

17 September 2015

**National Theatre: forthcoming productions in 2016**

Rufus Norris, Director of the National Theatre, today announced some forthcoming productions for 2016.

Yaël Farber will direct ***Les Blancs*** by Lorraine Hansberry in the Olivier Theatre, as the first of the year’s Travelex £15 Tickets productions, from March. This will be the first play by Lorraine Hansberry to be produced at the National Theatre, and also Yaël Farber’s first production for the National; her recent work in the UK includes *The Crucible* for The Old Vic, *Nirbhaya* at the 2013 Edinburgh Festival, and *Mies Julie* at the 2012 Edinburgh Festival and Riverside Studios.

Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill’s ***The Threepenny Opera***, in a new translation by Simon Stephens, will be directed by Rufus Norris in the Olivier Theatre from May, also part of the Travelex £15 Tickets season. Rory Kinnear will play Macheath.

Dominic Cooke’s production of ***Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*** by August Wilson will open in the Lyttelton Theatre on 2 February, as previously announced; the cast will include Sharon D Clarke, O–T Fagbenle, Lucian Msamati and Giles Terera.

***The Suicide*** by Suhayla El-Bushra, after Erdman, set in contemporary Britain, will be directed by Nadia Fall in the Lyttelton Theatre from April; another Travelex £15 Tickets production. Currently Writer in Residence at the NT Studio, Suhayla El-Bushra’s plays include *Pigeons* at the Royal Court, *Cuckoo* at the Unicorn,*The Kilburn Passion* at the Tricycle and *Fingertips* for Clean Break at Latitude; she was a core writer on the TV series *Hollyoaks* .

Carrie Cracknell returns to the NT to direct ***The Deep Blue Sea*** by Terence Rattigan in the Lyttelton Theatre, from June.

Howard Davies will direct Sean O’Casey’s ***The Plough and the Stars***, also in the Lyttelton, from July.

***Cleansed***by Sarah Kane will be directed by Katie Mitchell in the Dorfman Theatre, from February: the first production of a play by Kane at the NT.

Annie Baker’s Pulitzer Prize-winning play ***The Flick***, directed by Sam Gold, will open at the Dorfman Theatre in April. Originally produced in New York by Playwrights Horizons, followed by a transfer to Barrow Street Theatre, *The Flick* is presented in association with Scott Rudin. Annie Baker’s plays include *John, Circle Mirror Transformation* and *The Aliens*, all directed by Sam Gold, who recently won a Tony Award for his direction of the Broadway musical *Fun Home*.

Alexi Kaye Campbell makes his National Theatre debut with a new play, ***Sunset at the Villa Thalia*,** which will be directed by Simon Godwin in the Dorfman Theatre from May. His plays include *The Pride, Apologia, The Faith Machine* and *Bracken Moor.*

***Iphigenia in Splott***by Gary Owen comes to the Temporary Theatre from 27 January – 20 February, presented by the Sherman Cymru, following lauded runs in Cardiff and Edinburgh. It is directed by Rachel O’Riordan, with Sophie Melville recreating her award-winning performance as Effie.

Graeae Theatre Company’s co-production with Theatre Royal, Plymouth of ***The Solid Life of Sugar Water*** by Jack Thorne, highly praised at the Edinburgh Festival, comes to the Temporary Theatre from 26 February – 19 March, with Genevieve Barr and Arthur Hughes again directed by Amit Sharma.

Islington Community Theatre’s ***Brainstorm*** by Ned Glasier, Emily Lim and the company, which enjoyed a sell-out run earlier this year, will return to the Temporary Theatre in March.

After eight record-breaking years, ***War Horse*** will have a final extension to its West End run, with a last performance at the New London Theatre scheduled for 12 March 2016. It will have played over 3,000 performances and been seen by over 2.7 million people in London, and has won 25 awards. A second major UK tour will begin in autumn 2017.

A series of **panel debates and discussions** on current themes and issues, inspired by productions from the National Theatre repertoire and presented in association with the  *Guardian*, will run in the Lyttelton from November. Chaired by Evan Davis and Emily Maitlis, the topics will include: *The Red Lion* and the future of football, *As You Like It* and living in the city, *Waste* and the new political age, *Jane Eyre* and feminism, and *wonder.land* and the digital world. There will also be a debate linked to *Husbands & Sons* in Manchester during its run at the Royal Exchange.

**National Theatre Connections** was launched 21 years ago to meet a need for outstanding new plays for schools and youth theatres to perform. Its 21st anniversary next year will be celebrated by doubling the number of young people involved. 500 youth theatre companies involving 10,000 young people from every corner of the UK, working with 40 major regional theatres, will perform twelve plays drawn from the 150 works written by leading playwrights for young people since the festival began. Writers include Simon Armitage, James Graham, Katori Hall, Jackie Kay, Bryony Lavery and Patrick Marber. Connections is supported by the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation.

1840 schools across the UK (a quarter of all secondary schools) have signed up to **National Theatre: On Demand in Schools** which launched earlier this month. Danny Boyle’s production of *Frankenstein* with Benedict Cumberbatch and Jonny Lee Miller, and Nicholas Hytner’s productions of *Hamlet* with Rory Kinnear and *Othello* with Rory Kinnear and Adrian Lester, are now available to stream free on demand in every secondary classroom nationwide, with comprehensive learning resources to support each play. National Theatre: On Demand in Schools is delivered in partnership with Frog Education Ltd, and supported by Stavros Niarchos Foundation and the Sidney E. Frank Foundation.

October will see the publication of ***National Theatre: All About Theatre***, a richly illustrated new book for ages 10+, published by Walker Books in association with the NT. Specially designed to take children behind the scenes, *All About Theatre* tells the story of how theatre is made at the National, where everything happens under one roof – from writing and set design to wigs, make-up, video and music. Packed with tricks of the trade, quotes from famous actors and insights from theatre experts like fight directors and prop-makers, and with fun ideas to try at home, the book will inspire young readers to get involved in theatre themselves.

Rufus Norris also announced the appointment of four new **Associates**, who help to shape the artistic direction and policy of the NT: sound designer Paul Arditti, directors Nadia Fall and Simon Godwin, and actor Kobna Holdbrook-Smith. They join the existing Associate Directors Paule Constable, Dominic Cooke, Marianne Elliott, Tom Morris and Lyndsey Turner.

Ends

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Further details and press nights for all the productions will be announced with each new booking period. Public booking for *Les Blancs, Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom,The Suicide, Cleansed, Iphigenia in Splott,* *The Solid Life of Sugar Water* and *Brainstorm* will open on 22 October.

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