



Press Release: 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017

## The Albany's Raidene Carter joins Wac Arts

- Vibrant Performing Arts Organisation Wac Arts continues its bold plans for the future with the recruitment of **Raidene Carter**, joining as Director of Artistic Programmes.
- New Director of Artistic Programmes, Raidene Carter is excited to join Wac Arts celebrity supporters **Simon Callow** and **Simon Mayo** at the Wac Arts Weekender event 23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> March 2017.
- Wac Arts gives the public a rare opportunity to see 2016 **Oscar** winning of short film, Stutterer and 2017 **BAFTA** winning short film Home. As well as the opportunity to meet Home producer, Afolabi Kuti.

This week Wac Art's Chief Executive Karen Napier has announced the appointment of Raidene Carter as Director of Artistic Programmes at Wac Arts. Raidene, who is currently Head of Creative Programmes at The Albany, will join the team full time from early July.

Raidene Carter is a theatre and arts producer with over 10 years' experience in developing new work from participation, community and collaboration projects. Graduating from Central School of Speech and Drama in 2001, Raidene went on to work at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, Talawa Theatre Company, the Albany and Birmingham Repertory Theatre before returning to the Albany as Head of Creative Programmes in 2012, where she currently leads an expansive arts and community programme across five performance spaces, and in outdoor and site-specific settings.

Indhu Rubasingham, Artistic Director of the Tricycle Theatre who chaired the interview panel at Wac Art said *"I am very excited by the appointment of Raidene Carter as Director of Artistic Programmes. Wac Arts is a vital organisation with ambitious and bold plans for the future. I have no doubt that Raidene, with her passion and commitment will be an instrumental part in realising this vision and it was a privilege to be part of the process in selecting her"*.

Raidene has had particular success in developing theatre and events with diverse artists, community groups and young people, and became an LTC (London Theatre Consortium) and MOBO Executive Fellow in 2016. Wac Arts is renowned for producing diverse talent, trained for the modern performing arts world. Raidene is a natural fit for this dynamic organisation, whose mission is to empower young people to change their world through performing arts and media.

*"I know it's been said before that Wac Arts is one of 'London's best kept secrets' but having now discovered for myself, Wac Art's amazing creative projects, and, importantly, the huge*

*heart and ambition of the students, staff and Board, I feel incredibly lucky and excited to be joining Karen and the team to fully "let the cat out of the bag" - to share all it has to offer with the local community, new partners, artists and even more children and young people. Leaving The Albany was always going to be a hard decision because it's been my profession and passion for so many years, but Wac Arts is one of the few spaces we have in London that allows seemingly ordinary people to show how extra-ordinary they are– not only for show or public performance, or because a new fund or initiative comes along, but all day, every day. You can't easily replicate the sort of experience and dedication that places like Wac Arts have, and it's a brilliant gift for someone in my position - I can't wait to get started."* Raidene Carter

As Wac Arts gears up for its first ever four-day event, the Wac Arts Weekender (23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> March), Raidene will be joining the celebrations, witnessing first hand the innovation of the programmes, the creative talent of the students and experiencing the passion of the organisation. A key part of the vision of Wac Arts is looking to develop their iconic building to connect with the community and the industry to become one of London's arts and cultural hubs, with learning through the whole age range from 5 - 95. The Wac Arts Weekender is one of the early steps on the journey of elevating Wac Arts as they build the vision and plan for the future.

At the Weekender, young people will be joined by professional artists and companies such as Akademi Dance, along with masterclasses with the Lion King musical's David Blake. Film distribution company Starline Entertainment will host a panel discussion and 2017 BAFTA winning producer, Afolabi Kuti will be in the building to talk to guests as well as show his winning short film, Home, at the Weekender's Film Happening. Wac Arts patron Simon Callow and BBC Radio 2 DJ Simon Mayo will be performing BBC Radio 2's Drivetime in real time. Raidene joins the organisation at an exciting time where the attention is on making Wac Arts an externally focused organisation and to not only be London's best kept secret but an iconic home for youth and community-inspired performing arts and creativity.

### **Notes to editors:**

Wac Arts is an exciting charity based in Belsize Park, which transforms the lives of thousands of young people through its broad range of programmes in performing arts and media. From its inception in 1978, Wac Arts has been supporting young people aged 5-26, who are experiencing exceptional hardship, by providing outstanding levels of arts training, with a focus on innovation and creativity.

Wac Arts have an extraordinary track record for developing diverse talent and has a broad range of programmes including disability and inclusion programmes and offsite residencies, workshops in aerials and circus skills, junior and senior classes on the weekend, a full-time Diploma in professional Musical Theatre, and week night enrichment programmes.

[www.wacarts.co.uk](http://www.wacarts.co.uk)