

opera
north

Head of Costume & Wigs



Opera North's purpose is to create extraordinary experiences every day, using music and opera to entertain, engage, challenge and inspire.

Our people

Working at Opera North you will be part of a company and group of people committed to fulfilling this purpose. Whatever role you take we will provide you with an induction plan that introduces you to your job and the team you'll be working in, as well as giving you the opportunity to meet colleagues across the company. Our success in delivering against our purpose will be built on the commitment, skills, diversity and well-being of the people who work at Opera North, and we will invest in training to develop our people both professionally and personally, because we believe this strengthens not only our company, but also the wider creative sector.



**Our communities and
audiences are part of us
and we are part of them.**



Our award-winning work tours to theatre stages and concert halls throughout the North and beyond.



Who we are

Based in Leeds, rooted in the North of England and international in outlook, our award-winning work tours to theatre stages and concert halls throughout the North and beyond, including to London and major international festivals. Alongside touring opera, in Leeds we curate an eclectic artistic programme of gigs, concerts, spoken word and film in the Howard Assembly Room. We aim to make work that is bold, innovative and ambitious, always looking for new ways to share and create with audiences.

Music for everyone

Opera North believes opera and music is for everyone, and champions diversity in artists, repertoire and audiences. Through our Learning & Engagement team, the Company connects with communities and inspires each generation, aiming to enhance the health and well being of people in the cities, towns and villages where we work through arts participation and performance.

Howard Opera Centre and the HAR

In 2021 we moved into the Howard Opera Centre. It is a world class rehearsal facility for our orchestra, chorus and all the artists we work with, sharing the same building as our new education studio where everyone is welcome to learn about and make music. We have also created a modern flexible working environment for our staff and given our venue, the Howard Assembly Room, a new lease of life with a dedicated entrance and public spaces, together with restaurant and bar in the heart of Leeds.

Leeds as a capital of culture

Leeds is the only city in England outside of London to have a resident full time opera company, ballet and repertoire theatre as part of a diverse, collaborative and thriving cultural scene. That rich offer has been complemented by a growing tech sector. Surrounded by the stunning Yorkshire countryside including the Dales, Moors and North Sea coastline, Leeds is a fantastic place to live and work.

Purpose of the role

To lead the Costume Production, Hair and Make-up, and Running Wardrobe teams to deliver costumes and related designs that meet the artistic vision of Opera North's productions as well as maintaining Opera North's costume back-catalogue, store, and equipment. This role ensures artistic goals are achieved while managing budgets, schedules, and teams, maintaining the highest quality and professional standards.

Reports to

Technical Director

Direct Reports

Wigs & Makeup Supervisor, Textiles Artist, Workroom Manager, Senior Costume Supervisor, Touring Wardrobe Supervisor

Key accountabilities

Production planning and realisation

- The Head of Costume and Wigs will be responsible, in consultation with the Technical Director, for the realisation and running of the costume and make-up departments for the company's productions in all venues and any oversees venues as required, within budget, time and technical parameters
- Assess requirements of a production and advise on feasibility, facilities, work sequences and budgets
- Discuss, report and communicate progress with the creative teams and all HODs and appropriate stakeholders
- Attend planning meetings and be part of ensuring deliverability of productions
- Oversee relevant departmental schedules

Financial

- Prepare future production budgets as directed
- Manage allocated budgets for each production ensuring Supervisors are controlling and reporting their budgets and take corrective action when needed
- Advise the Technical Director on the suitability, quantity, and cost-effectiveness of the design
- Create and manage seasonal staffing budgets



Susanna 2025: Tristram Kenton

- Ensure the cost-efficient running of the department
- Collaborate with the Finance Department for accounting and reporting purposes

People Management

- Act as line manager for the teams, ensuring excellent communication throughout the department
- Support the TD and HR department in direct people management and the implementation of relevant policies
- In conjunction and consultation with departmental managers and the Health and Safety Manager, implement training as necessary and required for all members of the department
- In conjunction with the Technical Director and HR, recruit and manage staff and wardrobe touring staff for productions, projects, events, producing and touring work as required
- Prepare seasonal staff contracts ready for authorisation, ensuring compliance with support from the HR team
- Evaluate staff skills to ensure the highest standard of quality and efficiency for all productions is achieved
- Be responsible for supervising, coaching, and supporting the team, setting goals and expectations at regular 1-2-1s and team meetings, providing formal feedback at annual performance reviews, and resolving conflicts and issues punctually

Operational Management

- Deliver artistic visions into practical costume and make-up designs
- Oversee costume construction, altering, and fitting processes to ensure they meet performance and production highest standards
- Ensure excellent communication between costume designers, directors and key stakeholders
- Manage compliance with the Company's health and safety policies and procedures. Ensure that team members are fully trained, understand and consistently meet their health and safety responsibilities in their daily tasks and work outputs
- Ensure legal H&S compliance of departmental equipment
- Collaborate with all other Opera North teams and departments
- Support promotional or public events that involve costumes



Job Requirements

Experience / skills required:

- Proven experience in large scale costume design, production, and management
- Practical expertise in costume making, tailoring, and construction
- Effective manager of stakeholders relationships with production teams
- Ability to produce and monitor departmental budgets
- Training in H&S management

Functional/ leadership competencies:

- Excellent communication skills for collaboration across departments and external stakeholders
- Creative problem-solving under tight deadlines
- Ability to work well within a team
- Ability to deal proactively with company requirements
- Awareness of Health and Safety regulations within the industry
- IT literate, with emphasis on Word and Excel





Terms and conditions

Contract type: Full-time, permanent

Salary: £42,000 -
£50,000 per annum

Hours of work: 35 hours per week

Holiday entitlement: 33 days inclusive of 8 statutory holidays, per annum

Pension: Opera North will automatically enroll you into the company pension scheme upon appointment and after 3 months' service will contribute equivalent to 5.5% of your basic pay, should you meet the current legislative criteria. You will be required to make a personal contribution of 2.5% of your basic pay. We reserve the right to make future changes to our pension arrangements.

Equity, diversity and inclusion

We promote equity, diversity and inclusion in our workplace and make recruitment decisions by matching our needs with the skills and experience of the candidate. As we work to address underrepresentation in our workforce, we are particularly keen to hear from applicants from the global majority or those with other protected characteristics.

The successful candidate must have the right to work in the UK or be ready to obtain it.

General responsibilities of everyone who works for us:

- Represent the company values and purpose to create extraordinary experiences everyday
- Work collaboratively and co-operatively with all team members and take an active part in team meetings and discussions
- Be an ambassador for Opera North and follow our policies and procedures
- Play your part in ensuring that everyone who comes through our door is welcomed and treated with respect

How to apply

To apply for this role, please send a CV and covering letter via the Hireful website.

If you need any help completing your application including any adjustments to the application process please contact appointments@operanorth.co.uk to make us aware.

Good luck with your application and we look forward to hearing from you.



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