

Image Release

Monday 09 September 2024

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## PRODUCTION IMAGES RELEASED *OUR COUNTRY'S GOOD* AT THE LYRIC HAMMERSMITH THEATRE



Lyric Hammersmith Theatre today releases a first look at the production of Timberlake Wertenbaker's Olivier Award-winning classic *Our Country's Good*, directed by Artistic Director Rachel O'Riordan.

This brand new Lyric production marks the eagerly awaited UK revival of the modern classic based on the extraordinary true story of Australia's first penal colony. Timberlake Wertenbaker revisits her seminal play, collaborating with consultant **Ian Michael**, to honor the voice and history of Australia's First Nations People.

The poignant and timely revival continues Rachel O'Riordan's 2024 programming and continues productions she has helped at the Lyric, including the recent critically-acclaimed productions of *Faith Healer* and *Iphigenia in Splott* (Lyric Hammersmith Theatre), of which the latter was voted as *The Guardian's* top theatre show of 2022.

With deportation as punishment more relevant than ever before, *Our Country's Good* takes on new meaning in 2024, playing at the Lyric until **05 October** with **press night** on **11 September**.

Starring in the production are **Catrin Aaron** (*Richard III, Romeo and Julie*) as Liz Morden/Lieutenant Will Dawes, **Jack Bardoe** (*Love Labour's Lost, A Voyage Round My Father*) as John Arscott/Harry Brewer/Captain Jemmy Campbell, **Ruby Bentall** (*The Rubenstein Kiss, Ramona Tells Jim*) as Mary Brenham/Reverend Johnson/Meg Long, **Nick Fletcher** (*Minority Report, The Crucible*) as Robert Sideway/Captain David Collins, **Olivier Huband** (*The Duchess of Malfi, Mission Impossible: Fallout*) as Caesar/Captain Watkin Tench, **Harry Kershaw** (*Fanny, Peter Pan Goes Wrong*) as John Wisehammer/Captain Arthur Phillip, **Finbar Lynch** (*The Deep Blue Sea, Hamlet*) as Ketch Freeman/Major Robbie Ross, **Simon Manyonda** (*The Crucible, Word-Play*) as Second Lieutenant Ralph Clarke, **Naarah** (*The Sunshine Club, The Sapphires*) as Killara, **Aliyah Odoffin** (*Sleepova, Everything I Know About Love*) as Duckling Smith/Lieutenant George Johnston, and **Nicola Stephenson** (*The Empress, War Horse*) as Dabby Bryant/Second Lieutenant William Faddy.

*"Spewed from our country, forgotten, bound to the dark edge of the earth..."*

*Thomas Barrett: Transported seven years for stealing one ewe sheep.*

*James Freeman: Transported 14 years for assault on a sailor.*

*Dorothy Handland: Stole a Biscuit.*

*A ship, sailing 15,000 miles to Australia, is crammed with Britain's convicts – a punishment for their crimes. After a life-threatening voyage they arrive in 1788. But keeping the colony disciplined is a brutal job, and cruelty is rife. To keep the convicts in line and attempt to 'civilise' this often desperate, violent, poverty stricken group, a young ambitious lieutenant, Ralph Clark, decides they should perform a play.*

*With a mostly illiterate cast, rising mistrust amongst the ranks, and the leading actor facing the gallows, this is a one of a kind theatre production...*

*Our Country's Good* has Set & Costume Design by **Gary McCann**, Lighting Design by **Paul Keogan**, Sound Design by **Gregory Clarke**, Music by **Holly Khan**, Cultural Consulting by **Ian Michael**, Casting by **Isabella Odoffin CDG**, Casting Assisting by **Joanna Sturrock**, Fight & Intimacy Direction by **Bethan Clark**, Dialect and Voice Coaching by **Joel Trill**, Assistant Direction by **Harper K. Hefferon**.

- ENDS -

Press contact at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre:  
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## Notes to Editors

IMAGES available to download [here](#).

Production image credits © Marc Brenner

## ABOUT THE LYRIC HAMMERSMITH THEATRE

The Lyric Hammersmith Theatre produces bold and relevant world-class theatre from the heart of Hammersmith, the theatre's home for nearly 130 years. Under the leadership of its joint CEOs, Artistic Director Rachel O'Riordan and Executive Director Amy Belson, it is committed to being vital to, and representative of, the local community. A major force in London and UK theatre, the Lyric produces adventurous and acclaimed theatrical work that tells the stories that matter.

The Lyric Hammersmith Theatre has a national reputation for ground-breaking work to develop and nurture the next generation of talent, providing opportunities for young people to discover the power of creativity and to experience the life changing impact of theatre.

We are the creative heart of Hammersmith, proud of our history and ambitious for our future.

## Listings

Lyric Hammersmith Theatre  
Lyric Square, King Street, London, W6 0QL  
Tickets from £10  
Box office: 020 8741 6850  
[www.lyric.co.uk](http://www.lyric.co.uk)

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A Lyric Hammersmith Theatre Production

*Our Country's Good*

Written by **Timberlake Wertenbaker**

Based on the novel *The Playmaker* by **Thomas Keneally**

Directed by **Rachel O'Riordan**

Set & Costume Design by **Gary McCann**

Lighting Design by **Paul Keogan**

Sound Design by **Gregory Clarke**

Music by **Holly Khan**

Cultural Consulting by **Ian Michael**

Casting by **Isabella Odoffin CDG**  
Casting Assisting by **Joanna Sturrock**  
Fight & Intimacy Direction by **Bethan Clark**  
Dialect and Voice Coaching by **Joel Trill**  
Assistant Direction by **Harper K. Hefferon**

**Dates:** Playing until Saturday 05 October 2024

**Press Night:** Wednesday 11 September, 7pm

**Audio Described Performance:** Saturday 28 September, 2.30pm

**BSL Performance:** Monday 30 September, 7.30pm

**Open Captioned Performance:** Thursday 19 September, 7.30pm

**Chilled Environment Performance:** Saturday 21 September, 2.30pm