

National Theatre

Friday 17 April 2026

FIRST LOOK: REHEARSAL IMAGES RELEASED FOR THE
RETURN OF THE GLOBAL PHENOMENON

WAR HORSE

TO THE OLIVIER STAGE THIS SUMMER

FROM 16 MAY – 30 JULY 2026



Images by Brinkhoff-Moegenburg are available [here](#)

Rehearsal images have been released for the National Theatre's global smash-hit production, *War Horse*, which returns to its original home nearly two decades after its debut and following a recent acclaimed tour of the UK and Ireland. Based on **Michael Morpurgo's** beloved novel, adapted by **Nick Stafford** and originally directed by **Marianne Elliott** and

Tom Morris, *War Horse* has become the most successful play in the history of the National Theatre, winning more than 25 major awards including the Tony Award for 'Best Play' and has been seen by over 8.8 million people worldwide. It returns to captivate a whole new generation from 16 May until 30 July 2026.

War Horse tells the remarkable story of a young boy called Albert and his horse Joey, set against the backdrop of the First World War. It is a timeless story of love, courage and friendship, brought to life by astonishing life-sized horses from **Handspring Puppet Company** and a stirring musical score.

The cast includes, **Anita Adam Gabay** (Emilie/Joey as a Foal), **Rianna Ash** (Joey/Topthorn head), **Eloise Beaumont-Wood** (Joey as a Foal), **Stephen Beckett** (Ted Narracott/Strauss), **Ike Bennett** (David Taylor/Thomas Bone), **Jo Castleton** (Rose Narracott), **Owen Dagnall** (Geordie/Alternate Albert), **Alexandra Donnachie** (Joey/Topthorn head), **Felicity Donnelly** (Joey/Topthorn hind), **Sam Goodchild** (Joey/Topthorn hind), **Danny Hendrix** (Vet Martin), **Jasmin Hinds** (Matron Callaghan), **Linford Johnson** (Sergeant Fine), **Andrew Keay** (Joey/Topthorn hind), **Nicholas Khan** (Arthur Narracott/Brandt), **Manuel Klein** (Friedrich/Priest), **Michael Larcombe** (Joey/Topthorn hind), **Matthew Lawrence** (Joey/Topthorn head), **Madeleine Leslay** (Paulette/Sarah Carter), **Wade Lewin** (Joey/Topthorn head), **Jack Lord** (Klausen/Allan), **Damian Lynch** (Thunder/Carter), **Lewis McBean** (Joey/Topthorn heart), **Chris Milford** (Joey/Topthorn heart), **Corey Montague-Sholay** (Billy Narracott/Klebb), **Jordan Paris** (Joey as a Foal), **Anne-Marie Piazza** (Nell Allan/Schnabel), **Daniel Rock** (Captain Stewart/Ludwig), **Simon Stanhope** (Manfred), **Tom Sturgess** (Albert Narracott), **Sally Swanson** (The Singer), **Lucy Thorburn** (Jenny Bone/Annie Gilbert), **Chris Williams** (Captain Nicholls/Dr Schewyk), **Niko Wirachman** (Joey/Topthorn heart) and **Rafe Young** (Joey/Topthorn heart).

This tour revival of *War Horse* is created by director **Tom Morris** with revival director **Katie Henry**, drawings, set and costume designer **Rae Smith**, puppet designer **Adrian Kohler** for Handspring Puppet Company, lighting designer **Rob Casey**, director of movement and horse choreography **Toby Sedgwick**, puppetry director **Matthew Forbes**, animation and projection design by **59 Studio**. Music is by **Adrian Sutton** with songmaker **John Tams**, sound designer **Christopher Shutt** and music director **Dom Coyote**. Casting is by **Jill Green CDG** with **Paul Benzing** as Fight Director, **Rebecca Daltry** as Dialect Coach and **Cathleen McCarron** and **Shereen Ibrahim** as Voice Coaches.

Completing the team are, **Anna Marshall** as Associate Director, **William Fricker** as Associate Set Designer, **Johanna Coe** as Associate Costume Designer, **Tom Turner** as

Associate Lighting Designer, **Lewis Howard** as Associate Puppetry Director, **Matthew Gough** as Music Associate, **Rob Bettle** for Sound Quiet Time as Co-Associate Sound Designer, **Emma Laxton** as Co-Associate Sound Designer and **Olivia Laydon** and **Tom Shiels** as Casting Associates.

At the outbreak of the First World War, young Albert's beloved horse Joey is sold to the cavalry and shipped to France. Too young to enlist, Albert refuses to forget him, embarking on an extraordinary journey from the fields of rural Devon to the trenches of wartime France – determined to bring Joey home.

War Horse received its world premiere on 9 October 2007 at the National Theatre, where it played for two seasons before opening at the New London Theatre in March 2009. Since then, **War Horse** has been seen in over 100 cities in 15 countries, including productions on Broadway, in Toronto and Berlin, with touring productions in the UK and Ireland, North America, the Netherlands and Belgium. Michael Morpurgo's global best-selling novel has now sold over 2 million copies worldwide and in 44 different languages.

War Horse will play in the Olivier theatre **Saturday 16 May to Thursday 30 July 2026**, with an opening performance on **Tuesday 2 June 2026**.

Recommended for ages 10+.

Tickets available from nationaltheatre.org.uk.

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Notes to Editor

War Horse – original creative credits

The original production of **War Horse** was co-directed by **Marianne Elliott and Tom Morris**, with set and costume design by **Rae Smith** and puppet design and fabrication by **Adrian Kohler** for **Handspring Puppet Company**. Original lighting design was by **Paule Constable**, with movement and horse choreography by **Toby Sedgwick** and animation and projection design by **59 Studio**. Original Music was by **Adrian Sutton** with **John Tams** as songmaker and sound design was by **Christopher Shutt**.

Further Materials

- Rehearsal Images [here](#)
- Cast Headshots [here](#)
- Marketing Image [here](#)
- Teaser Trailer [here](#)

Production	Theatre	Dates	Opening Night	Publicist
<i>War Horse</i>	Olivier theatre	Sat 16 May – Thurs 30 July 2026	Tues 2 June 2026	Clare McCormack

Listings and Booking Information

Dates: 16 May – 30 July 2026

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:

Captioned Performances: Thursday 11 June – 7.30pm, Thursday 2 July – 7.30pm, Tuesday 14 July – 7.30pm, Tuesday 28 July – 7.30pm

BSL Interpreted: Tuesday 23 June – 7.30pm, Wednesday 22 July – 7.30pm

Audio Described (with touch tours taking place 90 minutes before the show):

Saturday 20 June – 2.15pm, Friday 24 July – 7.30pm

Relaxed performance: Tuesday 7 July – 6.30pm

About the National Theatre

The National Theatre offers the widest access to high-quality theatre in the world. This year, we will produce 18 plays, following over a thousand shows that have shaped British theatre since 1963.

Our productions transfer from our home in London to the West End, 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 Theatre, and taking the best of British theatre to the world. Through our online streaming service *NT at Home*; our education platform, the *NT Collection* in schools; and in cinemas with *NT Live*, we reach audiences digitally in almost every country worldwide - 184 out of 195 and counting.

We operate as a registered charity with a deep social purpose and a nationwide footprint. We partner with regional theatres to tour our shows, are active in more than 90% of state secondary schools, and our Skills Centre trains 5,000 people each year.

Our dedicated New Work Studio champions new writing, and we are central London's 'biggest factory' with workshops that craft 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

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