PRESS RELEASE

August 2019

**FIONA MOUNTFORD TO HOST NEW STUDIO TALKS AT THE LYRIC HAMMERSMITH THEATRE**

Today, the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre announces Studio Talk**,** a new programme of pre-show events hosted by Fiona Mountford, each inspired by the Main House productions, as part of Rachel O’Riordan’s first season as Artistic Director.

Studio Talkwill take place in the Lyric’s Studio Theatre on the last Tuesday of every Main House production. Each talk will invite members of the creative team and special guests from theatre, culture, politics and journalism to discuss and debate a topic inspired by the current production. Tickets for all Talks are £5.

**As one of the leading voices in arts criticism, Fiona Mountford, was theatre critic at the Evening Standard for 17 years. As well as writing reviews, she wrote feature interviews, talking to almost all of London’s leading theatre makers. She has also worked for the Independent on Sunday, Daily Telegraph, Sunday Telegraph and Time Out. (Full biog below)**

The first Studio Talk will ask if *marriage is a form of colonialism*, inspired by Tanika Gupta’s new adaptation of Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*. Taking place before the show on Tue 01 Oct, Fiona Mountford will be joined by Tanika Gupta, director of the show Rachel O’Riordan, political journalist and presenter of Radio 4’s *Any Answers*, Anita Anand and **Professor of Postcolonial and Decolonial Studies at the University of Sussex, Gurminder K Bhambra.**

Tickets for all **Studio Talk**'s are available now.

**STUDIO TALKS 2019/2020**

Studio Talk: A Doll’s House **–** Marriage is a form of colonialism?

**Tuesday 01 October 2019, 6pm**

Panel includes:

* Fiona Mountford (host)
* Anita Anand
* Professor Gurminder K Bhambra
* Tanika Gupta
* Rachel O’Riordan

Studio Talk: *Solaris – Staging outer space in theatre and film*

Tuesday 29 October 2019, 6pm

Panel includes:

* Fiona Mountford (host)
* Will Massa
* Rachel O’Riordan
* Brendan Owens

Studio Talk: *Love, Love, Love - Our parents aren’t heroes*

Tuesday 31 March 2020, 6pm

Panel TBC. Hosted by Fiona Mountford.

Studio Talk: *Sophocles’ Antigone: The Burial at Thebes – Only God is above the law?*

Tuesday 12 May 2020, 6pm

Panel TBC. Hosted by Fiona Mountford

**BIOGRAPHIES**

**Studio Talk Host:**

**Fiona Mountford was theatre critic at the Evening Standard for 17 years. Also well as writing (many thousands of) reviews, she wrote feature interviews, talking to almost all of London’s leading theatre makers. She also wrote arts interviews and comment pieces for the Independent on Sunday before its sad demise. Fiona read Classics at Cambridge and has previously worked for the Daily Telegraph, Sunday Telegraph and Time Out. For the past decade she has chaired Platforms at the National Theatre with a wide range of theatre practitioners spanning actors, writers, directors and academics. She also chaired the ‘Talking Twelfth Night’ and ‘Talking Lear’ Platform series. Fiona currently hosts a range of events and talks at theatres across London. For the Southbank Centre, she chaired an in-depth Stephen Sondheim study day. She was a judge for the Peter Brook: Empty Space Awards and led workshops for students as part of Mousetrap Theatre Projects’ Play the Critic scheme.**

Studio Talk: A Doll’s House **–** Panellists:

**Anita Anand is a political journalist who has presented television and radio programmes on the BBC for twenty years. She currently presents Any Answers on Radio 4. She is the critically acclaimed author of The Patient Assassin, Sophia: Princess, Suffragette, Revolutionary and, with William Dalrymple, Koh-i-Noor: The History of the World's Most Infamous Diamond.**

**Gurminder K Bhambra is Professor of Postcolonial and Decolonial Studies in the School of Global Studies, University of Sussex. Previously, she was Professor of Sociology at the University of Warwick and also Guest Professor of Sociology and History at the Centre for Concurrences in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies, Linnaeus University, Sweden (2016-18). She has co-edited five collections, Silencing Human Rights (with Robbie Shilliam, Palgrave, 2009); 1968 in Retrospect (with Ipek Demir, Palgrave, 2009); African Athena (with Daniel Orrells and Tessa Roynon, OUP, 2011), and European Cosmopolitanisms (with John Narayan, Routledge, 2017), and Decolonising the University (with Dalia Gebrial and Kerem Nisancioglu, Pluto Press, 2018).**

**Tanika Gupta has written over 20 stage plays over the last 20 years that have been produced in major theatres across the UK and has written extensively for BBC Radio drama. Theatre credits include: Lions And Tigers (Globe Theatre. Winner of the James Tait Black Prize for Drama 2018); A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian (Hull Truck Theatre); Midsummer Night’s Dream (Globe Theatre –Dramaturg); Anita and Me (Birmingham Rep); Love N Stuff (Theatre Royal Stratford East); The Empress (Royal Shakespeare Company); Wah! Wah! Girls – A British Bollywood Musical (Sadler’s Wells); Mindwalking (Bandbazi Theatre); Great Expectations (Watford Palace Theatre/English Touring Theatre); Meet The Mukherjees (Bolton Octagon Theatre); White Boy (National Youth Theatre/Soho Theatre); Sugar Mummies (Royal Court Theatre); Gladiator Games (Sheffield Crucible Theatre); Hobson’s Choice (Young Vic); Fragile Land (Hampstead Theatre); Inside Out (Clean Break); Sanctuary, Brecht’s The Good Woman Of Setzuan and The Waiting Room (National Theatre); Skeleton (Soho Theatre); and A River Sutra (Indoza).**

**Rachel O’Riordan was appointed the Artistic Director of the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre in February 2019. Rachel was the Artistic Director and CEO of Sherman Theatre from February 2014 – February 2019. During her tenure the theatre was transformed into a vibrant, exciting and influential producing theatre, winning The Stage’s prestigious Regional Theatre of the Year Award in 2018. Her credits as a director for the theatre include: The Cherry Orchard; the Olivier award-winning Killology (with the Royal Court); Bird (with the Royal Exchange) and Iphigenia in Splott (also at the National Theatre; England tour, Edinburgh Festival, Schaubūne, Berlin and off-Broadway)**

Studio Talk: *Solaris* **–** Panellists:

Will Massa is the Curator of Contemporary Fiction in the BFI National Archive, ensuring contemporary British fiction film is comprehensively represented in the national collection. He is currently helping to pioneer a framework for the acquisition of ‘new forms’ such as VR, multimedia and VFX into the archive. He previously worked in the British Council’s Film department, at various regional screen agencies in talent development, as a film festival programmer, a project assessor and a script consultant. He currently serves on the board of Encounters Short Film and Animation Festival. Will has an MA in World Cinema from the University of Leeds and has specialist interest in short film, the relationship between ‘export cinema’ and soft power, British poetic realism, representations of class and masculinity in 90s British cinema, and the intersection between film and new technologies.

Brendan Owens is Senior Manager of Public Astronomy at the Royal Observatory.

Please note there is no Studio Talk for the Lyric’s pantomime *Cinderella*

For press enquiries please contact Armani Ur-Rub in the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre’s Press Office:

armani.ur-rub@lyric.co.uk | T: 020 8741 6822 (ext 429)

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

Twitter: @LyricHammer | Facebook: LyricHammersmith

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

Booking Information

Tickets 020 8741 6850 | [www.lyric.co.uk](http://www.lyric.co.uk)

Lyric Square, King Street, London, W6 0QL

**Coming up at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre**

**A Doll’s House**

Friday 06 September – Saturday 05 October

Mon-Sat 7.30pm

Also Weds 1.30pm and Sat at 2.30pm

Free First Night: Friday 06 September

Press Performance: Wednesday 11 September, 7pm

Open Captioned Performance: Saturday 28 December, 2.30pm

Audio Described Performance: Saturday 28 September, 7.30pm

Preview Tickets from £10 | Tickets from £15

**Also booking at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre:**

**Solaris**

Thursday 10 October - Saturday 02 November 2019

Mon-Sat 7.30pm

Also Wed at 1.30pm and Sat at 2.30pm.

Free First Night: Thursday 10 October.

Press Performance: Monday 14 October, 7pm

Open Captioned Performance: Saturday 19 October, 2.30pm

Audio Described Performance: Saturday 19 October, 7.30pm

Preview Tickets from £10 | Tickets From £15

**Cinderella**

Saturday 16 Nov 2019 ‐ Sunday 05 Jan 2020

Free First Night: Wednesday 16 November

Press Performance: Saturday 23 November, 6pm

Relaxed Performance: Wednesday 04 December, 6pm

Open Captioned Performance: Saturday 14 December, 6pm

Audio Described Performance: Wednesday 18 December, 6pm

BSL Performance: Friday 27 December, 2pm

See [**full schedule**](https://lyric.co.uk/shows/cinderella/) online for show times, Mon-Sun

Preview Tickets from £10 | Tickets from £15

**Raymond Briggs’ Father Christmas**

Wednesday 20 November – Sunday 29 December 2019

See [**full schedule**](https://lyric.co.uk/shows/little-lyric/father-christmas/) online

Tickets: from £10. No booking fee.

**Love, Love, Love**

Thursday 05 March – Saturday 04 April 2020

Mon-Sat 7.30pm

Also Wed at 1.30pm and Sat at 2.30pm.

Free First Night: Thursday 05 March.

Press Performance: Wednesday 11 March, 7pm

Audio Described Performance: Saturday 28 March, 7.30pm

Open Captioned Performance: Saturday 28 March, 2.30pm

Preview Tickets: From £10 | Tickets From £15

**Sophocles’ Antigone: The Burial at Thebes**

Saturday 18 April – Saturday 16 May 2020

Mon-Sat 7.30pm

Also Wed at 1.30pm and Sat at 2.30pm.

Free First Night: Saturday 18 April.

Press Performance: Thursday 23 April, 7pm

Audio Described Performance: Saturday 09 May, 7.30pm

Open Captioned Performance: Saturday 09 May, 2.30pm

Preview Tickets: From £10 | Tickets: From £15

**In the West End**

**Noises Off**

Friday 27 September – Saturday 04 January 2020

Mon – Sat 7.30pm

Also Sat and Wed at 2.30pm

Press Performance: Thursday 03 October

Captioned Performance: Mon 11 November, 7.30pm

Audio Described Performance, Tue 26 November, 7.30pm

[**Find out more**](https://lyric.co.uk/shows/noises-off-at-the-garrick-theatre/)

**Ghost Stories**

Thursday 03 October – Saturday 04 January 2020

Mon – Thurs 7.30pm

Friday 7pm & 9.30pm

Saturday 2.30pm

Press Performance: Wednesday 09 October, 7.30pm

[**Find out more**](https://lyric.co.uk/shows/ghost-stories-at-the-ambassadors-theatre/)

**About the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre**

The Lyric Hammersmith Theatre is one of the UK's leading producing theatres; creating world class theatre from the heart of Hammersmith, the theatre’s home for more than a hundred and twenty years.

The Lyric has two stages – a Frank Matcham designed traditional Victorian Main House and a flexible contemporary Studio theatre. The theatre’s Reuben Foundation Wing, which opened in 2015, houses state-of-the-art creation and arts education facilities for theatre, dance, film, digital and music.

At the heart of the Lyric is a commitment to young people’s creativity. The theatre has gained a national reputation for its ground breaking work to forge pathways into the arts for young talent from all backgrounds, helping to diversify our industry.  Central to the Lyric’s work is a commitment to providing opportunities for children and young people who are disadvantaged. The Lyric is the largest creative hub in West London and home to an innovative partnership of arts organisations who work together to deliver life-changing creative opportunities for thousands of young West Londoners.

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

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