

Joanna Read



Joanna joined the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, Guildford, in January 2019, as Director and Chief Executive, having previously been Principal and Chief Executive of LAMDA, The London Academy of Dramatic Art. A theatre director by profession and previously Artistic Director of Salisbury Playhouse, Joanna brings to her role with a strong vision for the venue's future, to create great drama and to give the town and county a theatre it can be proud of. She recently directed two touring productions for the Yvonne Arnaud, *Sheila's Island* by Tim Firth and *Ladies of Letters* by Jonathan Harvey as part of the theatre's plan to increase its own productions. She also enjoyed directing this year's pantomime, *Jack And the Beanstalk*.

Under her leadership the LAMDA embarked upon a successful £29 million capital programme to build 10 rehearsals studios, two theatres and a TV suite for LAMDA, which was completed in summer 2017 winning a RIBA regional and national award. She developed international relationships for the academy, increased the touring work of the school, forging relationships with City College New York, Harlem School of Arts, UCLA, Moscow Arts Theatre School amongst others. Joanna was instrumental in shaping and launching the Virtual Conservatoire, a cross arts collaborative digital workspace.

Before LAMDA she was Chief Executive and Artistic Director of Salisbury Playhouse. Where notable productions directed included *Shadowlands* with Julian Glover *Playing For Time* with Joanna Riding, *Macbeth*, *The Winters Tale*, *The Duchess of Malfi*, *The Hired Man* and *The Waters of The Moon*.

She is currently a board member of Frantic Assembly and a patron of the Regional Theatre Young Directors Scheme and was chair and President of Guildford Shakespeare Company. She is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and has served as the external examiner for The Lir Conservatoire in Dublin.

Previous roles include Associate Director of the Octagon Theatre Bolton and Head of Education and Participation for Birmingham Rep, where she created a successful and wide-ranging education and outreach strategy, as well as commissioning and directing new writing including work by Debbie Isitt, Richard Cameron. Joanna has worked as a freelance director and writer for Edinburgh Festival Theatre, the Young Vic London, Sheffield Theatres, the New Vic Theatre Newcastle Under Lyme, The Watermill West Berkshire Playhouse, The Mill at Sonning and the Watford Palace Theatre, amongst others. She has written seven pantomimes for Salisbury Playhouse, as well as *Cinderella* and *Aladdin* for Watford Palace Theatre and the book for the musical *Two Cities* by Howard Goodall. She won a Theatrical Management Association Award for her production of *The Hired Man* at Salisbury Playhouse and the Olwen Wymark Award from the Writers Guild of Great Britain for her work nurturing new writing at LAMDA.

Joanna is delighted to become a patron of The Guildford Institute and is pleased to be able to offer her support to an important local organisation.