

Thursday 15 May 2008

National Theatre new connections

YOUNG TALENT TAKES OVER

LYCEUM THEATRE HOSTS *NEW CONNECTIONS*

The **Royal Lyceum Theatre** in Edinburgh will play host to scores of local young performers and producers from 10 - 14 June, in one of 15 showcases across the UK for ***NEW CONNECTIONS*** – one of the world's largest celebrations of youth theatre.

NEW CONNECTIONS, organised by London's **National Theatre** and supported by **Bank of America**, commissions new plays for and about young people from some of the finest contemporary playwrights, allowing schools and youth theatres unique opportunities to tackle new productions and work with like-minded people.

This year, ten groups will be performing a range of exciting new plays at the Lyceum Theatre for the sixth consecutive year. Participants include **Youth Theatre Fife**, **Falkirk Youth Theatre**, **RSAMD YouthWorks** and **Craigholme School** in Glasgow, **Balerno Youth Theatre**, **County Carlow Youth Theatre**, **Kildare Youth Theatre**, **YUF Theatre** in Shetland and **George Heriot's School** and **Lyceum Youth Theatre** in Edinburgh.

This year the National Theatre announced a new partnership with Bank of America as supporters of *NEW CONNECTIONS*. **Jonathan Moulds, President of Bank of America** for Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia commented: 'Bank of America is committed to bringing the power of theatre to young people across the UK regardless of their circumstances. We are pleased to partner with the National Theatre in what is one of the largest youth theatre festivals in the world.'

Nicholas Hytner, Director of the National Theatre said: 'Bank of America's generous support will enable *NEW CONNECTIONS* to develop into an even more exciting programme. It promises to fire the imaginations and aspirations of everyone involved.'

NEW CONNECTIONS culminates at a celebratory Festival in July at the National Theatre in London, where 10 companies from the nationwide festivals will be invited to perform.

For further information, contact Melissa Clarke, Lyceum Theatre: mclarke@lyceum.org.uk or Lucinda Morrison, National Theatre: 020 7452 3232 lmorrison@nationaltheatre.org.uk

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

New Connections: Connections was established 15 years ago in response to a widespread demand for challenging new plays for young people to perform. New Connections commissions 10 new plays every year, penned by some of the hottest talent in world theatre. The plays are then brought to life through hundreds of productions, created by thousands of young actors, technicians, designers and directors from across the UK, Ireland and further a field.

Robin's fund: To compliment *Fugee* there will be an exhibition set up by the charity Robin's Fund to present the work of Robin Taudevin, a photojournalist who captured images of young asylum seekers in the UK before his untimely death in 2006.

Charity set up by Robin's sister Julie Taudevin after his death in May 2006. Julia does a lot of work with asylum seekers and refugees and is currently leading youth drama for the Princes Trust aimed at destitute asylum seeker minors. Robin's largest body of work in his archive was of people seeking asylum in the UK. Since last June the fund has held eight exhibitions in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and London and have published photographs in the Big Issue, The Guardian and for Channel 4, all raising awareness of seeking and gaining asylum in the UK. The exhibition will support the production of *Fugee* and will be accompanied by testimonies from those in the photographs. For more information on Robin's work go to www.robintaudevin.com.

Refugee Week Scotland: June 16-22 2008 is Refugee Week Scotland. For more information, visit www.refugeeweek.org.uk

Plays & Writers:

A Vampire Story by Moira Buffini

Two young women arrive in a nameless British smalltown. Their names are not their own. They don't declare their ages. Are they sisters, as their assumed identities declare? Or are they mother and daughter? Are Eleanor and Claire vampires? Or are they troubled young women on the run?

Moira Buffini's plays include: *Blavatsky's Tower*, *Gabriel* (Soho Theatre) *Silence* (Birmingham Rep), *Loveplay* (RSC), *Dinner* (National Theatre/ Wyndhams Theatre), and *Dying For It* and *Marianne Dreams* (Almeida).

Film includes: *Presence*, *Gabriel*, *The Enlightenment*, *Dibbuk Box*, *Jane Eyre*.

Arden City by Timberlake Wertenbaker

Rosie and Sally are two cousins who escape from home after difficulties with Sally's father. Rosie dresses as a boy for safety and they find their way to an allotment. Orlando also has

to flee because his brother Oliver wants him killed, and finds his way to the allotment with Adam, his younger friend. A modern retelling of *As You Like It*: a story about love, identity and freedom.

Timberlake Wertenbaker's plays include *Our Country's Good* (Royal Court and Broadway), winner of the Laurence Olivier Play of the Year Award and the New York Drama Critics' Circle award for Best New Foreign Play; *Three Birds Alighting on a Field* (Royal Court), which won the Susan Smith Blackburn Award, Writers' Guild Award and London critics' Circle Award; and *Galileo's Daughter* (Peter Hall Company at the Bath Theatre Festival) The most recent of her many translations and adaptations is Gabriela Preissova's *Jenufa* at the Arcola Theatre.

Burying Your Brother in the Pavement by Jack Thorne

Tom's brother is dead. He was killed by a broken bottle to the neck. This has upset a lot of people but it hasn't upset Tom. Or, rather, it has upset him, but in ways he can't explain. Tom really didn't like Luke, but without him... This is a play about grief, and looking at someone that little bit more closely

Jack Thorne's plays for stage include *When You Cure Me* (Bush, Radio 3's Drama on Three, Barrow St Theatre, New York), *Fanny and Faggot* (Pleasance, Edinburgh, Finborough & Trafalgar Studios 2007) and *Stacy* (Tron, Arcola & Trafalgar Studios). His TV writing includes episodes of *Skins*, *Shameless* and *The Spastic King*. Jack is currently Pearson Writer-in-Residence at the Bush.

Fugee by Abi Morgan

Kojo is 14 but no one believes him; he's just one of the unaccompanied minors arriving in London, abandoned on the streets of the UK. Ara's from Baghdad and still hears the bombs at night. Cheung can do backflips and is from a village in China that is more than a thousand years old. Orphans in London, they are the only family they have now. Together they tell Kojo's story: a story of lost childhood, tall trees and a murder in motion, a murder by a child that everyone says is a man.

Abi Morgan's plays include *Skinned*, *Sleeping Around*, *Tiny Dynamite* and *Tender and Splendour* and have won a number of awards. For television, *My Fragile Heart*, *Murder*, *Tsunami - The Aftermath* and *Sex Traffic*, a multi award-winning drama for Channel 4. Film includes *Brick Lane*, an adaptation of Monica Ali's novel, released in cinemas in Autumn 2007. *White Girl*, a 90 minute film for BBC2 will be broadcast early next year.

It Snows by Frantic Assembly and Bryony Lavery

Same old story. Boy doesn't meet Girl. Girl doesn't meet Boy. Threatened by terrifying Lads Gang. Threatened by awe-inspiring Girls Gang. Mum and Dad have declared War. Against each other. Weird neighbour in the building opposite. Usual ordinary gloominess. Then, one day, it snows. And everything changes.

In collaboration with a wide variety of artists, Frantic Assembly's Artistic Directors - Scott Graham and Steven Hoggett - create new work that places equal emphasis on movement,

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design, music and text. Since its formation in 1994 Frantic Assembly has toured extensively throughout the UK and abroad, building its reputation as one of the country's most exciting companies.

Bryony Lavery's plays include *A Wedding Story*, *Stockholm*, *Last Easter*, *Her Aching Heart*, *Two Marias*, *Smoke* and the multi-award-winning *Frozen*. She has written four plays for Connections - *More Light*, *Illyria*, *Discontented Winter: House Remix* and *Red Sky*.

Scenes from Family Life by Mark Ravenhill

Jack and Lisa: two ordinary teenagers who want to have a baby. Only problem is Lisa keeps vanishing - literally - into thin air. Their friends Barry and Stacy, who's eight months pregnant, have the same problem. Soon, everyone in the whole world is dematerialising. Six months on and Jack and Stacy are the only boy and girl on the planet. For Jack it's a dream, for Stacy a nightmare. And when the vanished start to return, Jack has to learn how complex adult relationships are.

Mark Ravenhill's plays include *Shopping and Fucking*, *Some Explicit Polaroids*, *Mother Clap's Molly House*, and *Totally Over You* and *Citizenship* for Connections. Recent plays include *The Cut* at the Donmar Warehouse, *pool (no water)* for Frantic Assembly and *Dick Whittington and His Cat*, the Barbican's first pantomime. His seventeen play cycle 'Shoot, Get Treasure, Repeat' was given readings at the Edinburgh festival in August 2007 and will be given full productions in London in 2008.

Performances:

Please note all shows will be performed as double bills commencing at 7.30pm with a short interval between each show.

Date	Time	Company	Production
Tue 10 June	7.30pm	Youth Theatre, Fife	<i>A Vampire Story</i>
		Falkirk Youth Theatre	<i>Fugee</i>
Wed 11 June	7.30pm	RSAMD YouthWorks (Glasgow)	<i>Burying Your Brother in the Pavement</i>
		George Heriot's School (Edinburgh)	<i>A Vampire Story</i>
Thurs 12 June	7.30pm	Balerno Youth Theatre	<i>It Snows</i>
		County Carlow Youth Theatre	<i>Scenes from Family Life</i>

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Fri 13 June	7.30pm	Craigholme School (Glasgow)	<i>Arden City</i>
		Kildare Youth Theatre	<i>A Vampire Story</i>
Sat 14 June	7.30pm	YUF Theatre (Shetland)	<i>It Snows</i>
		Lyceum Youth Theatre (Edinburgh)	<i>Fugee</i>

Tickets

Tickets: £10/£5 (conc.) for a double bill

LyT members: £3.50 or £15 for all five nights

NT Connections Participants: £2.50

BOX OFFICE: 0131 248 4848

Lyceum Website: www.lyceum.org.uk

Support

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