

***The Wife of Willesden*, a new play by Zadie Smith, and
Dixon and Daughters, added to National Theatre at Home
streaming platform**

11 July 2023



The National Theatre announces two new productions to conclude its summer season on **National Theatre at Home**, joining an exciting line-up of incredible British theatre straight from London stages and the National Theatre Archive.

Critically acclaimed, multi-award-winning author **Zadie Smith** transports Chaucer's classic parable to 21st century North West London in her theatrical debut, a production from Kiln Theatre directed by **Indhu Rubasingham** (*The Father and the Assassin*). **Clare Perkins** (*Sweat*) is 'magnificent' (★★★★★ *The Times*) in this bawdy, beautiful comedy that celebrates the human knack for telling elaborate tales, especially about our own lives. Following its New York transfer, *The Wife of Willesden* joins NT at Home today and will soon be available to stream for schools, universities and the wider education sector on the National Theatre Collection.

Director Indhu Rubasingham said: "*The Wife of Willesden has undoubtedly been one of the great highlights of my tenure as Artistic Director of Kiln Theatre – and the opportunity to be part of NT Home will enable the work to be seen by so many more people across the*

globe, bringing Clare Perkins' career defining performance to audiences beyond our home base in Kilburn, and giving access to those unable to experience live performance. I am particularly thrilled that schools will be given this opportunity to see Chaucer in a relevant and contemporary light and to enjoy the brilliance of Chaucer through the vitality and kaleidoscope of Zadie Smith's world view. To witness these two world-class writers in dialogue with each other is a real treat. Our deepest thanks to NT at Home for this exciting platform."

Launching in August is *Dixon and Daughters*, a co-production with **Clean Break**, a groundbreaking company producing theatre with and about women affected by the criminal justice system. **Róisín McBrinn** returns to Clean Break, where she was formerly Joint Artistic Director, to direct this 'deeply affecting' (*The Stage*) story of family and forgiveness, written by **Deborah Bruce** (*The House They Grew Up In*). With a cast that includes **Brid Brennan** (*The Ferryman*), **Liz White** (*Anatomy of a Scandal*) and **Andrea Lowe** (*Sherwood*), *Dixon and Daughters* will be available on NT at Home from 8 August.

Recent productions added to the platform include plays straight from the NT's stages and recent broadcasts from National Theatre Live. **Samira Wiley** and **Giles Terera** star in the Olivier Award nominated revival of *Blues for an Alabama Sky*, an extraordinary play by **Pearl Cleage**. **Janet McTeer** leads *Phaedra*, with **Assaad Bouab** in his London stage debut, in **Simon Stone**'s reimagining of Seneca's famous tragedy. Alongside rollicking comedy *Jack Absolute Flies Again* from the writer of *One Man, Two Guvnors* – with **Caroline Quentin** and **Kelvin Fletcher** – and Shakespeare's romcom *Much Ado About Nothing*, with **Katherine Parkinson** and **John Heffernan**.

New plays are added to NT at Home each month, with over 70 productions now streaming, all available with captions. Some titles are available with audio-description and BSL.

National Theatre at Home is available at [ntathome.com](https://www.ntathome.com), with single titles to rent from £5.99 – £7.99, a monthly subscription for £9.99 or an annual subscription for £99.99. Gift membership is also available as a one/two/three month or one-year subscription.

Bloomberg Philanthropies is Headline Sponsor of National Theatre at Home.

National Theatre at Home is also supported by The Linbury Trust.

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Notes to Editors

For production images for *The Wife of Willesden* and *Dixon and Daughters*, please see [here](#).

For all other enquiries, please contact Joanna Cockerill on jcockerill@nationaltheatre.org.uk

The Wife of Willesden

Available now

by Zadie Smith

A proper local legend. Married five times. Mother. Lover. Aunt. Friend. Alvita will tell her life story to anyone in the pub – there's no shame in her game. The question is: are you ready to hear it? Because this woman's got the gift of the gab: she can rewrite mistakes into triumphs, turn pain into parables, and her love life's an epic poem. They call her *The Wife of Willesden*...

A play that celebrates the human knack for telling elaborate tales, especially about our own lives.

Zadie Smith transports Chaucer's *The Wife of Bath* to 21st Century North West London, directed by Kiln Theatre Artistic Director **Indhu Rubasingham**.

A production from Kiln Theatre. Filmed by the National Theatre.

Dixon and Daughters

Available from 8 August

by Deborah Bruce

If this house could speak.

Mary has just been released from prison. She wants to come home and forget all about it but Briana has other ideas.

Over a tumultuous two days a family is forced to confront not just their past but themselves. Because even if you refuse to hear the truth, the truth doesn't go away.

Róisín McBrinn returns to Clean Break to direct this powerful story of family and forgiveness by **Deborah Bruce**.

A co-production with Clean Break. Filmed by the National Theatre.

About Kiln Theatre

"Kiln Theatre has revitalised the cultural life of Brent and brings world-class theatre at an affordable price to people from all walks of life." Zadie Smith

Kiln Theatre sits in the heart of Kilburn in Brent, a unique and culturally diverse area of London where over 140 languages are spoken. We are a welcoming and proudly local venue, with an internationally acclaimed programme of world and UK premieres. Our work presents the world through a variety of lenses, amplifying unheard/ignored voices into the mainstream, exploring and examining the threads of human connection that cross race, culture and identity.

“This place was a special cocoon. Now she has grown and blossomed into a beautiful butterfly.” Sharon D. Clarke

We believe that theatre is for all and want everyone to feel welcome and entitled to call the Kiln their own. We are committed to nurturing the talent of young people and providing a platform for their voices to be heard.

“I wanted to say thank you for creating the most diverse theatre I have been to. In terms of race, culture, class, age, everything – not only in the selection of shows and actors, but in the audience.” Audience member

Welcome to Kilburn.

Artistic Director: Indhu Rubasingham | Executive Director: Daisy Heath

About Clean Break

Clean Break changes lives and changes minds through theatre – on stage, in prison and in the community. It produces ground-breaking plays with women’s voices at the heart of its work. Founded in 1979 by two women in prison who believed that theatre could bring the hidden stories of women who are criminalised to a wider audience, it remains true to these roots: inspiring playwrights and captivating audiences with the company’s award-winning plays on the complex theme of women and criminalisation. Its commissioned playwrights have included Alice Birch, Deborah Bruce, Lin Coghlan, E V Crowe, Vivienne Franzmann, Tanika Gupta, Katie Hims, Sam Holcroft, Theresa Ikoko, Lucy Kirkwood, Chloë Moss, Rebecca Lenkiewicz, Winsome Pinnock, and Rebecca Prichard.

Current Clean Break productions include *Dixon and Daughters* (by Deborah Bruce at National Theatre), *Blis-ta* (an audio drama by the late Sonya Hale, BBC Audio Drama Award winner), *Sweatbox* (a film of Chloë Moss’s acclaimed play set in a prison van). Recent productions include *Catch* (a small-scale touring play by Sonya Jalaly), *Favour* by Ambreen Razia (Bush Theatre), *Typical Girls* by Morgan Lloyd Malcolm (Sheffield Crucible) and *More Than We Can Bear* by Eno Mfron (part of The Keyworkers Cycle, Almeida Theatre). In 2021, the company presented *I am a theatre*, a retrospective exhibition at Swiss Cottage Gallery celebrating four decades of the company and launched a digital archive on its website in 2022.

About the National Theatre

The National Theatre makes theatre that entertains and inspires using its creativity, expertise and unique reach. The National Theatre shares unforgettable stories with millions of audience members across the UK and around the world – on its own stages, on tour, in schools, on cinema screens and streaming at home.

World-leading artists make their best work at the National Theatre with the widest possible audience and impact. The National Theatre invests in talent and innovation on stage and off, taking seriously its role as the nation's theatre. Of the new productions developed each year with a wide range of theatre companies, a third of that research and development resource is dedicated to shows staged at theatres outside London.

Through touring our work to local theatres and schools and nationwide education and community programmes, we are active in 71 of the 109 levelling up priority areas in the UK. A registered charity with deeply embedded social purpose, the National Theatre works with hundreds of schools and communities across the UK to fire imagination and inspire creativity, and to develop skills and pathways for careers in theatre.

For more information, please visit nationaltheatre.org.uk

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About the National Theatre Collection

The National Theatre Collection celebrates the best of British theatre and provides access to high-quality recordings of world-class productions from the NT and other leading UK theatres, alongside learning resources for schools, universities, and the wider education sector. Launched in 2019, the National Theatre Collection is free for UK state schools and FE colleges and is now being used in the classroom by 85 per cent of state secondary schools across the UK.

This September, the third collection of theatre titles will be added to the platform taking the number of productions available to watch to 70 by February 2024. From September these new titles will also be available to access for free in local public libraries across the UK to library members.

About Bloomberg Philanthropies

Bloomberg Philanthropies invests in 941 cities and 173 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: the Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg's giving, including his foundation, corporate, and personal philanthropy as well as Bloomberg Associates, a pro bono consultancy that works in cities around the world. In 2021, Bloomberg Philanthropies distributed \$1.66 billion. For more information, please visit [bloomberg.org](#) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [Twitter](#), and [TikTok](#).