

CREATIVE FUTURES

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Riz Ahmed, Joanne Harris and Matthew Xia announced as Creative Futures Ambassadors

Creative Futures are delighted to announce **three high profile Ambassadors** who have come on board to support the charity in achieving positive outcomes for children and young people through the arts.

Creative Futures is a multi-arts charity which transforms the lives of children and young people, particularly from disadvantaged communities in London. We use the arts and creativity to raise aspiration, achievement, and quality of life for children. We focus on early years, special educational needs especially hearing impairment, and looked after children. We believe passionately that the arts can deliver transformative experiences with the power to benefit society with many of our programmes taking place in areas of multiple deprivation. The three new Ambassadors attest to the importance of providing children from all backgrounds access to the arts.

Riz Ahmed

The actor and MC born in north London and soon to be star of *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*, has given this statement about us:

Artistic expression at a young age builds character, bridges, and a belief in the power of your voice - and it is these voices we need to amplify if we are to build an inclusive society that empowers the vulnerable and reflects the aspirations of the next generation. Creative Futures works with top level artists and educators to help make this goal a reality.

Joanne Harris MBE

The award-winning author of the novel *Chocolat* has provided us with this statement about why it is essential to provide access to the arts for all parts of society:

Reading develops intelligence, creativity and critical thinking skills. The same is true for music, theatre, and other expressions of creativity in the arts. These things help us make connections with other human beings; they can greatly enhance quality of life for people of all ages, and be appreciated on any level. In these times of political and social unrest, we need the arts and what they bring to our lives - joy, communication, empathy, and the sharing of our common human experience - more than ever before.

Matthew Xia

The DJ and theatre director who most recently directed the Olivier Award-winning play *Blue/Orange* at the Young Vic has told us about his own experiences of how the arts have changed his life:

Music and the arts have been instrumental in creating opportunities for me and many others from disadvantaged backgrounds across the UK. I found my confidence and learnt to process the world when I joined my local youth theatre, I developed a voice when I started writing lyrics, and learnt how to express the inexplicable when I started making music. Creative Futures insists that similar transformative opportunities are available to all young people, especially the more vulnerable.

Our Creative Futures Ambassadors represent some of the range of art-forms present in our programmes, and we are excited and honoured to have their support. Julian Knight, Creative Director and founder of Creative Futures says:

“Music, theatre, art and literature should not be for the privileged few but available to all children: from our sessions in nurseries, children’s centres, special schools and centres all over London we are seeing first-hand the power of the arts to bring people and communities together, and achieve real change in terms of educational outcomes, increased self-confidence and resilience in children and young people.”

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