

National Theatre

National Theatre's Learning activity reaches every local authority across the UK

- 10 new titles added to National Theatre Collection, available for free in state schools and local public libraries across the UK
- New partnership with the Unicorn Theatre makes new titles available to stream in primary schools
- Free theatre-making workshops and technical training programmes for young people
- Theatre critic Lyn Gardner announced as speaker for 2024 Student Conference leading masterclass on theatre reviewing
- Katie Mitchell, Ian Rickson and Gecko Theatre announced for Drama Teacher Conference 2024



For images, click [here](#)

18th September 2023

The National Theatre's Learning activity is now present in **every local authority across the UK** through its in-person and digital programmes. The NT's active engagement with schools, teachers and young people is a key part of its mission to support the next generation of theatre makers and creators across the UK. The NT aims to inspire creativity, fire imaginations and boost skills for the future workforce of the sector and to build a more creative nation.

Over the past year, **over 42,000 children and young people participated in National Theatre Learning activity** and the NT's schools programme delivered **10,800 hours** of in-person work, with **73%** of activity happening **outside of London**. In addition, **85% of all UK state secondary schools** are now signed up to the National Theatre Collection, allowing schools to stream the best of British Theatre directly into classrooms for free, making it easier to place arts and creativity at the heart of education.

Rufus Norris, Director of the National Theatre said, "*We recognise the impact theatre can have in sparking imagination at a young age, holding it at the heart of the National Theatre's Learning work. We are deeply proud to be able to reach students in every local authority across the UK, providing vital, accessible and easily delivered work through our programmes to help students to strengthen their creativity and develop skills that go beyond the classroom.*"

The NT's programme of activity for schools across the next school term is now announced for teachers and students to take part in:

Digital resources

Thanks to our growing partnership with *Bloomsbury Publishing* via their digital platform *Drama Online*, the **National Theatre Collection** is expanding. Ten new titles are now live on the platform with another ten to be added in February 2024, taking the total number of titles available to state schools to stream for free in the classroom to 70, alongside learning resources.

The ten new titles now live on the National Theatre Collection are:

- ***Phaedra***, written and directed by **Simon Stone**, with cast including **Janet McTeer**
- ***Everyman***, directed by **Rufus Norris**, with cast including **Chiwetel Ejiofor**
- ***Antony & Cleopatra***, with **Ralph Fiennes** and **Sophie Okonedo**
- ***Much Ado About Nothing***, with **Katherine Parkinson** and **John Heffernan**
- ***Wuthering Heights***, adapted and directed by **Emma Rice**
- ***The Book of Dust***, directed by **Nicholas Hytner**
- ***The Crucible***, directed by **Lyndsey Turner**
- ***Jack Absolute Flies Again***, with **Caroline Quentin**
- ***Our Generation***, written by **Alecky Blythe**
- NT schools touring production of **The PappyShow's *Shut Up, I'm Dreaming***

Following a successful pilot with Wolverhampton Central Library and Peterborough Central Library, the new titles will also be available to access for **free in local public libraries** across the UK to library members, making it easier than ever to watch theatre.

To sign up to the NT Collection, visit the [NT Website](#).

For primary schools

Through an exciting new partnership with the **Unicorn Theatre**, the following titles will also be added to the National Theatre Collection for Primary Schools:

- ***Anansi the Spider Re-Spun***
- ***Greek Myths Unplugged: Jessie and the Jellybeans, Ariadne on the Beach, Narcissus***
- ***Philip Pullman's Grimm Tales: Rumpelstiltskin and Little Red Riding Hood***

The National Theatre Collection for Primary Schools forms part of the NT's *Let's Play* programme. *Let's Play* provides learning resources and teacher training to all state primary schools across the UK for free.

Coming up this term are CPDs on creating an outstanding piece of theatre in your school, *Storytelling in the Primary Classroom*, and *Creating an Immersive Classroom*.

To sign up for these CPD training sessions, visit the [NT website](#).

For secondary schools

The NT's **2024 Student Conference** will take place on 22 January 2024 in association with **Gecko Theatre**, exploring their upcoming production of *King Lear*. The conference will include interactive workshops with the Gecko Theatre team, exploring their devising methodology and creative process. Over 600 students will watch a school's performance of *King Lear* with an exclusive post show Q&A with Artistic Director **Amit Lahav**.

Following previous Student Conferences, 78% of students felt more confident answering questions in their Drama exam as a result of attending. This year's Student Conference has been designed to support students with the live theatre review component of the GCSE and A-Level specifications, with a masterclass from theatre critic **Lyn Gardner** as she imparts her knowledge and experience with the students on crafting effective reviews and the process behind reviewing shows.

To sign up to the 2024 Student Conference visit the [NT website](#).

For teachers

The NT will be hosting its annual **Drama Teacher Conference** on 15 and 16 February 2024, offering a chance for drama teachers to learn from industry professionals to inspire, inform and upskill their practice in the classroom. Workshops and masterclasses will be hosted by theatre directors **Katie Mitchell** and **Ian Rickson**, as well as theatre companies **Gecko Theatre**, **Pilot Theatre**, and **Quirky Bird**, exploring topics including devising, physical theatre, live multimedia practice, exploration of popular set texts and inclusive theatre practice. More artists to be confirmed.

Over the two days, the conference will offer teachers the chance to partake in workshops, network with other drama teachers and watch an NT production.

To sign up the 2024 Drama Teacher Conference visit the [NT website](#).

Free theatre-making workshops for young people

The NT is hosting three free theatre-making workshops for those aged 16-25 later this year.

The *In Focus* workshops delve into how a show is created, led by members of the creative or production team. The workshops will explore upcoming productions of *The Confessions*, *The House of Bernada Alba* and *The Witches*, and include a free ticket to see the production.

Applications will open soon. For more information please visit the [NT Website](#).

Technical training

The National Theatre continues to welcome young people through its doors to take part in in-depth technical theatre training for future careers: **Young Technicians** for 14-18 year olds to explore the NT's backstage and off-stage spaces, take part in practical workshops from leading professionals and learn about the variety of roles involved in theatre and

Introduction to Stage Management for 16-21 year olds to learn about the role and skills of a stage manager.

Applications to the *Nationwide Young Technicians* programme will open in October, running in Nottingham, Greater Manchester and Plymouth.

Cayte McCarthy, Head of Drama and Media Studies from The Island Free School in the Isle of Wight, said *“National Theatre Collection has transformed the lives of many of my pupils. I teach in a deprived area and many pupils had never been to the theatre. Using the National Theatre Collection allows us a department to open our pupil's eyes to incredible performances and has inspired so much of the work that they and we produce. I love that my pupils watch performances such as Antigone for pleasure!”*

A student attendee from the 2023 NT Student Conference said, *“I genuinely believe this was so amazing, I'm so glad I got a chance to meet the creative team that make the performance possible and so outstanding.”*

Brochures detailing the upcoming term of activity for primary and secondary schools can be found [here](#). To take part in any activity please visit the National Theatre's [website](#).

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With thanks

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

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Lead philanthropic support for NT Collection from Richard and Kara Gnodde.

NT Collection is made possible in primary schools by the Hearn Foundation, as the Principal Funder of the Primary Schools Programme.

Nationwide learning is also supported by Buffini Chao Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation, Clore Duffield Foundation, Tim & Sarah Bunting, MFPA Trust Fund for the Training of Handicapped Children in the Arts, Behrens Foundation, Cleopatra Trust, The Andor Charitable Trust.

NT Collection is also supported by Bank of America, The Attwood Education Foundation, Delta Air Lines, Mike Staunton, The Michael Marks Charitable Trust and The Oakley Charitable Trust. New York City Public Schools access is generously supported by the Jerome L. Greene Foundation.

The Primary Schools Programme is also supported by The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington, Charlotte & Simon Warshaw, Archie Sherman Charitable Trust and The Derrill Allatt Foundation.

Secondary Schools Touring is also supported by Delta Air Lines, The Ingram Trust, The Constance Travis Charitable Trust, The Dorset Foundation – in memory of Harry M Weinrebe, Susan Miller & Byron Grote, The Anthony and Elizabeth Mellows Charitable Settlement, Allan and Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust and Shears Foundation.

Young People's Programmes are supported by Bank of America, The Maurice Hatter Foundation and the Richard Radcliffe Trust. With thanks to the MAP Fund.

Productions

The reopening of the Olivier theatre was generously supported by Areté Foundation / Betsy & Ed Cohen. The production of *Jack Absolute Flies Again* was supported by the National Theatre's Official Hotel Partner, Edwardian Hotels.

Much Ado About Nothing supported by Marcia Grand in loving memory of Richard Grand. Production also supported by Leila Maw Straus.

Emily Burns' work on these productions was supported by Backstage Trust.

Notes to the Editor

For images, click [here](#).

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

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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