



Press Release

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CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD [IMAGES OF RACHEL O'RIORDAN](#)

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ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF THE LYRIC HAMMERSMITH THEATRE RACHEL O'RIORDAN ANNOUNCES HER 2027 SEASON

- **Directors** at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre in Rachel O'Riordan's 2027 season include **Sarah Frankcom**, **Tom Jackson Greaves**, **Rufus Norris**, **Monique Touko** and **Roy Alexander Weise**.
- **Writers, adaptors and authors** include **Graeme Armstrong**, **Jocelyn Bioh**, **Inua Ellams**, **Kieran Hurley**, **Shirley Jackson**, **Toshikazu Kawaguchi**, **Timothy Allen McDonald**, **Alistair McDowall**, **Conor McPherson**, **Jodi Picoult**, **Stewart Pringle** and **Markus Zusak**.
- **Rufus Norris** directs in London for the first time since leaving his post as Artistic Director of the National Theatre with **Stewart Pringle's *Brock's Mill***, a **Royal Shakespeare Company** production in association with the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre.
- As previously announced and back by popular demand, the sell-out Tony Award-Winning ***Jaja's African Hair Braiding*** returns to the Lyric, from **Jocelyn Bioh** and **Monique Touko**, the team behind smash hit *School Girls; Or, the African Mean Girls Play*.
- Olivier and Tony Award-nominated **Conor McPherson** (*The Weir*) adapts **Toshikazu Kawaguchi's** internationally bestselling novel ***Before the Coffee Gets Cold*** in a **World Premiere** production.
- Lyric Artistic Director **Rachel O'Riordan** directs **Kieran Hurley's** (*Heads Up, Beats*) adaptation of **Graeme Armstrong's** best-selling and award-winning debut novel ***The Young Team***, a searing exploration of love, loyalty and tribalism in a co-production with the **National Theatre of Scotland**.
- **Sarah Frankcom**, former Artistic Director of the Royal Exchange in Manchester, directs **Alistair McDowall's** (*The Glow, all of it*) new adaptation of **Shirley Jackson's** seminal final novel ***We Have Always Lived in the Castle***.
- **Fuel** (*Nowhere, Touching The Void*) presents the award-winning gripping family drama ***Once Upon a Time in Sokoto*** at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, by

internationally acclaimed poet and playwright **Inua Ellams** (*Barber Shop Chronicles*) and directed by **Roy Alexander Weise** (*Nine Night*).

- The musical adaptation of **Markus Zusak's** bestselling novel ***The Book Thief*** has its London Premiere, adapted by renowned author **Jodi Picoult** (*My Sister's Keeper*) and award-winning playwright **Timothy Allen McDonald** (*Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka, The Musical*), with music and lyrics from **Elyssa Samsel** and **Kate Anderson** and direction from **Tom Jackson Greaves** (*FAME The Musical*).
- Hackney Showroom and the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre join forces to launch a new residency which sees Hackney Showroom take over the Lyric's Studio Theatre as a new home for innovative, genre-defying, risk-embracing theatre.
- **TICKETS ON SALE FROM 10AM TUESDAY 27 OCTOBER AT LYRIC.CO.UK**

Lyric Hammersmith Theatre Artistic Director Rachel O'Riordan has today announced her 2027 season, bringing together world-class directors and writers from across the UK and the world with a year's worth of programme. With **three World Premieres, three London Premieres** and a **returning smash hit**, this new season showcases bold storytelling from a wide range of artists across a rich diversity of form. From musicals, to stage adaptations, to animation, to new classics, this season reaches across the world while remaining firmly rooted in West London and its local communities.

Rachel O'Riordan, Artistic Director of the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, said: *"This 2027 season at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre is a statement of intent: a big, bold celebration of our audience and the artists who make such incredible work here. Three World Premieres, three London Premieres and one returning favourite, this year of incredible work represents the Lyric's eclectic, imaginative, ambitious spirit."*

New plays are the lifeblood of theatre and this year we are proudly sharing six major new works, including Stewart Pringle's innovative Brock's Mill and Inua Ellams's Once Upon a Time in Sokoto. Adaptations of much loved novels, both contemporary and classic, are a vibrant part of our programme. These stories have moved, delighted and challenged readers on the page; now we look at them again on-stage, reimagined by exceptional artists. Conor McPherson adapts global sensation Before the Coffee Gets Cold; we present the London premiere of the musical based on the beloved bestseller The Book Thief; and Alistair McDowall brings Shirley Jackson's iconic We Have Always Lived in the Castle to life. Sarah Frankcom will direct this World Premiere production, who joins the extraordinary group of directors whose work will appear on our stage in 2027: Monique Touko, Roy Alexander Weise, Tom Jackson Greaves and Rufus Norris, with his first London show since his tenure at the NT. We cannot wait to welcome them and their work to West London next year.

Personally, I am so proud to be directing Kieran Hurley's stage version of The Young Team by Graeme Armstrong. The novel is a cultural phenomenon - heartbreaking, vital and hilarious - and I cannot wait to bring this new version to audiences in Scotland and London in partnership with National Theatre of Scotland.

Partnership is at the heart of this season. I am so pleased to be working with NTS, RSC. Fuel, Melting Pot, Deus Ex Machina Productions and more. In addition, we are introducing a brand-new creative partnership with the powerhouse Hackney Showrooms. Watch this space for cutting edge new work in our Studio throughout 2027.

We can't wait to welcome you. Come in and be moved, thrilled, entertained and delighted. "

The Tony Award-winning ***Jaja's African Hair Braiding***, which ran to critical acclaim at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre in 2026 is remounted, driven by powerhouse director-writer duo **Monique Touko** (*Wedding Band*; *Marie and Rosetta*) and **Jocelyn Bioh** (*The Ladykillers Love Story*; *Nollywood Dreams*), the team behind smash hit *School Girls; Or, the African Mean Girls Play*.

Internationally acclaimed poet and playwright **Inua Ellams'** (*Barber Shop Chronicles*) ***Once Upon a Time in Sokoto*** has its London Premiere at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre. **Roy Alexander Weise** (*Nine Night, Hot Wing King*) directs this Alfred Fagon Award-winning epic story about the beautiful but unlikely friendship forged between an enslaved woman and her former master, produced by **Fuel**.

In association with the **Royal Shakespeare Company**, **Stewart Pringle's** (*The Bounds, Trestle*) ***Brock's Mill*** brings former National Theatre Artistic Director **Rufus Norris** back to direct in London for the first time since leaving his post. *Brock's Mill* is a poignant new family drama and a love letter to the craft of stop-motion film-making.

Toshikazu Kawaguchi's international bestselling novel ***Before the Coffee Gets Cold*** is adapted for the stage by **Conor McPherson** (*The Weir*), transporting the iconic time-travelling Funiculi Funicula to London. *Before the Coffee Gets Cold* began its life as a play, before it was adapted into the hit novel, so this production returns Kawaguchi's modern classic to its original form in this brand new adaptation.

The critically acclaimed musical adaptation of **Markus Zusak's** global hit ***The Book Thief*** has its London premiere, with music and lyrics from **Elyssa Samsel** and **Kate Anderson**, libretto by internationally renowned author **Jodi Picoult** (*My Sister's Keeper*) and award-winning playwright **Timothy Allen McDonald** (*Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka, The Musical*), and directed by **Tom Jackson Greaves** (*FAME The Musical*).

Graeme Armstrong's ground-breaking, bestselling debut novel ***The Young Team*** is adapted by **Kieran Hurley** (*Beats*) in a searing world premiere production which brings this cultural phenomenon to the stage for the first time, directed by Lyric Hammersmith Theatre Artistic Director **Rachel O'Riordan** in co-production with the **National Theatre of Scotland**.

Alistair McDowall (*all of it, The Glow*), adapts **Shirley Jackson's** seminal gothic thriller and final novel ***We Have Always Lived in the Castle***, directed by **Sarah Frankcom** in a world premiere production about the social and psychological implications of societal ostracisation and family tragedy on two sisters.

Tickets for the season are on-sale now at www.lyric.co.uk starting from £10.

Also announced today is a brand new partnership as **Hackney Showroom** and the **Lyric Hammersmith Theatre** join forces to launch a major new residency which sees Hackney Showroom take over the Lyric's Studio Theatre with two world premieres (to be announced) and a festival, creating a new home for innovative, genre-defying, risk-embracing theatre. The festival - **NICE PAIR** - will present, from an open call, four double acts to create original work in collaboration with **Hackney Showroom's** artistic team. Each pair will receive a fee of £6,000, work with an exceptional creative team and have their show presented for a week's run at the festival running from **8-20 March 2027**. The open call will be live from **27 October 2026 to 29 November 2026, 5:00pm**.

Sam Curtis Lindsay & Nina Lyndon, Co-Artistic Directors of Hackney Showroom said: "We're thrilled to be launching our next decade with an ambitious new partnership with the esteemed Lyric Hammersmith Theatre. Hackney Showroom has spent our first decade

turning innovation and risk into success and when we spoke to Rachel at the Lyric, we knew immediately we shared a vision for the future of theatre. This residency will be a continuation of the work we've done over the past decade: championing new theatre talent with our festival NICE PAIR and making epic shows with groundbreaking artists that wow and delight audiences."

SHOW BY SHOW

A Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, Madison Wells Live and Chase This Productions co-production

Jaja's African Hair Braiding

By Jocelyn Bioh

Directed by Monique Touko

Wednesday 20 January - Saturday 27 February 2027

Press night: Tuesday 02 February, 7pm

'Are we making money today or what?'

Welcome to Jaja's! This bustling Harlem braiding salon is where neighbourhood women come to have their greatest hairstyle dreams come true, all in the hands of a lively group of West African immigrant braiders.

Across one hot summer's day, these women experience everything in the pressure cooker of the sweltering shop: from demanding customers to secrets and lies, laughter and betrayal. But each of these women has big dreams as well, dreams which increasingly pit them against the city they call home.

Following its sold-out run in 2026, the UK premiere production of this Tony Award-winning comedy returns to the Lyric in 2027, reuniting the team behind smash-hit *School Girls; Or, The African Mean Girls Play* in writer **Jocelyn Bioh** and director **Monique Touko**.

Writer **Jocelyn Bioh** said: *"Words cannot begin to describe how thrilled I am that Jaja's African Hair Braiding will be re-opening its shop doors once again at the Lyric Hammersmith! Under the stunning direction of my dear collaborator, Monique Touko, I was so moved by how much U.K. audiences embraced the play with so much love and admiration. In many ways, Jaja's is about the power of community and I'm honored to feel like I am now a part of this beautiful U.K. theatre community."*

Director **Monique Touko** said: *"Jaja's African Hair Braiding is back by popular demand. It was an absolute honour to stage the UK premiere of Jocelyn Bioh's smash hit and welcome UK audiences into the shop earlier this year. To be back in such quick succession and re-engaging with audiences again is something I don't take for granted, and I truly appreciate all the love and support that has already been expressed for the show. Round two at Lyric Hammersmith is testament to the work and its power to unite and represent. Everyone is welcome back again to 2019's Harlem to listen, learn and laugh."*

Fuel presents

Once Upon a Time in Sokoto

By Inua Ellams

Directed by Roy Alexander Weise

Tuesday 13 April - Saturday 08 May 2027

Press night: Friday 16 April, 7pm

"There are powers that bind the world together, softer than spirits yet stronger than stone, that tie the river to the tree, the tree to rain clouds, rain clouds to the land, and people to each other."

The award-winning *Once Upon a Time in Sokoto* tells the epic story of a beautiful but unlikely friendship forged between an enslaved woman and her former master. Differences in faith, culture and heritage are overcome in the face of new enemies, in a gripping family drama set against the backdrop of events leading to the creation of Nigeria.

Winner of the 2024 Alfred Fagon Award for *Once Upon a Time in Sokoto*, Nigeria-born Inua Ellams is an internationally celebrated poet, playwright, and artist. He has published four poetry collections, and his plays include the hugely popular and critically acclaimed *Barber Shop Chronicles* (Fuel/National Theatre, UK and International tour) and the award-winning *The 14th Tale* (Fuel/UK tour) and his retelling of *Three Sisters* (Fuel/National Theatre).

Writer **Inua Ellams** said, *"I'm really excited that Once Upon a Time in Sokoto is coming home to London, where so many of the women who helped shape the story live; I've been dying to show them what we made and the Lyric is a perfect, perfect space."*

Director **Roy Alexander Weise** said, *"This play is an important part of Nigerian history and African history but it is also British history and world history. To be able to make more stops around the country shedding light through this epic story is a gift; to see auditoriums filled with ecstatic and diverse audiences celebrating a lost African civilisation is a blessing."*

I've not had a show on in our capital city since The Hot Wing King in 2024 and I'm buzzing to get back, to give audiences something fresh and to raise the roof with my communities. There may be tears. There will be laughter. And certainly loads to think and talk about."

The Royal Shakespeare Company in association with the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre presents

Brock's Mill

By Stewart Pringle

Directed by Rufus Norris

Thursday 13 May - Saturday 05 June 2027

Press night: Tuesday 18 May, 7pm

'Please don't do that. Address anything difficult to a stuffed animal.'

Forty years ago, Bluebell Studios was the heartbeat to a nation's childhood, the home-workshop where Bernard painstakingly animated the inanimate, bringing iconic children's television to life, frame by careful frame. His wife Annie sewed the costumes – waistcoats for badgers, a hat for Mirabel the tortoise – while their daughter May played out in the sunshine.

Or maybe that's just how Bernard remembers it.

These days, the workshop is a mausoleum to his career in make-believe. In the rafters, a homespun puppet slumps in enforced hibernation. Shelves are stuffed with armatures, old scripts, boxes, dusty books, models. Bernard's alone, his life in aspic – but soon, the past will have to be unpacked. Because May is all grown up, and she has questions.

A reckoning is coming.

Former Artistic Director and Chief Executive of the National Theatre, **Rufus Norris** directs RSC Writer-in-Residence **Stewart Pringle's** acutely observed, poignant new family drama in *The Other Place*. A homage to the craft of stop-motion film-making and an exploration of the

corrosive power of nostalgia, Brock's Mill investigates the ownership of memory and the importance of being present.

Director **Rufus Norris** said, *"I'm very excited to be working with Stewart on his play for the RSC, and doubly so because it will be coming to the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre. Brock's Mill is a rich, complex beauty of a play, will breathe perfectly in that wonderful house, and I look forward very much to sharing it with the audience there; it's a fantastic theatre that I have enjoyed countless times, and to be finally bringing work here is a privilege."*

Writer **Stewart Pringle** said, *"I'm so delighted that Mr Brock will be travelling to London after his time in Stratford, and it's a massive honour to have it at the beautiful Lyric where I have had so many of my very best nights in the theatre. I've been coming to the Lyric since my very first week living in London back in 2010, and it's just gone from strength to strength. Being part of what Rachel, Matthew and their team are bringing to it means the world. Brock's Mill is a strange and haunted sort of play, about time and craft and the sacrifices we make to tell stories, and I can't wait to share it with London audiences."*

A Lyric Hammersmith Theatre production

Before the Coffee Gets Cold

By Conor McPherson

Adapted from the novel by Toshikazu Kawaguchi

Thursday 17 June - Saturday 17 July 2027

Press night: Wednesday 23 June, 7pm

'Even if nothing changes and everything stays the way it is. I still want to go back.'

In many ways the Funiculi Funicula is a café like any other. It has regulars, like Mr Owen, sitting quietly and flicking through his magazines; it has waitresses, like Freya, who always pours the coffee when it's nice and fresh; and it has Nicholas, the café owner who is used to managing the varied demands of locals and tourists alike.

But it also has rules.

Rule one: there's a single seat that allows you to travel in time. Rule two: while you're travelling you cannot move from that seat. And rule number three: you must return to the present before your coffee gets cold.

Based on the bestselling novel by **Toshikazu Kawaguchi**, this major new adaptation by **Conor McPherson** (*The Weir*, *The Brightening Air*) brings this beloved story to the UK stage for the first time.

In association with Melting Pot, Gail Berman/SK Global, and Lombardo & Zell Productions.

Writer **Conor McPherson** said, *"It's been a genuine privilege to adapt Toshikazu Kawaguchi's moving, funny, and deeply human novel for the stage. I'm tremendously excited to share this magical story with audiences at the Lyric very soon."*

Toshikazu Kawaguchi, author of *Before The Coffee Gets Cold*, said: *"My story began its life as a play, in a small Tokyo theatre. I could never have dreamed then that, years later, Before the Coffee Gets Cold would become a novel that millions of people would read. It's a story about regret, redemption and learning to live with the choices we make, and the ones we didn't. And now it is set to begin a new life, again as a play, in a reimagining by Conor McPherson, on the stage at the Lyric, I couldn't be more excited and more thankful to Conor and the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre for bringing my story to life for theatre audiences in London."*

A Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, DEM Productions, and Writers' Cage co-production with Andrew Paradis, in association with Bethany Cooper Productions, and based on the original Octagon Theatre Bolton production

The Book Thief

Music and lyrics by Elyssa Samsel and Kate Anderson

Libretto by Jodi Picoult and Timothy Allen McDonald

Based on the novel by Markus Zusak

Directed by Tom Jackson Greaves

Originally directed by Lotte Wakeham

Saturday 24 July - Saturday 28 August 2027

Press night: Friday 30 July, 7pm

The Acclaimed Musical Based On The Global Bestseller

Germany, 1940, and Death is busier than ever. Having carried away more souls than they can count, they yearn for a story that renews their faith in humanity.

That story belongs to Liesel Meminger, twelve years old and unafraid to take what matters: a book she lifts from a gravedigger's pocket at her brother's graveside, another she snatches from the flames of the bonfire in the town square.

But these are dangerous times. Down in the cellar, her foster family is hiding Max, a Jewish boxer. He teaches Liesel the power of words, inspiring her to pick up a pen, determined to prove that human existence is worthwhile.

With a libretto by bestselling author **Jodi Picoult** (*My Sister's Keeper*) and **Timothy Allen McDonald** (*Roald Dahl's James and the Giant Peach*), and a soaring score by **Elyssa Samsel** and **Kate Anderson** (Apple TV's *Central Park*), *The Book Thief* transforms **Markus Zusak's** modern classic into "a show that will steal your heart" (WhatsOnStage ★★★★★), directed by **Tom Jackson Greaves** (*FAME The Musical*).

Director **Tom Jackson Greaves** said, *"I am thrilled to be leading this incredible musical into its next chapter, alongside our brilliant writers and creative team. It's a story that needs to be heard now more than ever and I cannot wait for a London audience to experience it."*

Writers **Jodi Picoult** and **Tim McDonald** said, *"We couldn't be prouder to present this new, gorgeous incarnation of The Book Thief in London. As Americans, we are very much aware of how quickly fascism can take hold of a country — this show is the right story, at exactly the right time."*

Elyssa Samsel and **Kate Anderson**, Lyrics and Music, said, *"We are so excited to bring this score back to life on stage, with some new songs that have grown and changed with the show's evolution."*

Markus Zusak, author of *The Book Thief*, said, *"What a beautiful theatre for The Book Thief to be playing in. I can't wait to see it come to life."*

A Lyric Hammersmith Theatre and National Theatre of Scotland co-production

The Young Team

By Kieran Hurley

Adapted from the novel by Graeme Armstrong

Directed by Rachel O'Riordan

Tuesday 31 August - Saturday 25 September 2027

Press night: Friday 03 September, 7pm

'You're loyal Azzy Williams. You're loyal to your mates. That's good. You'll no be runnin about wae that lot forever but, surely?'

Welcome to Scotland in 2005.

For Azzy, born and bred in North Lanarkshire, the Young Team Posse (YTP) seems to promise everything he could possibly want: excitement, community, freedom. It's where boys become men, and he's hungry to grow up.

Soon he's rising up the ranks, showing the world what he's made of. It's fast, furious – and dangerous. Is the Young Team where Azzy belongs, or just where he's ended up? Either way, the YTP is for life. Getting in is easy, not so finding a way back out...

Based on the award-winning novel by **Graeme Armstrong**, this searing new adaptation by **Kieran Hurley** (*Beats*) is directed by Artistic Director **Rachel O'Riordan** (*Iphigenia in Splott*, *The Children*), in a co-production with National Theatre of Scotland.

The Young Team has also been adapted for television, with a six-part series currently being filmed for BBC iPlayer, BBC One and BBC Scotland, produced by BAFTA winning and EMMY nominated Synchronicity Films (*The Tattooist of Auschwitz*, *Mayflies*, *The Cry*), in association with FOX Entertainment Global and Screen Scotland.

Writer **Kieran Hurley** said, *"I'm thrilled to be working with Rachel O'Riordan to create the stage adaptation of The Young Team for the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre and the National Theatre of Scotland. Graeme's brilliant novel is a powerful example of the epic stories that unfold in ordinary people's lives, and it has been an honour to be allowed to spend time living in its world. As well as an uncompromising and brutally honest account of violence and gang life, it's really a wonderful story of young male friendship, its loyalty, rivalry, and surprising tenderness. I can't wait to see Azzy Williams take over the Lyric's stage, bringing these uniquely Scottish voices into the room, and for audiences to feel the pull of the Young Team: the love and allegiances that bind these boys together, and the damage and hurt they inflict and endure. I hope it will move and provoke, and ultimately open a conversation about our young men and their vital, dangerous, and often unrequited search for recognition and belonging."*

Graeme Armstrong, author of *The Young Team*, said, *"I'm excited to see The Young Team adapted for stage and look forward to working with both Rachel and Kieran to bring the complex world of Scottish territorial violence to a new audience, particularly those who may have never seen their lives or communities depicted in a theatrical production before."*

Director **Rachel O'Riordan** said, *"I'm thrilled to be bringing Graeme Armstrong's phenomenal book The Young Team to the stage, in an electric new adaptation by Kieran Hurley. Set against the backdrop of early 2000s Scotland, audiences can expect a raw and compelling story of loyalty, camaraderie and territory. There is love, and there is violence. There is music, girls and the charged prospect of becoming a man. I'm delighted to be partnering with the National Theatre of Scotland to bring it to audiences in Scotland and London."*

A Lyric Hammersmith Theatre production

We Have Always Lived in the Castle

By Alistair McDowall

Adapted from the novel by Shirley Jackson

Directed by Sarah Frankcom

Thursday 07 October - Saturday 06 November 2027

Press night: Wednesday 13 October, 7pm

"I have often thought that with any luck at all I could have been born a werewolf, because the middle two fingers on both my hands are the same length.

I dislike washing myself, and dogs, and noise. I like my sister Constance, Richard Plantagenet, and Amanita phalloides, the death-cup mushroom. Everyone else in my family is dead."

There once were seven Blackwoods. Now there are only three.

Agoraphobic Constance, bewildered Uncle Julian, and resourceful eighteen-year-old Merricat live in peaceful isolation, Merricat's powerful "web of protection" keeping the house safe from the enemies beyond the garden gate.

For six years Merricat has kept the outside world at bay, but now Cousin Charles has come to stay, having heard rumours of a hidden Blackwood fortune...

Based on the classic psychological horror novel by Shirley Jackson (*The Haunting of Hill House*), this thrilling new adaptation by Alistair McDowall (*Pomona; all of it*) is directed by Sarah Frankcom (*Fun Home; The Last Stand of Mrs. Mary Whitehouse*).

Writer **Alistair McDowall** said, *"From the very first time I read Shirley Jackson's novel I knew I wanted to collaborate with it - I've harboured that wish for nearly a decade. I'm delighted and terrified to have been given the chance to bring her masterpiece to the stage."*

Director **Sarah Frankcom** said, *"I'm a lifelong fan of Shirley Jackson's writing and particularly of her final masterpiece We Have Always Lived In the Castle. From the first moment I read it, I fell in love with Merricat, the most fearless and unreliable of narrators and was completely bewitched by the world she conjures. The Lyric feels the perfect space to bring this story to life and Ali has created a wonderful version for the stage. It captures all of the novel's magic and mystery in the most theatrical of ways that gets under your skin and claims your heart and I can't wait to share it with audiences."*

Laurence Jackson Hyman, Shirley Jackson's son and manager of her estate, said *"As the manager of my late mother Shirley Jackson's literary estate, I am very pleased to see a new stage interpretation of her beloved and final novel We Have Always Lived in the Castle, being produced at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre. Alistair McDowall brings Merricat and Constance Blackwood to chilling life in this wonderfully evocative adaptation of Shirley Jackson's masterpiece. It promises to be a remarkable stage production, and I plan to attend its London Opening."*

ENDS.

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Listings

Lyric Hammersmith Theatre
Lyric Square, King Street, London, W6 0QL
Box Office: 020 8741 6850
www.lyric.co.uk
Tickets from £10

Jaja's African Hair Braiding

28 Jan – 27 Feb 2027

Press Night: Tues 02 Feb, 7pm
Audio Described: Tues 09 Feb, 7.30pm (with a Touch Tour at 6pm)
Captioned: Tues 16 Feb, 7.30pm
BSL: Thurs 18 Feb, 7.30pm
Chilled: Sat 20 Feb, 2.30pm

Once Upon A Time In Sokoto

13 Apr - 08 May 2027

Press Night: Fri 16 Apr, 7pm
BSL: Tues 20 Apr, 7.30pm
Chilled: Sat 24 Apr, 2.30pm
Audio Described: Thurs 29 Apr, 7.30pm (with a Touch Tour at 6pm)
Captioned: Tues 04 May, 7.30pm

Brock's Mill

13 May – 05 Jun 2027

Press Night: Tues 18 May, 7pm
BSL: Tues 25 May, 7.30pm
Chilled: Sat 29 May, 2.30pm
Captioned: Tues 01 Jun, 7.30pm
Audio Described: Thurs 03 Jun, 7.30pm (with a Touch Tour at 6pm)

Before The Coffee Gets Cold

17 Jun – 17 Jul 2027

Press Night: Wed 23 Jun, 7pm
BSL: Tues 06 Jul, 7.30pm
Audio Described: Thurs 08 Jul, 7.30pm (with a Touch Tour at 6pm)
Chilled: Sat 10 Jul, 2.30pm
Captioned: Tues 13 Jul, 7.30pm

The Book Thief

24 Jul – 28 Aug 2027

Press Night: Fri 30 Jul, 7pm
Chilled: Sat 07 Aug, 2.30pm
Captioned: Thurs 12 Aug, 7.30pm
Audio Described: Tues 17 Aug, 7.30pm (with a Touch Tour at 6pm)
BSL: Thurs 19 Aug, 7.30pm

The Young Team

31 Aug – 25 Sep 2027

Press Night: Fri 03 Sep, 7pm
Chilled: Sat 11 Sep, 2.30pm
BSL: Thurs 16 Sep, 7.30pm
Captioned: Tues 21 Sep, 7.30pm
Audio Described: Wed 22 Sep, 2.30pm (with a Touch Tour at 1pm)

We Have Always Lived In The Castle

07 Oct – 06 Nov 2027

Press Night: Wed 13 Oct, 7pm

BSL: Thurs 21 Oct, 7.30pm

Captioned: Tues 26 Oct, 7.30pm

Audio Described: Thurs 28 Oct, 7.30pm (with a Touch Tour at 6pm)

Chilled: Sat 30 Oct, 2.30pm

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 over 130 years. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Rachel O'Riordan and Executive Director Matthew Turbett, it is committed to being vital to, and representative of, our 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.

School Tickets

The Lyric offers a discounted schools rate for all Main House shows, which is available to all schools, colleges and universities.

Tickets are offered at £15 per student with one free teacher ticket for every ten students and two free teacher tickets for SEND schools. This offer is available for all performances Monday – Wednesday during the main run of the show (subject to availability).

Young Lyric Membership

The Lyric offers Young Lyric Membership for young people aged 0-25 who live in one of the 10 West London boroughs (Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kensington and Chelsea, Richmond upon Thames, Wandsworth and Westminster). You can sign up for membership as an individual (over 18) or as a parent/carer of a young person (under 16). Young Lyric members get £5 tickets to Main House shows, access to low cost or free courses and masterclasses, access to free bursary spaces for classes, performance opportunities and many more opportunities throughout the year.

ABOUT DEM PRODUCTIONS

DEM Productions is an award-winning production company now in its second decade, led by Tony and Olivier Award-winning producers Ramin Sabi and Emily Lunnon. DEM now has over twenty five productions to date, including: THE BOOK THIEF (Leicester Curve, Belgrade Theatre Coventry, Prince of Wales Theatre, Lyric Hammersmith Theatre); RIDE (Nominated for Best Musical Production at the Off WestEnd Awards and for Best Off WestEnd Production at the WhatsOnStage Awards, Old Globe, San Diego, Southwark Playhouse, Leicester Curve, Charing Cross Theatre); ALICE IN WONDERLAND (Marylebone Theatre 2025, Riverside Studios 2026); LUCIE JONES: LIVE AT THE LONDON PALLADIUM (2026); FOUR PLAY (King's Head Theatre, 2025); SAPPHO (The Other Palace, 2025); A ROLE TO DIE FOR (Marylebone Theatre, 2025); A SHERLOCK CAROL (Marylebone Theatre 2022 and 2023, The Times Critic's Pick); Sue Townsend's THE SECRET DIARY OF ADRIAN MOLE AGED 13 3/4 - THE MUSICAL (Ambassadors Theatre); DUST (Nominated for Best New Play and Best Off WestEnd Production at the WhatsOnStage Awards, NYT Critic's Pick, Trafalgar Studios, New York Theatre Workshop); the European Premiere of Stephen Schwartz's WORKING (Nominated for Best Off WestEnd Production at the WhatsOnStage Awards and for Best Production at the Off WestEnd Awards, Southwark Playhouse); the first major UK revival of SPRING AWAKENING (Winner of the WhatsOnStage Award for Best Regional Production, Hope Mill); BROTHER (Streamed Production, Southwark Playhouse); BLOWHOLE (Soho Theatre, Pleasance); the world premieres of KARAGULA (Styx, Soho Theatre), TWENTY-EIGHT, CLICKBAIT, and SENSE OF AN ENDING (Theatre503); and several other play revivals.

DEM also provides management and production accounting services across the industry.

Management clients include: THE PIANIST (Park Theatre, 2026); I DREAM (The Other Palace, 2026); THE CODE (Southwark Playhouse, 2025); ROAM (Shaftesbury Theatre, 2025); AUSTENLAND (Savoy Theatre, 2025); KING OF PANGAEA (King's Head Theatre, 2025); TRAPLORD (Winner of the Olivier Award for Best New Dance Production, International Tour and Factory International, Manchester); ERROL'S GARDEN (UK Tour, 2022 and 2024); THE RINK (Southwark Playhouse); THE WILD PARTY (The Other Palace); and THE SINGING REVOLUTION (Savoy Theatre).

Production accounting clients include: PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN (Secret Cinema); THE TRAITORS: LIVE EXPERIENCE (London); RIDE THE CYCLONE (Southwark Playhouse, 2025); THE CHOIR OF MAN (Arts Theatre); INVASIVE SPECIES (King's Head Theatre, 2025); WE WILL ROCK YOU (International Tour); FOOTLOOSE (International Tour); BRING IT ON (Southbank Centre, London); MONOPOLY LIFESIZED, DOCTOR WHO: TIME FRACTURE, THE GREAT GATSBY (Immersive, London); AMÉLIE (Criterion Theatre); and many others.

www.demproductions.co.uk | @dem.productions

ABOUT FUEL

Fuel leads the field in independent producing in the UK's live performance sector, working with brilliant artists to explore the big questions of our times, shining a light on how we relate to each other and the world around us, and telling untold stories by under-represented voices. From theatres to car parks, from schools to public spaces, Fuel produces high quality new theatre that reaches diverse audiences across the UK and internationally. Fuel collaborates with outstanding theatre makers with fresh perspectives and approaches who produce shows, performances or experiences which have direct and playful relationships with their audiences.

Fuel is celebrated for its pioneering producing model that develops innovative ideas through attentive collaboration, a spirit of curiosity, and an emphasis on trust. Fuel has developed a reputation for spirited and surprising new theatre, deep relationships with a wide range of artists, and passionate commitment to inclusion and care for young and diverse audiences.

Fuel was founded in 2004 and is led by Kate McGrath. Since its story began, Fuel has produced shows, festivals, films, installations, podcasts, apps and books. In doing so, Fuel has supported the artistic development of over 120 lead artists or companies and reached more than 1.5 million people, live and digitally, hosted over a hundred internships and been recognised with awards for its work. Fuel is currently working with artists and companies including Khalid Abdalla, Jay Bernard, Inua Ellams, Charlie Josephine, Lucian Msamati, Racheal Ofori, Toby Olié, Joelle Taylor, Uninvited Guests and Melanie Wilson. Fuel is supported by Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation, the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, and the PRS Foundation (Talent Development Network).

fueltheatre.com Instagram, Facebook, Bluesky, LinkedIn: @fueltheatre

ABOUT HACKNEY SHOWROOM

"Hackney Showroom delivers spellbinding theatre alongside enriching community building, culminating in a unique excellence that is hard to match" [Gay Times]

A warm embrace and a force for change for artists and communities, Hackney Showroom is an independent, artist-led theatre company and grassroots community centre.

We make and tour award-winning, genre-defying theatre productions, collaborating with innovative theatremakers - many with lived experience of injustice - to make astonishing and memorable new shows that change the landscape of tomorrow's theatre.

Our venue is our development space for theatre projects and offers a year-round cultural programme for our neighbourhood, creating the best conditions for artists and locals to flourish. With a refreshing invitation to local, national and international audiences, we engage a myriad of communities in nourishing cultural experiences that address the problems and possibilities of our times.

ABOUT MELTING POT

Melting Pot is an independent theatre and film production company. We develop, produce and manage all of our own productions, which have won Academy Awards, Tony Awards, BAFTAs, and Olivier Awards. Simon Friend founded the company in 2015 (as Simon Friend Entertainment Ltd) and has been named in The Stage 100 most influential people in British theatre and was joined by Hanna Osmolska in 2017.

West End and London credits include: August: Osage County (Noël Coward Theatre); One Day: The Musical (Garrick); The Truth (Apollo); Paranormal Activity (Ambassadors); Ghost Stories (Peacock); Second Best (Riverside Studios); The Real Thing (The Old Vic); The Crown Jewels (Garrick Theatre); Life of Pi (Wyndham's Theatre); Bad Jews (Arts Theatre); The Girl on the Train (Duke of York's Theatre); The Starry Messenger (Wyndham's Theatre); Admissions (Trafalgar Studios); The Height of the Storm (Wyndham's Theatre); Million Dollar Quartet (Royal Festival Hall); The Father (Wyndham's Theatre/Duke of York's Theatre).

UK Tour and regional credits include: The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time; Paranormal Activity; Atonement; The Battle; Inspector Morse: House of Ghosts; The Girl on the Train; Ghost Stories; Here You Come Again; Drop the Dead Donkey; Life of Pi; Minority Report; The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel; The Da Vinci Code; Dial M for Murder; Dr Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas; The Girl on the Train; The Messiah; Around the World in 80 Days.

US credits include: Paranormal Activity (Broadway, August Wilson Theatre/Boston Colonial Theatre/US Tour); Life of Pi (Broadway, Schoenfeld Theatre/US Tour); The Height of the Storm (Broadway, Samuel J. Friedman Theatre); The Closet (Williamstown Theatre Festival).

International credits include: Paranormal Activity (Ed Mirvish Theatre, Toronto); Life of Pi (Toronto/Abu Dhabi/Mumbai, China & Taiwan Tour/South Korea); Million Dollar Quartet (New Zealand/India).

TV and Film credits include: The Father, starring Anthony Hopkins and Olivia Colman (winner of 2 Academy Awards & 2 BAFTAs) and The Grinch Musical (NBC & Sky).

ABOUT THE NATIONAL THEATRE OF SCOTLAND

The National Theatre of Scotland is dedicated to playing the great stages, arts centres, village halls, schools and site-specific locations of Scotland, the UK and internationally. As well as creating ground-breaking productions and working with the most talented theatre-makers, the National Theatre of Scotland produces significant community engagement projects, innovates digitally, and works constantly to develop new talent. Central to this is finding pioneering ways to reach current and new audiences and to encourage people's full participation in the Company's work. With no performance building of its own, the Company works with existing and new venues and companies to create and tour theatre of the highest quality. Founded in 2006, the Company, in its short life, has become a globally significant theatrical player, with an extensive repertoire of award-winning work. The National Theatre of Scotland is supported by the Scottish Government. www.nationaltheatrescotland.com

ABOUT THE ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

The Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) is a leading global theatre company that sparks local, national and international conversations that build connections, create opportunities and bring joy.

We passionately believe that great storytelling can change the world, and that theatre offers its own unique form of storytelling: it is live and shared, and transforms a group of strangers into an audience which, together, experiences a story come to life in front of its eyes.

We collaborate with the most exciting artists to tell the stories of our time, and through a range of programmes we nurture the talent of the future.

We perform on three stages in our home in Stratford-upon-Avon, in London and in communities and schools across the country and around the world.

Our transformative Creative Learning and Engagement programmes reach over half a million young people each year.

rsc.org.uk

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Once Upon a Time in Sokoto

Cast

Adeola Yemitan	Nafisa Sarauniya
Antonia Layiwola	Zinari Zangina
Bayo Gbadamosi	Hadiru Zhango
Will Atiomo	Yusef Dawdu

Creative Team

Inua Ellams	Writer
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Roy Alexander Weise	Director
Amelia Jane Hankin	Set Designer
Femi Temowo	Composer
Coral Messam	Movement Director
Neill Brinkworth	Lighting Designer
Dan Balfour	Sound Designer
Jessica Cabassa	Costume Designer
Heather Basten CDG	Casting Director
Sam Lyon-Behan	Fight Director
Louise Kempton	Intimacy Director
Brigitte Adela	Associate Director
Movement Associate	Yemurai Zvaraya
Dylan Winn-Davies	Associate Sound Designer
Helen Mugridge	Production Manager
Rachel Gammon	Wardrobe Associate

Additional composition by Femi Temowo and Oiza x Meyi.

Once Upon a Time in Sokoto is produced by Fuel and was originally presented in association with Touring Together - a new national programme, bringing bold stories which shine a fresh light on the world we live in today, to audiences across the country.

Touring Together is a China Plate and Fuel initiative in collaboration with Brighton Dome, Leeds Playhouse, Oxford Playhouse, Royal and Derngate, Northampton and Warwick Arts Centre, generously supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England.

Once Upon a Time in Sokoto was co-commissioned and developed by Fuel with the National Theatre and is supported by the Garrick Charitable Trust.