

National Theatre

Visual Guide



THE GRAPES OF WRATH

Lyttelton Theatre



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

This production is supported
by the Huo Family Foundation.

Production photography
by Richard Hubert Smith.

Contents

This document is a visual guide to support your visit to the National Theatre. There are four sections:

About The National Theatre

How to get here
Who's who?
Lyttelton Theatre

The Production

The Grapes of Wrath
Content guidance

What happens in the play?

The set
The characters
Synopsis
Sonic story

Access Performances

Show information
Upcoming performances

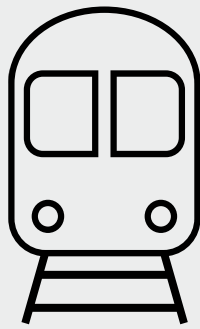
About the National Theatre

How to get here



The **National Theatre** is a large concrete building on the South Bank in London. It has three theatre spaces called the **Oliver, Lyttelton,** and **Dorfman.**

The address is **Upper Ground, London, SE1 9PX.**



The nearest **train** and **underground** stations are:

- **Waterloo**
- **London Blackfriars**
- **Embankment**



The National Theatre has an **underground car park.** There is **free parking available for Blue Badge holders.** There are lifts in the car park to take you into the theatre.



The **main entrance** to the National Theatre looks like this.



More information about getting here is on our **website**:
www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/your-visit/getting-here/

About the National Theatre

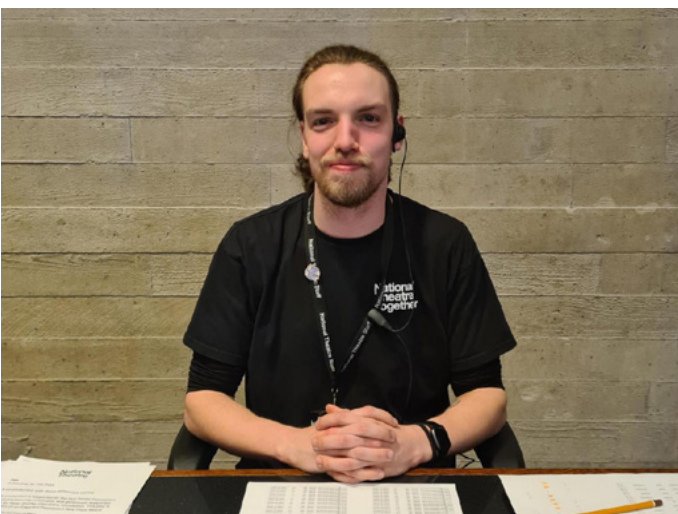
Who's who?



When you arrive through the main entrance, the **security team** will **check your bag**. You might need to queue for a short time. The security team will not touch you.



If you need help with your ticket, you can speak to the **box office team**. Their desk is near the entrance and looks like this.



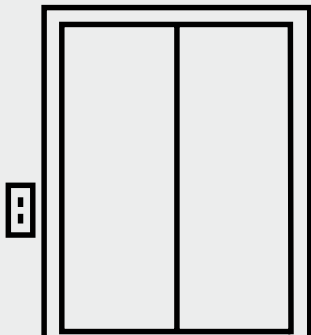
There are lots of staff available if you have questions or if you would like directions to your seats. **National Theatre staff** wear **black t-shirts** with **white writing**.

About the National Theatre Lyttelton Theatre



This production of *The Grapes of Wrath* will be performed in the **Lyttelton Theatre**.

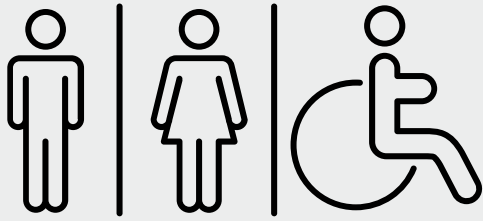
There are signs on the walls around the building to help guide you to the theatre.



There is **step-free access** around the National Theatre and there are **accessible toilets** on every level.



The Lyttelton has two levels of audience seating: The **stalls** (lower level) or the **circle** (upper level).



Bathrooms in the areas near the Lyttelton Theatre will have **hand towels instead of hand dryers.**



There is a **ground floor foyer and an upper foyer** with lots of seating. Both areas can be **busy and loud** before the performance.



The access desk is in the **Lyttelton ground floor foyer**. There are hearing enhancement headsets, ear defenders, fidget toys and large print cast lists available here.

The Production

The Grapes of Wrath

The Grapes of Wrath is a **play** by **Frank Galati**, adapted from the book by John Steinbeck.

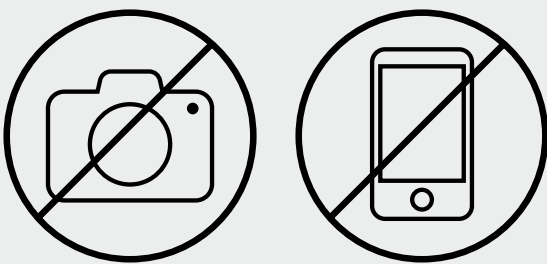
Dates

The Grapes of Wrath will be performed in the Lyttelton Theatre until **Saturday 14 September**.

Length

The Grapes of Wrath is **2 hours and 50 minutes** long. This includes one **20-minute** interval.

The following pages contain **spoilers**.



Please **do not take photos or use your phone** during the performance. You can use your phone before and after the performance and in the foyer.

The Production

Content Guidance

The Grapes of Wrath contains:



Bright lights



Loud music



Depictions of homelessness



Loud sounds and thunder



Depictions of illness and death



Screaming / shouting



Depictions of starvation



Smoke and haze



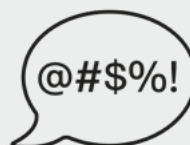
Depictions of still birth



Strobe lighting



Depictions of violence



Strong language



Gunshots

What happens in the play?

The set

The Grapes of Wrath is set in various locations between **Oklahoma** and **California** in the **United States of America**, as the Joad family travel across the country to find work.



The first act mostly takes place in an **old truck** which moves around the stage, with short scenes at different houses which appear on stage



The second act takes place in various **campsites**, with large tents set up at different angles, as well as barbed wire fencing.



In some scenes, a small part of the stage opens to reveal a small pool of water, which represents the Colorado River. The actors swim and splash around in this.

In the final scene, rain falls from the top of the stage.

The Characters

There are many characters in *The Grapes of Wrath*. There is a large ensemble of actors who sometimes play multiple different roles.



Ma Joad



Tom Joad



Pa Joad



Jim Casy

(the former preacher who joins the family on their journey)

The other Joad family members are:

- **Grampa and Granma Joad**, Tom's grandparents
- **Rose of Sharon**, Tom's oldest sister who is pregnant with her first child
- **Connie**, Rose of Sharon's husband
- **Al Joad**, Tom's 16-year-old brother
- **Noah Joad**, Tom's older brother
- **Uncle John**, Tom's uncle
- There are also two younger children, **Winfield** and **Ruthi**

What happens in the play?

Synopsis

- Tom Joad is released from Oklahoma state prison after serving 4 years for killing a man in a fight.
- He meets Jim Casy, a former preacher he knew as a child.
- They travel to Tom's family home but it is deserted. A neighbour tells them that most families have been evicted and are travelling west to find work.
- They go to Uncle John's house, where they find Tom's family packing up an old truck.



- They have seen posters advertising fruit-picking jobs in California with good wages, and have decided to go to California.
- The family leave the next morning to head towards California.
- Grampa Joad dies shortly after they leave. They bury him in a field as they cannot afford a funeral.
- They meet other migrant families on their way. They hear rumours of starvation and unemployment in California.
- Granma Joad dies just before they reach the California border.
- Noah and Connie abandon the family on their way.

Interval

- The family reach California. There are very few jobs and workers are exploited to the point of starvation.
- They stop at a migrant camp. Casy is arrested for punching a deputy sheriff who was about to shoot a man.
- They hear rumours that the camp will be burned down that night, so they continue travelling.

- They arrive at a camp with better conditions. The family have a happy night of dancing and singing, accompanied by the band.



- The camp does not provide work or food, so they decide to move on.
- They find jobs picking fruit, but Tom runs into Casy and finds out that he has only been hired to break a workers' strike.
- The police appear, attacking and killing Casy. Tom fights back and kills a police officer.
- It starts raining, and the land begins to flood.

- The family need to move to higher ground, but Rose of Sharon goes into labour. She gives birth to a stillborn baby.
- The family find a dry barn nearby to wait out the floods.
- In the barn is a boy kneeling over his father, who is starving to death.
- Ma sends the others outside so that Rose can nurse the dying man.

What happens in the play?

Sonic Story

The graphic on the next two pages tells the **sonic story** of *The Grapes of Wrath*. It highlights any particularly **loud or quiet** moments, or any moments when there are **sudden changes** to the sound.



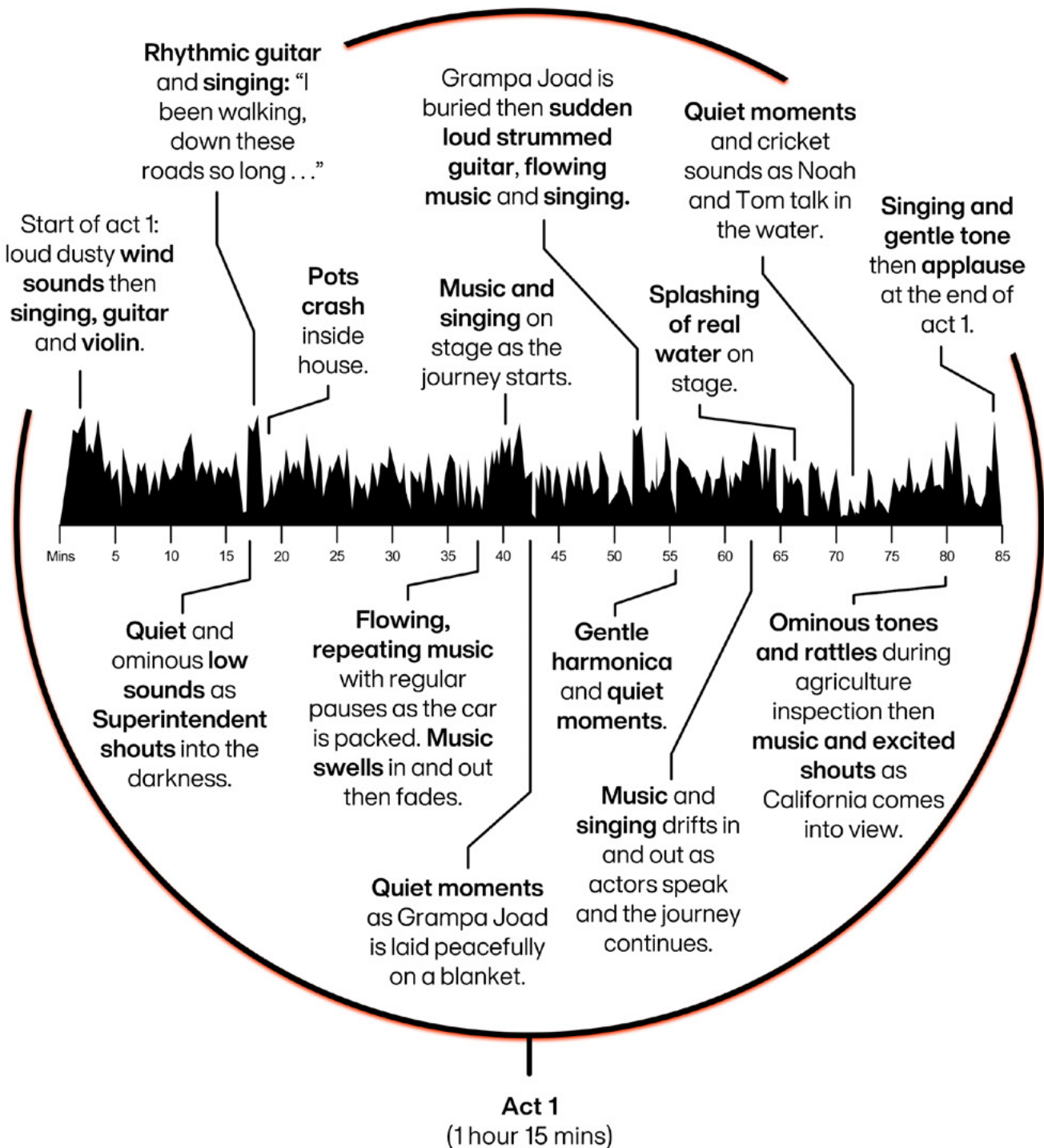
Sound summary

The Grapes of Wrath is a play with songs.

- There are four musicians who sing and play live music on stage during the performance.
- The musicians play guitar, violin, slide guitar, accordion and banjo.
- They move around and sometimes interact with the actors.
- There are quiet moments throughout the performance.
- For the first 30 minutes of Act 2 there are consistent high pitched bug and insect sounds in the background of the performance.

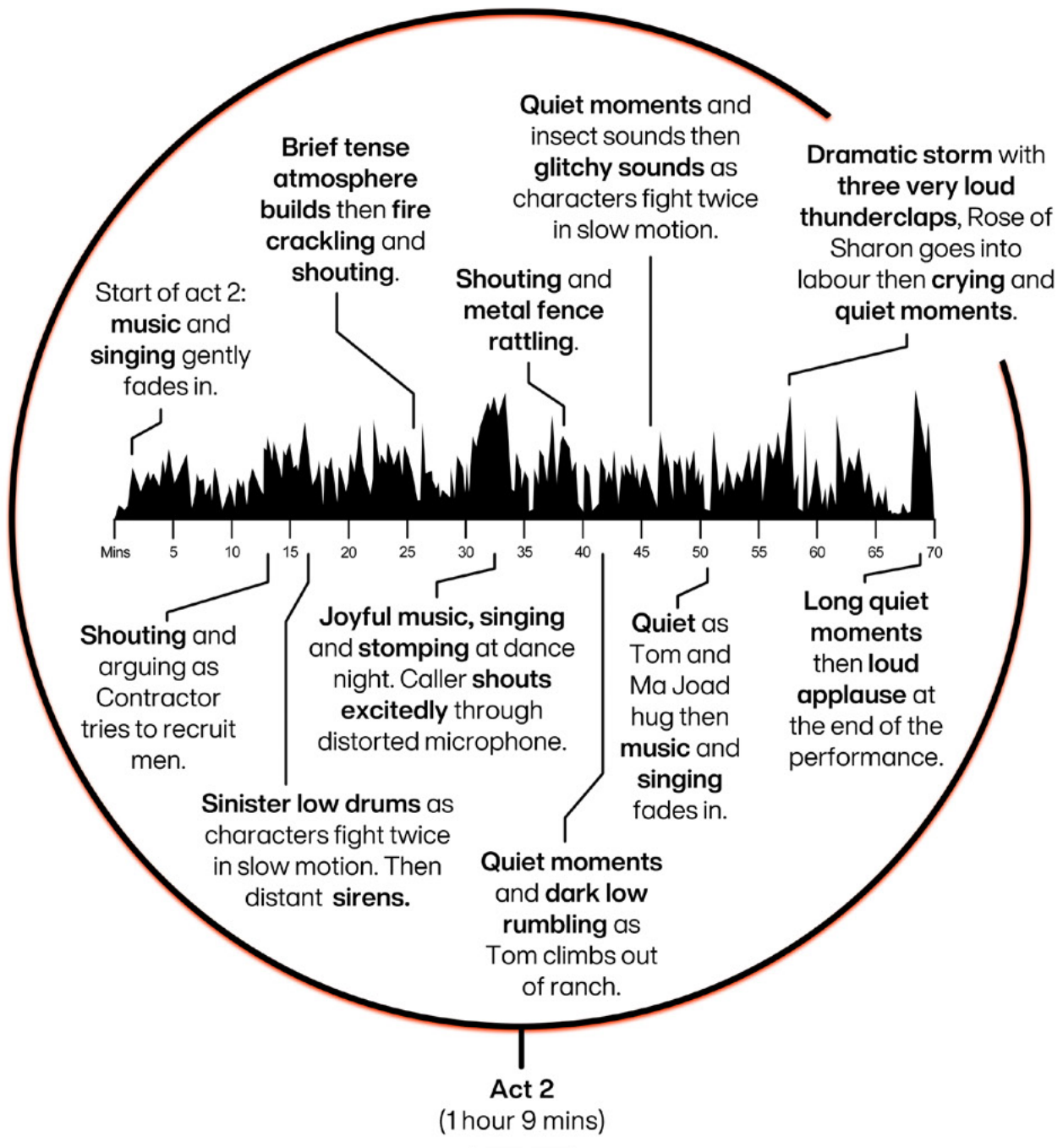
THE GRAPES OF WRATH

Sonic Story



THE GRAPES OF WRATH

Sonic Story



Access Performance

Show information

There is a **Dementia-friendly performance** of *The Grapes of Wrath* on **Wednesday 21 August at 1pm**.

There is also a **Relaxed performance** of *The Grapes of Wrath* on **Tuesday 10 September at 6.30pm**.

These performances will take place in a **relaxed environment**. This means:

- Some of the **lighting** and **sound effects** have been adjusted to be **less sudden or intense**.
- The **auditorium lights** will remain on during the show at a **low level**.
- You are welcome to **leave and re-enter** the auditorium if you need to.
- You are welcome to **move around** or **make noise**.
- We have **ear defenders** and **fidget items** available to use. Just ask a member of staff who will direct you to the **access desk**.
- There is a **quiet room** and a **chill out space** available, which you can ask any member of staff to direct you to.

Access Performances

Upcoming performances

Coriolanus

David Oyelowo returns to the London stage in the title role. Lyndsey Turner directs a thrilling new production of Shakespeare's timeless political tragedy.

Relaxed Performance on Monday 21 October at 7pm

A Tupperware of Ashes

Meera Syal is Queenie in this vivid and heart-breaking family drama about life, immigration and the Indian spiritual cycle of death and rebirth.

Relaxed Performance on Wednesday 30 October at 7.30pm

The Importance of Being Earnest

Max Webster directs a joyful and flamboyant reimagining of Oscar Wilde's most celebrated comedy.

Dementia-friendly Performance on Tuesday 14 January at 7.30pm

All the information about our future **relaxed performances**, and **how to book**, can be found on our website:

www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/whats-on/?accessibility=relaxed-performance