer Amy Trigg (winner of the inaugural Women's Prize for Playwriting 2020), broadcaster Amanda Holden and Evening Standard Future Theatre Award Winners Emily Aboud and Beth Hinton-Lever.

During lockdown the school launched *Mountview LIVE*, a series of online conversations led by Giles Terera with leading industry professionals. Participants included Dame Judi Dench, Sir Lenny Henry, Olivia Colman, Stephen Daldry, Glenda Jackson, Adrian Lester and Lin-Manuel Miranda. All conversations are free to view on Mountview's YouTube channel.

2021 saw the inaugural Mountview Prize which celebrates trailblazers who inspire social change and whose lived experience is inspirational to others. The 2021 recipient was director Dawn Walton who in accepting the Prize gave a talk and provocation entitled 'Filling the Space, Taking Your Space', which explored the notion of cultural leadership, referring to her own experiences as a theatre practitioner. The Mountview Prize also includes an award of a £2,800 bursary in the winner's name to a talented young person from an historically excluded community who is in financial need to enable them to attend Mountview's part-time Foundation in Acting course.

For more information see www.mountview.org.uk