

National Theatre

15-year-old student wins 2023 National Theatre New Views with play to be read on the Olivier Stage

- **Keira Grierson**'s winning play **3.2.1** will be presented as a staged reading on the Olivier stage for the first time with direction by **Ian Rickson**
 - The *New Views Festival* takes place from 5 – 6 July
- Eight shortlisted young writers will also have their plays read at the NT as part of the festival for new writing



For images, click [here](#)

Tuesday 30 May 2023

15-year-old student **Keira Grierson** from **Oasis Academy Coulsdon** in **Croydon** is the winner of the 2023 National Theatre's annual nationwide playwriting competition *New Views*.

Keira Grierson's play called **3.2.1** was selected from 468 entries from 90 secondary schools and colleges across the UK. The play will be presented as a staged reading on the Olivier stage for the first time at the NT's *New Views Festival* on **6 July**. Tickets are £5 and are on sale from Wednesday 31 May.

Keira will have the opportunity to be part of the rehearsal process alongside Theatre Director **Ian Rickson** (*Translations*, *Uncle Vanya*) to observe the play develop from page to stage, experiencing the process of working with a director to bring her vision to life.

Keira's winning play **3.2.1** follows the entwined stories of several conflicted teenagers. It explores themes of social media, modern female beauty expectations, and young love; through Keira's own interpretation of poetry.

Keira felt compelled as a young writer to write about the collective experience of young people and the impact of social media and its consequences for her generation. Keira decided to set most of the play through mobile communications and has used a chorus to share multiple voices.

The play was chosen by a panel of judges from across the industry including young actor **Archie Barnes** (*Phaedra*), NT Writer in Residence **Iman Qureshi** (*The Funeral Director*), theatre director **Mumba Dodwell** (*Othello*) and NT Associate Dramaturg **Sasha Milavic Davies** (*One Side to The Other*). Eight other shortlisted young writers will have their plays performed as rehearsed readings in the Clore Learning Centre at the National Theatre for participating *New Views* students and school groups to watch.

This year's shortlisted plays speak to the interests, passions and experiences of young people from across the nation. They explored a range of themes including intergenerational relationships, mental health, dementia, workers' rights and the current conflict in Ukraine.

1063 students from schools and colleges nationwide took part in *New Views* this year, learning about playwriting through workshops and mentoring from professional writers and writing their own 30-minute plays. As part of *New Views*, schools have the opportunity to watch NT productions and teachers take part in professional training and support their students.

Keira Grierson said, *"It felt surreal winning the competition, but I was just overjoyed that my passion for writing had lead to such a great opportunity. Taking part in New Views has been such an exciting way for me to express myself and my writing. I have really enjoyed working on my script, it has been an amazing rewarding experience."*

Director **Ian Rickson** said, *"I am really excited to be working on New Views this year, a vital resource both for first time writers, and the wider culture, especially at a time when they are under such threat in education and our society as a whole. 3.2.1 is driven by the writer's urgent need to engage with the intersections of gender and technology, as she finds a dynamic theatrical form that is fresh and original."*

Judging panel member and 17-year-old actor **Archie Barnes** said, *"The breadth of talent at this year's New Views is seriously impressive. The diverse characters and compelling stories reflect the reality of the world we live in, promoting understanding, empathy and social justice. It is exhilarating to think that one day I might be lucky enough to perform in a play written by one or more of the finalists."*

The eight shortlisted plays being performed as rehearsed readings at the Clore Learning Centre for participating *New Views* students to watch are:

- *A Communist Christmas* by **Ayah Abdirizak** (17) from Central Foundation Boys' School in Islington
- *Bill & Bunny* by **Delphina Hayles** (17) from HSDC Alton and Havant in Hampshire
- *Moonlit Dances* by **Gabriel Owens** (18) from Leeds Playhouse Hub in West Yorkshire

- *One Man Duet* by **Joshua Pritchard** (17) from The London Oratory School in Hammersmith and Fulham
- *Snowdrop* by **Alan Tarkill** (18) from Stockton Riverside College in County Durham
- *Stereo Types* by **Ornetta Kyei-Dompim** (16) from Eltham Hill School in Greenwich
- *To Drown Boundless Oceans* by **Chelsea Iheoma Anusionwu** (15) from St Anne's Catholic School and Sixth Form College in Hampshire
- *Train of Thought* by **Adithya Raghuraman** (15) from Queen Elizabeth's School in Barnet

Applications to take part in *New Views* 2023/24 are now open. To register please visit the [NT Website](#).

ENDS

To download images of the winning and shortlisted students and images of last year's production, please click [here](#).

For more information, please contact Orla Bentley at obentley@nationaltheatre.org.uk

With thanks

The Mohn Westlake Foundation supports nationwide Learning programmes for young people.

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Notes to the Editors

About the National Theatre

The National Theatre's mission is to make world-class theatre, for everyone. The NT 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 <https://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk>.

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