

Hatch

1. *to cause young to emerge from (the egg) as by brooding or incubating.*
2. *to bring forth or produce; devise; create; contrive; concoct (to hatch a scheme).*

Hatch One at Hertford Theatre is an opportunity for individual artists, arts practitioners, theatre companies and other arts organisations to find a safe, non-critical place to try out new ideas, develop new ways of working and to engage with the work of Hertford Theatre in a broader sense.

Importantly, this is a scheme that does not provide (at the outset) financial funding but rather looks at ways in which the venue itself can support the development of an emerging arts organisation/individual artist and their work. This might be by facilitating a period of research and development in our studio or by receiving creative, technical and marketing support in the delivery of a particular project or simply by having the opportunity to talk through ideas and plans with Theatre Director, Rhys Thomas.

Hatch Two forms the central part of Hertford Theatre’s Hatch programme and it is anticipated that this part of the programme will be supported by House (part of Arts Council England), the Royal Opera House Bridge Project and East Herts Council.

Hatch Two is a four-week residency due to start in February 2015 for an emerging theatre company to work in partnership with Hertford Theatre in pursuit of a greater understanding as to how the Hertford Theatre and the company concerned might best respond to the creative ambitions of young people growing up in and around Hertford.

By engaging with an emerging company trained in a non-British tradition of theatre-making; this is an attempt to dig down deeply into the cultural landscape of young people in Hertford. It is a move away from the current model, where a curriculum text is presented (in either workshop or production form) at Hertford Theatre and schools are invited to attend; towards a kind of theatre that attempts to genuinely respond to the creative aspirations of young people in Hertford.

The free workshops will take place at the receiving school or college, be tailored for 8-11 year olds, 12-15 year olds and 16-21 year olds and enable the students to work with professional writers, directors and actors. The focus will be very much on releasing creativity, imagination and new ideas in response to previously agreed stimuli. Teachers, if they wish, will have the opportunity to input as to what the stimuli might most usefully be for their students eg a particular story, novel, local history, a set text or even a photograph. This will be the starting point. The ambition is to encourage and nurture participants towards that which is fresh, inspired and unique, with a view to the participants further developing their work to be presented at Hertford Theatre as part of the Hatch Festival later in 2015.

With the company fully embedded at the theatre, living in Hertford and working with our key local primary and secondary schools and Hertford Regional College, it is anticipated that the company will deliver workshops, engage with teachers and lecturers, chat with visiting (professional and non-professional) companies, attend theatre staff marketing and programming meetings and, in partnership with theatre director, Rhys Thomas, explore ways in which the work of the company and its findings can be developed at Hertford Theatre.

Hatch Festival

The festival represents an opportunity for those local schools, colleges and other organisations that have participated in *Hatch Two* to share their own work over the course of a long weekend. Any work the company leading *Hatch Two* wishes to show will also be given the opportunity to be seen. In addition, other companies who wish to engage with Hatch in the future will be invited to showcase their approach and processes to the assembled audience. This means that teachers, young people and other stake holders will be given the opportunity to become part of the decision making process as to which companies would be most appropriate to work with us on Hatch in future.