

punchdrunk

Appointment of

Finance Director

February 2025 | Ref: JBGWB



Saxton Bampfylde

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"World conquering
theatre rebels."
Evening Standard

Our history

Founded in 2000 by Felix Barrett, Punchdrunk has pioneered a game-changing form of theatre which places the audience at the very heart of the action. Recently listed amongst **the 50 most influential artists of the last 50 years** (*Sky Arts, 2022*) alongside Bowie, Sir Steve McQueen and Vivienne Westwood, Punchdrunk disrupts the theatrical norm, creating worlds in which audiences can rediscover the childlike excitement of exploring the unknown.

Its iconic “mask” shows, which redefined the genre of immersive experiences, have been cited amongst **the 40 creative moments that changed culture** (*Creative Review*), and have found phenomenal success across the globe, with record-breaking productions established in the US, UK and China. *Sleep No More* in New York ran from 2011-2024, and in Shanghai the show has been running since 2016, making it the longest running show in the city’s history. *The Drowned Man: A Hollywood Fable* broke the National Theatre’s box office records when it went on sale in 2013. Punchdrunk’s 2022 London production, *The Burnt City*, became the company’s longest-running show in its home city, coinciding with the opening of its first permanent venue in Woolwich.

In 2024, *Viola’s Room* debuted in Woolwich; a gothic mystery reimagined for a new audience written by Booker Prize-shortlisted Daisy Johnson and narrated by Helena Bonham-Carter. Distilling two decades of the company’s immersive practice, *Viola’s Room* is an intimate sensory adventure where barefoot audiences embarked upon an audio-driven journey through a moonlit fever dream.

Alongside these landmark live theatrical experiences, Punchdrunk has taken its ground-breaking approach to cross-cultural collaborations in music, tech, fashion and TV: from projects with Rihanna to Jack White, Louis Vuitton to Alexander McQueen, and HBO to Brad Pitt’s Plan B Studios – most recently with TV series *The Third Day*, starring Jude Law, Naomie Harris, Katherine Waterston, Emily Watson and Paddy Considine which included the Bafta-nominated live event: *The Third Day: Autumn*: a 12-hour live episode, filmed in one continuous take.

Punchdrunk’s past theatrical works include: *The Drowned Man: A Hollywood Fable* (with the National Theatre), *The Crash of the Elysium* (Manchester International Festival), *The Duchess of Malfi* (with ENO), *Sleep No More* (with the American Repertory Theatre, Boston, Mass.), *It Felt Like A Kiss* (with Adam Curtis and Damon Albarn, Manchester International Festival), *Tunnel 228* (in collaboration with The Old Vic), *The Masque of the Red Death* (with Battersea Arts Centre), *Faust* (in collaboration with the National Theatre), and *The Burnt City*.

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"Hands down the best
immersive theatre
company in the world."

Time Out

The role

The Finance Director will play a pivotal role as part of the Senior Management team, collaborating closely with the Co-Executive Producers, Senior Producers, Artistic Director and Board members to help the company achieve its commercial and creative goals, while also establishing a robust operational framework.

In addition to safeguarding the company's long-term financial stability, the Finance Director will focus on fostering long-term growth in equity and value in the company. With a broad portfolio of projects, many of which will involve the creation of new and hybrid theatrical formats, the Finance Director will collaborate with the Co-Executive Producers and Senior Producers to ensure that the financial set-up of each project is fit for purpose; achieving industry best practice and identifying potential efficiencies and opportunities.

This role requires a Finance Director who thrives in a fast-paced and rapidly evolving creative environment. They will provide a backbone of operational efficiency and stability to create a workplace where an international portfolio, multiple projects and theatrical innovation can flourish.

Reporting to:	Co-Executive Producers
Responsible for:	Core team of 2: Production Accountant, and Finance Officer, plus Project Specific Finance Personnel
Key relationships:	Board, Senior Producers, Head of Production, Head of Marketing & Communications, Head of Ticketing & Audiences, General Manager, Buildings Manager

Key duties and responsibilities

Strategy and planning:

- Develop long-term growth and sustainability for the company through a financial plan created with the Co-Executive Producers, Board and Senior Management team;
- With the Co-Executive Producers, Board and Senior Management Team, review company strategy on a regular basis to reflect new and unforeseen opportunities;
- With the Co-Executive Producers, take responsibility for the company's annual budget;
- Support the Co-Executive Producers in mitigating organisational risk by evolving internal controls and updating financial management systems;
- To be responsible for the Shareholders capital table ownership.

Core finance responsibilities:

- To have control of all the company's accounting functions;
- To ensure all of the company's financial systems are robust and compliant;
- To ensure rigorous and accurate financial management of the company and the various productions and related activities;
- Lead the company's finance team and provide mentoring and appraisals in line with company policy;
- Assume ultimate responsibility for company cash flow / cash management policies;

- Prepare and (when applicable) present all required financial reporting (including to the senior management team, board, investors, and ACE/DCMS);
- Maintain good relations and communications with the external auditors and lead the year-end audit;
- If required, to undertake bookkeeping tasks as needed.

Reporting & governance

- Provide accurate and timely financial reports to Senior Management;
- Act as Company Secretary and ensure that all statutory and legal requirements are met;
- Prepare Board papers and attend Board meetings as requested;
- With the Co-Executive Producers, manage the company's relationship with DCMS and ACE, attending meetings, monitoring financial covenants and ensuring that all reports (financial and non-financial) are submitted on time;
- Manage relevant company policies as necessary and support the Senior Management Team with the ongoing development of the company handbook of statutory and company-specific policies.

Project support:

- Oversee the set-up of each project's financial structure, catering to the individual requirements and opportunities of each project;
- Develop each project's financial systems and processes, reviewing, advising and offering support where needed;
- Support the producing team on all financial matters relating to the projects;
- To participate in the medium and long-term planning for projects, with particular emphasis on how project plans relate to expenditure, cashflow, P&L and resource planning;
- Managing financial relationships and reporting with partners where relevant.

Please note that this job description is intended to provide a general overview of the key responsibilities and expectations for the role. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list and may be subject to change based on business needs or priorities.

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“Engrossing, meticulous,
shrewdly secretive, and
constantly changing.”

The Observer

Person specification

The Punchdrunk environment is fast-paced, often reactive, and endlessly evolving. The workforce comprises a brilliant team of passionate, creative and committed staff and freelancers who thrive in a collaborative, supportive and non-hierarchical environment

The ideal candidate will be excited to be part of a team whilst equally willing to be a proactive self-starter; happy to get their hands dirty, and who can make finance accessible for a team with a varied range of financial knowledge / ability.

They will ideally bring all or most of the following attributes:

- An accountancy qualification with a depth of experience
- A collaborative approach and an interest in theatre and the creative process;
- The ability to be a trusted partner at a senior level;
- A depth of production/content finance experience;
- Management experience from a relevant context;
- Knowledge of entertainment industry production, systems, software, and process;
- Adept at operating under tight timescales and managing competing priorities;
- A convincing and persuasive communicator across diverse teams, as well as senior stakeholders;
- Ability to work calmly and effectively in a fast-paced, dynamic work environment;

Terms of appointment

Contract: Full time, permanent
Due to the nature of this role some evening or weekend work will be required.

Salary: c.£70k pa

Place of work: Punchdrunk offices in Woolwich, London

Benefits:

- 3% pension contribution
- 20 days annual leave, plus bank holidays, rising to 25 days after 1 year
- Hybrid working (subject to operational needs)
- Free, 24/7 confidential Employee Assistance Programme, including up to 6 free counselling sessions per year
- Contribution towards eye tests
- Cycle to work scheme
- Theatre ticket scheme

How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Punchdrunk on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code JBGWB.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on Thursday 13th March 2025.

Interviews with Punchdrunk will take place on Thursday 20th March 2025.

** The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.*

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

Due diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.

A festive dining table set for a party. The table is covered with a dark, reflective surface and is laden with various dishes, including bread, fruit, and small appetizers. Several tall, slender glasses filled with a light-colored beverage are placed around the table. The background is decorated with numerous colorful balloons in shades of red, blue, yellow, and green, and long, thin streamers hang down from the ceiling. The overall atmosphere is warm and celebratory.

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