

National Theatre

Production images released for *The Odyssey: The Underworld* at the National Theatre



For production images, click [here](#)

Saturday 26th August 2023

The National Theatre today releases production photography for *The Odyssey: The Underworld*, the epic finale of the NT's landmark multi-location production celebrating national community, written by Olivier award-winning playwright **Chris Bush**, with music by **Jim Fortune** and directed by Director of Public Acts **Emily Lim**.

Staged as a full-scale musical production, *The Odyssey: The Underworld* features a 160-strong company of people from across the nation alongside a cast of professional actors, musicians and cameo performance groups to celebrate the fifth anniversary of Public Acts, the NT's nationwide programme to create extraordinary acts of theatre and community.

This fifth and final episode of the multi-location production brings together community participants from the first four episodes of *The Odyssey* including those from Restoke in Stoke-on-Trent, Cast in Doncaster, Trowbridge Town Hall in Trowbridge, The Fire Station (for Sunderland Culture in partnership with Sunderland Empire) in Sunderland as well as Public Acts founding theatre partner Queen's Theatre Hornchurch, and Trybe House Theatre in London.

The full professional cast includes **Amy Booth-Steel** (*Blue Jean*) as Calypso, **Tarinn Callender** (*Hamilton*) as Telemachus, **Sharon Duncan-Brewster** (*Dune*) as Odysseus,

Victoria Hamilton-Barritt (*Hex*) as Poseidon, **Emma Prendergast** (*Eastenders*) as Athena, and **Zubin Varla** (*Tammy Faye*) as Hades.

Cameo performances will also be featured from **The London Bodhrán Band**, **Haringey Vox Choir**, **Impact Dance Group**, and **South Wales Gay Men's Chorus**.

The creative team also includes set designer **Sadeysa Greenaway-Bailey**, movement director **Dan Canham**, costume designer **Fly Davis**, music supervisor and musical director **Tarek Merchant**, lighting designer **Joshua Pharo** and sound designer **Paul Arditti**.

Playwright **Chris Bush**, said '*It's been a pleasure to weave together this epic story of endurance, love and humanity. Assembling our own mini pantheon for world-class artists, performers and communities from across the nation has been a joy. There isn't anything else quite like it out there.*'

The Odyssey: The Underworld plays in the Olivier theatre from 26th to 28th August.

All performances of *The Odyssey: The Underworld* are audio-described, captioned and chilled. A British Sign Language interpreted performance will take place on Monday 28 August at 2pm.

For further information and to book tickets, please visit the [NT Website](#).

ENDS

Notes to the Editor

For production images, click [here](#).

For press enquiries, ticket requests and more information, please contact Orla Bentley, at obentley@nationaltheatre.org.uk

With thanks

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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 Public Acts

Public Acts is the National Theatre's nationwide initiative to create extraordinary acts of theatre and community. We make artistically excellent, ambitious and inclusive participatory theatre in partnership with those who share our vision for change.

The programme was first established in 2017, with our founding partners Queen's Theatre Hornchurch and eight brilliant community partners: the Bromley by Bow Centre, Body & Soul, Coram, DABD, Havering Asian Social Welfare Association (HASWA), Open Age, Thames Reach and the Faith & Belief Forum.

Public Acts produced *Pericles* (National Theatre) in 2018 and *As You Like It* (produced by Queen's Theatre Hornchurch in partnership with the NT) in 2019. In August 2022, the team presented *The Doncastrian Chalk Circle* in Doncaster in partnership with Cast.

Throughout the pandemic we continued to connect with our community members through online activity including a podcast project called *Stories To Get Us Through* and a new musical film, *We Begin Again*, created in partnership with The Guardian. In 2021 we produced *The Magic of Wild Heather*, a community cabaret, in Doncaster.

Public Acts is inspired by Public Works at the Public Theater, described as a 'groundbreaking programme of participatory theatre in New York', and the visionary participatory work of many theatre companies across the UK in the past decades.