

National Theatre

Visual Story



Dorfman Theatre



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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

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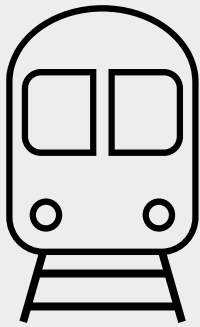
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About the National Theatre

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 **Olivier**, **Lyttelton**, and **Dorfman**.



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**.



More information
about getting here
is **on our website:**

**[www.nationaltheatre.org.
uk/your-visit/getting-
here/](http://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/your-visit/getting-here/)**

About the National Theatre

Dorfman Theatre



This production will be performed in the **Dorfman Theatre**. The Dorfman Theatre has **its own entrance**, separate to the National Theatre main building. **The entrance looks like this.**



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 looks like this.

About the National Theatre Dorfman Theatre



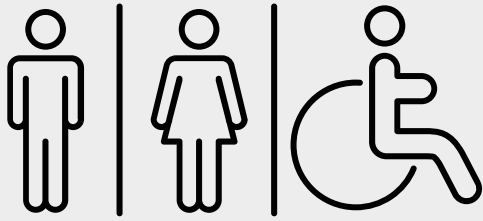
There are accessible toilets in the **ground floor foyer**.



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**.



The Dorfman Theatre has three levels of audience seating: the **pit** (lower level), the **circle** (middle level), and the **gallery** (highest level).



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



The **access desk** is located in the **Dorfman foyer corridor.**

There are hearing enhancement headsets, ear defenders, fidget toys, and large print cast lists available here.



There is a **ground floor foyer** and an upper foyer. The ground floor can be **busy and loud** before and after the show, and during the interval.

The Production

The Hot Wing King

The Hot Wing King is a play written by **Katori Hall** and directed by **Roy Alexander Weise**. This play is a **comedy** about family, Black Masculinity, sexuality, the love language of food, and the journey to finding home.

Dates

The Hot Wing King will be performed in the Dorfman Theatre from **Thursday 11 July** to **Saturday 14 September**.

Length

The Hot Wing King is **2 hours and 45 minutes** long. This includes one **20-minute** interval.

Please do not take photographs or use your phone during the performance. Cameras and phones may be used in the foyer.



The following pages include content guidance, photos of the set and characters, and a detailed synopsis. **This information contains spoilers.**

The Production

Content Guidance

The Hot Wing King contains descriptions of death and strong and offensive language. Real food is cooked in the performance, including chicken, bacon, cream, alcohol and garlic. Some of these can be smelled in the auditorium.



**Loud
door slams**



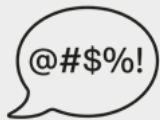
**Heavy
bass sounds**



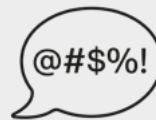
**Bright /
flashing lights**



Loud music



**Screaming
/shouting**



**Strong and
offensive language**



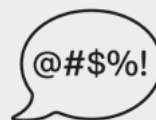
**Descriptions
of death**



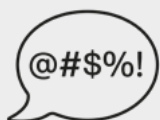
**Descriptions of
police brutality**



**Depictions
of alcohol**



A homophobic slur



Ableist language



**Sexual language
and scenes**

What Happens in the Play?

The set

The Hot Wing King is set in a house in Memphis, Tennessee in the United States of America. There are 2 levels to the house.

The lower level:

- A **kitchen** with 3 worksurfaces (one which rotates) and a fridge
- A **garden** with a patio and basketball hoop
- A **living room** area with sofas, a front door, a TV, and a piano.

A **set of stairs** from the living room area lead to the upper level:

- A **bedroom** with a double bed, drawers, and closet.



The Characters

There are 6 characters on stage in *The Hot Wing King*.



Cordell



Dwayne



Big Charles



Isom



Everett
(also known as EJ)



TJ

- **Cordell** has moved from St Louis to live with his partner **Dwayne** in Memphis. **Cordell** has two sons from his previous relationship with his wife Vanessa
- **Big Charles** and **Isom** are friends of **Cordell** and **Dwayne**
- **TJ** is **Dwayne's** brother-in-law, and **EJ's** (Everett) dad. **TJ** was married to **Dwayne's** sister, Jelissa, who was murdered by police two years ago
- **EJ** is **Dwayne's** nephew, and **TJ's** son.

What Happens in the Play?

Synopsis



Cordell is in the kitchen, preparing his recipe for the annual Memphis Hot Wing Festival. He offers his different hot wing flavours to his friends, Isom and Big Charles.

Cordell's partner, Dwayne, arrives home. In the garden, Dwayne and Cordell discuss Cordell not being able to find a job.

Dwayne tells Cordell he needs to leave to go back to work, but has received a text from his nephew, EJ.

Cordell tells Big Charles that he's still waiting for his ex-wife to sign divorce papers.

TJ, Dwayne's brother in law, speaks to Cordell. TJ is looking for his son, EJ (sometimes known as Everett.)

Dwayne arrives home with his nephew, EJ. Cordell is surprised, and he wants the focus of the weekend to be the Hot Wing Festival.



EJ asks if he can move in with Dwayne and Cordell. EJ reminds Dwayne that it has been 2 years since EJ's mother (Dwayne's sister) was murdered by the police.

In the kitchen, Cordell, Big Charles and Isom sing and dance while cooking.

Cordell puts Big Charles in charge of chopping, EJ in charge of seasoning, and Isom in charge of stirring the marinade. He asks Dwayne to soak the hickory chips.



Big Charles tells the story of how Dwayne and Cordell met in his barbershop.

Cordell talks about his hot wing recipes and gives everyone their jobs to ensure they make the best hot wings.



Dwayne gives everyone matching shirts with chicken prints on them.

They all dance while they cook. Cordell times the process as he coaches everyone at their cooking stations.



EJ suggests that Cordell opens up his own restaurant, but Cordell is hesitant.

Everyone goes to watch the TV while Isom continues stirring the marinade.

Without asking Cordell, Isom adds an entire container of peli peli, a strong chilli, to the marinade.



In the garden, EJ and Cordell play basketball. EJ asks Cordell about being gay.

EJ argues with Dwayne and Cordell about having to grieve by himself. He leaves, upset.

Cordell and Dwayne argue about their relationship. Dwayne tells Cordell about the guilt he feels surrounding his sister.

Interval

It's the next morning, and the group are waking up to prepare for the Hot Wing Festival. Big Charles comes downstairs singing, waking Isom up. Cordell has been up all night, searching for EJ.

Isom sends Big Charles to comfort Cordell.

Dwayne tries one of the hot wings. It's too hot and he runs to the fridge to get milk.

Isom tells everyone that he put the whole peli peli container in the sauce. Cordell panics.

TJ appears at the door, searching for EJ.

Dwayne chooses not to go to the contest.

TJ and Dwayne argue over EJ. TJ doesn't want EJ to be 'soft', and doesn't agree with Dwayne's lifestyle.

Isom challenges TJ to eat the hot wings, and offers a \$1000 reward for eating 5 wings without water or milk



TJ manages to eat 3 wings before he reacts, coughing and crying. Isom pours all the milk away.

EJ returns.



TJ borrows some clothes from Dwayne. He talks to EJ upstairs. They discuss EJ living with Dwayne.

EJ admits that he stole money from Dwayne. EJ takes Dwayne's spot on the Hot Wing Festival team.

Cordell tells Dwayne that he'll pack up and leave by the end of the week. He leaves to go to the festival.

Dwayne and TJ reflect on their relationship with Jelissa.

Isom, Big Charles, EJ and Cordell come home from the festival. EJ won the The Main Man Challenge – a category newly created just for him, for eating 6 of the peli peli wings.

Cordell crowns EJ with a cardboard Burger King crown as this year's Most Valuable Player. He mimes knighting him with a wooden spoon.



EJ goes to leave with TJ, but TJ tells EJ he can stay with Dwayne and Cordell. Cordell accepts this.

Cordell and Dwayne apologise to each other.

They all play basketball in the garden. EJ places a bet: if Cordell makes the shot, he'll invest his \$500 prize money from the festival to open a restaurant.



What Happens in the Play?

Sonic Story

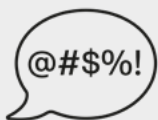
This graphic tells the sonic story of *The Hot Wing King*. It highlights any particularly loud or quiet moments, or any moments when there are sudden changes to the sound.



The Hot Wing King is **not** a musical, but the characters **sing together**



There are regular moments where **loud music plays**, usually involving synthesisers and electronic drums



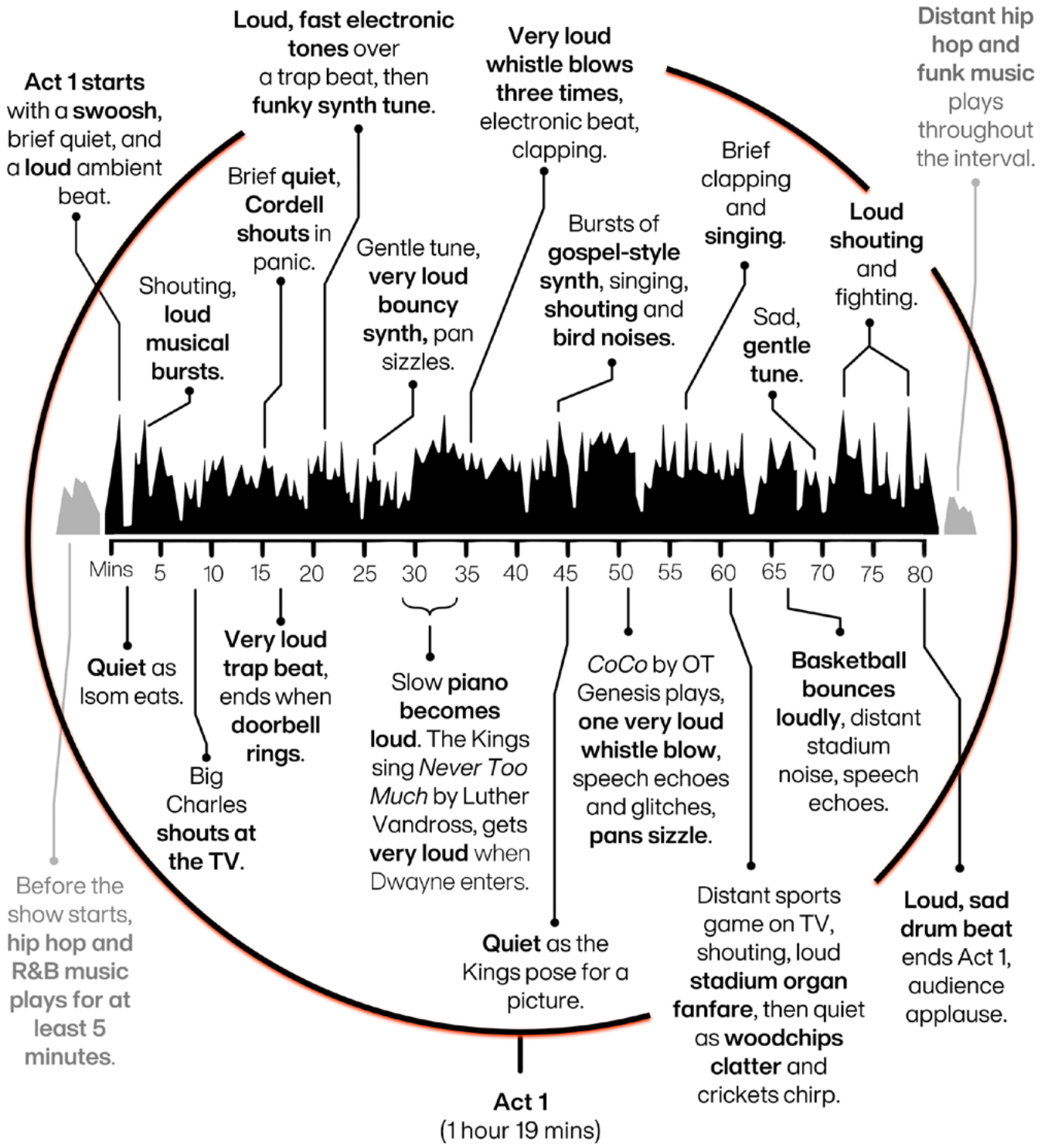
The characters shout **often**. Sometimes when they are angry, and other times when they are celebrating



Before the play and during the interval, different **songs play** over the **theatre speakers**. These are louder before the play starts, and quieter during the interval

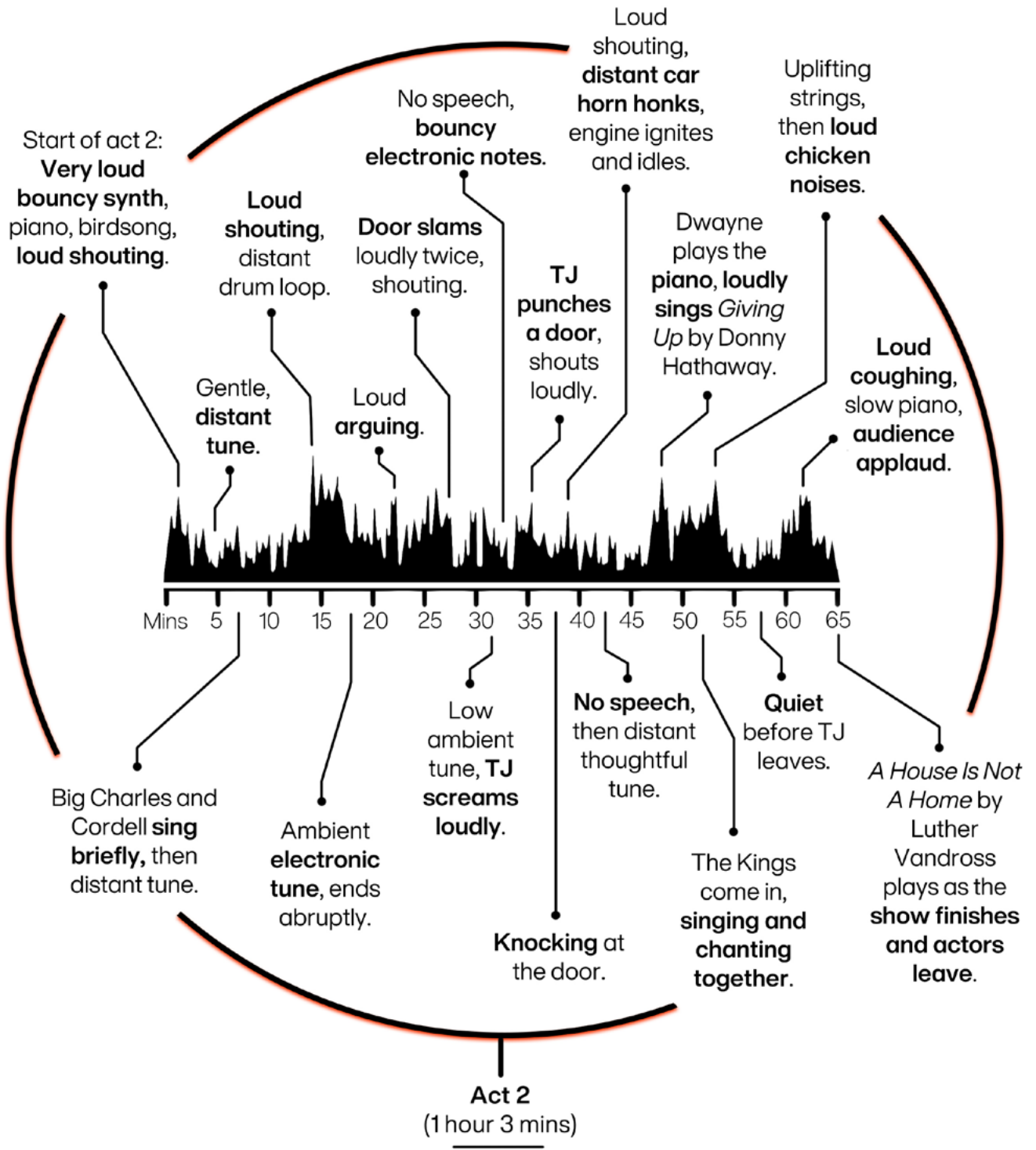
The Hot Wing King

Sonic Story



The Hot Wing King

Sonic Story



Relaxed Performance

Access information

There is a relaxed performance of *The Hot Wing King* on **Tuesday 13 August at 7.30pm.**

This performance 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 toys** available to use. Just ask a member of staff who will direct you to the **access desk**

There is a dedicated **quiet room** available, which looks like this:



Relaxed Performance

Upcoming performances

Our next relaxed performances after *The Hot Wing King* are:

The Grapes of Wrath

Carrie Cracknell directs Frank Galati's award-winning adaptation of John Steinbeck's masterpiece.

Tuesday 10 September at 6.30pm

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.

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.

Wednesday 30 October at 7.30pm

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

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