



The National Theatre announces new programming on the South Bank, on tour, on screen and internationally – and launches a major new campaign for its future, *National Theatre Together*

- All three South Bank theatres will be open for live performances for audiences for the first time since March 2020.
- **Rufus Norris** directs and is lyricist for brand-new musical *Hex*, based on *Sleeping Beauty* this Christmas in the Olivier theatre, with book by **Tanya Ronder** and music by **Jim Fortune**.
- **Alecky Blythe** returns to the NT for the first time since *London Road* with a new verbatim play *Our Generation*, a co-production with Chichester Festival Theatre, directed by **Daniel Evans**.
- The Lyttelton theatre will reopen for audiences in October with a co-production with Birmingham Rep of **Ayub Khan Din's** *East Is East*, directed by **Iqbal Khan**, celebrating 25 years since its premiere.
- **Clint Dyer**, Deputy Artistic Director of the National Theatre, directs and co-writes *Death of England: Face to Face* with **Roy Williams**, an original feature film from the Lyttelton.
- The National Theatre Live recording of *Follies* returns to cinemas in September, its first cinema outing since its premiere live broadcast in 2017.
- Returns to Broadway for the acclaimed *The Lehman Trilogy*, a co-production with Neal Street Productions, and *Hadestown*, and major tours across the UK and Ireland for *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* and *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*.
- *Story Seekers* launches – a new nationwide creative literacy project for primary schools in partnership with the Unicorn Theatre.
- Public Acts returns with a production of *The Doncastrian Chalk Circle* to open at Cast in Doncaster featuring members of the local Doncaster community.

Friday 4 June 2021

The National Theatre has today announced its programming until the start of next year with productions on all three South Bank stages as well as three major UK tours, two productions on Broadway, a return to cinemas, and a new feature film to be broadcast on television this autumn. In the week the theatre reopened for audiences again, six new productions were announced, and five productions halted by the pandemic were confirmed to return to the South Bank.

It has also announced the public launch of **National Theatre Together**, a new campaign with people at its heart, highlighting the importance of creativity and collaboration with theatre-makers and communities, for young people and audiences. The campaign cements the NT's commitment to the people of this country and will raise vital funds for the theatre's ambitious recovery post-pandemic.

Rufus Norris, Director and Joint Chief Executive of the National Theatre, said: "Theatre is a world-class UK industry, and brings with it a bucket-load of economic and social benefits. The National Theatre has a crucial role to play in supporting the nation's creativity; it's an incredible place full of amazing people and elicits enormous affection, pride and passion in audiences around the world. National Theatre Together celebrates the work we create with theatre-makers and communities, for young people and audiences – and asks our friends to once again stand with us and equip us to do what we do best: shape a bright, creative future for this nation."

Together for Audiences

In the Olivier, following ***Under Milk Wood*** which begins previews on 16 June, **Kae Tempest's** previously announced ***Paradise***, a new version of *Philoctetes* by Sophocles, will open in August and is directed by **Ian Rickson**. Featuring an all-female cast, **Lesley Sharp** will play Philoctetes. In September, **Larry Kramer's *The Normal Heart*** will open, directed by **Dominic Cooke** in a co-production with Fictionhouse. **Ben Daniels** will perform the role of Ned Weeks, and **Liz Carr** joins the cast alongside the previously announced **Daniel Monks** and **Danny Lee Wynter**.

In the Olivier this December, National Theatre Director **Rufus Norris** directs ***Hex***, a new musical that goes beyond the kiss that woke the Sleeping Beauty and tells the fairy's tale, with book by **Tanya Ronder**, music by **Jim Fortune** and lyrics by **Rufus Norris**. Based on the 17th-century folk-tale, this darkly thrilling new version also reunites director Rufus Norris with set and costume designer **Katrina Lindsay** (*Small Island, London Road*) following their 2002 critically acclaimed adaptation of *Sleeping Beauty*, from which *Hex* is adapted.

The Father and the Assassin, a new play by previous NT writer-in-residence, **Anupama Chandrasekhar** directed by **Indhu Rubasingham** will open in the Olivier in early 2022. The play tells the story of how Nathuram Godse was radicalised through the fight for Indian independence, from being a devout follower of Gandhi to becoming his eventual assassin in 1948.

The Dorfman reopened this week with previews of ***After Life*** and from September **Miranda Cromwell** will direct **Winsome Pinnock's** play ***Rockets and Blue Lights***, a co-production with the Royal Exchange Theatre where the play had to close in March 2020 having played only three previews. Set across multiple time frames the action moves between the stories of Lou, an actor working on a new film about artist JMW Turner, and Lucy and Thomas, two Londoners coming to terms with the meaning of freedom.

In December, **Nancy Medina**, recipient of the NT's Peter Hall Bursary, directs **Alice Childress'** ground-breaking play ***Trouble in Mind*** in the Dorfman. Taking a satirical look at the white-dominated theatre scene of Broadway in the 1950s, the play follows the story of Wiletta Mayer, an African-American singer and actress searching to make her mark on history as a part of an acting company forced to face the prejudice of the times, on stage and off. **Tanya Moodie** will play Wiletta Mayer.

In February 2022, **Alecky Blythe** (*London Road*) returns to the National Theatre with an extraordinary new verbatim play, ***Our Generation***, which is based on material gathered over five years, following the lives of 12 young people from across the UK. Directed by **Daniel Evans**, Artistic Director of Chichester Festival Theatre, it is a co-production with Chichester and will play in the Minerva Theatre from April 2022.

In the Lyttelton, following their acclaimed stage productions *Death of England* and *Death of England: Delroy*, **Clint Dyer**, Deputy Artistic Director of the National Theatre, and **Roy Williams** (*Sucker Punch*) have written a new feature film ***Death of England: Face to Face*** to be broadcast on Sky Arts this autumn. Also directed by Clint Dyer, *Death of England: Face to Face* will be filmed in the Lyttelton theatre this June, following on from the success of Simon Godwin's original film *Romeo & Juliet* which was filmed in the theatre over 17 days during lockdown last year, and broadcast on Sky Arts and PBS in April. **Neil Maskell** (*Peaky Blinders*, *Small Axe*) plays Michael, **Giles Terera** (*Hamilton*, *Flack*) is Delroy and **Phil Daniels** (*I Hate Suzie*, *Adult Material*) is Michael's father, Alan.

The Lyttelton will reopen for live performances for the first time since closing in March 2020. In October Birmingham Rep's production of **Ayub Khan Din's** play ***East Is East***, directed by **Iqbal Khan**, in the 25th anniversary year of the play's premiere at the Rep will open. In November, a new darkly comic play, ***Manor***, by **Moira Buffini** (*The Dig*) will open nearly 18 months after it was first scheduled to do so, directed by **Fiona Buffini**. **Nancy Carroll** will play the owner of a rundown manor house, which shelters an explosive mix of people during a storm. In April, **Emlyn Williams'** semi-autobiographical drama ***The Corn is Green*** gets its first London revival for 35 years with a new production by director **Dominic Cooke** that will bring the story to a new generation. **Nicola Walker** will play Miss Moffat with **Iwan Davies** as Morgan Evans. In February 2022, **Emma Rice's** adaptation of **Emily Brontë's** masterpiece ***Wuthering Heights*** will open following dates in Bristol and York. A co-production with Wise Children, Bristol Old Vic and York Theatre Royal, the show will go on to tour the UK in spring 2022.

The National Theatre also confirms today the return to Broadway for the acclaimed ***The Lehman Trilogy***, a co-production with Neal Street Productions, alongside the previously announced ***Hadestown***, and three major tours across the UK and Ireland are planned.

The first UK tour is for the internationally acclaimed production of ***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time***, adapted by **Simon Stephens** from **Mark Haddon's** best-selling novel, directed by **Marianne Elliott**, which will celebrate its 10th year in 2022. Then ***The Ocean at the End of the Lane*** based on the best-selling novel by **Neil Gaiman**, adapted by **Joel Horwood** and directed by **Katy Rudd**, will tour in 2023. **David Eldridge's** ***Beginning***,

presented by Lee Dean & Theatre Royal Bath Productions in association with Queen's Theatre Hornchurch, directed by **Polly Findlay** and **Joe Lichenstein**, will be revived at Queen's Theatre Hornchurch in September followed by a UK tour, with casting to be announced.

The Lehman Trilogy by **Stefano Massini**, adapted by **Ben Power** and directed by **Sam Mendes** will return to the Nederlander Theatre on Broadway in the autumn, with **Adrian Lester** joining **Simon Russell Beale** and **Adam Godley** as the Lehman brothers. The production then visits San Francisco and Los Angeles with casting to be announced. *Hadestown*, with music, book and lyrics by **Anaïs Mitchell**, directed by **Rachel Chavkin** returns to the Walter Kerr Theatre on Broadway from September with a North American tour in October. A South Korean production will open in Seoul in August.

Follies will be returning to cinemas for the first time since its original National Theatre Live broadcast to cinemas in 2017. After sold-out runs in the Olivier in 2017 and 2019 and winning Olivier Award for Best Musical Revival, it will now be playing in cinemas around the world from this September. **Stephen Sondheim's** legendary musical is directed by **Dominic Cooke** (*Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, NT) and features a cast of 40 and an orchestra of 21.

On the National Theatre's streaming platform, **National Theatre at Home**, two new titles are launching today: the Bridge Theatre's ***A Midsummer Night's Dream*** and The Old Vic Theatre's ***All My Sons. Consent*** will now be available with audio-description. New productions are added each month and there are now 23 productions available on the platform.

Together with Theatre-Makers

While the theatre has been closed, the National Theatre's New Work Department has continued to provide vital support for artists, hosting virtual readings and socially distanced workshops for new plays under development. The department is even more committed to opening up our doors to artists and theatre-makers from across the whole breadth of the UK, to support the sector to flourish after the devastation of 2020. Starting later this year, the NT will begin a new programme **Generate**, which will see a significant increase in partnerships with artists, venues and producers across the UK. At least a third of the New Work Department's capacity and resource each year will now be committed to developing ideas, with the specific focus on work to be produced outside London.

Continuing our support for theatre-makers across the UK, this year the **Linbury Prize 2021**, in partnership with the Linbury Trust, will provide 12 brilliant designers starting out in the industry with bursaries and the opportunity to gain first-hand experience through a design associate placement alongside an established designer on a variety of productions around the country. Chosen by a panel of four judges, applications are open to theatre design graduates or post-graduates, from graduating classes 2020 and 2021.

Lisa Burger, Executive Director and Joint Chief Executive of the National Theatre, said: “This year has seen us face a risk like no other as theatre-makers have left the industry in their droves following a year of little work. Our New Work Department has continued to provide vital support for artists over this challenging year, and as we look to the future, we commit to sharing our skills and expertise with the nation, with at least one third of our capacity dedicated to fuelling stages beyond the NT. And, as we once again employ artists and craftspeople for our stages in London and on tour, we remain resolute in our commitment to world-leading work that empowers artists, develops specialist theatre skills for the future and respects our environment. Theatre-makers create stories we'll never forget. Together we can empower artists and craftspeople to make world-leading work.”

The National Theatre is continuing to make its work as sustainable as possible by committing to adopting the baseline principles of the Theatre Green Book for all productions over the next 12 months. The Theatre Green Book is an initiative developed during lockdown by UK theatre-makers from across the sector and backed by leading industry bodies to help move theatre towards sustainable practice. It provides a common standard to work to and maps out theatres' path towards zero carbon.

Together for Young People

In response to the impact on children's learning following a year of significant disruption and challenges caused by the pandemic, the NT today launches **Story Seekers**, a new nationwide creative literacy project in partnership with the **Unicorn Theatre**. Story Seekers will set children on a mission to find, tell and share important stories for this time, culminating in the creation of their own filmed storytelling performances to share with their school community and beyond. Available for free to state primary schools, the six-week programme includes filmed theatre performances directed by **Justin Audibert**, Artistic Director of the Unicorn, to guide pupils through the quest, workshops and performances by leading professional storytellers and training and resources to support teachers to lead the project.

From this summer, the National Theatre will begin working with young people most affected by the pandemic on a new nationwide project, **Speak Up**, as part of the NT's **Theatre Nation Partnerships** programme. Young people will work in collaboration with local artists and teachers to lead creative projects in response to issues that are most important to them. The pilot project, funded by The Mohn Westlake Foundation, will begin with seven schools across Sunderland, in partnership with Sunderland Empire and Sunderland Culture; Greater Manchester, in partnership with The Lowry; and Wakefield with Theatre Royal Wakefield, with aspirations to expand across all six Theatre Nation Partnership areas reaching tens of thousands of young people over the next three years.

Following the huge success and demand for the **National Theatre Collection** which makes the best of British Theatre available to the education sector across the globe in partnership with both *Bloomsbury Publishing* via their platform *Drama Online*, and renowned EdTech leader *ProQuest*, available on their *Alexander Street* platform, a second Collection will be

added, starting with ten titles in September. This will include Inua Ellams' *Three Sisters* (a co-production with Fuel), Arthur Miller's *All My Sons* from the Old Vic and Headlong and *The Seagull* from Chichester Festival Theatre. A further ten titles will complete this second collection in February 2022, including the addition of Winsome Pinnock's *Rockets and Blue Lights* (a co-production with the Royal Exchange Theatre). Available **for free** to state schools across the UK, 71 per cent of state secondary schools have already signed up to the resource.

It is also announced today that, to support schools globally, a new partnership with the **New York City Department of Education** and **Bloomsbury Publishing** will provide access for public schools across New York to the National Theatre Collection for free, aiming to reach 30,000 students and teachers across three years, as well as creating educational materials to support teachers and engage students. The project is piloting with 20 schools and will launch fully in autumn 2021.

These programmes complement an existing multi-faceted national programme of learning projects that focus on igniting the creativity of tens of thousands of young people across the UK aged 4–21 years old.

Together with Communities

Having been postponed last year, Cast in Doncaster will host the third Public Acts production in August 2022, ***The Doncastrian Chalk Circle***, a newly adapted version of **Bertolt Brecht's** classic play by **Chris Bush**, directed by Public Acts Associate Director, **James Blakey**, with music by **Ruth Chan** and design by **Hannah Sibai**. Featuring 80 performers from our community partners **b:friend, Conversation Club, Edlington Community Organisation (ECO), darts and Cast Young Company**, joined by a company of professional actors and musicians and cameo appearances from local performance groups, this new version is an adventurous tale of belonging, full of passion, spectacle and plenty of Yorkshire grit and humour.

This August Bank Holiday weekend, the Doncaster community will also perform a new, immersive show ***The Tale of Wild Heather: A Cabaret*** at Cast with audiences invited to share a celebratory feast on Cast's main stage whilst being engaged in a forgotten Doncastrian myth. Written by **Jasmin Mandi-Ghomi**, directed by Associate Director, Public Acts, **James Blakey** and designed by **Hannah Sibai**, the story is co-created by the community company and features performances from local artists.

Lisa Burger said: "The National Theatre works with thousands of people across the country every year. Over the past four years, our flagship community programme Public Acts has demonstrated the extraordinary acts of compassion and unity that can be achieved through theatre. The National Theatre has the convening power to further unite communities by working in sustained partnerships with community organisations, schools and theatres throughout the UK. Our partnerships will encourage theatre-going nationally and create truly

inspirational participatory projects that galvanise communities and ignite the creativity of young people across the country. Nothing brings us together like theatre.”

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors

For further information, please contact Ruth Greenwood, Head of Press at the National Theatre, on rgreenwood@nationaltheatre.org.uk

For high-resolution, captioned images, please see [this folder](#).

About the National Theatre

The National Theatre’s mission is to make world-class theatre, for everyone.

The NT creates and shares unforgettable stories with audiences across the UK and around the world. On its own stages, on tour, in schools, on cinema screens and streaming at home, it strives to be accessible, inclusive and sustainable.

The National Theatre empowers artists and craftspeople to make world-leading work, investing in talent and developing new productions with a wide range of theatre companies at its New Work Department.

Our nation thrives on fresh talent and new ideas, so the National Theatre works with young people and teachers right across the UK through performance, writing and technical programmes to ignite the creativity of the next generation.

Together with communities, the NT creates ambitious works of participatory theatre in deep partnerships that unite theatres and local organisations – showing that nothing brings us together like theatre.

The National Theatre needs your support to shape a bright, creative future.

For more information, please visit nationaltheatre.org.uk

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