

# National Theatre

25 March 2021

**THE OLIVIER AND DORFMAN THEATRES TO REOPEN  
IN JUNE 2021 WITH  
DYLAN THOMAS'S MASTERPIECE *UNDER MILK WOOD*  
AND NEW PLAY BY JACK THORNE *AFTER LIFE***

- ***Under Milk Wood* by Dylan Thomas staged in the Olivier theatre, directed by Lyndsey Turner, with additional material by Siân Owen. Opening on 16 June with cast including Michael Sheen, Karl Johnson and Siân Phillips**
- ***After Life* based on the film by Hirokazu Kore-eda and written by Jack Thorne with concept by Bunny Christie, Jeremy Herrin and Jack Thorne to reopen the Dorfman theatre on 2 June, a co-production with award-winning theatre company Headlong**

The National Theatre today announces plans to reopen in June, welcoming audiences back to the South Bank for the first time since closing last December.

The Olivier theatre will reopen on 16 June with ***Under Milk Wood* by Dylan Thomas**, additional material by **Siân Owen**, directed by NT Associate **Lyndsey Turner**. **Michael Sheen** leads the acting company which includes **Susan Brown, Ifan Huw Dafydd, Alan David, Michael Elwyn, Kezrena James, Karl Johnson, Gaynor Morgan Rees, Anthony O'Donnell, Siân Phillips and Cleo Sylvestre**. Set and costume design is by **Merle Hensel**, lighting design by **Tim Lutkin**, movement by **Imogen Knight**, songs composed by **Edward-Rhys Harry**, and sound design and additional compositions by **Donato Wharton**. **Tom Bellerby** is staff director. The production will be performed in-the-round in the transformed Olivier theatre. The theatre will remain in this configuration for further productions until early 2022.

The Dorfman theatre will reopen on 2 June for the first time since February 2020 with the previously announced co-production with Headlong, *After Life* written by **Jack Thorne** and directed by **Jeremy Herrin**. Based on the film by **Hirokazu Kore-eda**, with concept by Bunny Christie, Jeremy Herrin and Jack Thorne, *After Life* is a surreal and powerfully human look at the way we live our lives, asking who you would choose to live with for eternity.

Initial casting includes **Olatunji Ayofe, Danielle Henry, Maddie Holliday, Togo Igawa, Anoushka Lucas, Kevin McMonagle, Simon Startin, Luke Thallon, June Watson** and **Millicent Wong**. Set and costume design is by **Bunny Christie**, lighting design by **Neil Austin**, movement direction by **Shelley Maxwell**, video design by **Max Spielbichler** and sound design by **Tom Gibbons**. **TD Moyo** is staff director.

Both productions will run until 24 July, with socially-distanced seating for the entire run of the productions. Tickets go on sale to the public on 30 April.

**Rufus Norris**, Director of the National Theatre, says: *"It's been an incredibly difficult year for theatre, but I'm delighted to be able to confirm our reopening plans today and to be sharing the news of our first two productions that will reopen the National Theatre in June. In our transformed Olivier theatre, Lyndsey Turner will share her new staging of Dylan Thomas's masterful **Under Milk Wood** with Michael Sheen joining the company. We're also very excited to reopen the Dorfman theatre for the first time since February 2020 with Jack Thorne's new adaptation of the film **After Life**, with concept by Bunny Christie, Jeremy Herrin and Jack Thorne. Both shows will play to socially-distanced audiences and we look forward with cautious optimism to welcoming back larger audiences across our theatres soon. Sharing our work online and on television over the last year has enabled us to reach millions of people and continue to keep culture alive, but the magic of live theatre is what we can now begin to look towards: to creating work with our freelance artists and colleagues, to supporting young people's creativity, and to bringing joy to audiences and communities through imaginative and inspiring live performance."*

The Olivier theatre will have a capacity of approximately 500, whilst the Dorfman capacity will be 120. For *Under Milk Wood* over 200 tickets will be available at £20, whilst nearly half the house for *After Life* will be at £20. Tickets will be available to purchase as singles, pairs or in threes or fours and with social distancing measures in place. There will also be a number of Access performances for each production. Full information on these and how to book can be found [here](#).

Further programming, including information on previously announced productions, *The Normal Heart* and *Death of England: Delroy*, will be announced at a later date.

Supported by the Garfield Weston Foundation through the Weston Culture Fund.

**ENDS**

For further information contact [sowilkinson@nationaltheatre.org.uk](mailto:sowilkinson@nationaltheatre.org.uk)

For images click here

### **Notes to Editors**

#### **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, the National Theatre Collection, which makes recordings of shows available to UK schools and the global education sector, and now National Theatre at Home. 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](http://nationaltheatre.org.uk)

For more information, please visit [nationaltheatre.org.uk](http://nationaltheatre.org.uk).

[@NationalTheatre](#)

[@NT\\_PressOffice](#)

#### **About Headlong**

Headlong is one of the most ambitious and exciting theatre companies in the UK, creating exhilarating contemporary theatre: a provocative mix of innovative new writing, reimagined classics and influential 20th century plays that illuminate our world. Headlong make bold, ground-breaking productions with some of the UK's finest artists. They take these industry-leading, award-winning shows around the country and beyond, in theatres and online, attracting new audiences of all ages and backgrounds. They engage as deeply as they can with these communities, and this helps them become better at what they do. Last year during an unparalleled period of global uncertainty, Headlong partnered with Century Films and BBC Arts to present *Unprecedented*, a series of critically acclaimed digital plays responding to the radical way that the world changed when the first lockdown was announced on the 23 March 2020. Previous Headlong productions include *People Places and Things*, *Junkyard*, *The Nether*, *Pygmalion*, *This House*, *Richard III* and *Labour of Love*.