

**Stage by Stage  
South Bank: 1997 – 2002**

**Stage by Stage**

**The Development of the National Theatre from 1848**

Designed by **Michael Mayhew**

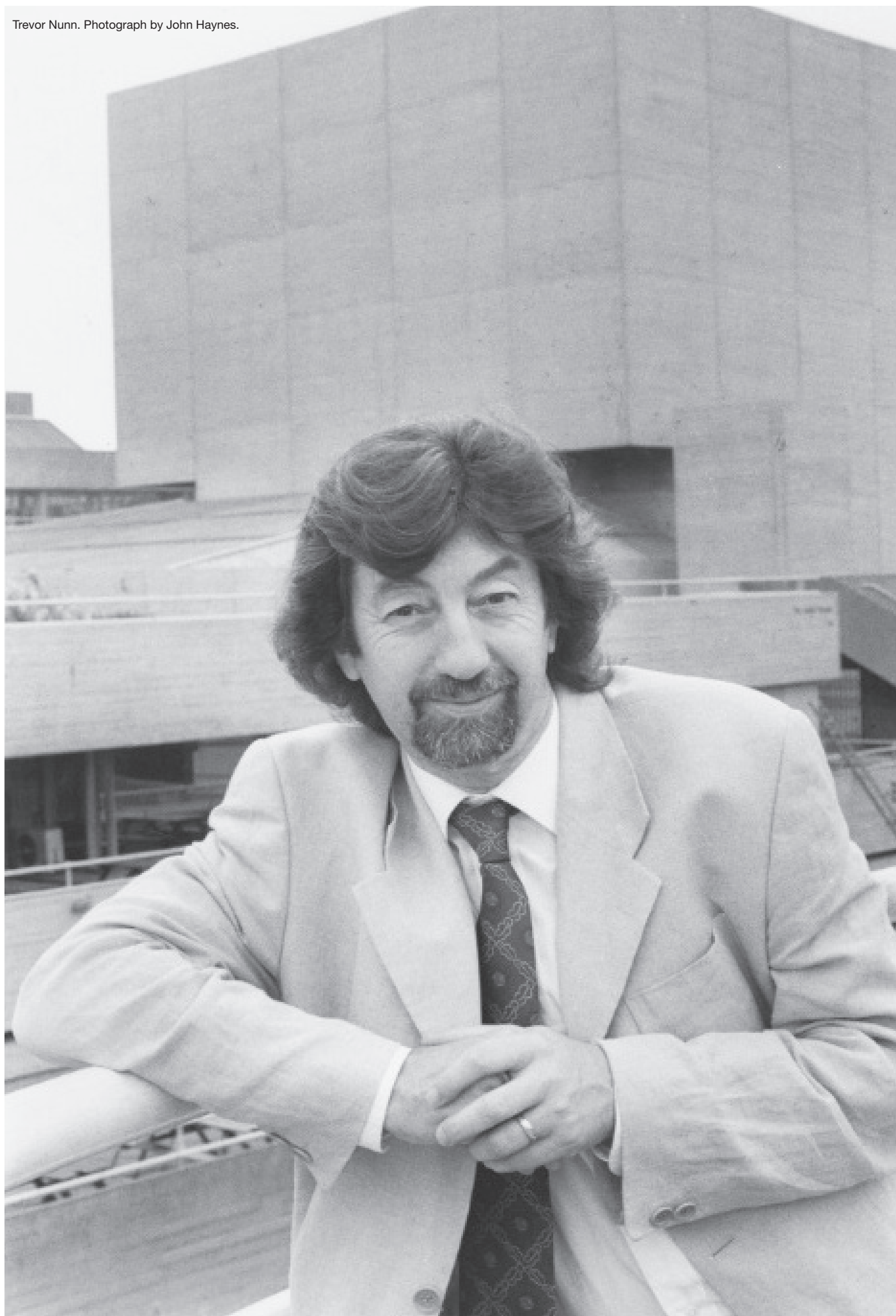
Compiled by **Lyn Hail & Stephen Wood**

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Monica Sollash and The Theatre Museum

The majority of the photographs in the exhibition were commissioned  
by the National Theatre and are part of its archive

The exhibition was funded by **The Royal National Theatre Foundation**

Trevor Nunn. Photograph by John Haynes.



## 1997

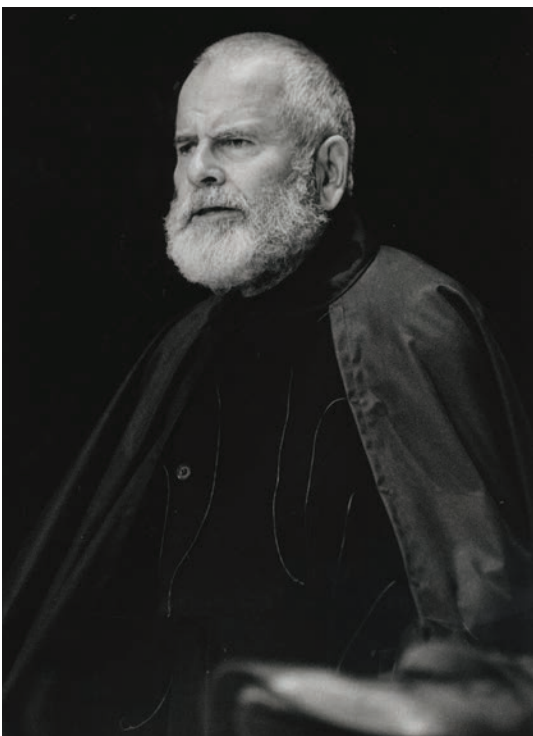
January: Richard Eyre is knighted in the New Year's Honour's List; his new production of *King Lear*, starring Ian Holm, causes long queues outside the Cottesloe.

Work begins on renewing the front of house and continues for over 12 months. The work includes giving the Theatre a new main entrance, closer to the riverside. The fourth year of stand-still grant from the Arts Council of England results in a reduction in real terms of £1.9 million; one of the results is a straight run of performances of *Guys and Dolls* throughout the summer instead of the usual choice of repertoire.

New plays by Peter Gill (*Cardiff East*), David Hare (*Amy's View*), Martin McDonagh (*The Cripple of Inishmaan*), Patrick Marber (*Closer*), and Tom Stoppard (*The Invention of Love*). The Olivier is temporarily transformed into 'theatre-in-the-round', with two European classics playing there (*The Caucasian Chalk Circle* and *Marat/Sade*). Trevor Nunn, Director Designate of the NT, directs Christopher Hampton's new version of Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*.

June: Trevor Nunn, in his first press conference, announces a programme which will include world premieres of plays by Sebastian Barry (*Our Lady of Sligo*), Kevin Elyot (*The Day I Stood Still*), Michael Frayn (*Copenhagen*), Frank

Ian Holm in *King Lear*. Photograph by John Haynes.



McGuinness (*Mutabilitie*), and Tennessee Williams (*Not About Nightingales*); and new versions of Bulgakov's *Flight* by Ron Hutchinson, and Ravencroft's *The London Cuckolds* by Terry Johnson.

*Othello*, directed by Sam Mendes, embarks on a world tour which includes first visits by the National to Korea, New Zealand, and mainland China.

October: Trevor Nunn succeeds Richard Eyre as Director.

With funds from the Royal National Theatre Endowment Fund and the National Lottery Fund, the NT buys the Old Vic Annexe, home to the Studio.

Six of the seven possible Evening Standard Awards go to the National.

## 1998

Trevor Nunn's production of a previously unperformed play by Tennessee Williams, *Not About Nightingales*, is a huge success in the Cottesloe, in a co-production with Moving Theatre and in association with the Alley Theatre, Houston. It later plays in Texas and New York.

David Hare's *Amy's View* and Patrick Marber's *Closer* transfer to the West End.

*Oh What a Lovely War*, staged in a specially made big top tent, tours the UK.

Sponsorship from the Hamlyn Foundation brings many first-time visitors to the NT.

Watch This Space summer festival fills Theatre Square, the newly created space outside the National, opened when Lottery-funded renovations of the front-of-house areas are completed.

The National launches its website on the internet.

## 1999

More of the National's work than ever before is seen in the West End (Tom Stoppard's *Invention of Love*, Michael Frayn's *Copenhagen*,

## NT Ensemble '99 are:

David Alder	Edward Gower	Omar F Okai
Roger Allam	Ceri Ann Gregory	Sophie Okonedo
David Arneil	Alexander Hanson	Chu Omambala
David Bamber	Victoria Hamilton	Dhobi Oparei
Cristina Barreiro	Alexander Hanson	Alastair Parker
Jasper Britton	Richard Henders	Kai Pearce
Miquel Brown	Diveen Henry	Sara Powell
Allyson Brown	Jamaine Hockley	Denis Quilley
Thomas Brown-Lowe	Patricia Hodge	Saskia Reeves
Michael Bryant	Jack James	Elizabeth Renihan
David Burt	Oscar James	Antony Renshaw
Robert Burt	Peter de Jersey	Roxanne Ricketts
Claudia Cadette	Phillip Joseph	Shaleen Robinson
Pauline Carville	Gabrielle Jourdan	Clive Rowe
Martin Chamberlain	Leila Joyce	Simon Russell Beale
Anthony Clegg	Alex Kelly	Aislinn Sands
Oliver Cotton	Beverley Klein	Myra Sands
Raymond Coulthard	Samantha Lavender	Adrian Sarples
Jim Creighton	Annabel Leventon	Imane Soussi
Derbhle Crotty	Henri McCarthy	Mark Springer
Ruddy L Davis	Leigh McDonald	Gabriel Swartland
Simon Day	Liam McKenna	Gilz Terera
Sophie Ann Day	Samantha Matthew	Mark Umbers
Rosie Day	Charles Millham	Lawrence Werber
Sam Douglas	Thomas Moll	David Weston
Vernon Douglas	Tanya Moodie	Michael Wildman
Jennifer Ehle	Sean Mullin	Jax Williams
Daniel Evans	Caroline Nicholls	Sean Williams
Andrew French	John Nolan	
Henry Goodman	Cyril Nri	

Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!*, as well as Priestley's *An Inspector Calls*, and on Broadway (*Not About Nightingales*, *Closer* and *Amy's View*).

Trevor Nunn launches a new Ensemble of actors with Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*. Over the year NT Ensemble also appeared in *Candide*, *Money*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Darker Face of the Earth*, *Summerfolk* and *Honk! The Ugly Duckling*.

The 100 most significant plays of the century are celebrated in NT2000 Platforms.

Bill Bryden's production of *The Mysteries* (*The Nativity*, *The Passion* and *Doomsday*) returns to the Cottesloe to celebrate a new millennium. The National wins 25 awards for its work this year.

### 2000

John Caird's production of *Hamlet*, starring Simon Russell Beale, visits Elsinore and later Belgrade as part of a major tour which ends in New York before returning to the NT.

Two linked plays (*House and Garden*) by Alan Ayckbourn take place in the Olivier and Lyttelton simultaneously, the cast hurrying backstage for successive scenes. The fun continues in the foyers after with a village fete each evening.

### 2001

Roger Michell's production of Joe Penhall's Cottesloe hit *Blue/Orange* transfers to the West End. Three other new plays premiered at the National – Charlotte Jones' *Humble Boy*, Mark Ravenhill's *Mother Clap's Molly House*, and Gregory Burke's *Gagarin Way*, (a co-production between the Traverse, Edinburgh and the NT Studio) – all transfer to the West End, as does Trevor Nunn's production of Lerner and Loewe's *My Fair Lady*.

Robert Lepage with Ex Machina visits with his visually stunning *The Far Side of the Moon*, and Company B Belvoir from Australia present *Cloudstreet*, a panoramic family epic lasting five hours.

The National celebrates its 25th anniversary on

the South Bank with a series of Platforms, an exhibition, and a new publication, *In Rehearsal* at the National. For the anniversary of the royal opening, on 25 October, the building is lit by specially designed projections, and the celebrations end with a firework finale turning the NT into a giant birthday cake. On the following day there is a single performance of the NT25 Chainplay – 25 playwrights were asked to contribute a scene each, and the results were published daily on the website.

The National Theatre wins a total of 34 awards for its work over the year.

## 2002

On Saturday 9 March 2002, the National gives 28 performances of 14 separate productions in 14 theatres:

On the South Bank *South Pacific* in the Olivier, *Tartuffe* in the Lyttelton, and *The Syringa Tree* in the Cottesloe; in the West End *Noises Off* at the Comedy, *An Inspector Calls* at the Playhouse, *The Island* at the Old Vic, *Mother Clap's Molly House* at the Aldwych, *Gagarin Way* at the Arts, *My Fair Lady* at Drury Lane, and *Humble Boy* at the Gielgud; on tour *The Good Hope* in Brighton; and on Broadway *Noises Off* at the Brooks Atkinson Theatre, and *Oklahoma!* at the Gershwin; and *Copenhagen* at the Kennedy Center, Washington, each of them with a matinee.

Barclays' Invest and Inspire sponsorship of the year's work in the Olivier also makes possible All Aboard! Sunday in the South Pacific – when hundreds of families enjoy a day of free entertainment, music, street theatre, workshops, storytelling, backstage tours, and a grand finale in Theatre Square.

Transformation presents 13 world premieres in the Lyttelton (transformed for the season by a single sweep of seats from circle to stage) and the Loft, a new 100-seat theatre created in the circle foyer. The season, from April to September, introduces new audiences to new work at new prices.

Nick Starr succeeds Genista McIntosh as Executive Director.

Trevor Nunn directs Glenn Close in Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*; Tom Stoppard's epic trilogy *The Coast of Utopia* (*Voyage*, *Shipwreck* and *Salvage*); and Cole Porter's *Anything Goes*. Yukio Ninagawa's company from Japan visit with Shakespeare's *Pericles*.

Shell in the UK announce they are to sponsor the National's youth theatre programme InterNational Connections, in a major new partnership worth £500,000 over two years, thereby doubling the number of schools and youth theatre groups that are able to take part in the programme each year.

*South Pacific*. Photograph by John Haynes

