

MOUNTVIEW

Tuesday 28 September

Abigail Morris appointed Artistic Director and CEO of Mountview Former head of Soho Theatre and Jewish Museum to run leading drama school



Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts has today announced its new Artistic Director and CEO will be Abigail Morris, former Director and Chief Executive of the Jewish Museum and Artistic Director of Soho Theatre.

In a successful and broad-ranging career as a creative practitioner and arts leader, Abigail's previous roles include Founder and Artistic Director of Trouble and Strife Theatre Company, and Visiting Fellow in Theatre at Cambridge University. As Artistic Director and CEO of Soho Theatre from 1992 to 2005, Abigail was responsible for building Soho Theatre in Dean Street, and for making it a leading commissioning venue, helping launch the careers of writers including Matt Charman, Chris Chibnell, Tanika Gupta, Laura Wade and Amanda Whittington.

Most recently as Director and Chief Executive of the Jewish Museum, Abigail created an award winning public programme and introduced innovative community engagement programmes with exhibitions including *Jews, Money, Myth* (winner of the 2019 Museums Change Lives Award), *Blood: Uniting and Dividing* which toured to Warsaw and Krakow and was nominated as the Polish Cultural event of 2017, and *Amy Winehouse - a Family Portrait*.

Incoming Mountview Chair, Dame Rosemary Squire, who led the recruitment panel, commented:

We are delighted to appoint Abigail Morris as Mountview's Artistic Director and CEO. Abigail is an outstanding leader who has grown organisations including Soho Theatre and the Jewish Museum to great acclaim. She is a visionary and innovative creative practitioner committed to the highest principles of vocational training who has developed two successful theatre companies and helped shape the careers of many leading British theatre makers.

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Abigail Morris, who will replace out-going joint CEOs Stephen Jameson and Sarah Preece when they step down in December 2021, commented:

I am hugely excited to be taking on this position at one of the UK's leading drama schools. I look forward to building on the incredible work that Stephen and Sarah have done so that Mountview continues to develop its wonderful combination of inclusive accessibility with the highest possible standards. I want the new building in Peckham to be fizzing with creative energy and be proudly local at the same time as having a national and international profile. Mountview and its students have an enviable reputation for excellence and I can't wait to start working with all the Mountview team to discover and develop the talent of the future.

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Notes to Editors

Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts

Mountview is one of the UK's leading drama schools and 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.

Mountview's purpose-built home in Peckham was completed in 2018 and includes The Mack, a 200-seat main house (made possible by a £1m donation from the Mackintosh Foundation), a 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 office space for creative organisations including disability arts practitioners Candoco and Touretteshero and a professional rehearsal suite.

In 2021 Mountview won a RIBA London Award and in 2020 was shortlisted as The Stage Theatre Building of the Year.

Alumni include Olivier Award winning actors Giles Terera and Rebecca Trehearn, Artistic Director of Donmar Warehouse Michael Longhurst, Eddie Marsan, Amanda Holden, Amy Trigg (winner of the inaugural Women's Prize for Playwriting 2020) and 2021 Evening Standard Future Theatre Award Winners Emily Aboud and Beth Hinton-Lever.

Throughout Mountview's 75 years, it has been dedicated to access to drama training and out-going joint Chief Executives Sarah Preece and Stephen Jameson's built on this core commitment. In 2020 they received Special Recognition Olivier Awards for moving Mountview to Peckham and promoting diversity and accessibility.

In 2020, Mountview launched The Judi Dench Fund for Access to Drama Training providing scholarships, bursaries and wellbeing and welfare initiatives for students.

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2021 saw the launch of the Mountview Prize which celebrates trailblazers who inspire social change and whose lived experience is inspirational to others. The Prize includes an award of a bursary in the winner's name to a talented young person from an historically excluded community to attend Mountview's part-time Foundation in Acting. The inaugural recipient was director Dawn Walton.

For more information see www.mountview.org.uk