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# barbican

## Barbican appoints Philippa Simpson as new Director for Buildings and Renewal, and Beau Vigushin as new Director for Audiences



Philippa Simpson  
Photo by Carlos Jimenez



Beau Vigushin

The Barbican is delighted to announce that Philippa Simpson has been appointed its new Director for Buildings and Renewal, and Beau Vigushin its new Director for Audiences. Both will take up their new role in the spring this year.

The appointments follow an extensive international recruitment campaign launched in autumn 2023 to identify exceptional individuals who will complement the Barbican's current team and who possess the skills and vision to lead the Centre into its next chapter. They are an important step in the Barbican's ongoing transformation, which includes the upgrade of its building to better serve its innovative programme of events which entertain millions of people every year, create connections, provoke debate, and reflect the world we live in.

In her new role as Director for Buildings and Renewal, Philippa Simpson will have an extensive brief including overseeing the operations and facilities management of the Barbican and the Guildhall School of Music & Drama (GSMD), as well as leading on the bold and visionary new plans for the Barbican Renewal Programme, a once-in-a-generation opportunity to radically reimagine what an arts and culture centre can be. The Barbican Renewal Programme will care for the things people love about the Barbican, while bringing underused spaces into new creative use, all without adding a single square metre of extra building.

Philippa joins the Barbican from the Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A) where she currently sits on the Executive Board as Director of Design, Estate and Public Programme, leading on major capital projects, exhibitions, heritage conservation and restoration works and design and brand initiatives. She started her career in the cultural sector as a curator at Tate before moving to Royal Museums Greenwich to run an international touring exhibition programme. During the past ten years she has delivered transformative projects at every scale, including the Exhibition Road Quarter, the new Photography Centre and most recently Young V&A in Bethnal Green.

**On joining the Barbican, Philippa Simpson, said:** *'I couldn't be more excited to be joining the Barbican at this pivotal moment. It's an enormous privilege to work within such an iconic and ambitious site, to help restore and revitalise the area for the communities it serves. The original vision of the Barbican Centre as a place of cultural and social exchange remains an inspiration, and the Renewal programme promises to build on this, as a catalyst for genuine change both in the City of London and beyond.'*

In his new role as Director for Audiences, Beau Vigushin will lead on all aspects of the Barbican's audience experience, reinforcing and building relationships with current visitors, and developing strategies to attract new audiences. Beau's focus will be on enhancing visitor experience including through the use of technology so even more people can enjoy the Barbican's varied programme and their time at the Barbican.

Beau has worked across the full spectrum of audience engagement, starting his career as an usher at Australia's largest performing arts centre - Arts Centre Melbourne. Through over 20 years of years of learning and leadership growth in the industry, he progressed and became Executive Director of Customer Experience in 2018. During this time, he led the end-to-end customer experience at Arts Centre Melbourne, where he focused on customer engagement, innovation, growth, service and communications, and also played an integral role in the organisation's pandemic response and building redevelopment.

Previously, Beau has been a Board Member with Arts Access Victoria and was recently a Board member with Tessitura – a global arts and cultural technology organisation with a sharp focus on how to create stronger and more meaningful connections with audiences. Beau has over the last few months been supporting the transformation of the Arts & Culture Trust in Perth and will relocate to London for this exciting new role.

**Of his new role at the Barbican, Beau Vigushin, said:** *'The Barbican has been connecting people with arts and culture for over 40 years. I'm so excited to join the team that bring to life the magic and excitement of arts and culture to thousands of people every day. The Barbican's values and commitment for everyone to feel welcome are a perfect match for me and I can't wait to play a role in the next phase of this London icon.'*

**Claire Spencer, Barbican CEO, said:** *'We're thrilled Beau and Philippa are joining the Barbican Team. This is such an exciting time to join the Barbican as we deliver on ambitious plans to improve and transform our building, strengthen our relationships with audiences and visitors to ensure the Barbican becomes a place where everyone belongs, and evolve our culture to one which is truly equitable and inclusive. Their outstanding experience to date will be instrumental in supporting us with these plans and on our mission of being a catalyst for creativity that sparks possibilities for artists, audiences, and communities. Throughout the recruitment process, both Beau and Philippa demonstrated their passion and clear vision for the Barbican's future. I look forward to welcoming them to the brilliant Barbican team. I extend my thanks to the many members of the team involved in these recruitments, the Barbican Centre Board, our colleagues at the City of London Corporation, and Gatenby Sanderson and McLean for their assistance throughout.'*

These latest additions to the Barbican's senior team follow the appointment of Jackie Boughton as Director of Commercial in November 2023. The Barbican's search for a new Director for Arts and Participation to lead its innovative arts and learning programme is ongoing.

## **ENDS**

### **Notes to Editors**

**For further information, images or to arrange interviews please contact:**

**Benno Rembeck**, Senior Corporate Communications Manager, Barbican  
E: [benno.rembeck@barbican.org.uk](mailto:benno.rembeck@barbican.org.uk)

## Barbican press room

All Barbican Centre press releases, news announcements and the Communications team's contact details are listed on our website at [www.barbican.org.uk/our-story/press-room](http://www.barbican.org.uk/our-story/press-room)

## About the Barbican

The Barbican is a catalyst for creativity, sparking possibilities for artists, audiences, and communities. We showcase the most exciting art from around the world, pushing traditional artistic boundaries to entertain and inspire millions of people, create connections, provoke debate, and reflect the world we live in.

We are an international arts and events centre rooted firmly in our own neighbourhood, collaborating with local communities and putting the City of London on the map as a destination for everybody. Central to our purpose is supporting emerging talent and shaping opportunities that will accelerate the next generation of creatives.

As a not-for-profit, we rely on the generosity of individuals and organisations, including our principal funder the City of London Corporation. Every ticket purchased, donation made, and pound earned supports our arts and learning programme and enables the widest possible range of people to experience the joy of the arts.

Opened in 1982, the Barbican is a unique and audacious building, recognised globally as an architectural icon. As well as our theatres, galleries, concert halls and cinemas, we have a large conservatory with over 1,500 species of plants and trees, a library, conference facilities, public and community spaces, restaurants, bars, and a picturesque lakeside oasis.

We're proud to be the home of the [London Symphony Orchestra](#), and a London base of the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#). We regularly co-commission, produce and showcase the work of our other associates and partners including the [Academy of Ancient Music](#), [the BBC Symphony Orchestra](#), [Boy Blue](#), [Britten Sinfonia](#), [Cheek by Jowl](#), [Darbar Festival](#), [Doc'n Roll Film Festival](#), [Drum Works](#), [EFG London Jazz Festival](#), [Human Rights Watch Film Festival](#), [London Palestine Film Festival](#), [National Open Youth Orchestra \(NOYO\)](#), [Serious](#), and [Trafalgar Entertainment](#).

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