Monday 23 November, 11am

**Raymond Briggs’ *Father Christmas* returns digitally
to bring festive joy to all**

Today Lyric Hammersmith Theatre is delighted to announce the return of Raymond Briggs’ Father Christmas, adapted by Pins and Needles. This production has given children and families festive joy at the Lyric for the last eight years and this year will be making a very special return in a digital partnership with the Oxford Playhouse, Tobacco Factory Theatres Bristol and Wales Millennium Centre.

Audiences from all four venues will be able to purchase a ticket to access a high quality digital recording of the production, available to view from Wednesday 09 December until Thursday 24 December 2020. Tickets will be available from £10, with all the venues providing free tickets to selected local outreach and community groups that they work with.

From the comfort of their home audiences will be able to watch Briggs’ grumpy but loveable Father Christmas as he gets ready for his busiest day of the year, Christmas Eve. Preparing his Christmas deliveries, feeding his reindeer and finally taking flight into the snowy night. Full of merry touches with plenty of live music, songs and playful puppetry. This is a perfect festive treat for under 8s and their families.

**Rachel O’Riordan, Artistic Director, Lyric Hammersmith Theatre** said: “It means so much to us to be able to offer our audiences Raymond Briggs’ Father Christmas this year and to be able to share this bloomin’ marvellous production with our partner venues. This has been a challenging year for all of us, but it is through innovative and collaborative partnerships such as this that together we will ensure we return stronger and continue to deliver the magic of theatre to our communities.”

**Louise Chantal & Vanessa Lefrançois, Joint Directors/CEO, Oxford Playhouse** said: “Oxford Playhouse is thrilled to continue our tradition of presenting a special Christmas show for young children, even if this year we’ve moved online and out of our Burton-Taylor Studio! Raymond Briggs’ Father Christmas is a truly magical show for little ones which can be safely enjoyed in the comfort of home.”

**Mike Tweddle, Artistic Director, Tobacco Factory Theatres Bristol** said: “Pins and Needles are a much-loved and respected Bristol company with outstanding instincts for theatrical invention and magical storytelling. We were collaborating with them on a bold new co-production for this Christmas, before the world changed! So we couldn’t be happier to be joining forces with them and co-producers the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre on this innovative, world-class offering of family theatre, specially reimagined and filmed for audiences at home.”

**Graeme Farrow, Artistic Director, Wales Millennium Centre** said: “We were determined to give our audiences in Wales a taste this year of the magical festive performances they’ve come to expect from us, whatever the circumstances. So we’re absolutely delighted and proud to present Lyric Hammersmith Theatre and Pins and Needles’ production of Raymond Briggs’ Father Christmas, which we know is a festive tale enjoyed by many families at this time of year.”

CREATIVES

Based on the Book by Raymond Briggs
Published by Puffin Books
Adapted by Pins and Needles
Directed by Emma Earle
Associate Director Eva Sampson
Design by Zoe Squire
Lighting by George Ogilvie
Music and Sound by Lucy Rivers
Puppet Designer Max Humphries
Assistant Director Hannah Drake
Dramaturg Adam Peck

**For further information, please contact** **amy.belson@lyric.co.uk** **/ 078 4348 3146**

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**Booking Information**

Tickets at all venues: All tickets provide the same view and experience of the show

Standard ticket: £10
This gives you access to the streaming of Raymond Briggs’ Father Christmas from 09 – 24 Dec

Family/group ticket: £15
If you are viewing the show with multiple people in your household and are able to do so please consider purchasing a family ticket

To book with the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre: [www.lyric.co.uk](http://www.lyric.co.uk)
On sale from Monday 23 November, 11am

To book with the Oxford Playhouse: [www.oxfordplayhouse.com](http://www.oxfordplayhouse.com)
Priority booking from Monday 23 November, 11am
On public sale from Tuesday 24 November

To book with Tobacco Factory Theatres Bristol: [www.tobaccofactorytheatres.com/](http://www.tobaccofactorytheatres.com/)
On sale from Monday 23 November, 11am

To book with the Wales Millennium Centre: [www.wmc.org.uk](https://www.wmc.org.uk/)
Priority booking from Friday 27 November, 8.30am
On public sale from Friday 04 December, 8.30am

**Lyric Hammersmith Theatre** has created some of the UK’s most adventurous and acclaimed theatrical work it its 125 year history. Under the joint leadership of Artistic Director Rachel O’Riordan and Executive Director Sian Alexander, the Lyric’s 2019/2020 programme of reimagined classics, contemporary plays and bold new works celebrated its unique Matcham theatre. At the heart of the Lyric is a commitment to young people’s creativity. The theatre has a national reputation for its ground-breaking work to forge pathways into the arts for young talent. The theatre is West London’s largest creative hub 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](http://www.lyric.co.uk)

Lyric Hammersmith Theatre is a registered charity, no. 278518.

In more "usual" times, **Oxford Playhouse**, is one of the country's leading regional theatres, programmes its 640-seat mainstage, 50-seat studio and works across the city under the banner of its offsite programme Playhouse Plays Out.   Its work revolves around its vision to be a theatre for everyone and mission to present inspirational performance as a leading cultural institution for Oxfordshire and beyond.  Since March 2020, OP has stayed connected to its audiences and communities by delivering creative and innovative projects and events online and digitally, through its lockdown Playhouse at Home programme and the Autumn live and streamed season of work.  The team continues to work with its community partners including Oxford Association for the Blind, Age UK and Be Free Young Carers to name a few. Find out more about their work at [www.oxfordplayhouse.com](http://www.oxfordplayhouse.com)

**Tobacco Factory Theatres** is delighted to be in digital partnership with Pins and Needles, the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, Oxford Playhouse and Wales Millennium Centre to bring Raymond Briggs’ Father Christmas to audiences at home this Christmas. Tobacco Factory Theatres is an (almost) 20-year-old theatre venue rooted in its South Bristol community, presenting the best touring work and outstanding in-house productions. It provides a welcoming home for creative adventures and human connection, for incredible theatre and opportunities to learn and exchange ideas. For more information: [www.tobaccofactorytheatres.com](http://www.tobaccofactorytheatres.com) / Twitter @tftheatres / Facebook & Instagram tobaccofactorytheatres

Tobacco Factory Theatres is a registered charity, no. 1097542.

**Wales Millennium Centre** is a landmark arts venue and cultural destination that presents the best touring talent from across the globe, and creates its own, award-winning productions. WMC is also a charity creating inspirational and life-changing experiences that broaden horizons. The cornerstone of Wales Millennium Centre’s production schedule is its annual Festival of Voice; an international arts festival showcasing all the voice can do and immersing its audience in the incredible talents of artists from across the globe. For further information, please visit: [wmc.org.uk](http://www.wmc.org.uk/)

Wales Millennium Centre is a registered charity, no. 1060458.