

WANTED x 2 APPRENTICES
**Permaculture Grower and Performance Practitioners from London or
the South West**

for *A Little Patch Of Ground* a unique participatory arts project

About the Project

With funding from the Arts Council, Encounters Arts is collaborating with Dartington Arts in Devon and Artsadmin at Toynbee Studios, London to create *A Little Patch of Ground*, a high quality performance and food growing project working with an inter-generational group of local residents

A Patch of Ground explores the themes of people, place and planet and is inspired by permaculture principles and the eco-philosophy of Joanna Macy. The project runs weekly from the beginning of May and culminates in September 2011 with an exhibition and public performances at both locations. Each week a group of 20-25 participants will meet for three hours at their respective site and work in the garden, prepare food and eat together, watch topical films about food, climate change, ecology, interconnection and take part in eco-philosophy inspired creative activities leading to the creation of a performance. The two groups will come together to view each others performances at the end of the project.

A Little Patch of Ground was devised by Encounters director Ruth Ben-Tovim working with Associate Artist Anne-Marie Culhane. Anne-Marie has worked for sixteen years as an environmental artist, performer and community activist and has a certificate in Permaculture Design.

Pilot versions of *A Little Patch of Ground* took place in Liverpool (2009) at the Bluecoat as part of Liverpool's Year of the Environment and The Point, Doncaster (2010) funded by the Arts Council

See here for images and more background:

<http://www.encounters-arts.org.uk/perf/performance.htm>

Apprentices

We are looking for two Apprentices (one from London and one from the South West) to work on the project. One should have skills and experience in food growing and the other experience of making performance.

Both should have some experience of facilitating groups of non-professionals and also have some awareness or interest in current ecological issues.

The Apprentices will travel on a weekly basis with the rest of the creative team to Toynbee Studios in the London's East End and to the Dartington Estate in Totnes to work on the sessions (see below for more detailed brief)

The project will be led by artists Ruth Ben-Tovim and Anne- Marie Culhane who will work with a professional permaculture designer/ grower to create a

herb and vegetable growing garden where project participants can learn how to cultivate salad, herbs, vegetables and fruit incorporating permaculture principles where possible. It is intended that the garden provide some of the food/herbs for the weekly meal that the group cooks for each other and for the performance at the end of the project. It is also intended that the gardens and their resources will be used after the project as part of ongoing cultivation of fruit and vegetables on the sites. The food growing element is integral to and intertwined with the other creative activities within the weekly sessions which will in turn feed into the creation of the multi- media performance, an installation/exhibition.

About the Partners

Encounters offer imaginative spaces and participatory processes for people to explore their relationship with themselves, each other, where they live and the wider natural world. In arts, education, community, environmental and regeneration contexts, we use the transformative role of the arts to reconnect people to their own imaginative and instinctive power to shift how they see the world and their place within it. www.encounters-arts.org.uk

Dartington Arts.

Dartington is a pioneering charity – a place of experiment, enterprise, and education where the arts, social justice and sustainability (Schumacher college) come together. Based near Totnes in South Devon. All departments are involved in the project. www.dartington.org

Artsadmin is a unique producing and presenting organisation for contemporary artists working in theatre, dance, live art, visual arts and mixed media. At its Toynbee Studios home in East London Artsadmin has established a centre for the creation, development and presentation of new work. www.artsadmin.org

Supporting partners are:

- **The Permaculture Association** www.permaculture.org.uk
- **Transition Network** www.transitionnetwork.org

Apprentice Brief

The Apprentice with growing skills will:

- Support the designer in installing the growing space including assistance with build, propagation of seeds and sourcing materials for the project build - where possible recycled/reused/local and minimal impact
- Undertake most of the weekly maintenance of the garden, troubleshooting and seeking support where necessary, ensuring that there is an ongoing programme of planting and maintenance in place.
- Facilitate the majority of the growing sessions (up to 20). This means preparing a task list for each session for the group to do (weeding, watering, thinning, harvesting etc)
- Attending a team planning meeting prior to each session
- Preparing short presentations/talks on various elements of the garden for example companion planting, plant feeds, composting with the emphasis on creative ways of demonstrating and communicating ideas and principals. This element will be mentored and supported by the Permaculture Designer and Anne-Marie Culhane, project co-deviser.
- Attend the whole of the weekly session to see and contribute to the ways that the garden learning and activity integrates with the other creative elements of the project and to join in with activities working and supporting participants
- Assist the creative team with any other practical and facilitation tasks that are needed each week eg. documentation, food prep

Ideal Requirements:

- a competent grower, ideally already aware of or trained in horticulture or permaculture
- skilled and enthusiastic about working with people from all backgrounds and abilities
- excited about taking advantage of a unique creative opportunity to extend their own development and learning
- used to working as part of a team
- knowledge of food preparation and harvesting
- willing to learn and be adaptable, flexible and a good communicator

The Apprentice with Performance Skills will:

- assist Ruth Ben-Tovim and Anne- Marie Culhane in all aspects of the creative facilitation of the 20 week programme
- work with Ruth Ben-Tovim to prepare resources and equipment for each session
- learn and then lead individual activities during the programme
- work closely with individual participants, supporting them to prepare work for performance
- help with the smooth running of the logistics of the project
- creatively document the project

Ideal Requirements:

- background in drama/directing/installation
- experience of relational or participatory practice
- excellent communication and people skills
- experience of eco-philosophy, transition towns
- used to working as part of a team

Schedule:

Both apprentices are expected to attend the weekly sessions which will run from 5.30 – 8.30 on a Tuesday (London) and Thursday (Totnes) with planning meetings from 3.30 on the same day.

Sessions start: week commencing 2 May 2011

Finish: Final performances will be in the week commencing 26 September (London) and the week commencing 3 October 2011 (Totnes).

A project evaluation session with all team members will take place in the following week.

Detailed schedule is yet to be finalized but apprentices will be expected to assist during these final production weeks.

Fee: £1000

plus all travel and accommodation (where necessary) .

We also have a Learning Champion who will assist you in setting and monitoring your own personal learning objectives.

We are looking to roll out this project in the future in the South West and London initially, so we are also looking for Apprentices interested in a long term collaboration with Encounters and *The Little Patch of Ground* Project.

To apply please send by email to ruth@encounters-arts.org.uk the following:

1. A CV
2. Up to one side of A4 on:
 - what interests you about this project and the apprentice role
 - what do you think you can offer to this project;
 - what are the key outcomes you would like to achieve from taking part in this Apprentice programme.

Deadline for Applications: 21st March 2011 5.00 pm

Interviews: Monday 28th March (Dartington)

Successful applicants must be available on 1 April for an all day planning session with the whole team