



Harry & Greta was the 2023 NMTA Award Winner, composed and written by Lewis Cornay and performed for 4 wonderfully received performances at The New Wolsey Theatre, Ipswich. There were also 2 Livestreams of the performance, which reached online audiences across the UK.

**“Really top notch. Very professional performance by the children. A brilliant set, with good lighting and effects. Catchy music, really good songs, and a potentially brilliant storyline. Amazing choreography.” - Harry & Greta Audience Member**

### THE AWARD

This award is held in memory of opera and musical theatre director Vernon Mound, a founding Associate Director of British Youth Music Theatre, who died in 2010. The award is supported by friends of Vernon and associated trusts and foundations.

The NMTA offers the rare opportunity of awarding a music theatre commission to a young writer or team of writer/creators, mentoring from established music theatre makers, development support from BYMT, dramaturgical support from a director and a staged production at a UK regional venue with a large company of young people from across the UK. Having previously been biennial, BYMT is delighted to announce that the Award will now happen on an annual basis.

**‘This award is the perfect opportunity for us to reach out to writers, or potential writers, under the age of 30 who want to develop a new music theatre piece and bring their unique musical ideas to life. We hope to hear from composers, lyricists, story writers, song makers, music producers who are excited by the idea of creating something completely original with a group of young people from across the UK, and inspiring progress in new music theatre.’**

**Emily Gray - Creative Director of BYMT**

In 2019, 2021 and 2023 the winning show was produced at the New Wolsey Theatre in Ipswich. Whilst this theatre remains a valued partner to BYMT, we have strong partnerships with Birmingham Hippodrome and other theatres across the UK, and we will ensure the NMTA 2024 production happens in a space dedicated to supporting young people and new work. We aim to fit the show to the most appropriate venue.

**'I am over the moon to be writing a brand-new musical for BYMT. As a previous young member, it feels incredibly full circle to be welcomed back. I know how formative and inspiring the experience can be and I look forward to being able to create in such a nurturing environment.'**

**Lewis Cornay - Writer of the 2023 Winner 'Harry & Greta'**

## **INCLUSIVITY**

BYMT is committed to creating an inclusive culture in all its activities, ensuring equality of opportunity for all our creative practitioners and encouraging applications from individuals regardless of disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships. We are particularly keen to hear from writers from global majority backgrounds and those who self-identify as disabled, as they are under-represented in the new music theatre sector.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

- The award is intended to support writer/composer/creators, aged 30 or under on the deadline for submission (16th October 2023)
- Writing teams need to be based in the UK or Ireland
- Submissions can be made by one writer/lyricist/composer/music producer or by a team of any combination of those elements
- The individual or team must be available to develop their show through 2024, for a production in early August

## **DEADLINES**

- The deadline for submissions is 12pm on Monday 16th October 2023
- Interview teams will be selected and informed by 6th November 2023
- Interview/pitches will take place the week of 20th November 2023
- The Award winners will be announced at BYMT's Let It Snow concert 3rd December 2023

## DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

- An outline of the show and casting will be needed for BYMT's in person auditions, starting January 27th 2024
- The performance company of young people will be selected by 1 March 2024
- First draft will be due April 2024
- Second draft to be completed by the end of May 2024 for a development workshop
- Final rehearsal draft deadline 30th June
- Rehearsals around late July/August
- Production in August 2024

## THE PRODUCTION

The winning idea will be produced with a company of about 35 young people whose ages will range between 11 and 21, although the final decisions on age range will be agreed with the writing team on the basis of the material. The performers will be drawn from the company's national auditions, online and in person from November 2023 to February 2024. Many of the performers will be advancing to drama school or conservatoire training within a year or two of being a member of BYMT. The work can therefore be complex and challenging if the material requires this.

BYMT's production of *Babies*, the 2021 NMTA Winner, was mounted at the New Wolsey Theatre, Ipswich. Following this initial production, *Babies* has been licensed and developed by a commercial company, who have given the writers two development opportunities to rework and showcase the piece for a company of professional performers, produced professional quality recordings of a number of the songs and are currently promoting a staged concert performance at the Lyric Theatre in the West End.

The idea must provide satisfying performance opportunities for a large company and have within it the opportunity for the young performers be collaborative in the process of creating the show. Examples of this way of working might include ghost lyrics created by the writer, that are then turned into show lyrics by the young company, or characters within the story being created by the performers. The writers could be involved as director/MD/choreographer/music producers. Please note that 70-75% of successful participants at our BYMT auditions are female and non-binary. Each year the company encourages and produces at least one production with female and non-binary identifying young people and we encourage gender fluid casting on all our productions.

Music theatre is a wide-ranging art form and submissions are encouraged from a diverse range of genres, including contemporary, pop, folk, electronic, blues, hip-hop, grime, rock, jazz, roots, world and opera, as well as musical theatre, and the form can be influenced by musicals, plays with songs, song cycles with a narrative, dance theatre, staged oratorio, alternative, physical, political and experimental theatre. Potential arrangements can be orchestral, recorded tracks or live music production. We are looking for a distinctive musical 'voice' that uses any genre to explore and express story through the music theatre form.

The narrative/story could be totally original or based on an existing other work, such as a book, film, event or true life story; if your idea is based on an existing work, then it is important that the rights to the original are obtained in advance, at least in principal.

The intention of the Award is to:

- Support the writer/creators in their chosen path
- Push the boundaries of what music theatre can be
- Highlight the voices wanting to diversify and challenge traditional notions of musical theatre
- Share the resources BYMT has to develop and showcase the writers of the future
- Inspire young people to engage with writing music theatre

BYMT will appoint the creative, technical and pastoral team for the production in consultation with the writer/s. The Award winners will be expected to attend at least one BYMT audition in January/February 2024. They will receive at least two mentoring meetings between January and June 2024 with experienced writers. The production will receive a development workshop with the young company in May 2024. The writers will have the opportunity to continue working on the script following this, with a final rehearsal ready script and score to be provided to the rest of the creative and technical team by 30th June 2024.

## **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Submissions will be reviewed by a panel drawn from BYMT staff, freelance composer/writers and BYMT young people. Assessment will be based on:

- Synopsis or outline or concept of up to 2,000 words
- Short biogs of the writer/composers involved and why they want to collaborate on this production
- Links to Soundcloud or other samples of two pieces of music by the writer/composer OR 2 recorded songs or pieces of music from the proposed show if available
- A piece of sheet music to support one of these samples, if possible
- Samples of writing/dialogue up to 4 pages in length from the proposed work or other work by the writer(s)
- Samples of lyrics or libretto up to 2 pages in length from the proposed work or other work by the lyricist
- A reference from a creative professional that the writer/s have worked with in the past; ideally this is both a character and professional reference, outlining how the writer/s like to work and the quality of their writing

## SELECTION PROCESS

Submissions will be reviewed by a panel drawn from BYMT staff, freelance composer/writers and BYMT young people. Assessment will be based on:

- Concept/Idea
- Music originality – an individual sound/voice
- Writing quality - feel and purpose
- Lyric content
- Relevance to being created with a company of young people
- Collaborative team (how you would like to develop the show)

Every piece will be read and scored by two members of the panel.

**Writers who are shortlisted will be invited to spend half a day with BYMT at our base, Mountview, in Peckham, 120 Peckham Hill Street, London SE15 5JT. They will meet the staff and a panel of experienced writers, young people and BYMT staff.**

If you have any questions or concerns about the submission or need the information in another format, please call the BYMT office on 020 8563 7725 or email [cerysjones@bymt.org](mailto:cerysjones@bymt.org).

Applications can be submitted via **Google Forms** on the company website or entered onto a Word document from the website and emailed to [cerysjones@bymt.org](mailto:cerysjones@bymt.org). In the subject line, please state NMTA Submission 2023.

**We wish you the best of luck with your application.**

# APPLY HERE

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