

PRESS RELEASE
04 September 2019



LYRIC HAMMERSMITH SPRING 2019 SEASON ANNOUNCEMENT

Today the Lyric Hammersmith announces its Spring 2019 season, the final productions programmed by outgoing Artistic Director Sean Holmes. The season celebrates Holmes' tenure - bringing back one of his most successful shows, reflecting the Lyric's partnerships with the UK's leading theatre companies, and embodying a reputation for daring new work alongside a commitment to nurturing the creativity of young people.

- ***Leave to Remain*** – the world premiere of a new play with songs by Matt Jones and Kele Okereke opens the season. Commissioned by the Lyric, directed by Robby Graham and designed by Rebecca Brower, with Olivier Award nominated actor **Tyrone Huntley** in the lead role.
- The first song from *Leave to Remain*, 'Not the drugs talking' written and performed by Bloc Party's Kele Okereke is released today, available on iTunes and Spotify.
- The Lyric welcomes the highly acclaimed **1927 Theatre Company** with *The Animals and Children Took to the Streets* and **Kneehigh's** *Dead Dog in a Suitcase (and other love songs)*.
- ***Ghost Stories*** – following worldwide success and the smash hit movie, the original terrifying hit is back. Written by Andy Nyman and Jeremy Dyson and directed by Andy Nyman, Jeremy Dyson and Sean Holmes.
- Continuing the theatre's commitment to providing opportunities for young creative talent, **Holly Race Roughan** is announced as the Artistic Director for the Lyric Ensemble for 2019 and **TD Moyo** as the director for the lead show of the Evolution Festival.
- A new season of **Little Lyric** shows is announced for families and children under 11, presented in the newly refurbished studio theatre.

The Lyric continues its commitment to accessible pricing with **24% of tickets released for sale at £15 or under** and its Free First Night programme, which will see more than 2000 free tickets given to people who live or work in Hammersmith and Fulham. Priority booking for Lyric Friends and Supporters opens today, with public booking opening at 9.30am on Wednesday 5 September.

Sean Holmes said, "This new season follows an exciting autumn with Jude Christian taking over the Main House; first with *othellomacbeth* her innovative synthesis of two of Shakespeare's most iconic plays. Then Cariad Lloyd joins Jude to give *Dick Whittington* the full Lyric treatment, celebrating 10 years of the Lyric Pantomime, first introduced during my initial season as Artistic Director.

Our new spring season is everything I've always strived for the Lyric to be – provocative, entertaining and eclectic bringing the best theatre artists to our beautiful Hammersmith home.

I'm especially excited by the potential of our first show of the season, *Leave to Remain*, a new play with songs. We have brought leading artists from different fields together – Matt is one of the UK's leading television writers, Kele is an astonishing musical talent, both as a solo artist and with his

band Bloc Party, Robby has a beautifully physical choreographic style and Rebecca is an exciting award-winning designer. They are creating something unique for us and I can't wait to experience this truly special piece of work.

One of the joys of being Artistic Director of the Lyric has been bringing theatre companies from across the world to visit us. This season sees two genre defying companies make us their home. I'm a huge fan of the work of 1927, *The Animals and Children took to the Streets*, will introduce their form defining work to a Hammersmith audience. I am also delighted to welcome back Kneehigh with their ground-breaking show *Dead Dog in a Suitcase (and other love songs)*, it has toured nationally and internationally and now finds a new London home here at the Lyric.

Nurturing young people and providing space for them to develop as artists is a fundamental part of what the Lyric is. It is an absolute honour to watch young people from all backgrounds explore their talents and become the next generation of theatre makers under our roof. I am delighted that Holly Race Roughan is joining us as the Director of the Lyric Ensemble for 2019. This year's Evolution Festival was a brilliant success with young artists from across London showcasing their work. Next year the lead show for the festival is 'Feel' directed by TD Moyo.

The opening of *Ghost Stories* was a monumental moment when it first landed on our stage in 2010. It has since gone on to achieve worldwide cult status, most recently as a hit movie. Now horror is coming home to Hammersmith."

Leave to Remain

A new play with songs by Matt Jones and Kele Okereke
Directed by Robby Graham
Designed by Rebecca Brower

A Lyric Hammersmith Production

18 January – 16 February 2019
Press Night: Thursday 24 January at 7pm

Opening the season is *Leave to Remain*, written by **Matt Jones**, with music by the lead singer of Bloc Party **Kele Okereke** and directed by **Robby Graham**. Starring Olivier Award nominated actor **Tyrone Huntley** in the role of Obi, with further casting to be announced.

Give me your worst day
Give it to me
I'll take the strain
Give me all the times you go insane
Your leave to remain

A remarkable story of a young gay couple suddenly faced with an uncertain future, told through a mixture of music, drama and movement. *Leave to Remain* explores the effects of one couple's marriage, and what happens when it begins to fracture both their families.

Matt Jones has written for *Stan Lee's Lucky Man*, *Mr Selfridge*, *Doctor Who*, *Torchwood*, and *Dirk Gently*. Working out of Los Angeles, he wrote an episode and served as supervising producer on the second season of *Rogue*, starring Thandie Newton. As a non-writing executive producer, he has worked on twenty dramas for television, and has produced or executive produced over eighty hours

of drama, including Paul Abbott's BAFTA-award winning *Shameless*, which he developed and went on to executive produce for its first four UK seasons. He also served as executive producer on the American remake of the teen drama *Skins*.

Kele Okereke is the frontman (principal songwriter and lead vocalist) of the English rock band Bloc Party, whose debut album *Silent Alarm* was nominated for 2005's Mercury Prize and named 'Album of the Year' by NME. Over the course of Bloc Party's career, they have released five full-length albums and sold over four million records, quickly garnering a reputation as one of Britain's most thrilling live acts. Since 2010, whilst continuing to lead Bloc Party, Kele has embarked on the journey of a solo music career which has seen the release of three full-length albums, most recently *Fatherland*.

Robby Graham is a choreographer, director, and Artistic Director of Southpaw Dance Company. As Artistic Director of Southpaw Dance Company, Robby has created a wealth of internationally touring work, including the award winning productions 'Faust', 'Carousel', and 'Speakeasy'. Robby has also created several celebrated large-scale, mass movement spectacles, including 'Rush', 'Wordplay', and most recently, choreographed 'The Future of Things Past', the opening ceremony for Castlemaine State Festival in Victoria, Australia. In 2017 Robby choreographed *Angels in America* at the National Theatre. Most recently Robby co-directed Johnathan Harvey's *Beautiful Thing* for Greenwich Docklands Festival and choreographed the first Public Acts iteration of *Pericles* at the National Theatre with 230 community cast members.

Rebecca Brower was the 2012 winner of The Stage Design Award and The Equity Young Members Bursary Award. Rebecca was on the design team for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and last year designed the Rio 2016 Paralympics Heritage Flame Ceremony. Theatre design credits include *Beautiful Thing* (Greenwich & Docklands Festival), *All or Nothing* (West End), *The Dog Beneath the Skin* (Jermyn Street Theatre) and *Rothschild & Sons* (The Park Theatre).

Tyrone Huntley whose theatre roles include TJ in the *Sister Act* (UK Tour), Doctor in the original London cast of *The Book of Mormon*, Gator in the original London cast of *Memphis* and White in *Dreamgirls*. Tyrone won the Evening Standard Theatre Award for Emerging Talent in 2016. He played the role of Judas in *Jesus Christ Superstar* at the Regent's Park Open Air Theatre, for which he received great acclaim for his performance and was nominated for both the WhatsOnStage Award for Best Supporting Actor in a Musical, and the Laurence Olivier Award for Best Actor in a Musical.

The Animals and Children Took to the Streets

Directed and written by Suzanne Andrade
Film, Animation and Design by Paul Barritt
Music by Lillian Henley
Costume by Sarah Munro and Esme Appleton

A 1927 Production.

Co-commissioned by BAC, Malthouse Theatre Melbourne and The Showroom (University of Chichester)

19 February – 16 March 2019

Press Night: Friday 22 February at 7pm

The innovative theatrical company **1927** bring back their highly acclaimed show, *The Animals and Children Took to the Streets*, a glorious blend of macabre and spectacular through music, animation and live performance storytelling. Like a graphic novel burst into life, 1927 invites you on a theatrical journey of startling originality. Seamlessly synchronising live music, performance and storytelling with stunning film and animation.

Welcome to the Bayou, a part of the city feared and loathed. In the infamous Bayou Mansions; a sprawling stinking tenement block, curtain-twitchers and peeping-toms live side by side... and the wolf is always at the door.

When Agnes Eaves and her daughter arrive late one night, does it signal hope in this hopeless place, or has the real horror only just begun?

Supported by Corn Exchange Newbury and early development supported by The Arches & Manipulate Visual Theatre Festival. UK Premiere funded by Arts Council England.

Ghost Stories

Written by Jeremy Dyson and Andy Nyman
Directed by Jeremy Dyson, Andy Nyman and Sean Holmes

Designed by Jon Bausor
Lighting by James Farncombe
Sound by Nick Manning

A Lyric Hammersmith Production.

29 March – 11 May 2019
Press Night: Friday 5 April at 7pm

Following sell out shows, a West End transfer, productions in Shanghai, Australia, Canada, Italy, Germany and a smash hit film, the original terrifying live production is back. Experience Andy Nyman and Jeremy Dyson's worldwide cult phenomenon in the theatre where it all began.

WARNING. Please be advised that Ghost Stories contains moments of extreme shock and tension. The show is unsuitable for anyone under the age of 15. We strongly advise those of a nervous disposition to think very seriously before attending.

Keep telling yourself it's only a show.

Andy Nyman is an award-winning actor, director and writer who has earned acclaim from both critics and audiences for his work in theatre, film and television. On stage he was most recently seen in Martin McDonagh's *Hangmen* (Wyndham's Theatre), Stephen Sondheim's *Assassins* (Menier Chocolate Factory) and *Abigail's Party* (also Wyndham's Theatre). Other theatre work includes the original production of *Ghost Stories* (Lyric/Duke of York's Theatre) which has recently been made into a major motion picture, also written, starred and directed by Andy & Jeremy Dyson. Other Film credits include *The Commuter*, *Death at a Funeral* & *Kick-Ass 2*. His upcoming films include playing opposite The Rock & Emily Blunt in Disney's *Jungle Cruise* plus starring opposite Renee Zellweger in *Judy*. He can currently be seen on TV on *Wanderlust* on BBC1. On TV he is best known for *Peaky Blinders*, *Campus* & *Dead Set*. This winter he will return to the Menier Chocolate Factory to play the iconic role of Tevye in Trevor Nunn's new production of *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Andy has also collaborated with Derren Brown for almost 20 years, creating many of his most famous TV and stage moments. Together he and Derren have won an Olivier award and most recently a New York Drama Desk award for the 2017 'Unique theatrical experience for their show 'Secret', which Andy co-wrote and co-directed.

Jeremy Dyson is a screenwriter, stage-writer and author, best known as a member of comedy group *The League of Gentlemen*. With Andy Nyman he co-wrote and co-directed the stage and film versions of *Ghost Stories*. In addition he co-created and co-wrote the BAFTA-nominated comedy-drama series *Funland* and co-created, co-wrote and directed the Rose d'Or-winning all-female comedy show *Psychobitches*. His second collection of stories, *'The Cranes that Build the Cranes'* won the Edge Hill Award for short fiction in 2010.

Sean Holmes has been Artistic Director of the Lyric Hammersmith for nearly a decade. During his tenure Sean has directed 22 shows including the Olivier Award Winning *Blasted*, which received the 2011 Outstanding Achievement in an Affiliate Theatre award, led the ground-breaking *Secret Theatre* company and staged *Bugsy Malone* – which reopened the theatre in 2015 after a major capital development.

Dead Dog in a Suitcase (and other love songs)

Written by Carl Grose
Music by Charles Hazlewood
Directed by Mike Shepherd

A Kneehigh with Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse Production.

21 May – 15 June 2019
Press Night: Thursday 23 May at 7pm

Kneehigh are wildly excited to be returning to the Lyric with their trail-blazing and much celebrated theatrical tour-de-force *Dead Dog in a Suitcase (and other love songs)*.

Mayor Goodman has been assassinated. Contract killer Macheath has just married Pretty Polly Peachum and Mr and Mrs Peachum aren't happy. Not one bit.

Based on the Beggar's Opera, which ran for 1,463 performances at the Lyric in 1920. John Gay's classic musical satire, *Dead Dog in a Suitcase (and other love songs)* is busting with wit, wonder and weirdness. Kneehigh's extraordinary cast of actor musicians shoot, hoot and shimmy their way through this twisted morality tale of our times.

*This is now, this is it
The world is poor and man's a shit
The game is rigged, nothing's truer
Death's a joke and life a sewer!*

Evolution Festival

The Lyric's Evolution Festival, established in 2016, is a four-day, multi-artform festival set up to support young artists in London aged 18-25 to showcase their talent and celebrate the ground-breaking and exciting work they are producing.

The festival creates a safe and creative space for artists to share their work, represents the diverse and multi-cultural talent in London and allows artists to connect with a wider audience.

Feels will be the lead show of the 2019 festival, directed by **TD Moyo**. TD Moyo is a director, teacher, performer and South London activist with an MA in Performance. *Feels* was first seen as a scratch performance at the Evolution Festival in 2018. Working with the Lyric team TD Moyo is developing the work through the year into a fully realised show to lead the festival in 2019.

The festival will take place Wednesday 6 – Saturday 9 March 2019. Further details will be announced early next year.

Lyric Ensemble

The Lyric Ensemble, a group of young aspiring actors, was established last year by international director Anne-Louise Sarks, Nicholai La Barrie (Director of Young People, Lyric Hammersmith), Sean Holmes and the Lyric's Artistic Associates. All of the members of the first Ensemble are now either working professionally as artists or have secured places at drama schools or universities.

We now launch the Lyric Ensemble for 2019, with auditions taking place October 2018.

The Ensemble comprises 15 actors aged between 18-25 years old who work together in regular sessions and intensive rehearsal weeks over a 9 month period. During their time at the Lyric they receive training, mentoring, careers advice and pastoral support from the Lyric team, finishing with their showcase production. The Artistic Director for the 2019 Ensemble is **Holly Race Roughan**, currently Associate Director for arts in prison charity KESTREL. Holly was also the associate director for *People, Places & Things* (National Theatre and West End) and has worked as a director for many theatres and theatre companies across the UK, including the Royal Exchange Manchester and Gate Theatre, Southwark Playhouse and Theatre 503 in London.

Little Lyric

Little Lyric is a season of theatre for audiences aged up to 11 years, with studio shows on Saturdays and during the school holidays providing a first introduction to theatre for young audiences. The 2019 Spring season includes Pied Piper Theatre's *The Big Enormous Present* during February Half Term. Please visit www.lyric.co.uk/shows/little-lyric/ for full details and a list of already announced performances.

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For more information visit www.lyric.co.uk.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Booking Information:

Tickets from £10

Priority booking for Lyric Friends and Supporters: 9.30am Tuesday 4 September 2018

Public booking: 9.30am Wednesday 5 September 2018

Spring Season Early Bird Offer: Book for the first show of the season, *Leave to Remain*, and get £10 off your second show booking. (Terms and conditions apply)

Tickets: 020 8741 6850 | www.lyric.co.uk

Lyric Square, King Street, London, W6 0QL

About the Lyric Hammersmith

The Lyric Hammersmith is one of the UK's leading producing theatres. For more than a hundred and twenty years it has been responsible for creating some of the UK's most adventurous and acclaimed theatrical work. It has also gained a national reputation for its work with and for children and young people and creates pathways into the arts for young talent from all backgrounds, helping to diversify our industry. Recent productions include our critically acclaimed annual pantomimes, the smash hit *Bugsy Malone*, the international tour and co-production with Filter Theatre of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Lesley Sharp in Simon Stephen's new version of Chekhov's *The Seagull* and the UK premiere of the international phenomenon *Terror*.

The Lyric's dual commitment to producing the highest quality contemporary theatre, whilst nurturing the creativity of young people is what makes it unique within the cultural ecology of the UK. It is a local theatre rooted in its community with a national and international reputation for the quality and innovation of its artistic work.

In April 2015 the Lyric reopened following a multi-million pound capital project, which saw the addition of the Reuben Foundation Wing housing state-of-the-art facilities for theatre, dance, film, music, digital and more. The 'new' Lyric is now the largest creative hub in West London and home to an innovative partnership of like-minded leading arts organisations who work together to deliver life-changing creative opportunities for thousands of young West Londoners.

Free First Night

The Lyric is proud to call Hammersmith their home. In 2016 they celebrated the 20th anniversary of their Free First Night scheme, part of their long term partnership with the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham, through which they give free tickets to people who live or work locally. Through this scheme last year they provided 2,354 Free First Night tickets to people who may not have had an opportunity to see theatre before. And as part of this commitment to the local community, they also provided 2,000 tickets to Hammersmith & Fulham schools. For full details including dates of future Free First Nights, www.lyric.co.uk.

Season details

Leave to Remain

Friday 18 January – Saturday 16 February 2019

Mon-Sat 7:30pm

Also Sat at 2.30pm (excluding Sat 19 January) & Wed at 1:30pm (excluding 23 January)

Free First Night: Friday 18 January at 7.30pm.

Previews: Friday 18 - Wednesday 23 January 2019

Press Night: Thursday 24 January at 7pm

Open Captioned Performance: Saturday 9 February 2019 at 2:30pm

Audio Described Performance: Saturday 9 February 2019 at 7:30pm

Tickets: From £10

The Animals and Children Took to the Streets

Tuesday 19 February – Saturday 16 March 2019

Mon-Sat 7:30pm

Also Wed at 1:30pm & Sat at 2.30pm

Free First Night: Tuesday 19 February at 7.30pm.

Previews: Tuesday 19 – Thursday 21 February 2019

Press Night: Friday 22 February March at 7pm

Open Captioned Performance: Saturday 9 March 2019 at 2:30pm

Audio Described Performance: Saturday 9 March 2019 at 7:30pm

Tickets: From £10

The Big Enormous Present (part of the Little Lyric studio season)

Tuesday 19 – Saturday 23 February 2019 (February Half Term)

Tue-Sat 11am and 1pm

Tickets: From £10

Ghost Stories

Friday 29 March – Saturday 11 May 2019

Mon-Thu 8pm, Fri & Sat at 7pm & 9:30pm (No performance on Sat 30 March at 7pm, Fri 5 April at 9:30pm Also Sat 6 April at 8pm)

Fri 10 May performances at 9:30pm and Midnight (12am)

Free First Night: Friday 29 March at 7.30pm

Previews: Friday 29 May – Thursday 4 April 2019

Press Night: Friday 5 April at 7pm

Audio Described Performance: Friday 26 April 2019 at 7pm

Open Captioned Performance: Saturday 27 April 2019 at 7pm

Tickets: From £10

Dead Dog in a Suitcase (and other love songs)

Tuesday 21 May – Saturday 15 June 2019

Mon-Sat 7:30pm

Also Wed at 1:30pm & Sat at 2:30pm

Free First Night: Tuesday 21 May at 7.30pm. For more information: www.lyric.co.uk

Press Night: Thursday 23 May at 7pm

Open Captioned Performance: Saturday 8 June 2019 at 2:30pm

Audio Described Performance: Saturday 8 June 2019 at 7:30pm

Tickets: From £10