



National Theatre

Drama Teacher Conference 2021




About the Drama Teacher Conference

The National Theatre's Drama Teacher Conference provides drama teachers with the opportunity to work with some of the finest artists, makers and companies in the industry every February half term.

We focus on upskilling teachers, encouraging confidence in exploring new and contemporary artists in school and in signposting your students on to further opportunities and careers.

Here, we recognise that drama teachers are not working alone, and are part of an incredible community as diverse and talented as the industry you represent.

The Conference is a time for you to experiment, create and develop your practice. This year, the Conference is entirely digital due to Covid-19 but we hope this opens access to more teachers across the UK. The NT is committed to supporting teachers and look forward to welcoming you soon.



Format

At this year's Drama Teacher Conference, everything will be delivered digitally with specific activity across the week, including:

Masterclasses

Pre-recorded videos streamed at set times, most of the masterclasses will be screened twice in the week. They will involve the artist working in a room or digitally, sometimes with other collaborators, to demonstrate their ideas. Here is a unique opportunity to watch theatre-makers at work and hear about their creative process, using practical & transferable exercises for you to use in your own work with young people.

Approx 1.5-2hours. £5 each or included in £30 Masterclass and Panel Pass.



Panels

These are pre-recorded videos in which a panel of artists and a chair will discuss topics pertinent to the industry, young people and teachers. All panels are approximately 1-1.5 hours.

Approx. 1-1.5hours. £5 each or included in £30 Masterclass and Panel Pass.



Interact Sessions







These are live interactive sessions, run over Zoom and led by artists. They will provide a chance to explore different skills with professional artists and other teachers all over the country. Spaces are limited on these, so book early to avoid disappointment.

2 hours (unless stated otherwise) £5 each.















Monday 15 th February		
Time	Title	Format
10am	Katie Mitchell on Naturalism and Multi-Media in Theatre	 Masterclass
2pm	Staging a Revolution: Theatre and Activism	 Panel
	Games & Play in the Devising Process with Coney (2.5hours)	 Interact
	Shifting Mindsets and Embedding Anti-Racism Presentation and Discussion	 Interact
	Tackling The Technical: On Budgets, Equipment and Creativity	 Interact
5pm	Collaborating and Theatre Making with Marianne Elliott, Bunny Christie and Paule Constable.	 Panel




Please note: There will not be any sessions on Wednesday 17th February.

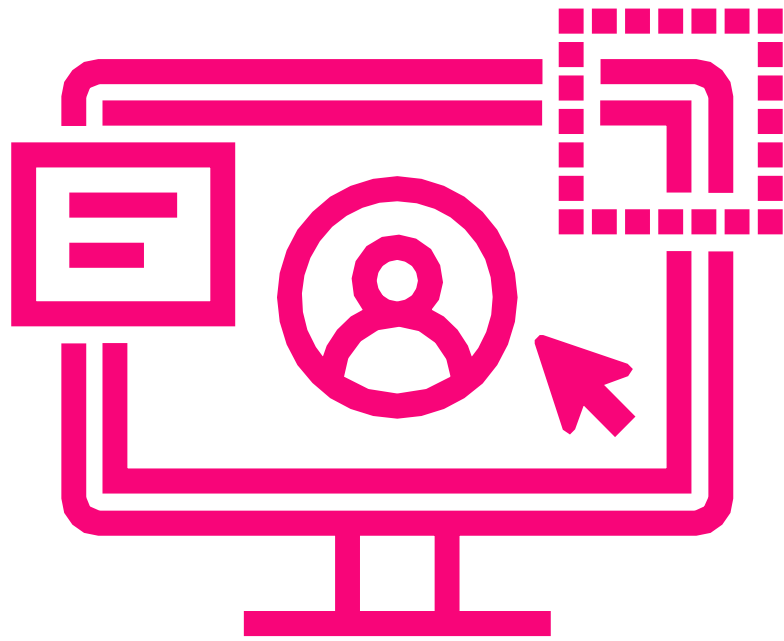
Tuesday 16 th February		
Time	Title	Format
10am	Socially Distanced Theatre-Making with Justin Audibert and Actors on Dennis Kelly's DNA	 Masterclass
	Games & Play in the Devising Process with Coney <i>(2.5 hours)</i>	 Interact
	A Practical Exploration of Brecht	 Interact
2pm	Performing in a Pandemic with the National Theatre	 Panels
	Stanislavski: Naturalism in 2021	 Interact
5pm	Katie Mitchell on Naturalism and Multi-Media in Theatre	 Masterclass

Please note: There will not be any sessions on Wednesday 17th February.

Thursday 18 th February		
Time	Title	Format
10am	Directing Text with Matthew Xia	 Masterclass
2pm	Staging a Revolution: Theatre and Activism	 Panel
	Maximum Impact with Minimum Resource: Set and Prop Design	 Interact
	Tackling The Technical: On Budgets, Equipment and Creativity	 Interact
5pm	Shifting Mindsets and Embedding Anti-Racism: Exploring Two Texts by Writers of the Global Majority	 Interact
	Socially Distanced Theatre-Making with Justin Audibert and Actors on Dennis Kelly's DNA	 Masterclass

Friday 19 th February		
Time	Title	Format
10am	Exciting Experiments: Directing and Devising Remotely with Nickie Miles Wildin	 Masterclass
	Devising Differently: Techniques for 2021	 Interact
	A Practical Exploration of Brecht	 Interact
	Maximum Impact with Minimum Resource: Set and Prop Design	 Interact
2pm	Theatre Reviewing: A Creative Response with Critics, Lyn Gardner and Ava Wong-Davies	 Panel
5pm	Directing Text with Matthew Xia	 Masterclass

Saturday 20 th February		
Time	Title	Format
10am	Theatre Reviewing: A Creative Response with Critics, Lyn Gardner and Ava Wong-Davies	 Panel
2pm	Collaborating and Theatre Making with Marianne Elliott, Bunny Christie and Paule Constable	 Panel
5pm	Exciting Experiments: Directing and Devising Remotely with Nickie Miles Wildin	 Masterclass



Masterclasses

Katie Mitchell on Naturalism and Multi-Media in Theatre

Monday 15th February at 10am and Tuesday 16th February at 5pm

Katie Mitchell creates feminist work combining Stanislavski's naturalism and experimental multi-media techniques. An esteemed theatre and opera director, working across the UK and Europe, she is also a prescribed practitioner on many exam boards. This is a rare chance to watch Katie at work and learn about her process through practical examples and ideas.

Socially Distanced Theatre-Making

with Justin Audibert and Actors on Dennis Kelly's DNA

Tuesday 16th February at 10am and Thursday 18th February at 5pm

Justin Audibert is the Artistic Director of the Unicorn Theatre; an experienced and exciting director of everything from children's theatre and new writing to Shakespeare. Observe Justin's work with actors in a socially distanced rehearsal room as they explore the classic GCSE text, Dennis Kelly's DNA. This session will include practical exercises for working at a distance and using these parameters as creative opportunities, all of which are designed to be directly applicable to working with young people in schools.

Directing Text with Matthew Xia

Thursday 18th February at 10am and Friday 19th February at 5pm

The script is an instruction manual, a blueprint for a theatrical experience. Using a series of borrowed, stolen and adapted exercises and methods, Matthew will unlock the meaning in the text with professional actors. These are the processes Matthew has used in the creation of work such as *Blue/Orange*, *Into The Woods*, *Frankenstein* and most recently *Amsterdam*. Matthew will be using Katherine Soper's *Wish List* with two actors in this session.

Matthew Xia is a brilliant theatre director. He is the Artistic Director of the Actors Touring Company and an Associate Director at Nottingham Playhouse; his directing work has included credits at the Orange Tree Theatre, the Everyman Theatre in Liverpool and the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester. Matthew is deeply committed to making theatre more representative of the world we live in. Matthew's work is influenced by Stanislavski stylistically and Brecht politically.

Exciting Experiments: Directing and Devising Remotely with Nickie Miles Wildin

Friday 19th February at 10am and Saturday 20th February at 5pm

How can we make devising remotely fun, creatively accessible and feel like an ensemble?

Join Graeae Theatre's Associate Director Nickie Miles-Wildin and an ensemble of professional, young actors to explore techniques for directing and devising remotely. From warm up games to movement exercises, Nickie will share her practice with you which she has refined for remote working. This session aims to equip you with confidence and a range of exercises you can utilise with your students to maintain creativity and spontaneity remotely.

Nickie Miles-Wildin is a director, actor and writer. Her wealth of experience includes developing new writing, directing the Royal Exchange's Young Company and performing in the Para-Olympics opening ceremony.



Panels

Staging a Revolution: Theatre and Activism

Monday 15th February at 2pm and Thursday 18th February at 2pm

In a time of immense change, how can we use theatre to encourage young people to use their voice to highlight the issues they really care about? What stimulus do these professional artists and companies use when making a show?

Keisha Thompson is a Manchester based writer, performance artist and producer. Her work includes poetry, music, collaboration and one-woman shows.

LUNG is a campaign-led verbatim theatre company that tours work nationally. They work closely with different communities to make verbatim theatre and hidden voices heard. Matt Woodhead, Co-Artistic Director, joins this panel.

Maxine Peake is a stage, film and television actor committed to social change. Maxine made her name as Twinkle in Victoria Wood's sitcom Dinner Ladies. Further work includes The Welkin at the National Theatre, the lead role in BBC legal drama Silk and appearing in Channel 4's Shameless.

Travis Alabanza is a performer, writer and theatre maker. Their unique mixture of performance, poetry, style, political views and risk-taking performances has given them a unique placement both nationally and internationally.

Collaborating and Theatre Making with Marianne Elliott, Bunny Christie and Paule Constable

Monday 15th February at 5pm and Saturday 20th February at 2pm

Marianne Elliott, Bunny Christie and Paule Constable have a wealth of experience of collaborating across shows and styles to make incredible theatre. This conversation will detail their own experiences of theatre-making and how these can be used if studying one of these practitioners at A Level.

The three panelists worked together to direct and design *The Curious Incident on the Dog in the Night-Time*. Beyond this -

Bunny Christie is a multi-award-winning Production Designer. Her work includes *People Places and Things*, *The Red Barn* and *The Welkin* at the NT.

Marianne Elliott is a celebrated theatre director, with credits such as *War Horse*, *The Light Princess* and *Company* to her name.

Paule Constable is an Olivier award winning lighting designer and an Associate Designer at the National Theatre where she has designed *wonder.land*, *Ocean At The End of the Lane* and *The Red Barn* among many others.

Performing in a Pandemic with the National Theatre

Tuesday 16th February at 2pm

As teachers around the world have adapted theatre-making in schools within new restrictions, so have theatres. Hear from the backstage team and creatives working at the National Theatre about their experience and key learning during this time. This will include an insight into specific backstage roles, the impact this time has had on what work the NT can make and what we are hopeful for in the future.

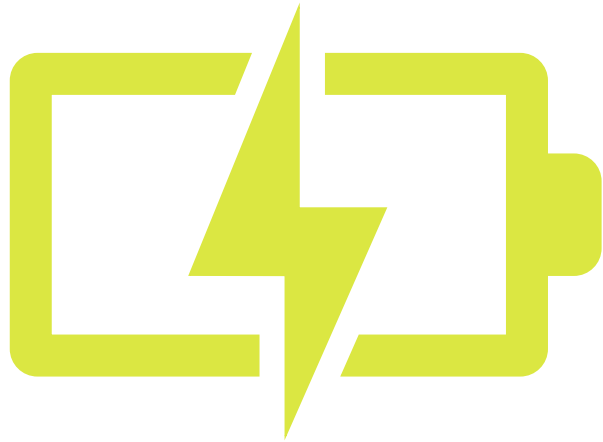
Theatre Reviewing: A Creative Response with Critics Lyn Gardner and Ava Wong-Davies

Friday 19th February at 2pm and Saturday 20th February at 10am

Reviewing theatre is a key part of every syllabus for GCSE and A Level Drama; join Lyn and Ava as they are interviewed by Chris Holman, Head of Drama at Heathland School, to hear their tips and techniques to making reviewing exciting for all students. This includes suggestions of digital theatre to watch during this time, a range of approaches to reviewing and practical exercises to use when exploring writing your first review.

Lyn Gardner is Associate Editor of *The Stage* and has over 30 years' experience writing as a theatre critic.

Ava Wong-Davies is a freelance theatre critic who writes for *Exeunt*, *The Independent* and more.



Interact Sessions

Games & Play in the Devising Process with Coney

Monday 15th February at 2pm and Tuesday 16th February at 10am

Coney are interactive theatre-makers. They create games, adventures and play in theatres, schools, museums, on the streets and online. Their work always follows the principles of adventure and curiosity.

Coney will share processes and tools exploring how to design and utilise games and play in your classroom. This session will include facilitation and reflection exercises to support the devising process and to make work as an ensemble - including interactive and immersive pieces.

Please note Coney's sessions will be 2.5 hours.

Tackling The Technical: On Budgets, Equipment and Creativity

Monday 15th February at 2pm and Thursday 18th February at 2pm

Here, you will explore how to best use tech in school, for productions and lessons. We aim to support you in teaching your students about lights and sound, as both a designer and technician. Working with the smallest budgets, professionals will highlight their recommendations for equipment, and what creative solutions you may utilise in school.

Shifting Mindsets and Embedding Anti-Racism Presentation and Discussion

Monday 15th February at 2pm

What does decolonising the drama curriculum mean in your classroom and to your school? A presentation on why the drama curriculum and exam specifications need to change and how teachers can become deliberate activists and not passive sympathisers. How broadening the culture heritage of writers and practitioners taught to students benefits their learning and performance.

As well as asking questions, teachers will be invited to share their concerns and the barriers you experience to including texts, practitioners and theatre history from global majority cultures. This is also an opportunity to share success stories of inclusive practice.

Stanislavski: Naturalism in 2021

Tuesday 16th February at 2pm

In this session, you will work with a professional theatre director to explore Stanislavski's practice and how it can be applied to a 21st century rehearsal room. This will include exploring naturalism, super objectives and further practical exercises you can use in your classroom.

A Practical Exploration of Brecht

Tuesday 16th February at 10am and Friday 19th February at 10am

Join Splendid's Artistic Director, Kerry Frampton in exploring practical application of the theories and techniques of Bertolt Brecht.

For nearly twenty years, Splendid Productions have been creating theatre in a structure pioneered by Brecht. In this session Kerry will share her insights into performing and teaching this style – interpreting techniques that are often characterised as complex, dogmatic and overly serious, and using them to create energetic, entertaining, provocative political theatre that speaks urgently to our present time.

The session will include:

- An exploration of key concepts
- Demystifying terminology including dialectics, montage, archetypes, gestus and verfremdungs
- Practical approaches to test out the theory
- Devising and creating Brecht-inspired work
- Three bonus Brechtian techniques not covered in GCSE and A-level

Maximum Impact with Minimum Resource: Set and Prop Design

Thursday 18th February at 2pm and Friday 19th February at 10am

Explore designing for shows in schools with professional theatre designers. This workshop will include an overview of designing professionally and highlight key techniques you can utilise in school with very little budget.

Shifting Mindsets and Embedding Anti-Racism Exploring Two Texts by Writers of the Global Majority

Thursday 18th February at 2pm

What does decolonising the drama curriculum mean in your classroom and to your school? A presentation on why the drama curriculum and exam specifications need to change and how teachers can become deliberate activist and not passive sympathisers. How broadening the culture heritage of writers and practitioners taught to students benefits their learning and performance.

As well as asking questions, teachers will be invited to share their concerns and the barriers you experience to including texts, practitioners and theatre history from global majority cultures. This is also an opportunity to share success stories of inclusive practice.

Devising Differently: Techniques for 2021

Friday 19th February at 10am

Join Jude Christian, Director and Writer, in exploring generating ideas when devising and refining themes into stories. This will be a practical workshop utilising a toolkit which can be used to adapt your work for different circumstances. You will be asked to make and collaborate through exercises directly applicable to your classroom.

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