

National Theatre

Thursday 15 October

NATIONAL THEATRE ANNOUNCES NEW ASSOCIATES AND PETER HALL BURSARY RECIPIENTS

The National Theatre announced today that **Rufus Norris**, NT Director and Joint Chief Executive, has invited **Ola Animashawun** and **Clint Dyer** to join as Associates of the National Theatre.

In addition, The Peter Hall Bursary has been expanded to support three new artists. The directors who have been invited to receive this fund are **Ned Bennett**, **Ola Ince** and **Nancy Medina** and they will be supported by the NT for the next two years.

Ola Animashawun, was previously the founder and Head of the Royal Court Young Writers Programme, where he was also an Associate. Ola will work at Associate level in both Learning and the New Work Department at the NT, as well as continuing in his role as Connections Dramaturg which he has held since 2018. In this new position he will work cross organisationally towards racial equity and increased representation both in the work presented on stage and at all levels in the NT's workforce.

Ola is joined by Clint Dyer who becomes an NT Associate following playing 'Cutler' in the NT's Olivier winning production of *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, the success of *Death of England* and the programming of *Death of England: Delroy*, which will open in the Olivier theatre later this month. In this role Clint will work closely with Rufus Norris and the Senior Artistic team and together with the Associates will advise on programming decisions. He will also continue to act and write and direct his own work. Clint Dyer's Associate role is supported by the NT Foundation as a Peter Hall Bursary.

The NT Associates are a group of leading artists, creatives and theatre makers who provide thought leadership and advisory input across all areas of the National Theatre's artistic

mission, galvanising change and providing fresh incisive perspectives on the decisions of the Director and Senior Managers. They take on special projects that they both initiate and at the request of the Director, as well as make their own work.

The National Theatre is committed to supporting freelance artists and continuing to expand the pool of directors making work at the NT. Every two years The Peter Hall Bursary is awarded to an exceptionally talented director, providing them with the opportunity to develop their experience through an attachment at the NT. Previous recipients of this bursary include Emily Lim and Alexander Zeldin.

This year the bursary has been expanded to support three directors, **Ned Bennett**, **Ola Ince** and **Nancy Medina**. These three new Bursaries are in recognition of these directors' artistic merit and outstanding achievement in their body of work over the last five years, with the long-term aim of bringing their great talent onto the National Theatre's stages for the benefit of our audiences.

Each director will use the financial and artistic support to gain a greater understanding of the workings of the NT and be empowered and supported to develop work to direct at scale for the National Theatre's stages. NT Associate **Lyndsey Turner** will be working closely with all three directors in a mentor capacity and the two-year Bursary will support a period of artistic development and research, create a space for enquiry and the development of their own creative practice.

Speaking about the bursaries **Rufus Norris** said, "At a pivotal moment in my career I was hugely fortunate in being awarded an Arts Foundation fellowship which gave me some crucial breathing space within a period where my artistic development was being hampered by an inability to simply pay my rent, a situation most freelancers will be very familiar with. That breathing space allowed me, for a year, to focus solely on my artistic work, and I am incredibly grateful to the National Theatre Foundation for their support in delivering something similar to these three exceptional directors. We will be making demands of them but with the sole aim to keep them growing creatively through this most challenging of times."

ENDS

For more information and images contact Ruth Greenwood, Head of Press:
rgreenwood@nationaltheatre.org.uk

For images click [here](#)

Notes to Editors

Biographies

Ola Animashawun

Ola Animashawun is the National Theatre Connections Dramaturg and newly appointed Associate and the co-founder and Creative Director of the playwriting consultancy, Euphoric Ink. He is also a former Associate Director of the Royal Court Theatre, where he worked for 23 years, during which time he founded and ran the Royal Court Young Writers Programme and set up a nationwide writers' programme – Critical Mass – which is dedicated to finding and nurturing new African, Caribbean, Asian and other PHDP (people historically denied power) playwrights. Ola has worked in theatre for over 30 years, with 20 of those years dedicated to specialising in script development as a dramaturg and facilitator. He also holds positions as an Associate Artist, Dramaturg and Mentor for Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Theatre Absolute, Shop Front Theatre, and Eclipse Theatre. His other skills include, acting, directing, devising, writing and presenting. He is a patron of Graeae Theatre and Script Yorkshire and an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

Clint Dyer

Clint Dyer's theatre credits include (as an actor) *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* and (as writer and director) *Death of England* at the NT. Other theatre as an actor *The Kid stays in the picture* at Royal Court, *The Royale*, *Perseverance Drive* and *A Carpet, A Pony and A Monkey* at The Bush; *Sus* at the Young Vic; *Michael X* for Eclipse; *Big White Fog at the Almeida*. Other theatre as director includes *The Big Life* at the Apollo-West End and Stratford East; *Kingston 14* at Stratford East; *The Westbridge* at the Royal Court; and *Lady MacWata* (also co-deviser) at Voila Theatre Festival. As writer-director other theatre includes *Sylvia Plath* for Open Court at the Royal Court. As writer co-director other theatre includes: *The Happy Tragedy of Being Woke* for Complicité. As writer and actor other theatre includes: *The Big Idea – The New Order at the Royal Court*. As writer TV and film includes: *Kev*, part of *Soon Gone: A Windrush Chronicle*, and *Dim Sum* (part of 'Europeans'). As an actor Television includes: *Timewasters*, *Black Mirror*, *Death in Paradise*, *Fallout*, *Trail and Retribution*, *Dalziel & Pascoe*, *Inspector Linley*, *The Commander*, *Lock Stock*, *Thief Takers and Prime Suspect*. As actor film includes *Sus*, *Cherps* (BFM Best Actor Award nomination), *The Trail*, *Mr Inbetween*, *Everybody Loves Sunshine*, *Love Me Still*, *Creation Stories*, *Made in Italy*, *Acts of Vengeance*, *The Club*, *Montana*, *Unknown*, *Sahara*, *Agora* and *Mr Bean 2*.

Nancy Medina

Nancy Medina is originally from Brooklyn NY, and currently based in Bristol. She is an acting tutor at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School and Co-Artistic Director of the Bristol School of Acting. Directing credits include: *The Laramie Project* (Bristol Old Vic) *Two Trains Running* (Royal&Derngate/English Touring Theatre), *Strange Fruit* (Bush Theatre) *The Half God of Rainfall* (Fuel/Birmingham Rep/Kiln Theatre), *Collective Rage: A Play in 5 Betties* (Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama), *When They Go Low* (NT Connections/Sherman Theatre), *Yellowman* (Young Vic), *Romeo and Juliet* (GB Theatre), *As You Like it* (GB Theatre), *Curried Goat and Fish Fingers* (Bristol Old Vic), *Dogtag* (Theatre West), *Strawberry & Chocolate* (Tobacco Factory Theatres), *Dutchman* (Tobacco Factory Theatres) and *Persistence of Memory* (Rondo Theatre). Awards: 2018 RTST Sir Peter Hall Director Award (Royal & Derngate/ETT), 2017 Genesis Future Director Award (Young Vic), 2014 Emerging Director's Prize (Tobacco Factory Theatres)

Ned Bennett

Ned Bennett trained at LAMDA, on the NT Studio Directors' Course, and as Trainee Director at the Royal Court (2012–13). Directing credits: *Dick Whittington* at the National Theatre; *1st Luv* for The Big House, *Equus* with English Touring Theatre & Theatre Royal Stratford East and Trafalgar Studios; *Victoria's Knickers* with NYT Rep; *Buggy Baby* at the Yard Theatre; *Baddies* for Synergy Theatre Project; *An Octoroon* at the Orange Tree and National Theatre; *Brixton Rock* for The Big House; *The Crocodile* at the Manchester International Festival; *Yen* at the Royal Exchange and Royal Court; *Pomona* at the National Theatre, Royal Exchange, Orange Tree, RWCMD and The Gate; *Superior Donuts* at the Southwark Playhouse; *Primetime* and *Pigeons* Royal Court tours; *Mercury Fur* at the Old Red Lion/ Trafalgar Studios; *A Butcher of Distinction* at the King's Head. He was awarded Best Director in the UK Theatre Awards for *Pomona* and *Yen* and for *Pomona*, *An Octoroon* and *Equus* in the Off West End Awards.

Ola Ince

Ola graduated from Rose Bruford College in 2010 with a First Class Honours BA in Theatre Directing. Ola is a critically acclaimed and award winning Director. In 2012 she was the Borris Karloff Bursary recipient. In 2015 Ola became a BBC Performing Arts Fellow, Resident Associate Director at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre and Red Women of the Year nominee. In 2016 she became the Genesis Future Director Award winner and Artistic Associate at Lyric Hammersmith and Theatre Royal Stratford East. In 2018 she won the h100 Theatre & Performance Award. In 2019 she was named one of the Elle list's '50 Game Changers of Now'. Ola is currently an Artistic Associate at the Royal Court Theatre.

About the National Theatre

The National Theatre's mission is to make world class theatre that's entertaining, challenging and inspiring – and to make it for everyone. It aims to reach the widest possible audience and to be as inclusive, diverse and national as possible with a broad range of productions that play in London, on tour around the UK, on Broadway and across the globe. The National Theatre's extensive UK-wide learning and participation programme supports young people and schools through performance and writing programmes like Connections, New Views and Let's Play, while Public Acts creates ambitious new works of participatory theatre in sustained partnership with theatres and community organisations around the country. The National Theatre extends its reach through digital programmes including NT Live, which broadcasts some of the best of British theatre to over 2,500 venues in 65 countries, and the National Theatre Collection, which makes recordings of shows available to UK schools and the global education sector. The National Theatre invests in the future of theatre by developing talent, creating bold new work and building audiences, partnering with a range of UK theatres and theatre companies.

For more information, please visit nationaltheatre.org.uk.

[@NationalTheatre](#)

[@NT_PressOffice](#)