

# National Theatre

## Visual Story



by James Graham  
**Olivier Theatre**



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

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Production photography by Marc Brenner.

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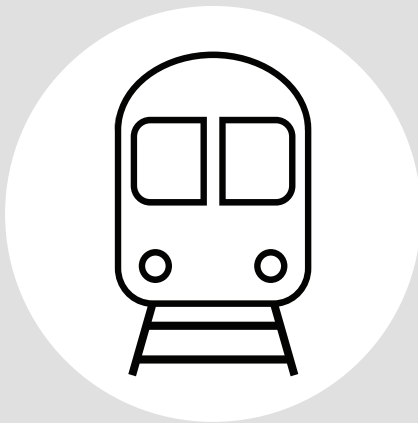
# About the National Theatre

## 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 address is:  
**Upper Ground, London, SE1 9PX.**



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

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



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



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.



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

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

# About the National Theatre

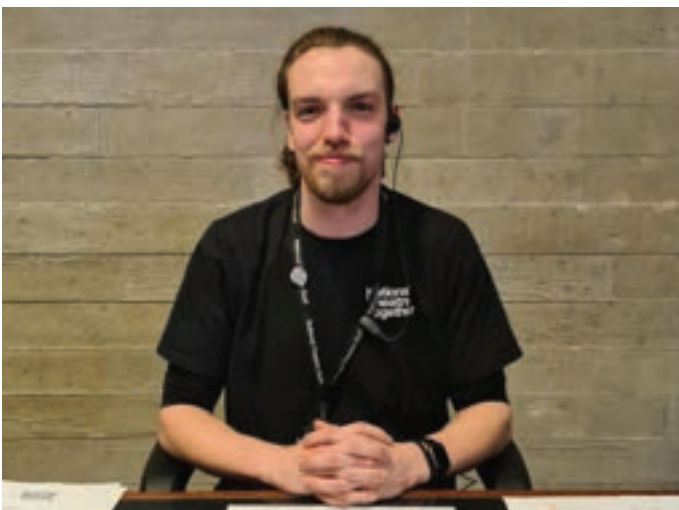
## Who's who?



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 in the building if you have questions or if you would like directions to your seats. **National Theatre staff** wear **black t-shirts** with **white writing**.

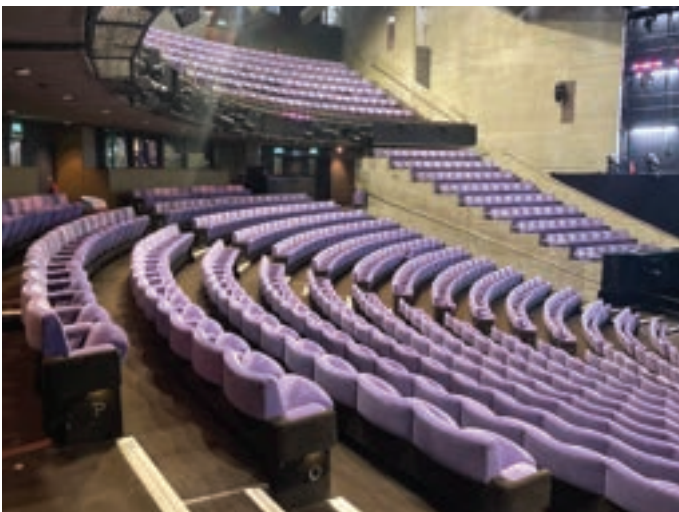


# About the National Theatre

## Olivier Theatre



This production of *Dear England* will be performed in the **Olivier Theatre**. There are signs on the walls around the building to help guide you to the theatre.

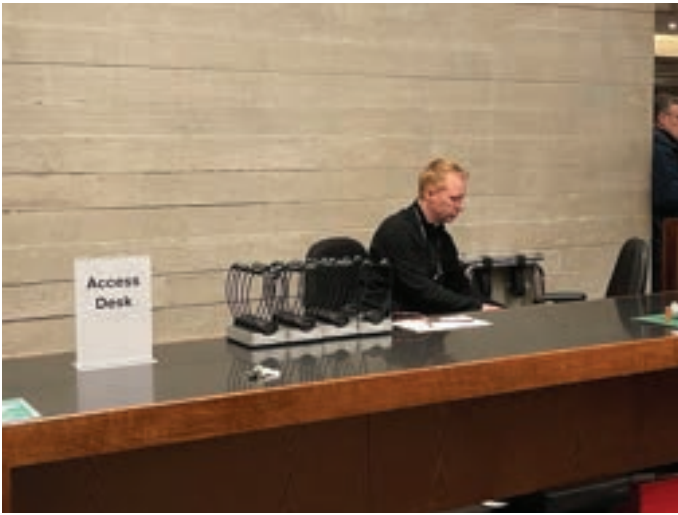


The Olivier has two levels of audience seating:

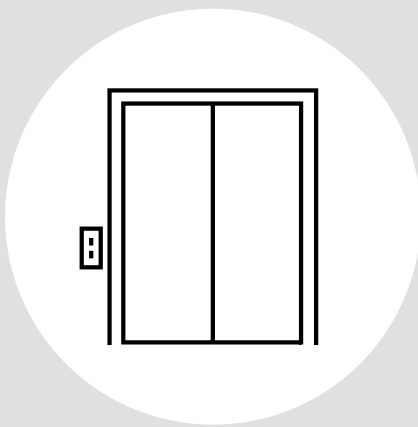
- The **stalls** (lower level)
- The **circle** (upper level)



There are **foyer spaces** at the stalls level and circle level. These can be **busy and loud** before and after the performance.



The **access desk** is in the **Olivier stalls foyer**. There are hearing enhancement headsets, ear defenders, fidget items and large print cast lists available here.



There is **step-free access** around the National Theatre. There are **accessible toilets** on the ground floor, stalls and circle and levels.



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

# The Production

## *Dear England*

*Dear England* is a **play** by James Graham. This production is a new version of the play originally produced in 2023.

### Dates

*Dear England* will be performed in the Olivier Theatre until **Saturday 24 May**.

### Length

*Dear England* is **2 hours and 50 minutes** long.  
This includes one **20-minute** interval.

### Warning!

The following pages contain spoilers.

### Please Note

This play is a fictionalised account of England's football teams. Some characters are based on real-life individuals, and some are completely made up by the writer.



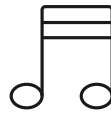
# The Production

## Content Guidance

*Dear England* contains:



**Screaming/  
Shouting**



**Loud music**



**Strong language**



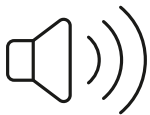
**Bright lights  
directly facing  
the audience**



**Strobe lighting**



**Discussions  
of racism**



**Loud and sudden  
sound effects**

# What Happens in the Play?

## The set



The story of *Dear England* takes place in many different locations, like football stadiums, training grounds, and Football Association offices.

The locations are sometimes represented in projections at the back of the stage, and lockers and chairs on the stage.

There is a bright, circular light above the stage which displays light, text and colour.

There is a projection wall at the back of the stage which sometimes displays locations, scores, or images.

# What Happens in the Play?

## The characters

There are many characters in Dear England. Most of the actors play different characters in a large ensemble. Some actors play multiple different footballers from different versions of the England team.



**The England Mens Football Team and Gareth Southgate**



**Gareth Southgate**



**Dr Pippa Grange**



**Chloe Kelly**



**Gary Lineker**



**Harry Kane**



**Ensemble**

# What Happens in the Play?

## Synopsis

### 1996 – Prologue

A young Gareth Southgate, playing for England, misses an important penalty kick.

### 2016

Sam Allardyce is fired as the manager of the England men's football team.



Greg Clarke (Football Association chairman) and Greg Dyke (ex-chairman) ask Gareth Southgate to be the new manager.

Previous England managers, prime ministers, and the English public offer their thoughts on Gareth Southgate.



Gareth meets his new staff. He asks Pippa Grange, a culture coach and psychologist, to join the team.

Gareth chooses the players for his England squad. He explains his strategy to the team and begins a countdown to the 2022 world cup in Qatar.



Gareth shakes up the culture of the canteen at St George's Park.



The team practise penalties. Gareth and Pippa introduce the idea of the players supporting each other before they kick the ball, and following a plan.



## 2018

England beat Panama 6-1 at the world cup in Russia.



They play Colombia next, and the game goes to penalties. England win. They are through to the quarter finals.



### Interval

A teenager spray paints graffiti onto a wall. It reads *It's Coming Home*.



The ensemble sing, dance, and share their excitement and fears about the 2018 World Cup. Gary Lineker reports on the success of the team in the quarter finals.



England lose against Croatia, and are out of the competition. Pippa and Marcus Rashford discuss superstitions before playing a game.

## 2020-2021

Greg Clarke, FA chairman, explains to Gareth that the 2020 European championship will be delayed to 2021 because of the pandemic.

Gareth and the team discuss what it means to them to play for England. The players share their thoughts on social media.



Pippa decides to leave, as she does not feel comfortable with the direction Gareth is taking the team in.



England make it to the final of the competition.

After losing to Italy on penalties, Raheem Sterling, Marcus Rashford and Jadon Sancho talk about the racist abuse they receive. Gareth reads a letter to the country, titled *Dear England*.

A series of resignations take place: Greg Clarke, Boris Johnson, then Liz Truss.



## 2022

Chloe Kelly and Sarina Wiegman celebrate the success of the England Women's team in the Euro 2022 final.



Gianni Infantino, FIFA president, announces the beginning of the Qatar 2022 World Cup. He warns Gareth that political symbols are banned.

England reach the quarter final, but lose the game on penalties. Gareth comforts Harry Kane, not allowing him to take the same responsibility that Gareth had to take in 1996.



2024

The players move through a series of games at the Euro 2024 competition in Germany. New England players are introduced.



The next manager of England is announced: Thomas Tuchel. He speaks with Gareth about his legacy and future.

The players say goodbye to Gareth. They dance.

# What Happens in the Play?

## Sonic Story

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

### Sound summary

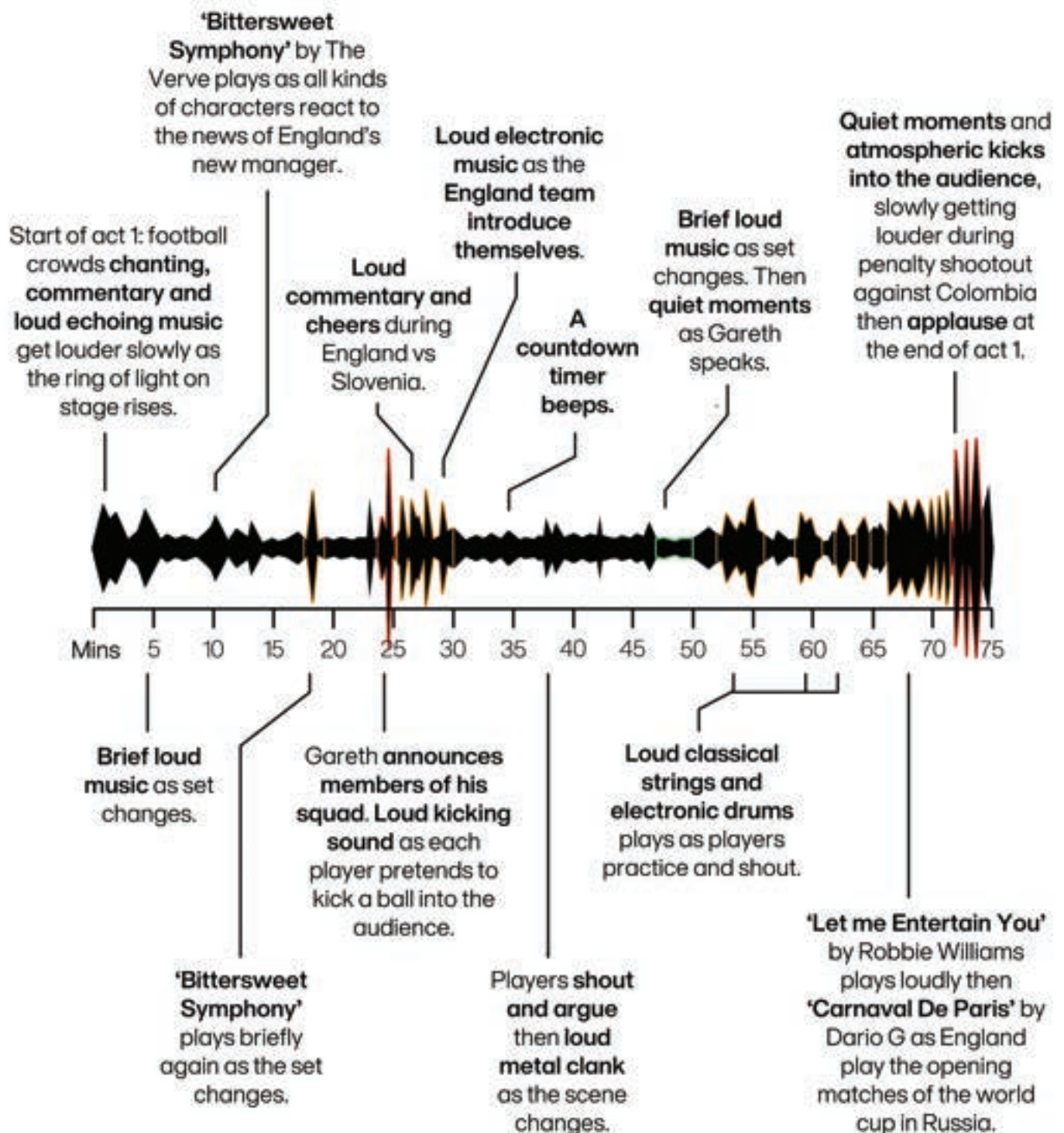
- *Dear England* is a play with music
- Characters often shout or talk over each other
- Lots of scenes include loud and sudden sound effects
- There are regular penalty shoot-outs during the show. When these happen there is quiet, then loud kicking sound effects that move through the speakers in the audience





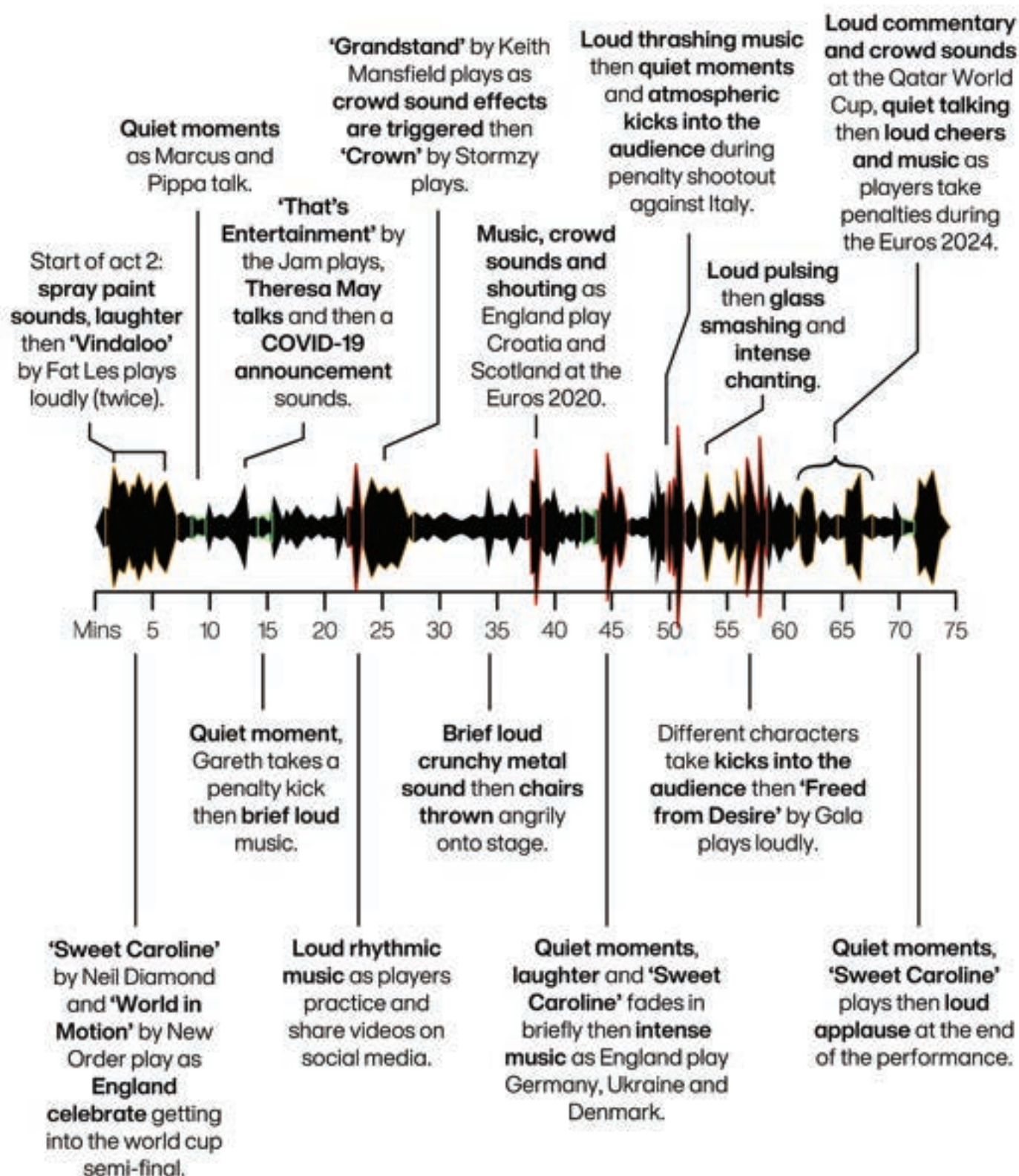
# Dear England

## Sonic Story – Act 1



# Dear England

## Sonic Story – Act 2



Sonic story  
designed by  
Touretteshero  
©C, 2025



# Relaxed Performance

## Access information

There is a relaxed performance of *Dear England* on **Tuesday 15 April 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 **quiet room** and **chill-out space** available, which staff can direct you to

# Relaxed Performance

## Upcoming performances

### ***Here We Are***

Tuesday 10 June at 7:30pm

Tony Award-winner Joe Mantello directs Stephen Sondheim's final musical with a book by David Ives.

### ***Nye***

Monday 4 August at 7:30pm

Michael Sheen reprises his role as Nye Bevan in this 'valiant and valuable affirmation of the NHS' (Telegraph). Written by Tim Price and directed by Rufus Norris.

### ***The Estate***

Thursday 21 August at 7:30pm

Adeel Akhtar is Angad in this razor-sharp exploration of family, power and the lies we tell about ourselves. Daniel Raggett directs Shaan Sahota's remarkable debut play.

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](https://nationaltheatre.org.uk/whats-on/?accessibility=relaxed-performance)