



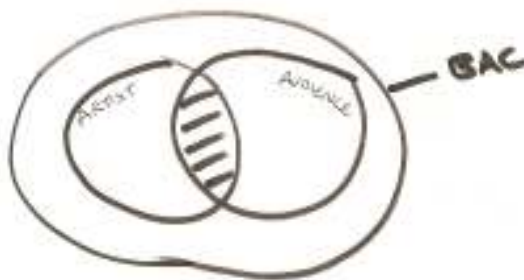
Vision and Model

Our **mission is to invent the future of theatre**

BAC's definition of **theatre**: *a dynamic event that will draw people together in the 21st century; capable of creating live moments that change the way we look at our universe and understand ourselves within it; a place where people come to meet, to celebrate, to experience each other and the world; where risk and adventure are celebrated; embracing diverse cultural influences and hybrids; a transformative and participatory experience that inspires our individual and collective imagination; enables complicity and brokers new connections and understanding between local, national, international and virtual communities; theatre is not boring, it is exciting.*

Our **approach** to delivering our mission is to use **Scratch** to create new theatre.

Scratch: *BAC created Scratch ten years ago; Scratch is about testing ideas; as well as being a process it is also a way of thinking that embraces experiment and learning; in a theatre context Scratch means artists sharing work-in-development with an audience; audiences then help enrich the work through their immediate response, through their feedback, sometimes even through getting involved and creating the work themselves. BAC's role is that of **Producer**, holding together the collaboration between artist and audience; this point of connection, the bit in the middle (see diagram below), is where risk takes place; BAC as Producer enables artists to develop ideas through scratch with teachers, with children, with architects, with scientists, with events hirers, all in the interests of inventing the future of theatre.*



Over the last five years we have:

- sought to integrate our theatre, participate and events programmes to enrich each another;
- signed a 125 year lease on the Town Hall with a rent free period for 20 years;
- opened up the Town Hall's 72 spaces & beginning to use the building as a playground for new ideas;
- undertaken a process of organisational development to become a more resilient organisation.

In the coming ten years BAC will build on these foundations by:

1. making Scratch the heart of our programme, actively producing experiments between artists & others
2. providing more resources to artists – time, space, people and ultimately finance
3. further integrating our producing within theatre, participate and events strands of activity
4. creating a 21st century performance environment through this activity & for the benefit of this activity
5. enabling opportunities for collaboration across the theatre sector with the work we create

Invention, collaboration and democracy have become values that we aspire to at BAC in all our work, each strongly rooted in our Town Hall building since 1893.

The BAC Model

Our core activity

The plan is about focusing on what BAC does best: Scratch. The focus is on bringing people together, supporting and guiding what develops through their participation and collaboration, and actively testing the ideas that emerge. The model amplifies BAC's role as an international development house, or an invention centre, based in the Town Hall on Lavender Hill. The invention centre is a supportive environment in which artists from across the world or around the corner can develop new ideas and test these with audiences. Using the finite resources of BAC – time, space and money –the invention centre is programmed on a sustainable basis, offering artists, staff and audiences an environment in which new ideas can flourish.

We aim to create a busy and active public laboratory for creativity and invention. This model defines our core activity. It is central to the delivery of our mission.

There are three basic operating models for the building:

Artist residency – artists living and running the Town Hall – overnight 7 nights a week

***Artist Residency:** a home for artists from one night up to six months. From Spring 2011 bedrooms, bathrooms and kitchens will be provided in the Town Hall for artists; there will be 12 bedrooms for long-stay artists with privacy and comfort; there will be 12 beds in basic, shared spaces for short-stay artists; the Town Hall will typically be in its artist residency state between 8pm and 9am Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and between 12am and 9am Thursday, Friday and most weekends; at these times it is imagined resident artists will have the run of the building; there will be different kinds of artist residencies including opportunities for individual artists, resident ensembles and companies, resident creative technicians, resident designers working across a series of projects, international residencies, as well as more short-term residencies for presenting work, professional development or visiting other resident artists; artists will support the running of their residency and enable the Town Hall to feel like a*

welcoming, open and exciting home for creativity; resident artists will be able to use open house and the scratch bar to test their ideas.

Daytime opening – audiences engaging with artists through participation and events – 5 days a week

Daytime Opening : *using the Town Hall's spaces for rehearsals, participation and events; artists use the building for day-time rehearsal residencies to develop their ideas; some residencies will be a day, some will last over a month; the Town Hall's spaces are also put to use for participatory activities where artists and participants work together to create new theatre; audiences are also be able to hire spaces for their own events and are encouraged to connect with artists to develop their event in creative ways; the café bar located throughout the open public spaces at the front of the building provides a warm beating heart for all users of the building and attracts audiences off Lavender Hill to enjoy our building; we encourage a welcoming fun atmosphere and an open enquiring approach to all activities.*

Scratch Nights – a creative social space - Thu, Fri, Sat nights

Scratch Nights: *these take place on Thursday to Saturday evenings - a creative social space where everyone is invited to invest their creativity in the development of new ideas; primarily the scratch bar is a great place to hang out, opening up the foyer, courtyard and corridors of the Town Hall as an exciting and creative destination to relax with friends and family; artists are able to present work in two different ways; for some artists their work will be formally programmed as part of the scratch bar, providing them with structure, deadlines and marketing their work to an audience from across London; for other artists the bar provides a laboratory environment where audiences are accessible to them to try out experiments, last minute.*

Beyond our core activity

In addition to BAC's basic model, we want to find great ways to maximise the exposure for new ideas.

We want to grow our audience on Lavender Hill by presenting up to three high profile **BAC productions** of the best of this work each year, as major productions or festivals of work.

We also want to reach out to new audiences, regionally, and work with partner London venues to present the best of BAC's work in their theatres. We want to build on the collaborative and collegiate working across London Theatre and find ways to further develop work for artists across London. We also want to look to present these productions nationally and internationally

So there are two additional programme strands, both reflecting BAC's core values of invention, collaboration and democracy and both directly relating to the work created through Scratch at BAC:

BAC productions: *these include high profile productions or festivals presented at BAC. They could be a production across the building or in the Grand Hall or Council Chamber for longer runs; these productions will help BAC develop its building, enabling the decisions of artists to drive capital development; there is an imagined audience of thousands for larger BAC productions. These productions also include a number of smaller productions presented at BAC, or often elsewhere in London in partnership with theatre and non-theatre venues.*

BAC productions on tour: *theatre productions or other ideas emerging from the invention centre (e.g. curriculum ideas developed through the Artist-Teacher Exchange programme) being presented and distributed more widely. This could be a national tour of a BAC production; it could be our methodologies shared in other sectors that artists have developed; BAC might participate as co-commissioner, as presenters or producers of these projects working in partnership often months or years ahead; over time this might also include commercial presentations of BCA work, offering positive financial feedback to the core artists model.*

Our stakeholders – artists, audiences and staff

This model is based on the participation of all of our stakeholders in our mission to invent the future of theatre. For artists, audiences and staff we want to offer a creative environment in which ideas can flourish through collaboration. Building from BAC's earlier ladder of development model, we seek to evolve a much more organic and flexible series of structures that enable creative participation in the invention of theatre. With participation at the heart of our ways of working, we seek to blur boundaries between artists, audiences and staff in a building that celebrates adventure, risk and uncertainty. We will build a series of audience journeys across the building and across a lifetime, that encourage repeat experience of BAC's programme, with a series of fluid and resilient structures that enable individuals from a diverse range of backgrounds to contribute flexibly to our mission.

BAC conceives of itself as a producer of work that holds collaboration at its creative heart. Through our programmes of work we have developed strong connections with adult audiences who take risks, with young people who want to invent new theatre through their collaboration with artists. We seek to develop our audience focus to include families built around our new children's theatre programme and emerging inter-generational work. We want to focus all of our programme – our theatre and events strands – on these three targeted groups through artist-led approaches that hold invention and collaboration at their heart.

Our building

Our vision for the Town Hall is to create a sustainable 21st century theatre in a 19th century building where you can both experience and create great art: a space that is profoundly owned by its community.

We will provide a home for an international and diverse community that includes residential opportunities for artists and kitchens where artists and audiences can prepare food and eat together; a series of physical spaces in which the role of artist and audience, the notions of work and play, will be blurred.

We will create a place to meet, perform, experience each other and the world, a space where risk and adventure are celebrated.

We will retain and celebrate the ghosts of the original Town Hall. We will recognise that one of BAC's great strengths is that it is not based in a purpose built theatre and that its spaces act as a provocation for artists who are looking to reinvent the rules of theatre.

We want the experience of an arts building to be exciting, surprising, at times disorientating, inherently theatrical. We want the building to reveal itself gradually, like an exciting story, rewarding those who peek behind the curtain, breaking the barriers between "front of house" and "back stage".

The journey of the building is for everyone – a building where relationships and ideas are born and nurtured, a series of physical spaces in which the role of artist and audience, the notions of work and play, will be blurred.

The perfect place to hang out, to dream and create the future.