



# tiata fahodzi

our  
impact  
2021-2025



# contents

Foreword .....	p.1
About Us – Our Mission & Values .....	p.2
Artistic & Strategic Vision .....	p.3
Milestones for the Past Four Years .....	p.4-5
Home of British African heritage /British Black playwrights....	p.6-7
Creating a more equitable and inclusive sector .....	p.8-9
Embedding a Culture of Care .....	p.10-11
Watford at Our Heart .....	p.12-13
Case Study: An Artist’s Story .....	p.14
Climate Justice .....	p.15
Looking to the Future .....	p.16
Thank Yous & Reference Notes .....	p.17



# foreword

Over the last four years, tiata fahodzi has been on a mission to grow and revitalise itself. Alongside the whole of the theatre industry, the company faced the unforeseen impacts of a worldwide pandemic. It has changed how the company creates work, and how our audiences engage with us. But tiata fahodzi was eager to meet this challenge with fresh ideas and a determined outlook, sitting atop a track record of over **25 years** and is now looking ahead to celebrate its **30th** birthday.

In 2021, we were joined by tiata fahodzi's CEO & Artistic Director, **Chinonyerem Odimba**, and we are immensely proud of everything that her leadership has achieved in the subsequent years. We are also grateful to our supporters, especially our major funders: Arts Council England and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. It is through their sustained belief and trust that we are able to continue the vital work that tiata fahodzi does in championing and supporting British African heritage / Black British artists.

As a company we have been discussing the ideas that lie at the core of our work. We held these discussions within the Board, and then took them out further to our stakeholders, to our artists and our audiences. This open dialogue helped us to find a sense of clarity in our mission – shaping the idea of **compassionate disruption**. We wanted to drive forwards with this idea as a strategy for approaching all of our endeavours, of pushing boundaries in a way that was dynamic yet kind, empathetic and yet still driven towards progress.

Over the last four years, we have made some major achievements in developing the company. These have included an uplift in funding and financial turnover, securing a full board of dedicated Trustees, and bringing theatrical work to stages across the country. We have introduced our flagship artistic development programme – **PlayLab** – and piloted a successful new touring model with **Triple Bill**. tiata fahodzi has also secured an associate partnership agreement with the **Central School of Speech and Drama** which will commence formally as of September 2025, enabling us to engage directly with the future of the theatre industry, enabling us to contribute to the new generations of theatremakers.

As we look to the future, we are all too aware of the challenges that are being faced by the theatre industry at large as well as our artists, collaborators and audiences. Which is why we believe that it's important to communicate tiata fahodzi's impact and the **meaningful** change that follows.

We wish to thank everyone who has worked over the last four years to be a part of our journey. Whether that be as a staff member, a freelance artist, a friend or a partner. Each and every one of you has played an important role in the company's success over the last four years, and we look forward to seeing tiata fahodzi flourish into the future and beyond.

**Debo Adebayo**  
Co-Chair

**Edward Kemp**  
Co-Chair

# about us – our mission & values

tiata fahodzi is a black-led, artist centred British African heritage / Black British theatre company that is driven to support global majority artists historically excluded. We create a home where artists and audiences can belong, whilst still being fearless risk-takers in our productions and projects.

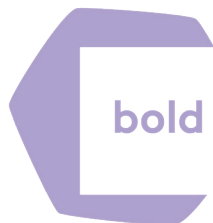
## our impact

This Impact Report looks at the company's work across the last four years, following the appointment of our CEO & Artistic Director **Chinonyerem Odimba**. We have framed this report around four of the pathways that tiata fahodzi takes to create **compassionate disruption**.

These are:

- To be a home of British African heritage / Black British playwrighting, staging ambitious work by British African heritage / Black British writers, challenging form and nurturing the next generation of Black British talent
- To compassionately disrupt and seed change in the wider theatre ecology, creating a more equitable and inclusive sector
- To embed a culture of care in our organisation and throughout the sector
- Watford at our heart: locally made; nationally recognised

### bold / brilliant / futures



tiata fahodzi is artist-led, making theatre at odds with tradition and producing creative projects celebrating British-African heritage and global majority artists historically excluded. tiata fahodzi's work is driven by social purpose and the need for justice, existing to push form, spark conversation, disrupt inequitable norms and motivate debate.



tiata fahodzi are fearless risk-takers, cultivating a restorative and healing space within the arts sector, building a home where both artists and audiences can belong, where we can collaborate, celebrate, partner and co-produce to ask big questions and find solutions to forge a radical future.



tiata fahodzi envisions a genuinely equitable society for all, empowering artists at all stages of their careers and providing a home, where artists and audiences are cultivated and nurtured, feeling free and supported to connect and create with endless imaginations.



# CEO & Artistic Director – Vision and Strategy

Since taking on the role of CEO and Artistic Director at tiata fahodzi, I have continued to find joy in collaborating with artists, audiences and communities that I strongly believe truly represent some of the most talented, most dedicated, and most caring in our cultural and artistic lives.

tiata fahodzi as a whole company has been through of period of reflection, growth and liberation of our collective imagination. We have imagined new ways of expressing both the joys and challenges of being a Black led theatre company in 2025 and reimagined what our collective ideas of a British African heritage / Black British 'artist' are.

But mostly we have spent the last 4 years lifting up the artists, audiences and stakeholders that believe in our work and choose to be a part of our beautifully evolving story.

We have experimented with new ideas around artist development by creating our PlayLab model, a yearlong opportunity for artists, at different point in their careers, to meet, share ideas and frustrations, to think about the artists they want to be, and to influence the work that we do and they ways that we do that. Artists such as Monique Touko, Yomi Sode and Oladipo Agboluaje exemplify the calibre of British African heritage / Black British artists that feel PlayLab and tiata fahodzi can be a home to them.

The delight and gratitude for our success in seeking and receiving support from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation to reimagine PlayLab from 2024 onwards, has been truly felt and has also allowed us to interrogate the work with do around disability and access. PlayLab will be relaunched in autumn 2025 with a refreshed process; one that speaks to some of the feedback and conversations we've had with artists.

We have opened up conversations around the global majority and diasporic experience in specific areas of the industry such as dramaturgy, Climate Justice and wellbeing. Whether through facilitated workshops, townhall style events or our 'Compound Conversations' (a curated series of meetings for artists covering everything from writing workshops to funding advice for artists), we have consistently and strategically ensured that our work is inspired by listening and being in dialogue.

But sitting at the heart of our work as our excitement to thrill audiences with the work on stages. We have grown from making small scale work to mid-scale productions. Commissioning first time playwrights, as well as producing and touring debut plays, and finding new voices that both celebrate the canon but also disrupt the given forms in theatre. And we couldn't be prouder of the work we have been able to support and share thanks to the brilliance of writers such as babirye bukilwa, Anyebe Godwin, Diana Atouna, Nkenna Akunna and Magero Otieno-Magero. All possible through partnerships with Paines Plough, Belgrade Theatre, Bristol Old Vic, and others.

And now in 2025, the company's natural ambitious and playful approach continues with a new drive towards compassionate disruption – our ability to hold space for learning and growing whilst also becoming champions for work and processes that challenge how we make work, and what theatre we should be making. And our contemporary Untitled Black opera is a shining example of redefining the process of making work by bringing together a group of mid-career or established creatives to dream together towards a new opera production, with a research and development process running from June 2025 – followed by plans to fully produce the opera in 2027/2028. Alongside this, the company will also be looking at what we have to offer to audience development thinking for a theatrical form that is desperately in need of diverse audiences.

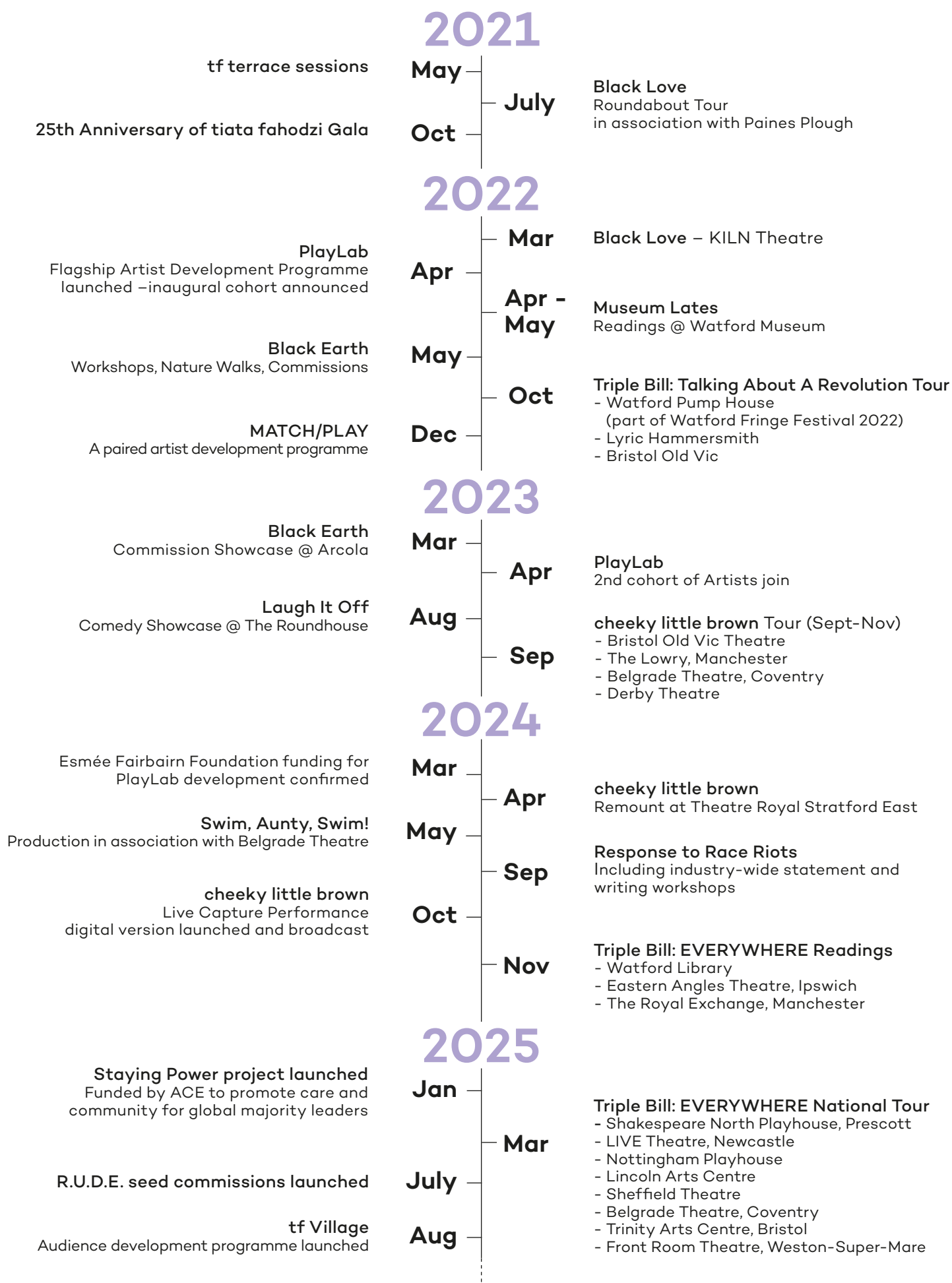
Our staying power is very much rooted in our values, and our ability to be agile, to learn, and innovate. And so, this new strategic and artistic vision starts with a complete rebrand (including website) for tiata fahodzi in Autumn 2025. With a new look, I hope we can find a new sense of belonging in the theatre industry.

Certainly, what is always true as a CEO & Artistic Director, is that the work never feels done. But the future holds many fruitful promises for tiata fahodzi; the promise of making even bigger and more inventive work, securing the support to continue to exist sustainably, and the joy of seeing how the company can still surprise artists and audiences alike.

Thank you to all those that have been a part of my leadership journey and tiata fahodzi over the last 4 years. We are because of YOU!!!

**Chinonyerem Odimba**  
CEO & Artistic Director of tiata fahodzi

# milestones for past four years





**35** shows &  
stories told

**43**

venues visited

Including Bristol Old Vic Theatre,  
Belgrade Theatre, Lyric Hammersmith,  
Kiln Theatre, Watford Pump House,  
The Lowry, Derby Theatre, and many more

**40**

new partnerships created

**9,548** audience  
members  
reached

**190**

artists supported

Our artists range from performers,  
to playwrights, to creative team  
members, to visual artists, to poets  
and more

**80%**

uplift in  
company turnover

Supported by Arts Council England as part of  
the National Portfolio, and by individual funding  
bodies such as the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation  
and Genesis Foundation

freelance theatre  
workers employed

**173**



# home of British African heritage / Black British playwrights

We are committed to staging ambitious work by British African heritage / Black British writers, challenging form and nurturing the next generation of Black British talent.

We believe that creating theatre that celebrates the richness, variety and joyfulness of British African heritage / Black British stories and experiences is a powerful political act, contributing to a radically equitable and just future.

With 60.1% of British African heritage / Black British artists feeling unsupported entering the theatre industry **on stage** and 79% feeling unsupported entering the industry **off-stage** (Act For Action Report, 2024), it shows that the work that we strive towards is needed now more than ever. It's vital for the longevity of our art that we build equitable space for our artists and audiences and finds ways to **compassionately disrupt** the broader sector at large.

## our outcomes

- Producing a major show biannually
- Running our 'Triple Bill' touring model that commissions and tours three short plays by British African heritage / Black British writers
- Opening up our rehearsal rooms to British African heritage / Black British and Global Majority artists to observe and engage with the company via our Artists Village

"Black Love is a beautiful and essential piece of theatre."  
★★★★★ The Stage

## our achievements

"[Chinonyerem] Odimba, appointed one of the Society of London Theatre's 'future industry leaders' in April, continues her positive impact on the company and the sector"

The Stage 100 2025: Producers (Not-For-Profit)

- Black Love (2021) toured across **8 venues** and received **5 stars** from the Stage, **4 stars** from the Guardian
- Chinonyerem Odimba won **Best Musical Theatre Bookwriting** at the **Writer's Guild Awards 2022** for **Black Love** (2021)
- Triple Bill: Talking About a Revolution (2022) was nominated for **4 WhatsonStage Awards**. **Best New Play**, **Best Regional Production**, **Best Professional Debut Performance** – Chloe Lemonius, **Best Professional Debut Performance** – Haina Al Saud
- Black Love (2022) was remounted at the Kiln Theatre, reaching **2,833 audience members** across a 3-week run. **60%** of those audiences were from ethnically diverse backgrounds
- Triple Bill: Talking About a Revolution (2022) was nominated for **4 WhatsonStage Awards**
- cheeky little brown (2023) toured across **3 venues** and reached over **1,168 audience members**
- Our Artist Village brought **6 British African heritage / Black British artists** into our rehearsal spaces for cheeky little brown (2023) to develop their craft
- Triple Bill: EVERYWHERE (2024) commissioned **3 playwrights**, continuing the programme from its initial pilot stage, having readings at **2 venues** – one in Watford, and another in Manchester





## Triple Bill Tour (2022)

In October 2022, we piloted Triple Bill, commissioning three British African heritage / Black British writers - Diana Atuona, babirye builwa and Malaika Kegode - to create new, original 30-minute plays in response to the prompt: TALKING ABOUT A REVOLUTION. They received dramaturgical support from our CEO & Artistic Director, Chinonyerem Odimba, to develop their work and their craft.

To deliver this pilot programme, we partnered with The Lyric Hammersmith and Bristol Old Vic Theatre to create a small-scale tour that would allow these fresh, new pieces of writing to be seen by audiences across the country.

These plays were designed for small-scale touring, allowing them to be highly adaptable to any environment. This was done with the intention of allowing the work to be presented in unconventional performance spaces – such as community centres and education settings – as a way to connect with audiences who wouldn't typically cross the threshold of a theatre. In addition to playing dates at more traditional venues, Triple Bill was also performed at a community venue, The Pumphouse Arts Centre in Watford; our regional home. This allowed us to re-engage with our company's base location and re-affirmed the potential of reaching broader audiences by stepping outside conventional theatre spaces.

*"tiata fahodzi's Triple Bill presents an excellent platform for three brilliant writers to showcase their talents within a popular mixed bill format. It provides a vital space for those early career writers to springboard their work in front of audiences - a vital step in the development of their voice & an exciting opportunity for underserved audiences for original drama to engage with a great & eclectic night out."*

Bristol Old Vic

This new model of touring continued, with tiata fahodzi commissioning a fresh set of **three playwrights** in 2024 to create work based around the theme of "EVERYWHERE". Our Triple Bill received readings in London, Manchester and Watford; before touring nationally in 2025 playing at Shakespeare North Playhouse, Prescott, LIVE Theatre, Newcastle, Nottingham Playhouse, Lincoln Arts Centre, Sheffield Theatre, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Trinity Arts Centre, Bristol, Front Room Theatre, Weston-Super-Mare.

# creating a more equitable & inclusive sector

To compassionately disrupt and seed change in the wider theatre ecology, creating a more equitable and inclusive sector.

tiata fahodzi is a genuine expert in the stories and experiences of British African heritage / Black British – an expertise built over more than a quarter of a century as the UK's leading British African heritage / Black British theatre company. It's through this lived experience that the company has become an authority on creating authentic work and serving as a leading voice in debate. We have a genuine understanding of the rich complexity of the narratives of our communities, the barriers to making and experiencing theatre, and how to overcome them.

We are **passionate** about the significant role we have to play reaching beyond our own programme to seed change across the wider theatre industry, ensuring a more equitable and inclusive sector. During the period, we will increasingly focus on making targeted and specific interventions, designed to **compassionately disrupt** the status quo and drive wider change.

## our outcomes

- Extending our influence and expertise through Co-Productions, Co-Commissioning, and Associate Producing work
- Co-leading a Consortium of Global Majority led theatre companies
- Curating and leading Compound Conversations, a round table which encourages conversation and exchange

## our achievements

*"So brilliant to hear things you've thought about voiced and to have answered too. Definitely makes me feel less alone"*

Compound Conversations Participant, 2022

- Chinonyerem Odimba, CEO & Artistic Director, and **tiata fahodzi** appeared in the **Stage 100: Producers (Not-For Profit)** consistently from 2022 to 2025
- Collaborated with Paines Plough as Associate Producers on **Black Love** (2021) as part of the Roundabout Tour
- Associate Produced the premiere of **Swim, Auntie**, **Swim!** with Belgrade Theatre which won the **UK Theatre Award for Best New Writing** and was nominated for **Best Production** and **Best Playwright** at the **Black British Theatre Awards**
- Chinonyerem Odimba, our CEO & Artistic Director, led a **workshop** that gave space for British African heritage / Black British and Global Majority Artists to reflect on their writing. **25 participants** attended, with an additional **20 applicants** on a reserve waiting list
- Organising a Dramaturgy Townhall in October 2021 to discussing Eurocentric Dramaturgy. This engaged with over **150 organisations**
- Publishing **Four Letters** online in response a 'Letter to Eurocentric Dramaturgs' by four Global Majority writers **Matilda Feyisayo Ibin, Hassan Abdulrazzak, Oladjipo Agboluaje, and Lorna French**
- In 2021, Compound Conversations held 8 separate events and engaged with **141 participants**
- Partnered with **New Vic Theatre** and **New Earth Theatre** to deliver the **Backstage Residency**, providing opportunities for eight entry-level theatremakers from Global Majority backgrounds to gain vital development experience working in the round at the New Vic Theatre



## case study:



### Swim, Aunty, Swim! (2024)

In May 2024, tiata fahodzi was associate producer on Belgrade Theatre's production *Swim, Aunty, Swim!*, written by Siana Bangura – a play about sisterhood, motherhood, friendship, ageing, and the sublime power of water.

The production saw **1,350 audience members** attend 14 performances at Belgrade Theatre. This averaged at **90 people** per showing in a small studio space.

The show won the **UK Theatre Award** for **Best New Writing** and was nominated for **Best Production** and **Best Playwright** at the **Black British Theatre Awards**.

Alongside our financial investment, our CEO & Artistic Director Chinonyerem Odimba played a vital role in the play's development as dramaturg, bringing her literary expertise to the development of the script. It inspired us to think more expansively about the interventions we can make through co-production and associate partnerships, sharing our expertise and having a key creative input alongside any financial contribution we make. In doing so, we can curate and encourage development within the sector that allows British African heritage / Black British stories to find a home on the stage and assists venues in attracting and serving more diverse audiences.



# embedding a culture of care

## to embed a culture of care in our organisation and throughout the sector

tiata fahodzi believes that a genuinely equitable theatre sector will only be achieved by a radical reinvention of the working culture that enables it. We know that British African heritage / Black British theatre workers and audiences face particular challenges, in the context of endemic racism across society and the rise in organised violence and acts of terrorism by the far right.

We prioritise the creation of a culture of care, not only benefitting those we work with directly but also informing the wider sector. This culture of care will always be intersectional and have individual needs at the heart of its consideration. An invitation to be part of a tiata fahodzi project will always be an invitation to be part of a specific practice of care – we will offer our collaborators a sense of ‘homecoming’, regardless of where we physically meet.

tiata fahodzi understands the **barriers** that artists face, whilst also acknowledging that as a company we also face our own set of restrictions. These barriers encompass the ‘big and small barriers’ to make our work. Be that a challenging touring landscape, with decreasing guarantees or a talent drain with barriers to innovation and the increase in costs to tour our work. Placing care within our work and being kind to ourselves and the way we make work as a company, not only through our artists but also through our staff and those we collaborate with is central to this. It ensures that as a company we are embracing these barriers and seeing artists as something that makes us stronger through **our resilience** to deliver our work. It ensures that as a company we are embracing these barriers and finding our resilience to deliver our work through the invaluable meaningful relationship with the artists we work with.

### our outcomes

- Creating a culture of care for the creation process
- Building a sense of home within our base in Watford
- Sharing our work digitally to broaden our welcome to any potential artists and audiences

### our achievements

- Introducing drama therapy and working with freelance dramatherapists into our rehearsal processes – such as for **Black Love** (2021, 2022), and **cheeky little brown** (2023)
- Maintained two fixed days per week in office for the **core staff** at tiata fahodzi, giving space to allow for compassionate flexibility
- Filmed and digital streamed a live-capture of **cheeky little brown** in partnership with The Space Arts and Bristol Old Vic





## PlayLab

In 2022, the company initiated PlayLab, a development strand which saw **six British African heritage / Black British artists** join the organisation on attachment. These were split between three Artist Associates and three Creative Associates. Each of these artists embodied different disciplines and focuses. The first cohort was comprised of Artist Associates director Monique Touko, sound designer/composer Esther Kehinde Ajayi and poet/playwright Yomi Sode. The Creative Associates were dramaturg Zodwa Nyoni, climate change expert and BBC's Springwatch presenter Gillian Burke and playwright Oladipo Agboluaje.

*"This is an opportunity to explore my self-expression and question my creative intentions further."*

Artist Associate Esther Kehinde Ajayi,  
Sound Designer / Composer

The structure of this programme is unique due to the fact that there is no fixed, pre-determined outcome. Instead, it's a curated space that allows the cohort to focus on themselves, their work and their practice. It offers support dramaturgically, pastorally and financially without any strings or conditions. It de-centres the idea of an end show/product or expectation. This freedom instead allows the artists to truly explore what being an 'artist' means to them and finding their place within that.

This approach to care-focused development has allowed those creatives to foster their own ambitions and build careers beyond their time as part of the PlayLab cohort, whilst still remaining in contact with tiata fahodzi.

When surveyed by tiata fahodzi, **78.6%** said that what they valued from a development programme was "financial support or paid time, clear career pathways or commissions, access to venues/platforms". This need to maintain connection was exemplified with one participant noting about other pre-existing development programmes that "there was next to no follow up and the programme leaders didn't seem interested in what happened to anyone afterwards". This apathy is the **anti-thesis** to our approach as part of PlayLab, and why we believe that the programme is so vital.

To remain committed to learning from the artists we work with, we successfully applied to Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. Their funding has enabled us to re-imagine and re-develop PlayLab as a core artist development programme for the company. This ongoing investment will allow us to create a new structure that gives British African heritage / Black British artists what they need to develop their work and their careers, whilst also continue to embed that all important care and consideration for them as artists and people.

One area that we are particularly focused upon is how we engage with disabled and neurodivergent artists, making the programme more broadly accessible. To begin this work we have undertaken training for our entire core staff – increasing our knowledge base so that we can better serve the spectrum of artists that we engage with as an intersectional theatre company. The work we are doing on rethinking PlayLab will take us in 2027 and we hope to announce a new cohort of artists in 2026.



# watford at our heart

## locally made; nationally recognised

As a Watford-based organisation we recognise and celebrate our home in the heart of the Watford community. Our current base is housed within Watford Library which gives us access to the diverse community members of the town. Our location roots us within the town, whilst giving us scope for national ambition with our work.

*“tiata fahodzi are a much-loved part of our town. I always find their productions entertaining and thought-provoking. They play a really active role in Watford - working with a range of organisations and always willing to share their expertise and insights.”*  
 Peter Taylor, Mayor of Watford



### our outcomes

- Connecting with local businesses and organisations to create events
- Engaging with the community through local public-facing events
- Offering Watford-based residencies for British African heritage / Black British artists

### our achievements

- Our 25th Birthday Celebrations in Watford was held at the Pump House Arts Centre – a local community venue, and the evening was catered for by local food and refreshment providers. tiata fahodzi commissioned artists including set designer Josie Hunter, visual artist Suzannah Garbiel, poets Magero Otieno-Magero, and Chloe Filani, and ACD-Arts musicians who performed on the night
- Our CEO & Artistic Director, Chinonyerem Odimba, sits on the Watford Cultural Leaders panel; offering critical advice and insight around the cultural landscape within Watford
- Awarded funding from Watford Borough Council for MATCH/PLAY
- Produced Museum Lates at Watford Museum – bringing Black British canon to local audiences
- Launching the Triple Bill Readings (2024) at Watford Library
- Screening the live-capture recording of cheeky little brown (2024) at The Pumphouse Arts Centre as part of the Watford Fringe (2025)
- Participating in the Watford Borough Council application to the Windrush Legacy Celebrations planned for 2026



## case study:



## Museum Lates

Throughout April and May 2023, we engaged audiences in Watford with Museum Lates, a series of 5 rehearsed readings and conversations held at Watford Museum. Each reading explored the British African heritage / Black British Canon from 1970-2010. In each, a cast of emerging actors performed a play from a different decade by a British African heritage / Black British writer who has made a notable contribution to Black stories, introducing the local community and beyond to an important element in British African heritage / Black British theatre

These plays were: **Rum and Coca Cola** by Mustapha Matura (1970s), **Leave Taking** by Winsome Pinnock (1980s), **Boy with Beer** by Paul Boakye (1990s), **Random** by Debbie Tucker Green (2000s), **Chewing Gum Dreams** by Michaela Coel (2010s).

*"I went to Museum Lates last night and saw Random. Just wanted to say thank you to you and the artistic team. It was absolutely incredible; the acting, the writing and directing."*

Audience Response, 2023



## case study:



## An Artist's Story: Malaika Kegode

tiata fahodzi is an artist-led organisation – which is an idea that sits at the heart of our work. We believe in supporting an artist's development, assisting them in growing in their craft and experience, and maintaining this level of developmental support even when they become an established artist.

A clear example of this can be found in our relationship with **Malaika Kegode**. Malaika is an artist that we have been consistently supporting over the last three years.

Initially joining us as part of our Triple Bill Tour pilot model for Talking About A Revolution, our CEO & Artistic Director Chinonyerem Odimba worked with Malaika to develop their short, 30-minute play. This relationship allowed both Malaika and tiata fahodzi to grow in their creative ambitions to showcase the kind of work that Triple Bill was designed to champion.

After this, tiata fahodzi maintained that crucial contact with Malaika as she explored avenues of her creative career. This gave us the opportunity to support Malaika's application to other development and artistic programmes outside of tiata fahodzi's own. A notable example being **English Touring Theatre's** New Voices Programme. This was another chance for Malaika to grow as an artist and develop her network within the theatre industry, which is something that we are proud to be able to offer British African heritage / Black British artists as a company.

Now in 2025, we have offered Malaika a place as part of our **R.U.D.E Seed Commissions** – which stands for 'Remember You Disrupt Everything'. It's an opportunity for four artists to embody tiata fahodzi's belief of **compassionate disruption** when beginning the initial stages of their creative process, to be able to create something that challenges the form and their own body of work.

In creating this sustained connection, we believe that we have created a home for Malaika and writers like her to develop their ambitious work as British African heritage / Black British artist, to be able to create art that disrupts the form and seeds change in the wider theatre ecology, and takes deliberate care of artists through the ebbs and flows of their career.

*"In an industry that can feel impenetrable, tiata fahodzi set a benchmark for kindness and clarity. The support and belief I've received from them over the years has been transformative for my work and confidence, helping me to advocate for myself and push my writing to exciting new places. When you come into theatre from a non-traditional background, finding allies who understand, respect and encourage growth within your practice are essential, and it makes a world of difference knowing that Chino and tiata fahodzi are on your side."*

Malaika Kegode, 2025

# climate justice

tiata fahodzi centres future-thinking across its work, not just solely in the longevity of the business, but also to sustain the company amongst the current Climate Change Crisis.

## our outcomes

- Reducing carbon emissions and air pollution in our operations and touring
- Promoting care and justice in creative sector climate solutions
- Creating space for Global Majority artists to explore and lead climate responses

## our achievements

- Situated within the **Watford Library** (1st Floor Offices), we are able to reduce our carbon footprint through the use of communal assets
- Utilising **public transport** (trains, buses, etc.) wherever and whenever possible when touring work to reduce our carbon footprint
- Reuse / repurposing of set pieces for our remount of *cheeky little brown* (2024)
- **Donating** materials and set pieces used in *Triple Bill: EVERYWHERE* (2025) to a community-run venue to encourage the **prevention** of needless purchases and increased waste
- Pioneering **Black Earth**, a climate justice research project for Global Majority artists

## case study:

### Black Earth

In May 2022, we embarked upon **Black Earth**, a research project around climate justice, community, and joy. It involved **workshops, nature walks, and Green Care Packages** for members of the local communities in Watford and the South East, as well as the Bristol and Bath regions. The project explored the mental health impact of the climate emergency on British African heritage / Black British and other Global Majority people, as well as how **creative resistance** can play an active part in how we respond.

The project was awarded funding from the **National Lottery Fund** and was held in partnership with **Watershed Bristol** and **Julie's Bicycle**.

It was initiated by an open Town Hall meeting in May, facilitated by Samia Dumbaya and Selina Nwulu – which was live illustrated

by Jasmin Thompson. This project had a community-based focus, allowing people to be engaged in the topic and share their voices in the discussion.

Based on these discussions, follow-up workshops led by Zakiya McKenzie and Kaysha Provost – live illustrated by Camille Aubry – were held with community members in Bristol, exploring the three main themes identified during the open Town Hall: What does climate justice mean to us? Exploring our relationship with guilt and mental health. Actions of creative resistance.

The outcomes and discussions from these workshops guided us to create **Green Care Packages** in partnership with Community Apothecary and the afrofuturists apothecary. The learnings and legacy from the interactive booklet included in the

package will help guide communities and arts organisations in how to create space and joy for Global Majority people when discussing, learning, and organising for climate justice.

Six free **decolonial nature walks** also took place in Leigh Woods, Bristol and Cassiobury Park Nature Reserve, Watford as part of Great Big Green Week. Workshop sessions around Climate Justice were led by Farah Ahmed on behalf of Julie's Cycle. As part of the project, we commissioned the work of digital artist Ama Dogbe and writer Joshua Anderson-Grey. Ama created an interactive online game featuring a dam that 'powers' the world and Joshua wrote a play 'Pack Mentality'. A showcase of their work and panel discussion was held as part of a symposium at **Arcola Theatre** in March 2023.

*"There are not many spaces Black environmentalists can get together, talk and be in community with each other – that completely made the day. I also think the workshop was useful for getting us to think deeper about what climate justice looks like but also our actions and strategy for campaigning for it. I enjoyed the resources given in the presentation, as well as the space to decompress and recognise how difficult the work is."*

Participant, 2022





# looking to the future

tiata fahodzi looks to the future with excitement. Emboldened by the idea of **compassionate disruption**, we are currently developing a spectrum of productions, projects and programmes. All are artist-led and care-focused, aimed at developing ourselves, our collaborators and our audiences.

## **\*Untitled\* Opera Project**

Led by our CEO & Artistic Director Chinonyerem Odimba, tiata fahodzi is embarking on the development of an opera project based on the Greek tragedy of 'Orpheus and Eurydice'. This production aims to push the form of what opera can be, and the breadth of audiences that it can be made for.

A key aim of the project is to show our commitment to mid-career and/or established global majority artists seeking opportunities to grow their craft with peers and find new storytelling forms. We have engaged 8 global majority artists/creatives as well as experienced dramaturgs, to help shape the project and bring the innovative approach to the making of opera alive. tiata fahodzi has also been able to secure partnerships with Birmingham Opera Company, National Opera Studio and National Theatre Studio, as well as international connections with Fedora and Opera Europa.

## **R.U.D.E Seed Commissions**

Remember You Disrupt Everything is a seed commissioning scheme that encourages four British African heritage / Black British writers the opportunity to think about their next big play.

We will be inviting them to spend time dreaming, researching and writing about the one play that they have always wanted to write. A play that they see in alignment with tiata fahodzi and our work, a play that tells their story in a way that feels like it expands their horizons as an artist.

## **PlayLab**

Our flagship artist development programme, PlayLab, will be re-launching following a period of restructuring and reflection; kindly funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. This time has enabled us to properly consider what British African heritage / Black British artists need from a modern development programme. PlayLab will be re-launching in Autumn / Winter 2025.

## **Artists Village**

As part of our commitment to find innovative ways to engage with audiences at any and all levels, tiata fahodzi continues to develop our Artists Village model – which is a space where audience development and artists development intersect. As this project evolves, we are learning from audiences and artists, regionally and nationally, and have been giving artists the opportunity to join us in rehearsal spaces, develop their work by facilitated sessions with local artists talking about our theatrical work at an early stage in its development, championing our shows in their local areas, and helping us discover new exciting ways to speak directly to ever growing tiata fahodzi's audiences.

## **Triple Bill**

Our Triple Bill Touring programme will be returning – working on developing three short, 30-minute plays with three fresh writers. These pieces will be dramaturgically supported by our CEO & Artistic Director Chinonyerem Odimba before being taken out on tour to be shared with our audiences.

If you are interested in connecting with us to talk about how you could support tiata fahodzi's future, please contact us at [info@tiatafahodzi.com](mailto:info@tiatafahodzi.com)



## reference notes

**Act for Action Report: The Reality of Black British Theatre Professionals** conducted by Irvine Partners on behalf of the Black British Theatre Awards (2024). Available online at: <http://bit.ly/4p4aA8Y>

**Racism and Ethnic Inequality in a Time of Crisis: Findings from the Evidence for Equality National Survey** edited by Nissa Finney, James Nazroo, Laia Bécaries, Dharmi Kapadia, and Natalie Shlomo, published by Policy Press and Bristol University Press (2023). Available online at: <http://bit.ly/3UVORCo>

## thank yous

tiata fahodzi wishes to thank;

Sian Alexander, Edward Kemp, Debo Adebayo, Alisha Artry, Caroline Hinds, Sherma Polidore-Perrins, Amy Rockson, Mwizakunyuma Mkandawire, Sarah-Jane Rawlings, Deborah Titilola Sawyerr, Samenua Seshier, Elouise West, Sampira Willbourne, Olivette Otele, Femi Elufowoju Jr, Suzanne Bell, Sherrie Eugene-Hart, Peter Taylor, Donna Nolan, Ben Atterbury, Marcus Bernard, Asma Hussain, Laura Horn, Semeta Bloomfield, Koko Brown, Kevin Fitzmaurice, Amber Massie-Blomfield, Corey Campbell, Diana Whitehead (Fourth Wall PR), Paula Stanic, Yamin Choudry, Adrian Green, Heather Basten, Wabriya King, Campbell X, Diana Atouna, babriye bukilwa, Malaika Kegode, Magero Otieno Magero, Nkenna Akunna, Anyebe Godwin, Yusra Warsama, Fiona Morris, Giles Chilpin, Hilary Carty, Josette Bushell-Mingo, Alison Holdom,

**British African Theatre Makers: General Needs & Barriers Survey** conducted by tiata fahodzi, June 2025.

**Global Majority Theatre Makers: Reflecting on Existing Development Programmes Survey** conducted by tiata fahodzi, June 2025.

Arts Council England, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, Creative Access, The Space Arts, Theatre503, Belgrade Theatre, TheatreCentre, Bristol Old Vic Theatre, Theatre Royal Stratford East, Genesis Foundation, National Lottery Community, New Earth Theatre, Live Theatre, Fund, Watford Borough Council, Watershed Arts Trust, The Africa Centre, Break Comms, Pump House Arts Centre, Paines Plough, KILN Theatre, Tamasha Theatre, Beyond Face, Watford Borough Council, Watford Library, The Arcola, New Earth Theatre, Watford Museum, New Vic Theatre, The Watford Fringe, English Touring Theatre. Fedora, Genesis Foundation, Hr Hub, Royal Society of Arts, Birmingham Rep, Live Theatre, English Touring Theatre, Lyric Hammersmith, National Theatre Studio, Fedora



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



## photography, design & writing acknowledgements

photographs used throughout this report have been taken by photographers over the last four-year period. credits belong to: Craig Fuller, Marc Brenner, Wasi Daniju, Suzannah Gabrielle, Héctor Manchego, Camilla Greenwell

Developed with the support of Sian Alexander ([www.linkedin.com/in/sianalexander](http://www.linkedin.com/in/sianalexander)), in collaboration with the whole tiata fahodzi team and board

tiata fahodzi  
1st floor offices  
Watford Library, Hempstead Road  
Watford  
WD17 3EU

[info@tiatafahodzi.com](mailto:info@tiatafahodzi.com)

co-chairs  
trustees

Edward Kemp & Debo Adebayo  
Alisha Artry, Caroline Hinds,  
Sherma Polidore-Perrins,  
Amy Rockson

ceo & artistic director  
executive producer  
general manager  
finance manager  
executive assistant

Chinonyerem Odimba  
Conor Dye  
Joanne Bispham  
Mandeep Gill  
Muneerah Yate  
(Maternity Cover, Lerato Mokate)

external marketing & comms

Stephen Oakes & Louise Thomas  
at BREAK COMMS

graphic design

Chris Chasseaud Design

Registered Company No. 3440596 | Charity No. 1108416

*My time at tf has been fulfilling and gratifying. Having harnessed a whole plethora of experiences and eventualities, it's cathartic to be able to pass learning onto future creatives who will experience similar eventualities. Generations of creatives come and go. I'm interested in what has been learned and what is to come. We have to make impact, but impact in half a generation is not enough. Intergenerational impact is vital for our creatives. So we have to work with believers. Believing that we can, believing that will and believing that we will, for ever after. Passing on gems and skills is a generous gift. tf allows us to do that and has prepared the potential path for generational future successes. Blessings always. Resilience always.*

Sherrie Eugene-Hart