

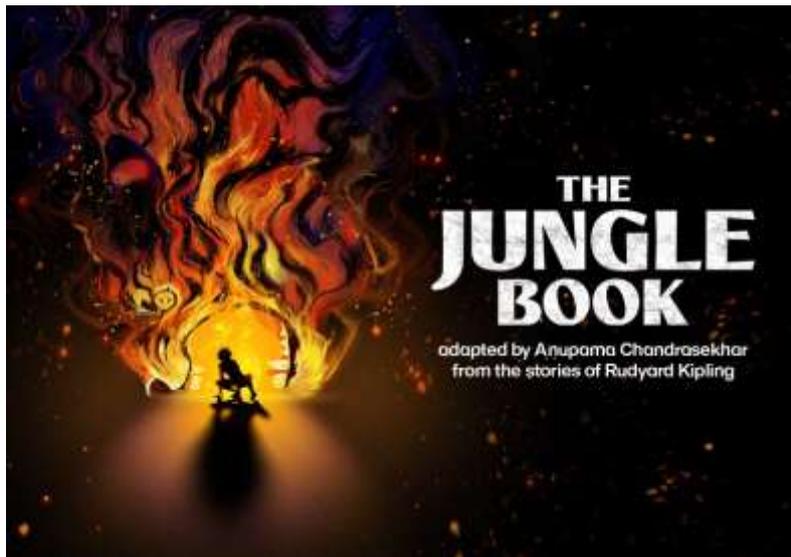
National Theatre

Embargoed until 12pm (GMT) Monday 16 March 2026

NEW STAGE PLAY OF THE JUNGLE BOOK COMING TO THE NATIONAL THEATRE FOR THE 2026 FESTIVE PERIOD

INDHU RUBASINGHAM DIRECTS ANUPAMA CHANDRASEKHAR'S REIMAGINING OF RUDYARD KIPLING'S TIMELESS FAMILY TALE WITH INNOVATIVE PUPPETRY BY LUME: NICK BARNES AND FINN CALDWELL

OLIVIER WINNER HIRAN ABEYSEKERA TO PLAY MOWGLI



TICKETS ON SALE FROM MIDDAY ON THURSDAY 26 MARCH 2026

This festive season, the **National Theatre** will stage **Anupama Chandrasekhar's** (*The Father and the Assassin*) new play, an adaptation of **Rudyard Kipling's** beloved family tale ***The Jungle Book***, directed by **Indhu Rubasingham**. With innovative puppetry by **Lume: Nick Barnes** and **Finn Caldwell**, this thrilling new adaptation will bring the jungle roaring to life on the Olivier stage from Friday 13 November 2026 to Saturday 6 February 2027.

Initial casting announced today includes **Hiran Abeysekera** as Mowgli. Hiran is joined by **Sarah Amankwah, Darcy Braimoh, Sebastian Charles, Laura Cubitt, Fred Davis, Ayesha Dharker, Ali Goldsmith, Romina Hytten, Tony Jayawardena, Avey Leventis, Kel Matsena, Sifiso Mazibuko** and **Jordan Metcalfe**. Further casting to be announced.

Speaking about the world premiere of *The Jungle Book*, Director Indhu Rubasingham, said:

‘It’s wonderful to be reuniting with Anupama for her new play as she reframes Kipling’s beloved tale. Setting it in the mangroves of the Sundarbans region of India gifts us such a rich environment to turn the Olivier theatre in a real theatrical event with extraordinary puppetry and performances at its heart. *The Jungle Book* is a beautiful and adventurous story about family, identity and belonging, I can’t wait for audiences to experience this thrilling new play.’

In the mangroves of the Sundarbans, wolves howl, birds soar and tigers’ roar. At the heart of this wild and vibrant kingdom, an unlikely child is growing up... Mowgli.

Danger stalks the shadows, and threats lie hidden beneath every rock. To protect his family, his friends and the only home he has ever known, this young hero must first discover who he really is and where he truly belongs.

Directed by **Indhu Rubasingham** with puppetry by **Lume: Nick Barnes and Finn Caldwell**, set and costume designer **Rajha Shakiry**, movement director **Finn Caldwell**, composer **Fernando Velázquez**, lighting designer **Oliver Fenwick**, sound designer **Benjamin Grant**, casting directors **Bryony Jarvis-Taylor CDG** and **Martin Poile CDG**, voice coach **Cathleen McCarron**, associate director **John Young**, associate puppetry director **Scarlet Wilderink**, associate puppet designer **Caroline Bowman** and associate set designer **Ruth Hall**.

Anupama Chandrasekhar is part of a new studio programme supported by CHANEL Culture Fund that champions creativity and global storytelling. The International Artist Residencies based at the National Theatre Studio offer long-term placements, providing the time, space and resources needed to develop ambitious, innovative work that shapes and engages with culture worldwide.

The Jungle Book will play in the Olivier theatre **Friday 13 November 2026** to **Saturday 6 February 2027**, with a press performance on **Tuesday 24 November 2026**.

Recommended for ages 7+.

Further casting to be announced.

Tickets are on general sale from **midday** on **26 March 2026**, nationaltheatre.org.uk.

ENDS

For images, click [here](#).

Production	Theatre	Dates	Press Night	Publicist
<i>The Jungle Book</i>	Olivier theatre	Fri 13 Nov 2026 – Sat 6 Feb 2027	Tuesday 24 November 2026	James Lever & Anoushka Chakrapani

National Theatre Listings and Booking Information

The Jungle Book

Adapted by **Anupama Chandrasekhar**

from the stories of **Rudyard Kipling**

Dates: 13 November 2026 – 6 February 2027

Venue: Olivier theatre, National Theatre Upper Ground, South Bank, London SE1 9PX

Box Office:

To book online visit www.nationaltheatre.org.uk

To book tickets by phone, call **020 3989 5455** from 9.30am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 10am–6pm on Saturdays.

Group Bookings

To book tickets for a group of 10 or more, call 020 7452 3010 from 11am–6pm, Monday to Saturday.

Access ticket booking

To book Disabled concession tickets and for any additional support you may require, please call our Access line 020 7452 3961 from 11am–6pm, Monday to Saturday. Our [Access page](#) have more detailed information for users with specific access requirements.

Assisted performances of *The Jungle Book* at the National Theatre:

Captioned Performances: Wednesday 2 December 2026 - 1.30pm, Tuesday 15 December 2026 -7pm, Wednesday 20 January 2027 - 7pm

BSL Interpreted: Saturday 23 January 2027 - 1.30pm

Audio Described (with touch tours taking place 90 minutes before the show): Saturday 19 December 2026 - 1.30pm, Friday 8 January 2027 at 7pm, Saturday 30 January 2027 - 1.30pm

Relaxed performance: Saturday 16 January 2027 - 1.30pm

With thanks:

This production is supported by Bagri Foundation and Cockayne - Grants for the Arts.

About American Express

American Express (NYSE: AXP) is a global payments and premium lifestyle brand powered by technology. Our colleagues around the world back our customers with differentiated products, services, and experiences that enrich lives and build business success.

Founded in 1850 and headquartered in New York, American Express' brand is built on trust, security, service, and a rich history of delivering innovation and Membership value for our customers. We seek to provide the world's best customer experience every day to a broad range of consumers, small and medium-sized businesses, and large corporations, and we build and manage relationships with millions of merchants across our global network.

For more information about American Express, visit americanexpress.com, americanexpress.com/en-us/newsroom/, and ir.americanexpress.com.

About American Express Experiences®:

Through Amex Experiences®, Cardmembers have access to presale tickets, as well as some of the best seats and exclusive offers at some of the UK's most sought-after entertainment events via partnerships with a range of institutions including AEG (BST Hyde Park, All Points East, Roundhay Festival and The O2 arena); All England Lawn Tennis Club (The Championships, Wimbledon); Formula1®; Brighton & Hove Albion Football Club; Somerset House (Somerset House Summer Series); London Restaurant Festival; the National Theatre; and Aviva Studios, the home of Factory International. Amex Experiences is just one example of the powerful backing that American Express provides its Cardmembers.

About the National Theatre

The National Theatre offers the widest access to high-quality theatre in the world. This year, we are producing 14 plays across our three South Bank auditoriums, having staged more than a thousand shows that have shaped British theatre since 1963.

Our shows transfer to the West End and travel to Broadway and beyond, winning awards on both sides of the Atlantic. We champion bold storytelling that inspires, challenges and entertains, bringing the world to the National and taking the best of British theatre to the world. Through NT at Home and NT Live, we reach people digitally in almost every country worldwide: 184 out of 195 and counting.

We are a registered charity with a deep social purpose and a nationwide footprint. We partner with regional theatres to tour our work; more than 90% of state secondaries are signed up to our schools' platform, NT Collection; and our Skills Centre trains 5,000 individuals each year.

Our dedicated New Work Studio champions new writing, and we are central London's 'biggest factory' with workshops that power every aspect of our productions. We host the world's most extensive theatre archive, and our Green Store houses more than 150,000 reusable props and costumes as part of our sustainability commitments.

For more information, please visit nationaltheatre.org.uk

@NationalTheatre

@NT_PressOffice