

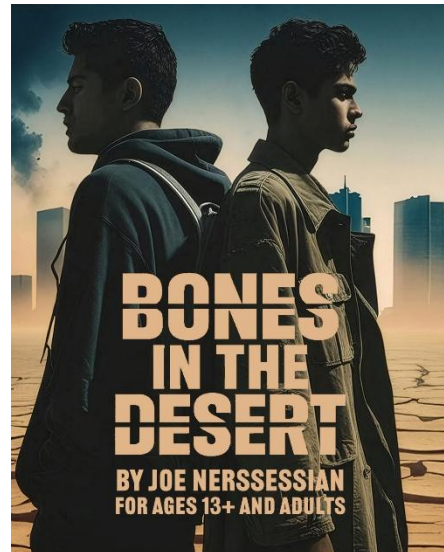
CASTING CALL OUT

Bones in the Desert tour

Half Moon is seeking two adult male/non-binary actors (18+) for the upcoming November-December 2026 tour of *Bones in the Desert*, a powerful new play by Joe Nersessian exploring the legacy of genocide and the lives it still touches, for ages 13+ and young adults.

Demonstrable experience and training required, offering an energetic performance style, team player ethos, ideally with strong movement ability. Confident in/interested in work for youth audiences.

This being small-scale touring actors travel in the company van with the Technical Stage Manager and assist with get-ins/outs as part of role. A DBS will be required. A valid clean driving license an advantage but not essential. We particularly welcome those who are based in London and the South East of England.



The roles

Bones in the Desert is a two-hander.

ARTUR – Male character*, playing age: mid/late 20s.

Trained actor with strong physical and vocal range, offering an ability to be both introspective as well as the maturity to portray and describe narratives of refuge displacement, genocide and violence.

This is a culturally specific casting as the character is of Syrian/Armenian Christian heritage, so we would be seeking an actor identifying as coming from heritage of a SWANA diaspora (South-West Asian/North Africa/Middle Eastern region).

*This is a male character, but we welcome actors of any gender identity to audition.

HAGOP – Male character*, playing age: youthful look as the character is a teenager, but we would expect that the actor cast would be an actual age of 24-30.

Trained actor with strong physical and vocal range, offering an ability to be energetic, playful at times cruel, as well as the maturity to portray and describe narratives of refuge displacement, genocide and violence.

This is a culturally specific casting as the character is of Syrian/Armenian Christian heritage, so we would be seeking an actor identifying as coming from heritage of a SWANA diaspora (South-West Asian/North Africa/Middle Eastern region).



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About the Show

Two lives. One past. A hundred years apart. A story that refuses to stay buried.

Berlin, 2022. Artur's a 19-year-old refugee who's stuck in a city that doesn't feel like home, trapped between worlds, conflicting roles and by the ghosts of his desperate escape from the Syrian civil war. His only release is a dead-end job washing dishes, where the casual racism of the customers makes him invisible.

Then someone from his journey shows up: Hagop. Same age, same trauma, same questions. What begins as a joyful reunion becomes a reckoning with identity, with memory and with the question of how to be free.

From the deserts of 1915 to the chaos of today, *Bones in the Desert* explores the legacy of genocide and the lives it still touches. With raw honesty and urgency, it also confronts mental well-being, racism in contemporary Europe and the cost of silence.

Written by British-Armenian playwright Joe Nersessian, this powerful new play speaks directly to young adult audiences with heart, humour and an unflinching gaze. It's about where we come from, who we carry with us and what it means to belong.

Threading together forgotten massacres and modern-day violence, it weaves a haunting, cross-generational tapestry of loss, inheritance and the quiet rebellion of those who choose to speak.

Featuring a continuous soundscape, this show will be an exhilarating theatre adventure, presented in Half Moon's on-going and award-winning immersive style.

Music is by Nick Powell, lighting design by Claire Childs, director is Chris Elwell.

Bones in the Desert is a production by Half Moon, the UK's leading small-scale young people's venue and touring company. It is the latest in the series of pieces for teenage/young adult audience which have won and been nominated for Off West End Theatre/Offies awards across the theatre for young people categories (*Hot Orange*, *Daytime Deewane*, *Crowded* and *Off the Grid*).

Performances last 60 minutes, no interval. Followed by a Q&A session with the cast.

Project Dates

Auditions will take place at Half Moon in London on **Thursday 9 July 2026**.

Callbacks will take place at Half Moon in London on **Tuesday 14 July 2026**.

Rehearsals take place at Half Moon, London.

Then touring across England from 18 November–6 December 2026. Venues programmed for this period ranging from Tanya Moiseiwitsch Playhouse, Sheffield, The Nest, Chichester Festival Theatre and Gulbenkian, Canterbury.



Rehearsal week 1: **w/c Monday 7 September 2026**

Rehearsal week 2: **w/c Monday 26 October 2026**

Rehearsal week 3: **w/c Monday 2 November 2026**

Tech/Production week: **w/c Monday 9 November 2026, opening at Half Moon Thursday 12–Tuesday 17 November 2026**

Touring period: **Wednesday 18 November–6 December**

Venues programmed include Tanya Moiseiwitsch Playhouse, Sheffield, The Nest, Chichester Festival Theatre and Gulbenkian, Canterbury.

Fee

£635 per week invoice job.

Half Moon runs an ITC Equity Fair Work Approved contract for this job which includes stated allowances/benefits (i.e. per diems/accommodation provided on tour/holiday pay).

Actors travel in the company van with the Technical Stage Manager. Actors assist with get-in /get-out. Actors will be required to have or be willing to obtain a DBS certificate.

How to Apply

Deadline for applications is no later than 10am on Monday 22 June 2026.

Please apply [via SPOTLIGHT](#) or [via email to admin@halfmoon.org.uk](mailto:admin@halfmoon.org.uk) with the subject 'CASTING BONES IN THE DESERT'

Applications open: Thursday 4 June 2026

Auditions will take place at Half Moon in London on **Thursday 9 July 2026**

Callbacks will take place at Half Moon in London on **Tuesday 14 July 2026**

About Half Moon

Half Moon is the UK's leading small-scale young people's venue and touring company. It is a local organisation with a national remit, committed to supporting artists and young people at every stage of their creative development. Working from our base in East London, we specialise in new writing and artform development, acting as a gateway organisation that provides pathways for progression and experimentation. Our wide-ranging programme reaches around 50,000 annually and engages those who are often excluded from arts activity. Our activity includes a season of professional plays for young audiences, national touring productions and an extensive creative learning programme, including eight youth theatres.

Half Moon is a National Portfolio Organisation of Arts Council England and receives regular funding from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

Half Moon's digital archive is available at stagesofhalfmoon.org.uk



Website: halfmoon.org.uk

Instagram: [halfmoon_theatre](https://www.instagram.com/halfmoon_theatre)

Facebook: [halfmoontheatre](https://www.facebook.com/halfmoontheatre)

Reviews of previous Half Moon productions for this age:

★★★★ “Impressive writing debut for young audiences.... Today’s school audience get a closeup masterclass in acting.... A bittersweet gem about the ache to continue a kiss”

The Guardian on Hot Orange (2024)

★★★★ “Brave, bold, provocative and lyrical.... this smouldering immersive production is an important and exploratory tale of teenage love.... Exquisitely crafted, brave and beautiful...just extraordinary”

Everything Theatre on Hot Orange (2024)

★★★★★ “I left the theatre grinning, exhilarated by superb performances, intricate and vibrant writing, and energised by the buoyant, pulsating beat. But I was also delighted at the sight of so many joyful teenagers who had just quietly been educated about a little bit of brown-skinned rebellion. Tell me again how theatre for children is the easy stuff.”

Everything Theatre on Daytime Deewane (2022)