

The Birmingham Repertory Theatre
and National Theatre present

EAST — IS — EAST

BY AYUB KHAN DIN

FRI 3 – SAT 25 SEPTEMBER 2021



BIRMINGHAM
REPERTORY
THEATRE

National
Theatre

WELCOME TO THE REP

Hello, and Welcome Back...

I'm Sean Foley, and I am honoured to be the Artistic Director of The REP in its 50th Anniversary Season in our iconic 1971 Centenary Square home. Despite joining The REP during 2019, and finally arriving in the building in February 2020, the challenges of the last 18 months have meant that this is the first full season of shows I have been able to programme...

We are immensely proud of the whole REP team for getting us to this point, grateful to everyone who has supported The REP during this time, and I'm thrilled to have finally got to this moment.

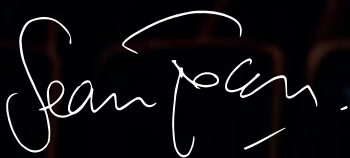
I'm excited by the amazing array of creative talent from Birmingham, around the country, and across the world, that will be at The REP for this very special season. This season will celebrate both our remarkable, pioneering history, and our future – major revivals of classics rub shoulders with world premiere new shows, and new talent mingles with established stars.

To open the season, *East Is East* is making its return to The REP 25 years since its world premiere on our stage. Since then it has had many major revivals, been made into a BAFTA winning film, and travelled around the world becoming one of the most significant plays of its time. I'm thrilled that The REP's new Associate Director, Iqbal Khan – recently also announced as the Artistic Director of the Commonwealth Games opening ceremony – is joining forces with writer Ayub Khan Din for this co-production with the National Theatre. This modern classic, set in 70s Salford in an English-Pakistani household, is as exciting, funny, and relevant today as it was in 1996.

This season we are celebrating our remarkable and pioneering history on our stages, but also looking to the future. Our Open House project will transform the frontage and public areas of our building, reimagining our public spaces and creating new facilities for all. We hope that this project, along with other changes happening behind the scenes, will make The REP an ever more more welcoming and inclusive space to be enjoyed by everyone.

The REP creates world class theatre right here in Birmingham. Opening the doors again at this iconic and beloved theatre is, we hope, a moment of joy for everyone in the city. We look forward to sharing the amazing event of live theatre with you again...

All the best,



Sean Foley
Artistic Director

Our 50th birthday
season is sponsored by



EAST IS EAST

CAST LIST

Meenah Khan
Amy-Leigh Hickman
Doctor/Mr Shah
Irvine Iqbal
George Khan
Tony Jayawardena
Saleem Khan
Adonis Jenieco
Auntie Annie
Rachel Lumberg
Sajit Khan
Noah Manzoor
Maneer Khan
Joeravar Sangha
Tariq Khan
Gurjeet Singh
Ella Khan
Sophie Stanton
Abdul Khan
Assad Zaman

UNDERSTUDIES

Hamzah Aftab
Maneer, Saleem & Dr/Mr Shah
Sara Faraj
Meena & Sajit
Emma Keele
Ella & Annie
Joeravar Sangha
Abdul & Tariq

CREATIVE TEAM

Director
Iqbal Khan
Set, Projection & Lighting Designer
Bretta Gerecke
Costume Designer
Susan Kulkarni
Composer
Felix Dubs
Sound Designer
Jon Nicholls
Fight Director
RC Annie
Casting Director
Stuart Burt CDG
Associate Director
Natasha Kathi-Chandra
Associate Projection Designer
Max White
Voice Coach
Abi Lumb
Associate Costume Designer & Supervisor
Suzanne Knight
Makeup & Hair Designer
JoJo Dutton

Production Manager
Heather Doole
Set Build Production Manager
Sam Paterson
Company Stage Manager
Jo Alexander
Deputy Stage Manager
Ana Carter
Assistant Stage Manager
Myer Daniels
Props Supervisor & Assistant Stage Manager
Laura Stone

SARFRAZ MANZOOR IN CONVERSATION WITH AYUB KHAN DIN AND IQBAL KHAN

Journalist and author Sarfraz Manzoor talks to writer Ayub Khan Din and director Iqbal Khan

SM: What does it mean for you to bring *East Is East* back to Birmingham?

AKD: What is special to me is that it's 25 years and it all started off in that studio in Birmingham. It was a life-changing experience for me because my life changed overnight. The way people perceived British Asians in general and in our business was completely turned on its head as well. Suddenly, we could laugh at ourselves. It felt as if a veil was lifted that suddenly we had permission to go on a further journey than what was normally perceived of us.

SM: What prompted the restaging now? Is it the 25th anniversary?

IK: Well, the 25th anniversary is important – it's important to mark that. There are questions around identity that have never been as vocal and visible in all parts of the community. This isn't just an Asian conversation. Everyone is having this conversation now: What's our national identity? What tribes do we belong to? And this play is speaking to all of those things but with real detail. And the play, as opposed to the film, is a much more nuanced, darker journey to go on.

SM: How do you think time has treated the play?

AKD: I think it's still as fresh and relevant as when we first did it. Perhaps more so because the politics we have today have moved so fast and it seems like every moment of that movement has continued to inform the play and vice versa. I think the issues within the play are still saying that and are still resonating with young Asians today. I think that's why it feels so fresh to me.

IK: It was incredibly funny – dangerous – it walked a line that was really exciting to me. I felt our story was visible in a way that I hadn't seen represented before on screen. Also I don't think there is another play that has dealt as well and has spoken and crossed into the mainstream as well about a mixed race relationship between Pakistani and white – I can't think of one.

It does feel like (with this new production that) we're really digging into darker waters in the play. There is a story about domestic abuse in the play. Is George a monster? Is his mind fractured? What is his psychosis? We're much more able to enter the mind of George than I think we were before. He's much less a figure of fun and there is something quite tragic about him. There's also something about the strength of the women in the play. All of the women in the play – Annie, Ella and Meenah – are incredibly strong. Their gender presence in the play feels even more significant now than I remember it being 12 years ago. Ayub was writing with a freedom and confidence 25 years ago about these things and I think the world is now catching up.

SM: Do you think it would be as easy to write with such freedom now?

AKD: The problem would be white liberal theatre practitioners stopping me from saying things. It's weird. It's as if things have come full circle. They couldn't give a flying f*ck about putting Asian or brown faces on television or what was said about them. Now they're so concerned about what we write about ourselves and what people write about us that they stop it. It's the same people who wouldn't allow us the platform are now being overprotective about the platform they've now given us.

SM: Is there a greater talent pool than in the past?

IK: I'm incredibly excited about the extraordinary range of talent that is coming through now in the younger generation of actors. They have had much more experience. They're much more confident. So that talent pool has deepened and broadened and I think we have an exceptional company of young people.

AKD: Now we've got British Asian film stars in Hollywood. In the mainstream soaps, we have regular Asian families involved. It's when we're seeing we're mainstream that things move on. It's those people in the mainstream, competing with the best.

SM: When you watch it now what does it make you think?

AKD: I can hear my voice investigating the father, trying to understand what his motivations were, trying to understand the decisions that he made and the effects they had on his family and his relationship with his children. The more I thought about it, the bigger those decisions became and the bigger an impact they had on my life. So that's – there is a real cathartic process in a way. And I still don't think I understand.

SM: When an audience watches the play today are they watching a snapshot of what life was like for a Pakistani family in the 1970s?

IK: I think Ayub has caught it brilliantly, the texture of the time and the unsentimental piss-taking vitality of all of this family resonate far beyond this play at this particular time. The matrix of ideas that he's exploring, the psychological fractures, the humour, it all feels – we see it more and more clearly as time moves on. It's as though he wrote the play in the shadows five years ago and we are now – the world has caught up with it and caught up with the issues the play was mining then. It captures the time then really well but it's also a play that transcends that time and says truths about families and the dislocations of the people who embrace dominant cultures and the heritage they think they have.



THE STORY

George Khan and Ella Khan live in Salford in 1971 with their six children; Abdul (23), Tariq (21), Maneer (19), Saleem (18), Meenah (16) and Sajit (12), and run a fish and chip shop. George is from Pakistan, and still has family, including a wife, in Azad Kashmir in West Pakistan, whilst Ella is from England. George wants his children to be raised Muslim and in the proper Pakistani way, but the kids have other ideas...It's up to Ella, with the help of her good friend Auntie Annie, to try and keep everybody happy.

WORLD EVENTS

In 1971, India and Pakistan were on the cusp of war over the independence of East Pakistan. When the British Raj was dissolved in 1947, independent nations of India, with a majority Hindu population, and Pakistan, with a majority Muslim population were formed – a process that became known as partition. Pakistan was composed of East and West Pakistan, separated culturally and geographically. Political power was based in West Pakistan, and there was a growing move towards self-determination in East Pakistan. In 1970 Sheikh Mujib from the Awami League won the Pakistan-wide election to become Prime Minister. However, power was not conceded and on 7 March 1971 Sheikh Mujib gave a speech to thousands of people at the Dhaka race Course calling for independence for East Pakistan. On 26 March 1971 Bangladesh – formerly East Pakistan – was declared independent, nine months of civil war ensued with the invasion of the Pakistani army. Under the code name of 'Operation Search Light' thousands of East Pakistani intellectuals were systematically targeted and killed. On 16 December 1971, Bangladesh's fight for independence ends in Victory on 16 December 1971.

CELEBRATING EAST IS EAST

*Sudha Bhuchar, co-founder of Tamasha, shares her thoughts on the origins and impact of **East Is East**.*

I first met Ayub at Tara Arts in 1984 when we were cast in *Miti ki Gadi* (The Little Clay Cart), Jatinder Verma's adaptation of Shudraka's Sanskrit classic. Playing lovers, the impoverished Charudata and courtesan Vasantasena, we struck up a lifelong friendship that was cemented by Shaheen Khan, who remains the 'glue' in our trio! Shaheen and my East African/Indian upbringing seemed worlds apart from Ayub's childhood in Salford, where his family ran a fish and chip shop with the only 'real' bath in the neighbourhood, but we found much in common, like our love of the songs from the iconic 70s film *Pakeezah*.



Sudha Bhuchar with her copy of the original programme. Ayub shared that he was writing *East Is East*, inspired by his family, and that director Teddy Kendal from the Albany in Deptford had agreed to mount a reading there. I was cast as the original Meenah or miscast more like with my dodgy Salford accent! The piece was a triumph with the intimate audience and spurred Ayub to chip away at it over the coming years. Some of the classic scenes (like the kids hiding their illicit pork sausages

from their father) have remained intact in the final version.

Kristine Landon-Smith and I also met at Tara in 1987 when Jatinder cast us as male warriors, Duryodhana and Karna, in *The Broken Thigh*. Our friendship led to us founding Tamasha in 1989 and in 1996, the late and great Elyse Dodgson (who founded the International dept at the Royal Court) invited Tamasha to partner with the Court in a new writing programme aimed at unearthing fresh Asian talent.



The Duke of York's Theatre lit up, April 2 1997

Shaheen and I were writing together by then and cajoled Ayub to accompany us to the 'Bombay Jungle Night' at the WAG club as we were researching for *Girlies* (a Radio 4 series reflecting our multi-cultural lives with us in chunky parts!) As none of us were ardent clubbers we soon left and retired to Ayub's flat. He told us that he was feeling dejected as *East Is East* had been universally rejected. I invited him to join our workshop. Adamant that *East Is East* was a closed chapter, he gave me another play, *Aatcha!* (meaning OK!- a black comedy about a series of tourist killings in Goa) to read instead. It didn't compare to my vivid memories of *East Is East* and I finally persuaded him to get it out of his drawer. The rest, as they say, is history.



Ayub Khan Din, Sudha Bhuchar and Shobu Kapoor at the 100th performance of *East Is East*, Duke of York's Theatre on 9 April, 1997

Tamasha went on to commission the play and Birmingham Repertory Theatre, who we had a relationship with, were immediately on board. With Elyse and Carl Miller championing at the Court, we secured a 3-way co-production with Tamasha as lead partner and *East Is East*, directed by Kristine, opened at The REP's studio theatre to a rapturous house on 8 Oct 1996.

The evening was electric, and Bill Alexander, The REP's then artistic director voiced what we were all feeling – that we had a hit on our hands. The production's run also sold out before it opened at the Ambassadors theatre's 60-seater studio (where the Royal Court were temporarily resident) and wowed audiences everywhere on that national tour. It cried out for a future life on the big stage. The indomitable Philip Headley (who had partnered Tamasha on our production of *House of the Sun* in 1993) pipped the Royal Court to the post and over a memorable coffee at his flat, he and I did the sums on the back of an envelope and shook on the deal. *East Is East* transferred to Theatre Royal Stratford East in Feb 1997 and onto the Duke of York's (Royal Court's 'downstairs' venue at the time) in late March, where we celebrated its 100th performance on April 9 and the show sold out for months.

Its success snowballed as from the outset people had clamoured to secure the film rights. Leslee Udwin's memorable film

version hit our screens within 18 months of Tamasha's first production, and she went on to make the sequel *West Is West*.

The play's longevity lies in how Ayub has beautifully fictionalised his family's lived experiences through comedy and pathos. Kristine recalls the challenge and pleasure of honouring the comedy while drawing truthful, understated performances from the cast, ensuring the play didn't tip over into sitcom. The relationships and sparky dialogue between the mixed-race children resonated with Kristine (of Indian/Australian heritage) and many of the original cast and, as Britain's fastest growing demographic, the contemporary parallels continue as young people seek to define themselves and how they want to be perceived. The chemistry between Nadim Sawalha as George and Linda Bassett as Ella ensured that the parents' deep love anchored the play and when George resorts to violence it is his own fragility he displays -as a first-generation immigrant, trying to mould his children in his image whilst refusing to recognise their contribution to his own transformation. Sue Mayes's wonderfully realistic set, including beaded curtains and authentic 70s decor was the icing on the cake. Ayub admitted that the parker-clad youngest child Sajit was him and I remember Shaheen and I being moved to tears at the press night in London.



Kristine Landon-Smith (director) & Stephen Daldry (Royal Court director) at the press night of *East Is East* in the remount at The Duke of York's Theatre on 2 April, 1997

In typical Ayub fashion he dismissed our concerns with a 'It's alright. Look at me now, I'm wearing tweed!'

East Is East has won awards, had many revivals, translations and iterations around the world including Kristine revisiting it for Oldham Coliseum (1999) and Sam Yates production at Trafalgar studios (2014) where Ayub played George alongside Jane Horrocks's Ella. Many of the young cast in all the productions have gone on to have stellar careers and become household names and audiences have been moved at the parallels to their own families - so many lives transformed by their 'East Is East moment'

How appropriate then that the 25th anniversary production has come home to The REP. Tamasha's relationship with The REP began in 1995 when associate director Anthony Clark invited us to mount Indian writer Abhijat Joshi's debut play *A Shaft of Sunlight*. In a memorable encounter in the theatre bar, I met one of India's best known Bollywood directors Vidhu Vinod Chopra who loved the production and wanted to meet



The original cast of *East Is East* in rehearsals, taken by Robert Wokeman



Sudha Bhuchar, Ayub Khan Din and Shaheen Khan at the press night of *Last Dance at Dum Dum*, 1999

Abhijat. They have gone on to make many globally successful films together and Abhijat is now one of India's foremost and famous writers. Other Tamasha/REP co-productions include Kristine and my award-winning musical *Fourteen Songs Two Weddings and a Funeral* (1998) and *Balti Kings*, written by Shaheen and me (2000)- set in the kitchen of a Balti restaurant on Birmingham's Ladypool road (where the term 'Balti' was invented) on the day Shah Rukh Khan comes to town.

At this moment when there is so much circuitous discussion about amplifying diverse voices in British theatre, it is timely to reflect on the legacies that institutions like The REP hold. This gem of a play could so easily have slipped through the net as new work from writers of colour is still deemed 'risky'. I hope this revival can act as a catalyst to open the door to the canon of work that already exists awaiting rediscovery, and new work yet to be commissioned. Who knows, maybe Ayub's *Aatcha* will yet have its day!

Sudha Bhuchar

Co-Founder of Tamasha, Artistic Director of Bhuchar Boulevard, actor and playwright.

East Is East was originally brought to the stage by Tamasha, Birmingham Repertory Theatre and the Royal Court who produced the original production on The REP's stage in 1996

EAST IS EAST IN REHEARSALS

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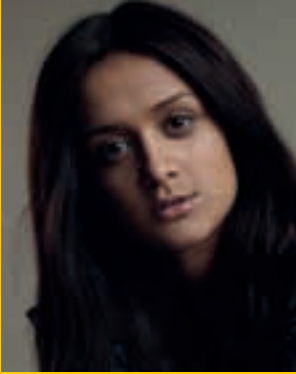


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THE CAST



Amy-Leigh Hickman Meenah Khan

Amy's theatre credits include: *Beautiful Thing* (Tobacco Factory Theatre); *South Pacific* (UK Productions); *Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Half A Six Pence* (Bill Kenwright Ltd) and *Fiddler On The Roof* (UK Productions).

Television credits include: *Tracy Beaker Returns*, *The Dumping Ground*, *Casualty*, *Doctors*, *EastEnders* (BBC); *Strike Back* (Left Bank Pictures/Cinemax/Sky); *Safe* (Canal+); *Our Girl* (BBC Studios); *Innocent* (ITV), and *Tin Star* (Sky Atlantic). Amy won a Royal Television Society Award for Best Actor for her role as Nasreen in *Ackley Bridge*.



Irvine Iqbal Dr/Mr Shah

Irvine's theatre includes: *Romeo & Juliet* (Regents Park Open Air); *Now Or Never* (The Barn Theatre); *The Boy In The Dress* (RSC); *Aladdin* (Prince Edward Theatre); *Broken Wings* (Theatre Royal Haymarket), *Branded* (Criterion Theatre); *Bend It Like Beckham* (Phoenix Theatre); *David Walliams Live* (Garrick Theatre); *World of Walliams* (Palace Theatre); *Mr Stink* (UK tour); *Wuthering Heights* (Lyric Hammersmith); *Cooks Clock* (Soho Theatre); *Then Like My Dreams* (Stratford East Theatre); *The Good Woman of Setzuan* (Leicester Haymarket Theatre); *The Mahabharata* (Old Vic Theatre); *The Far Pavilions* (Shaftesbury Theatre); *Little Shop Of Horrors* (Jersey Opera House); *Jallabies and Tea* (Chichester Festival Theatre); *The Emperor And The Nightingale*, *Layla Majnun* (MAC Theatre); *Bombay Dreams* (Apollo Victoria Theatre) and *Blood Drive* (Bridewell Theatre).

Television credits include: *The Bill*, *EastEnders*, *Casualty*, *Doctors*, (BBC Television); *Spotlight And Saris* (BBC) and *Big Cat Country* (Plimsoll Productions).

Film credits include: *Aladdin: Live from the West End* (Disney); *The Cook* (Senator Film), *Infinite Justice* (Dehlavi Films) and *The Pinocchio Effect* (I Dream Productions/New Line Cinema).



Tony Jayawardena George Khan

Tony's theatre credits include: *The Invisible Hand*, *White Teeth* (Kiln Theatre); *Lions And Tigers*, *Twelfth Night*, *Christmas At The (Snow) Globe* (Shakespeare's Globe); *Hobson's Choice* (Royal Exchange Theatre); *Young Marx* (The Bridge Theatre); *The Tempest*, *The Roaring Girl*, *The White Devil* (RSC); *Bend It Like Beckham* (Phoenix Theatre); and *England People Very Nice*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *London Assurance* (National Theatre).

Television credits include: *The Crown* (Left Bank Pictures/Sony Pictures Television Production UK); *The Duchess* (3 Arts

Entertainment/ Clerkenwell Films); *Ackley Bridge* (The Forge); *The Tunnel* (Kudos/Shine France); *Holby City*, *Silent Witness* (BBC); *The Windsors* (NOHO Film and Television); *Strike Back* (Left Bank Pictures/Cinemax/Sky); *Cuckoo* (Roughcut Television) and *The Life and Adventures of Nick Nickleby* (Kindle Entertainment).

Film credits include: *A Streetcat Named Bob* (Shooting Script Films); *The Cook* (Senator Films); *Jadoo* (Jadoo Films); *Trance* (Fox Searchlight) and *The Wedding Video* (Squirrel Films).



Adonis Jenieco Saleem Khan

Adonis' theatre credits includes: *The Picture Of Dorian Gray* (Pleasance London); *The History Boys* (The Wolverhampton Grand); *Very Special Guest Star* (Soho Theatre); *Jimmy Jimmy Jimmy* (Clapham Omnibus), *Dad* (Southwark Playhouse) and *Party Skills For The End Of The World* (Manchester International Festival/ Shoreditch Town Hall).

Film & Television credits include: *Tyrant* (Fox); *Beyond Reasonable Doubt* (CNN); *Tin Star* (Sky Atlantic) and *Me Myself And Di* (Three Wise Monkeys).



Rachel Lumberg Auntie Annie

Rachel's Theatre credits include: *The Band* (Theatre Royal Haymarket); *Romeo & Juliet*, *This Is My Family*, *The Way of The World* (Crucible Theatre); *The Full Monty* (Noel Coward Theatre); *Dandy Dick* (UK Tour); *'Tis Pity She's A Whore* (Leeds Playhouse); *Calendar Girls* (UK Tour); *The Devil Inside Him* (National Theatre Wales); *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice* (Vaudeville Theatre); *Cariad*, *Measure for Measure* (Theatr Clwyd); *Mog*, *Treading Water* (Soho Theatre); *The Girlfriend Experience* (Royal Court); *Le Nozze Di Figaro*, *Il Turco in Italia* (Royal Opera House); *Woyzeck* (St Ann's Warehouse, New York/ The Gate Theatre); *See How They Run* (Salisbury Playhouse/Windsor Theatre), *Between Mouthfuls*, *Talent* (Colchester Mercury Theatre); *Katherine Howard* (Chichester Festival Theatre) and *Chatsky* (The Almeida).

Television credits include: *Pistols* (Wiip Productions for BBC and BBC America); *Coronation Street* (ITV); *Casualty*, *New Tricks*, *Becoming Human*, *Doctors*, *A Lump in My Throat*, *Accused*, *Casualty*, *Get Me To The Crematorium*, *Hetty Wainthropp Investigates*, *Holby City*, *The Moonstone*, *Tears Before Bedtime*, *Undercover Heart*, *Sunburn Series 2* (BBC Television); *Stella* (Sky TV); *A Dance To The Music Of Time* (Channel 4 Films) and *A Touch of Frost* (Yorkshire Television).

Film credits include: *Summertime* (Tornado Films); *South Kensington* (Medusa Films) and *Emma* (Matchmaker Films).

Radio credits include: *Daf's Cab*, *Henry IC Part 1 & 2* (BBC Radio).

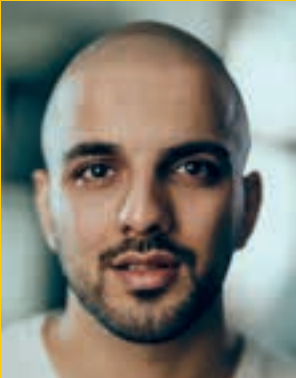


Noah Manzoor Sajit Khan

Noah has been appearing in theatre from a young age, and is incredibly excited and grateful to be making his Birmingham and London debut. The character of Sajit is a dream role for Noah.

Noah's theatre credits include: *The King And I* (Lyceum Theatre); *The Wizard And I* (Crucible Theatre).

Film credits include: *Letterbox* (Wax Films).



Joeravar Sangha Maneer Khan

Joeravar Sangha graduated from St Mary's University.

Joeravar theatre credits include: *Billionaire Boy* (Garrick Theatre/UK Tour).

Television credits include: *Doctors* (BBC).

Film credits include: *Solo: A Star Wars Story* (Lucas Film Ltd).



Gurjeet Singh Tariq Khan

Gurjeet's theatre credits include: *Wuthering Heights*, *Hobson's Choice* (Royal Exchange Theatre); *A Christmas Carol* (Hull Truck Theatre); *The Rise And Fall Of Little Voice*, *Goth Weekend* (SJT Scarborough Newcastle Live) and *Dara* (National Theatre).

Television credits include: *Ackley Bridge* (Channel 4); *The Bay* (ITV) and *Three Girls*, *Broken Biscuits* (BBC).

Film credits include: *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Lawrence Batley Theatre The Dukes).

Radio credits include: *Whose Baby* (BBC Radio 4).



Sophie Stanton Ella Khan

Sophie's theatre credits include: *As You Like It*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *The Fantastic Follies Of Mrs Rich*, *Slaughter City* (RSC); *Ink*, *Knot of the Heart*, *Dying For It*, *Cloud Nine* (Almeida Theatre); *Shakespeare Trilogy* (Donmar Warehouse); *Made In Dagenham* (Adelphi Theatre); *Nut*, *England People Very Nice*, *Market Boy* (National Theatre); *Ding Dong The Wicked* (Royal Court Theatre); *Beautiful Thing* (Sound Theatre/Bush Theatre); *Crossing the Equator* (Bush Theatre); *Cariad* (Tristan Bates Theatre); *Mercury Fur* (Paines Plough/Menier Chocolate Factory); *Sleeping Around* (Paines Plough/Donmar Warehouse); *Breeze Block Park* (Liverpool Playhouse); *Bright* (Soho Theatre); *She Stoops To Conquer* (New Kent Opera); *A Collier's Friday Night* (Hampstead Theatre) and *Hindle Wakes*, *Love's Labour's Lost* (Royal Exchange).

Television includes: *King Gary, The Forgiving Earth, Silent Witness* (BBC); *Vera* (ITV); *Endeavour IV* (Mammoth Screen); *The Halcyon* (Left Bank Pictures); *EastEnders, One Night, Hunter, Fingersmith, Coupling* (BBC TV); *Harry Price: Ghost Hunter, Midsomer Murders* (Bentley Productions); *The Job Lot* (Big Talk Productions); *Walter* (ITV Studios); *My Mad Fat Diary* (Tiger Aspect); *The Smoke, Mayday, Ashes To Ashes* (Kudos Production); *New Tricks* (Wall to Wall); *Silent And The Damned* (Mammoth Screen); *Lewis: He Loves Me* (ITV Granada); *PAs (2 AM)*; *Wallander* (BBC Scotland); *Whitechapel* (Carnival); *Sold* (Touchpaper TV); *Jekyll* (Hartwood Films); *Spitgame* (Zenith); *Our Hidden Lives* (Diverse Productions); *Wall of Silence, The Vice, Girl's Night, Tough Love, Prime Suspect, Where The Heart Is* (Granada); *The Brief, The Unknown Soldier, Plain Jane* (Carlton TV); *Hidden City* (Hallmark Productions); *Hogwash* (Freemantle Media); *Black Books* (Assembly Films/TV); *The Mayor Of Casterbridge, Plastic Man* (Sally Head Prods); *Gimme Gimme Gimme, The Wilsons* (Hat Trick); *A Touch Of Frost* (YTV); *Dressing For Breakfast, Dangerous Lady* (Warner Sisters); *The Sculptress* (Red Rooster Films); *Shine On Harvey Moon* (Witzend); *Peak Practice* (Central TV) and *Get Real* (Tandem).

Film credits includes: *Una* (Bron Creative); *Me Before You* (MGM); *How I Live Now* (Cowboy Films); *Cheerful Weather For The Wedding* (Cheerful Weather/Goldcrest Pictures/Yellow Knife), *Grow Your Own* (BBC/Warp Films); *Closer* (Footprint Films); *Shadowlands* (Price Entertainment) and *Beautiful Thing* (Channel Four Films).



Assad Zaman Abdul Khan

Assad trained at Manchester School of Theatre

Assad's theatre credits include: *The Winter's Tale, Coriolanus, Julius Caesar, Salome* (RSC); *A Doll's House* (Lyric Hammersmith); *The Funeral Director* (English Touring Theatre); *White Teeth* (Kiln); *Arms And The Man* (Watford Palace); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (New Wolsey Theatre); *East Is East* (Jamie Lloyd Productions/ Ambassador Theatre Group); *Behind the Beautiful Forevers* (National Theatre); *Beats North* (Curious Monkey/Northern Stage); *Dark Woods Deep Snow* (Northern Stage) and *Tyne* (Live Theatre).

Television credits include: *Hotel Portofino* (PBS/ITV/Eagle Eye Drama); *Small Axe* (BBC); *Our Girl* (BBC); *Vera* (ITV); *Apple Tree Yard* (BBC/Kudos) and *Cucumber* (Channel 4/Red Productions).

UNDERSTUDIES



Hamzah Aftab Maneer, Saleem & Dr/Mr Shah

Hamzah Aftab grew up watching the 1999 film version of *East Is East* and feels a strong connection to the story and the characters. He finds it a pleasure to be a part of the company. He trained in performing arts acting for 4 years at The Birmingham Theatre School, which led him to East 15 on their BA Acting & Stage Combat 3-year degree. This is his first professional production after graduating over a month ago he feels that the opportunity to learn four parts is a challenge that he is ready for.



Sara Faraj Meena & Sajit

Sara Faraj trained at the Manchester School of Acting.

Sara's theatre credits include: *You Bury Me* (Edinburgh International Festival 2021).

TV credits include: *Wolfe* (SKY TV).

Film credits include: *Only Love Matters* (KQ Movies).



Emma Keele Ella & Annie

Emma trained at LAMDA and the Stella Adler Studio in New York.

Emma's theatre credits include: *The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Night-Time* (National Theatre – International Tour); *Abigail's Party* (40th Anniversary Production, Theatre Royal Bath and UK No.1 Tour); *The End of the Line, A Bunch Of Amateurs* (Southwold Summer Repertory); *Yen* (Gothenburg English Studio Theatre); *April In Paris, September in the Rain* (UK No.1 Tour); *Phaedra's Love* (Arcola Theatre) and *Torn Out Pages* (Gilded Balloon for the Edinburgh Festival).

TV credits include: *Emmerdale, Coronation Street, Downtown Abbey* (ITV); *Silent Witness, Doctors* and *New Tricks* (BBC).

Film credits include: *Downhill* (Crisis Films LTD).

Emma won the Bazza Film Festival Best Actress Award in 2018 for her role in *Jo* (short).

Emma also founded and runs Reduced Circumstances, a theatre company committed to nurturing talent and developing new work.

THE CREATIVE TEAM

Iqbal Khan

Director

Iqbal Khan has directed acclaimed productions at the RSC including *Tartuffe*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Othello* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. His other work includes; *Educating Rita*, *Perfect Days*, *Beautiful Thing* (Oldham Coliseum); *Oleanna*, *Rafta Rafta* (Bolton Octagon); *Macbeth* (Shakespeare's Globe); *Shakespeare at the Bowl* (collaboration between LA Philharmonic & BBCSO at the Hollywood Bowl & Barbican); *The Wildman of the West Indies* (Donizetti opera for ETO/Hackney Empire/UK Tour); *Treemonisha* (Pegasus Opera); *The Importance of Being Earnest: The Musical* (Riverside Studios); *The Killing of Sister George* (Arts Theatre); *Broken Glass* (Tricycle/Vaudeville); *A Slight Ache and Landscape* (National Theatre).

Bretta Gerecke

Set, Projection and Lighting Designer

Bretta Gerecke is a lighting, set, costume and projection designer for Theatre, Circus, Opera, Film and Installation Art. She is the resident designer at Catalyst Theatre (Canada) where she co-creates and tours new work across North America, the UK and Australia. Bretta also designs for Cirque du Soleil, the RSC, The National Arts Centre, The Stratford Shakespeare Festival, Edmonton Opera, Calgary Opera, Vancouver Opera, The Citadel Theatre and The Grand Theatre. She is the recipient of over 25 awards for her work including Avenue Magazine's Top 40 under 40, Global Television's Woman of Vision, Best Emerging Artist and the Lucille Lortel Award for Costume Design. She recently represented Canada in Prague at the Scenography Quadrennial and her costume designs were exhibited in Moscow, Beijing, and Taipei. Bretta is a marathon runner and an archaeological illustrator.

Susan Kulkarni

Costume Designer

Susan Kulkarni is an international award winning costume designer for stage, screen and immersive theatre. She studied at Oxford University and RADA. She is Head of Costume for Secret Cinema, designing all their large-scale events from *Bond* to the forthcoming *Bridgerton*. Most recently she Costume Designed *United Queendom* (Les Enfants Terribles), *Herding Cats* (Soho Theatre) and Jeff Wayne's immersive *War of the Worlds*. She designed over 2000 bespoke costumes for the UAE's National Day 48 Celebration and the Closing Ceremony of the Islamic Solidarity Games.

Other designs include the award winning *Symphony in Blue* and the Monaco Grand Prix parties for Diagio; *Detroit*, *Cesario* and *More Light* (National Theatre), *Figaro* and *The Magic Flute* (Central City Opera, Colorado).

Filmed work includes Assistant Costume Designer for Martin Scorsese's Oscar nominated film *Silence* and *The Peripheral*, an upcoming Amazon series. She was part of the Costume Team for *Downton Abbey*, *Wolf Hall*, *Huntsman*, *The Crown* and *The Northman*. Forthcoming shows include the UK Tour of *Bring It On: the Musical* and a Warner Bros production.

Felix Dubs

Composer

Felix Dubs is a preeminent figure in UK underground music with a reputation extending well beyond the West Midlands. As a Birmingham-based DJ and record producer, Felix has carved a niche for himself as one of the scene's most indisputably emotive and eclectic beat-makers. Stitching together rich tapestries using everything from murky synths to jazz-inspired brass excerpts, he counts an ever-expanding list of rap royalty in his circle, with local legend Jaykae, viral 'trap metal' star Scarlxrd and grime pioneer Wiley among those to have sought out his immersive signature sound as the foundation for their tracks. First emerging a little under a decade ago with a slew of releases on coveted labels including Squarewave and Sukh Knight's New World Audio and Mr. Mitch's Beatfighter imprint, the Indian-British talent has since made welcome forays into disparate subgenres including lo-fi hip-hop, trap and UK funky, juggling these innovations with his better-known expeditions in grime and dubstep.

Now at the helm of his very own label, Red Lagoon, he's also earned his stripes as a music curator, securing sought-after endorsements of the brand's first releases from the likes of Mixmag, Complex and Mixtape Madness as well as prestigious airplay on Radio 1, 1Xtra and the BBC Asian Network among other stations.

Jon Nicholls

Sound Designer

Jon Nicholls music/sound scores for theatre include: *Hamlet* (RSC); *My Brilliant Friend Parts 1 & 2*, *Spring Storm*, *Beyond the Horizon*, *The Holy Rosenbergs* (National Theatre); *Oleanna*, *Touching The Void*, *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*, *Bakersfield Mist* (West End); *Breaking The Waves* (Scottish Opera); *The Mirror Crack'd* (Wales Millennium Centre & NCPA Mumbai); *Good Canary* (directed by John Malkovich); *Much Ado About Nothing* (Rose, Kingston); *Bracken Moor*, *Mermaid* (Shared Experience); *The Master Builder*, *Richard III* (Leeds Playhouse); *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Sheffield Crucible); *Pink Mist*, *Medea* (Bristol Old Vic); *Wonderland*, *Our Country's Good*, *The Duchess of Malfi* (Nottingham Playhouse); *Idomeneus*, *Dear Elizabeth* (Gate); *The Norman Conquests* (Liverpool Playhouse); *Copenhagen*, *Betrayal*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Things We Do For Love*, *Betrayal*, *Christmas Eve*, *The Whale*, *The Model Apartment*, *The Mother*, *Trouble in Mind*, *Intimate Apparel*, *The Double* (Theatre Royal Bath); *Eden End*, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, *In Praise of Love* (Northampton Royal and Derngate); *Wipers* (Curve); *Blue Remembered Hills*, *Art*, *Silas Marner* (Theatr Clwyd).

Screen credits include: scores for numerous documentaries for the BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Sky and Al Jazeera. *VR: The Turning Forest*, *The Turning World* (BBC VR).

Jon has created music and sound design for over forty audio dramas and composed features, many for the BBC, including most recently: *The Meaning Of Zong*, *Lanny*, *Henry IV Part 1*, *Ballad Of The Blade*, *Ballad Of The Fix*, *Earthsea*, *Beloved* (BBC Radio 3 & 4) and *Hindu Times*, *The Mother Load* and *Black Diamonds* for Scottish Sound Stage. As an independent radio producer he's made *Unicorns*, *Almost* and *Water Towers Of New York* for Radio 3's Drama on 3 and *Between The Ears* series.

RC-ANNIE

RC-ANNIE Ltd, established in 2005 by Rachel Bown-Williams and Ruth Cooper-Brown, is the UK's leading Dramatic Violence Company.

Theatre credits include: *2:22 A Ghost Story* (Noël Coward Theatre); *Henry VI Part 1 Rehearsal Room Project*, *King John*, *Measure for Measure*, *The Taming of the Shrew* (RSC); *As You Like It* (Globe on Tour); *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Secret Theatre*, *Lions and Tigers*, *Twelfth Night*, *Comus and Imogen* (Shakespeare's Globe); *The Welkin*, *Anna*, *Common* (National Theatre); *The Prince of Egypt* (Dreamworks at The Dominion Theatre); *Alone in Berlin* (Royal and Derngate); *Macbeth*, *Plenty* (Chichester Festival Theatre); *The King of Hell's Palace* (Hampstead Theatre); *Noises Off* (Lyric Hammersmith & West End); *The Night of the Iguana* (Noel Coward Theatre); *Hobson's Choice* (Manchester Royal Exchange); *King Hedley* (Theatre Royal Stratford East); *Europe* (Leeds Playhouse); *The Price*, *Switzerland* (Theatre Royal Bath); *The Invisible Hand*, *Red Velvet* and *Wife* (The Kiln).

Stuart Burt CDG

Casting Director

Stuart Burt CDG's current credits for 2021 include: *Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Palladium); & *Juliet* (Shaftesbury Theatre); *Singin' In The Rain* (Sadlers Well's, Int. & UK Tour); *Romeo & Juliet* (Regent's Park Open Air Theatre); *The Da Vinci Code* (UK Tour); *Rocky Horror Show* (UK Tour); *The Drifters Girl* (Garrick Theatre) and *The Time Traveller's Wife* (2022). As Casting Director for The Jamie Lloyd Company credits include: *The Seagull*, *Cyrano De Bergerac* (Playhouse Theatre); *Betrayal* (Harold Pinter Theatre/Broadway); Season Casting Director for *Pinter at the Pinter* (Pinter Theatre); *Doctor Faustus* (Duke of York's); *The Maids*, *The Homecoming*, *The Hothouse*, *The Ruling Class*, *Richard III*, *Macbeth*, *East is East*, *The Pride* (Trafalgar Studios). Film credits include: *Everybody's Talking About Jamie* (Choreography Casting). TV credits include: *Dr Seuss' The Grinch Musical* (NBC/Sky) and *Locked Up Abroad* (National Geographic). Stuart was this year's winner of the Casting Director's Guild Award for Best Theatre Casting for *Cyrano De Bergerac*.

Natasha Kathi-Chandra

Associate Director

Natasha Kathi-Chandra is an international theatre director based in London, UK and Hyderabad, India. Her directing credits include: *It Kind Of Looks Like A Doughnut* (Curve/Pleasance); *Beyond Lockdown* (Tara Theatre); *The Wolves* (London College of Music); *Four Stages* (OFFCom-Bread & Roses); *Om Shanti F*ck & Doll Face* (Arcola/Battersea Arts Centre/Camden People's Theatre); *Sad About The Cows* (Tristan Bates); *Voices Of The Movement* (Park); *The Infinite Line Between Dating & Dying* (Etcetera); *The Crucible* (Hyderabad Film & Theatre Festival 2010); *Les Miserables*, *Alexander*, *Rising Of The Great*, *The Lion King* (various, Hyderabad, India). Associate Director for Kali Theatre on Discovery 2018-19 (Pleasance/Arnolfini Arts) and Discovery 2021-22 (Hampstead Theatre). Digital Directing credits include; *Exposed*, *Cheek To Cheek* (Kali), *Hear Me Now Monologues* (Titiola Dawudu/Tamasha). Her Assistant Directing credits include; *The Woods* (Royal Court); *The House Of In Between* (Stratford East) and *New Work* (National).

Max White

Associate Projection Designer

Max White's theatre credits include: *Gaslight* (Theatre Royal Windsor/Bill Kenwright Ltd.); *The Color Purple* (Leicester Curve/Birmingham Hippodrome Theatre); *Tribute to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos* (Royal Opera House Muscat); *All's Well That Ends Well*, *The Empress*, *The Mouse and His Child*, *Merchant of Venice* (Royal Shakespeare Company) and *Matilda The Musical* (Cambridge Theatre/Royal Shakespeare Company).

Abi Lumb

Voice Coach

Abi Lumb is a voice and dialect coach and has an MA in Professional Voice Practice from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.

She has worked extensively as a voice and dialect coach and associate lecturer within drama schools including LAMDA, Arts Ed, Mountview, Laine Theatre Arts, ALRA, Rose Bruford, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and Bristol Old Vic Theatre School.

Some of her coaching credits include: *Peter Pan* (The REP); *The Winter's Tale* (The Globe); *A Few Good Men*, *Appropriate*, *Ulster American*, *Lovesong*, *Yen* (LAMDA); *Little Women* (Laine); *Tales From Ovid*, *Parliament Square* (ALRA); *Gatsby* (The Union Theatre); *The Awakening*, *The Bad Seed* (Brockley Jack) and *Outlaws To In-Laws* (King's Head Theatre).

Suzanne Knight

Associate Costume Designer & Supervisor

Suzanne Knight studied Costume Construction and Wardrobe Supervision at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. Her credits include Assistant Costume Designer and Head of Show Calls for Secret Cinema Presents: *Romeo + Juliet*, *Casino Royale* and *Stranger Things*, Costume Supervisor for *Herding Cats* (Soho Theatre) and Head of Costume for online immersive theatre company CtrlAltRepeat.

Birmingham Repertory Theatre

Birmingham Repertory Theatre is the only producing theatre in the UK's Second City.

The oldest building-based theatre company in the UK, The REP has an unparalleled pioneering history and has been at the forefront of theatre in this country for over 100 years. It is a registered charity (number 223660).

The REP's mission is to create artistically ambitious popular theatre for, by and with the people of Birmingham and the wider world. The commissioning and production of new work lies at the core of The REP's programme and over the last 15 years, the company has produced more than 130 new plays. As well as presenting over 60 productions on its three stages every year, the theatre tours its productions nationally and internationally. The REP's acclaimed learning and outreach programme is one of the largest and most diverse of any arts organisation in the country. Every year we have over 70,000 contacts with young people and adults in the community on projects from drama or writing workshops to large-scale productions. The REP is also committed to nurturing new talent through its youth theatre groups, and it offers training for early career writers, directors, and artists through its ground-breaking REP Foundry theatre maker's programme.

Artistic Director **Sean Foley**
Executive Director **Rachael Thomas**

National Theatre

The National Theatre's mission is to make world-class theatre, for everyone.

The National Theatre creates and shares unforgettable stories with audiences across the UK and around the world. On its own stages, on tour, in schools, on cinema screens and streaming at home, it strives to be accessible, inclusive and sustainable.

The National Theatre empowers artists and craftspeople to make world-leading work, investing in talent and developing new productions with a wide range of theatre companies at its New Work Department.

Our nation thrives on fresh talent and new ideas, so the National Theatre works with young people and teachers right across the UK through performance, writing and technical programmes to ignite the creativity of the next generation.

Together with communities, the NT creates ambitious works of participatory theatre in deep partnerships that unite theatres and local organisations – showing that nothing brings us together like theatre.

The National Theatre needs your support to shape a bright, creative future. For more information, please visit **nationaltheatre.org.uk**

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National Theatre
Box office and information
+44 (0) 20 7452 3000
National Theatre, Upper Ground,
London SE1 9PX

nationaltheatre.org.uk

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Eleanor Deeley
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Oliver Colley
Richard G Jones
Lighting Technicians

Rob Kettridge
Senior Sound Technician

Simon Fox
Head Draughtsperson

Janine Forster
Chris Maggs
Graeme Mell
Alex Merriman
Pippa Newbold
Harry Wainwright
Scenic Workshop Assistants

Judy Martin
Laura O'Connell
Chris Tait
Martin Vernon
Scenic Artists

Evie Frosdick
Artist Assistant

Tracey Dolby
Wardrobe Dresser

Hannah Marshall
Costume Alterations

Nadene Wheatley
Lighting Programmer

Arthur Skinner
Projection Engineer
and Programmer

Chris Ashenden
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PAVING THE WAY FOR ANOTHER 50 YEARS

OPEN HOUSE

Helping to secure our future and open the door for the next generation of audiences and theatre makers.

As we celebrate 50 years on Centenary Square, OPEN HOUSE will transform the frontage and public areas of the building, creating an inclusive and welcoming entrance and foyer with enhanced cafe and restaurant facilities.

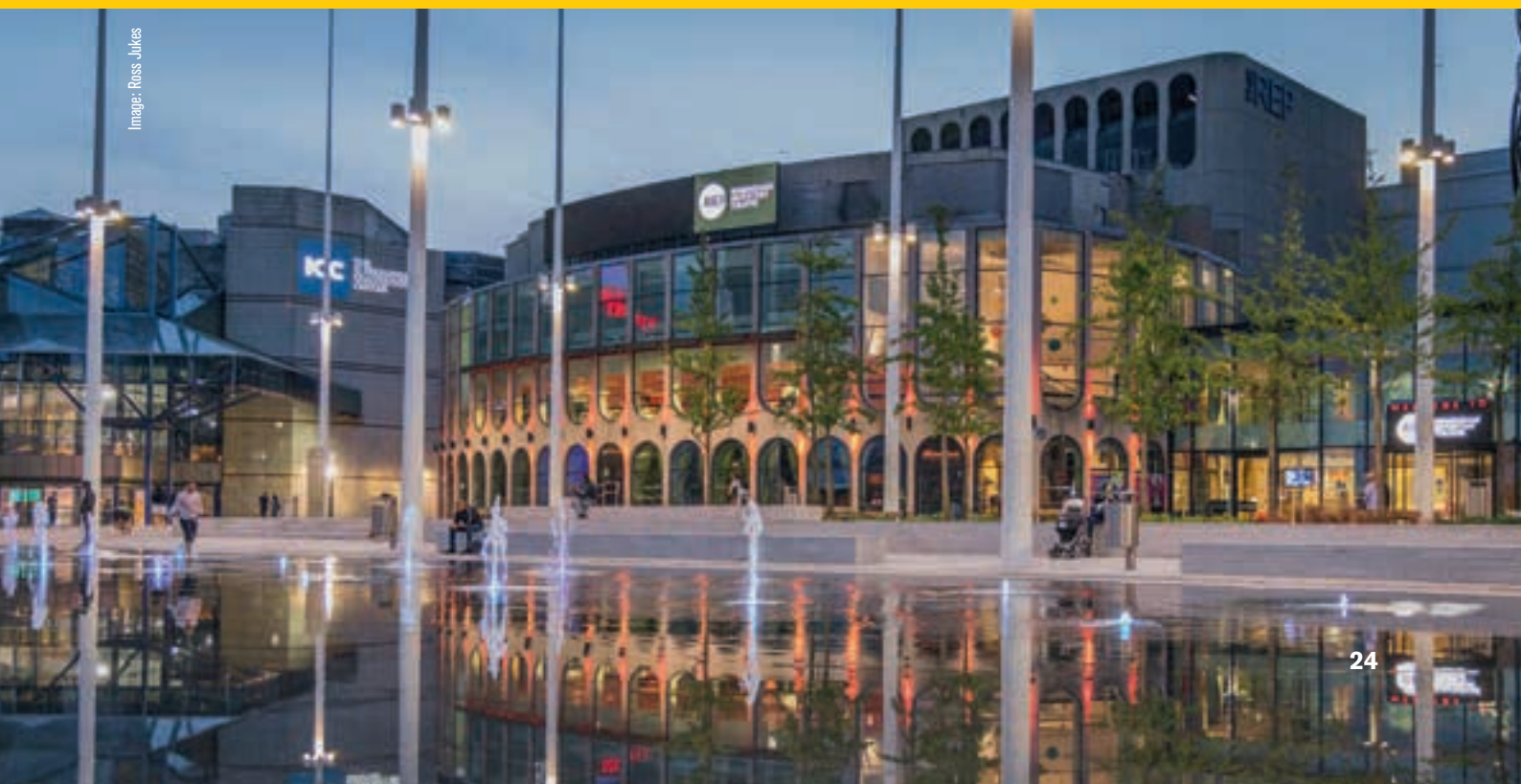
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"I am very proud to be a Trustee of this amazing theatre. The REP's impact on the industry and my home city cannot be underestimated and that is why this project is so important. Open House will safeguard The REP's legacy and future, ensuring it can continue to inspire the next generation."



CREATIVE LEARNING

The Creative Learning team strive to make theatre accessible to as many communities as possible and work with primary and secondary schools, universities, the Young REP youth theatre, Lightpost Theatre Company, care homes, libraries, homeless shelters, local charities and other drama organisations to make The REP a space for anyone and everyone.

This summer alone, they have delivered 16 summer school programmes, and engaged with a total of 1301 young people. This included 'Play in a Week' workshops, school workshops, a mental health and wellbeing week, a European youth theatre festival, and even a 'spy school' where participants stopped an evil A.I technology for taking over the world!

To find out how your group or school could get involved, email learning@birmingham-rep.co.uk

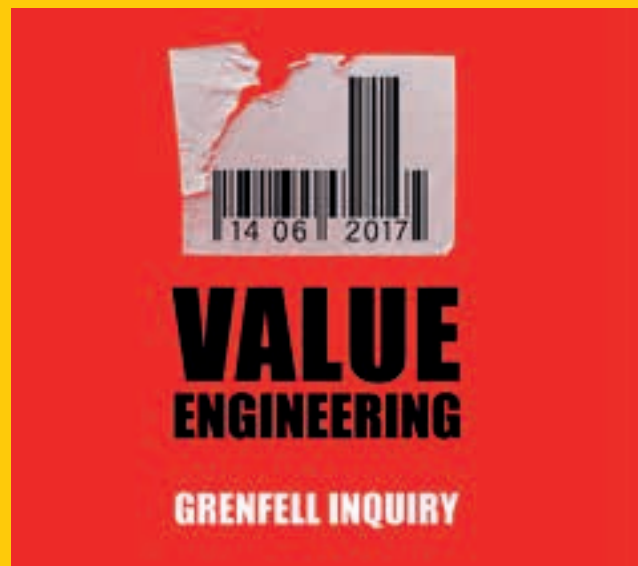


COMING UP THIS SEASON



What's New Pussycat? **08 – 14 Oct 21**

Mods, miniskirts and rocking romance in this brand-new Tom Jones musical!



Grenfell: Value Engineering – Scenes From The Inquiry **16 – 20 Nov 21**

A dramatic play that delves further into the devastating fire that engulfed Grenfell Tower.



The Play What I Wrote **27 Nov 21 – 01 Jan 22**

The hilarious Morecambe and Wise homage brings sunshine this Christmas.



David Suchet – Poirot & More, A Retrospective **05 Dec 21**

For one night only, Sir David Suchet looks back fondly at his illustrious career and shares some of his most beloved performances in a new and intimate light.



The Snowman
06 – 09 Jan 22

This much-loved classic is back and ready to enchant audiences this winter.



Animal Farm
22 Jan – 05 Feb 22

A bold reimagining of George Orwell's timeless tale.



The Covid 19 Variations
08 – 09 Feb 22

A powerful and entertaining take on the last 18 months, featuring films by Alison Jackson and music by Richard Thomas.



Coming To England
19 Feb – 06 Mar 22

A musical journey for children and their families about overcoming adversity.

ACCESS

The REP is committed to making theatre accessible. We offer many services for customers with access requirements and are always learning how else we can be of assistance.

AD Audio Described Performances

Our Audio Described Performance use live narrators to describe the action on stage, interspersed between actors' dialogue. You can pre-book a headset through the Box Office and then collect it at the venue for a returnable deposit. Alternatively, you can access the audio description via a smart phone and headset by downloading the MobileConnect app and logging on to the MobileConnect wifi network. Customers wishing to enjoy an Audio Described Performance should be in their seats 15 minutes before the performance begins in order to hear the full description of the set and costumes. This is also made available online before the show

SL Sign Language Interpreted Performances

Many of our shows will have BSL Interpreted performances. The interpreter is typically situated on the right hand side as you face the stage. The seats with the best view of the signer are reserved for members of our Access Register, so please specify that you are booking for the BSL performance when you contact Box Office.

CAP Captioned Performances

During a Captioned Performance, the actors' words appear as visible text on screens at the same time as they are spoken. The seats with the best view of the screens are reserved for members of our Access Register, so please specify that you are booking for the captioned performance when you contact Box Office.

RP Relaxed Performances

Relaxed performances are designed to welcome people with a disability or sensory and communication conditions, or anyone that would benefit from a more relaxed performance environment. There is a relaxed attitude to noise and movement and some small changes made to the light and sound effects.

WC Wheelchair Seating

Wheelchair seating is available in all our Auditoria

For more information on our access provisions, including upcoming performances, please visit. www.birmingham-rep.co.uk/about-us/access

You can join The REP's Access Register by signing up for an online account or changing the preferences of your existing account. You can also join the access register by phone on 0121 236 4455, or emailing access@birmingham-rep.co.uk

Our Country's Good, A Nottingham Playhouse Theatre Company Production in co-production with Ramps on the Moon
Photo © Catherine Ashmore



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