Barbican Box in Manchester
Artist Mentor Brief
January – July 2021

The Project

Barbican Box supports schools and their students to express their unique voices in a playful and engaging way, through creating new artistic work such as theatre performances or a piece of visual art..

Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning are partnering with HOME, Manchester, to commission an artist to design and curate a new Barbican Box. Barbican Boxes are filled with a range of objects and resources all carefully selected to be a stimulus from which teachers and students develop their own artistic work.

The Box is accompanied by a package of tools to support teachers and students through the creative journey. This programme also offers Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Research & Development days for teachers and artists, alongside a free visit to HOME and an opportunity to have the students' work showcased at HOME and experience the work of other participating schools.

Coney

We're excited that this year's Barbican Box will be designed and curated by award-winning interactive theatre company, Coney. This box will support teachers and students to create new work through the concept of 'playful activism.'

Coney create games, adventures and play where people can choose to take a meaningful part. Coney's work takes place anywhere that people gather: in theatres, schools, museums, on the streets and online.

The experience starts when you first hear about it, and only ends when you stop thinking and talking about it.

Coney make play with ideas that resonate in the world: from the everyday to the extraordinary. Their work is inspired by the belief that the world can be a magical place where everyone can do extraordinary things. Collaboration and dialogue are at the heart of how Coney create work with audiences, peers, partners, and a network of makers.

Barbican Box schools will become part of Coney's *Undercover Caretaker Agency*: an introduction to playful activism in schools built on three principles of play: **adventure**, **curiosity** and **loveliness**. It aims to prompt creative responses to the passion and challenges young people are experiencing - emotional health, resilience, transitioning - empowering them to have an amplified voice and bring about positive change that will affect them and their peers.

Coney's practice incorporates digital, interactive, innovative and adventurous approaches, and teachers and students will be invited to explore these elements within their own work through the Box process.

You can find more information about Coney here.

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Barbican Box in partnership with HOME

Barbican Box at HOME runs from January – July 2021. The first phase of the project, January – February, focuses on the creative consultation with schools. The live delivery of the programme, working with young people is planned to start in June 2021.

All participating schools will receive:

- An online introductory session from Coney, in January 2021
- Activities for the classroom, created by Coney
- The Box (containing a range of tools for the creation of new creative work) for schools to keep
- One day of teacher CPD training at HOME (or online depending on restrictions), delivered by Coney during the Summer term 2021
- A learning resource pack
- Tickets to a performance or event at HOME for all participating students and teachers
- Four mentoring sessions from a professional practitioner (one 1:1 planning session with teacher and three facilitated sessions with teacher and students)
- A showcase opportunity at HOME (or online if needed) in July 2021, where all schools' work will be shared

HOME

In 2021, Barbican will work in partnership with HOME to deliver Barbican Box with schools and colleges across Greater Manchester, building on the success of the Barbican Box project in the region over the last three years.

HOME is Manchester's purpose-built arts and entertainment venue formed from the merger of Cornerhouse and the Library Theatre Company. It houses five cinemas screening independent and foreign film, two theatres showcasing contemporary and commissioned plays, and a large gallery exhibiting provocative contemporary art.

HOME is a centre for co-production, artistic creation and sharing. It is dedicated to learning, for people of all ages and is a place for new work and playful ideas; of festivals and commissions; of artists and of audience engagement.

Artist Mentor Role

The artist mentor plays a central and vital role within the Barbican Box process. Representing the project, you will be a key connector between the Barbican, HOME, and the school. As an integral part of the project, it's important to be familiar with the vision and objectives, so that you feel able to confidently facilitate that process. We will support you in familiarising yourself with these.

As part of Barbican Box, the artist mentor will be invited to facilitate a series of workshops that embrace the themes of community, playfulness and change-making. We are keen to hear from artists who have cross-disciplinary practice in visual arts, theatre and performance. The artist mentor will be selected based on their experience in facilitating interactive creative projects exploring the practice of play and/or game design or have an interest in developing this within their creative practice. They will also design workshops that take inspiration from Coney, the Box themes and use their own process to create new work with the students.

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If we're unable to deliver the project in person, due to Covid-19 government guidelines or local restrictions, we'll aim to deliver it remotely – this is likely to include digital or online means. We are therefore looking for artist mentors who would be comfortable working in this flexible way if required.

We aim to assign each mentor to work with a minimum of one school through June and July 2021. As an artist mentor, you will be responsible for mentoring the teachers/school groups. This will involve leading practical workshops, and providing support, advice and guidance to your teachers/groups.

You will be part of a small community of artist mentors working on Barbican Box at HOME. Our intention is to create a project in which a carefully selected group of artist mentors are embedded from start to finish, allowing you space to reflect on the development of your practice as you work in a range of different settings, mentoring several groups of young people and teachers with diverse needs.

We hope this will also enable you to build a strong relationship and rapport with the teacher, which is key to a successful mentoring relationship. Your minimum commitment would be attending all four sessions with each of your schools, plus attending their showcase day/s at HOME at the end of the process.

We will aim to assign you to schools based on your availability and on the teacher's training and development needs. We always try to be as flexible and accommodating as possible, but if we cannot feasibly match a mentor with a school, due to a lack of availability and/or suitability for the school's needs for example, there is a chance we will not be able match you with a school for this project. We will, however, still provide Artist Mentor training, as outlined below, irrespective of the number of schools a Mentor is matched with.

What does the artist mentor role involve?

- ⇒ Attending an online project introductory session, one day of R&D and one day of CPD with teachers.
- ⇒ Developing a schedule based on your diary availability and overall capacity at the start of the project so we can ensure a smooth working process among all partners.
- ⇒ Once allocated to a school/s, we encourage mentors to develop a regular form of communication in collaboration with their schools in order to check in on progress and forthcoming visits.
- ⇒ Leading four mentoring sessions per school through June and July 2021.
- ⇒ Ongoing feedback and support amongst all project partners is key. Harlow Playhouse and Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning tend to arrange quick updates with artist mentors after each of their sessions to check in on progress and provide an opportunity to discuss and flag any key concerns.
- ⇒ Attending the school's final showcase day/s.
- ⇒ Participating in an evaluation of the Barbican Box project at the end of the programme. (Please note: you will not be required to evaluate your students' performance).

- **Fees**
  - 1 x online project introductory session: £150
  - 1 x R&D Day: £200
  - 1 x Teacher CPD Day: £200
  - 4 x mentor sessions with a school: £150 per session
  - Showcase days: £200 per day

- **Project timeline for Artist Mentors**

Date/Time	Action	Led By
2021		
TBC April	Coney Intro Session	Barbican & Coney
TBC May	Artist mentor R&D Day and teacher CPD Day at HOME	Barbican & Coney
May	Boxes delivered to schools	Coney
June - mid-July	Artist Mentor sessions with schools – the making process for students	Barbican
TBC mid-July	Showcases at HOME	Barbican

- **Length of your sessions with schools**
  In order to take full advantage of your sessions, wherever possible we ask schools to timetable / allow **three hours** for each of your sessions with students. If this is not possible due to timetabling constraints, at the very minimum, each of your mentor session should ideally be no less than 90 minutes.

- **Scheduling your sessions**
  HOME and Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning will work with you to manage the relationship with all the schools and are in regular contact/liaison with the participating teachers. We'll put you in touch with your school directly at the start of the process to set up the dates and times of your sessions in schools. We kindly ask you to copy us into all correspondence so we are kept in the loop on all session dates, and any changes or developments that may occur during the process.

- **Child Protection and DBS**
  We have set out a range of child protection guidelines which we expect all artist mentors to follow. We will issue these to you in advance of the programme and are happy to discuss these in more detail with you should you have any questions. Wherever possible, we will also carry out a DBS check for you at the start of the project.

- **Cancellation and Rescheduling**
  Should you need to cancel or reschedule your session with a school, please give us as much notice as possible to ensure school's timetables can be adjusted accordingly. Similarly, we ask schools to give us a minimum of two weeks' notice if they need to reschedule a session date.

Next Steps

We would love to hear from you!

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If you are interested in working with us on Barbican Box at HOME 2021 please fill in the application form on the website.

If you have any queries, please email creative.learning@barbican.org.uk

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