

National Theatre

Ncuti Gatwa, Katherine Parkinson, and Adrian Scarborough among actors connecting with audiences at National Theatre Live big screen event in Manchester Arndale Centre

- On 22 January, National Theatre Live are hosting a big screen immersive experience at Manchester Arndale Centre, in partnership with Vue.
- Visitors will have the chance to read lines from famous plays with well-known actors through a big screen set up in the middle of the shopping centre, from a Vue luxury recliner.
- This event celebrates how National Theatre Live, a pioneer of event cinema, beams high quality theatre from stage to screen, sharing renowned performances with audiences across the world.
- A new survey shows almost half of the UK (47%) are interested in attending event cinema, with over two thirds (69%) believing it would have a positive impact on wellbeing, rising dramatically to 86% for Gen Z audiences.



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Today, **National Theatre Live** announces a free event taking place at **Manchester Arndale Centre** on **22 January**, inviting members of the public to take the 'best seat in the house'. Visitors will have the chance to read an excerpt of a famous play with an actor based at the

National Theatre in London, live through a big screen in the middle of the shopping centre, from the comfort of one of Vue's luxurious recliner seats – The Lux seat.

This immersive experience celebrates how National Theatre Live, a pioneer of event cinema, beams high quality theatre from stage to screen, sharing renowned performances with audiences across the world. A new survey* shows that **a quarter (25%) of Brits want to go to the cinema more this year**, rising to **38% percent for Gen Z** audiences. While only 19% of people have attended event cinema to date, **almost half (47%)** are interested in attending a screening, rising to **53% for Gen Z**.

The free event will offer shoppers in Manchester the chance to interact with **Ncuti Gatwa, Ronke Adékoluéjọ, Eliza Scanlan** and **Amanda Lawrence** from the National Theatre's cast of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, the next production to release to cinemas through National Theatre Live from 20 February.

Other familiar faces taking part include **Adrian Scarborough** (*Gavin and Stacey*), **Katherine Parkinson** (*Rivals*), **Hammed Animashaun** (*Black Ops*), **Craig Parkinson** (*Line of Duty*), **Eben Figueiredo** (*Much Ado About Nothing*) and **Owen Teale** (*Game of Thrones*), all of whom have previously featured in a National Theatre Live production.

National Theatre Live screens in 850 cinemas and venues across the UK, with a survey showing that **almost a third of Brits (31%) highly value accessibility and convenience** when choosing arts experiences. What's more, **over half (53%)** of the UK believe it is important to have arts experiences to maintain a healthy work-life balance, with **two thirds (69%)** believing event cinema would have positive impact on wellbeing, increasing drastically to **86% for Gen Z audiences**.

Alex Bayley, Chief Marketing Officer at the National Theatre, has said, *"We are so thrilled to bring National Theatre Live to life in such a dynamic way, reaching outside of London to celebrate the initiative. What National Theatre Live offers so brilliantly is the ability for people around the UK and the world to access incredible productions they might not have been able to see – but importantly it captures these performances to create an emotional and immersive experience. As the survey shows, there is incredible power in the arts and event cinema to improve wellbeing, and we hope this day offers an exciting and fun experience for those who take part."*

Today, National Theatre Live is also releasing a new advert with National Theatre Live alumnus **Benedict Cumberbatch** (*Frankenstein, Hamlet*) in a new campaign with Wonderhood Studios. **45% of Brits value high production quality when choosing arts experiences**, and this ad showcases how National Theatre Live captures the magic of every moment on stage, letting viewers get up close to take in the spectacle, from the best seat in

the house. This is available to watch [here](#) and will play before future National Theatre Live screenings in venues worldwide.

Upcoming National Theatre Live titles include *The Importance of Being Earnest* releasing 20 February and *Dr. Strangelove* with Steve Coogan releasing 27 March. Screenings can be found at [ntlive.com](https://www.ntlive.com).

Sky Arts is the Headline Sponsor of National Theatre Live in the UK.

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Notes to Editors

* This online survey of 2000 UK adults nationally representative on the basis of age, gender, region was commissioned by National Theatre and conducted by market research company OnePoll, in accordance with the Market Research Society's code of conduct. Data was collected between 8th-13th January 2025.

For further information please contact Zara Jayant at zjayant@nationaltheatre.org.uk

Images [HERE](#).

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 every local authority 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 Vue

Vue Entertainment holds the number one market share position in the UK, with 93 state-of-the-art cinemas throughout the UK and Ireland, totalling more than 850 screens. Vue offers stadium seating, VIP seats and luxurious recliners alongside highly anticipated blockbusters and the very best of event titles, including opera, ballet, musicals, national theatre, sporting events and concerts.

About Sky Arts

Sky Arts exists to bring more art to more people across the UK. In 2020, with the creative industries under serious threat, we threw open our doors to make the channel free for everyone to watch. We've redoubled our mission to increase access to the arts and we're committed to getting everyone involved as the industry recovers. The fact is, we need the arts now like never before, and Sky Arts brings them straight to your living room.

We have something for everyone, championing creative talent by showcasing the best in music, theatre, dance, literature, opera and visual art. From Glyndebourne to Grime and Cézanne to The Style Council, we've got your passions covered. Millions of viewers tune in to hit returning series such as Portrait Artist of the Year, Urban Myths and British cultural institution The South Bank Show, but our acclaimed new programmes might take you anywhere from Pinter's house with Danny Dyer to a Scottish road trip with Samuel Johnson.

Collaboration is at the heart of what we do. Sky Arts is the headline sponsor of National Theatre Live in the UK and we work with cultural partners across the country including the English National Opera, Royal Academy of Arts, Tate, Creative Industries Federation and Coventry City of Culture to name but a few.

You can watch Sky Arts for free on Freeview channel 11 and Freesat channel 147. If you've got Sky or a Now TV entertainment pass, you can also watch over 2,000 hours of shows exclusively on demand.

About Wonderhood Studios

Wonderhood Studios is a unique independent creative company founded in 2018, bringing together experts across advertising, premium TV, social and design under one roof. We provoke wonder through a neighbourhood of curious minds, developing original ideas that impact culture for brands, platforms and broadcasters.

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