DAVID HARE’S

B E A T T H E D E V I L

Ralph Fiennes will make his Bridge Theatre debut performing David Hare’s monologue *Beat the Devil*, a new play written as a response to the author’s experience of contracting coronavirus. Nicholas Hytner will direct with designs by Bunny Christie, lighting by Jon Clark, sound by Gareth Fry and music by George Fenton. The performance schedule can be found below.

*On the same day that the UK government finally made the first of two decisive interventions that led to a conspicuously late lockdown, David Hare contracted Covid-19. Nobody seemed to know much about it then, and many doctors are not altogether sure they know much more today. Suffering a pageant of apparently random symptoms, Hare recalls the delirium of his illness, which mix with fear, dream, honest medicine and dishonest politics to create a monologue - performed at The Bridge by Ralph Fiennes - of furious urgency and power.*

Ralph Fiennes has enjoyed an extensive career in theatre, film and television as well as producing and directing film.  He was last on stage at the National Theatre in *Antony and Cleopatra*. Fiennes was previously directed by Hytner as Edmund in *King Lear* for the Royal Shakespeare Company.  His many other theatre credits include *Hamlet, Ivanov, Richard II* and *Coriolanus* for the Almeida, *The Master Builder*, *God of Carnage* and *Faith Healer*.  His many film credits include *Schindler’s List, The English Patient, The Constant Gardener, The Grand Budapest Hotel*and the roles of Lord Voldemort in the *Harry Potter* films and M in *Skyfall and* *Spectre.*  He has also directed three feature films - *Coriolanus, The Invisible Woman* and *The White Crow*. Fiennes’ forthcoming films include *The King’s Man*, *The Dig*, *The Forgiven* and *No Time To Die.*

David Hare is one of the UK’s most prolific and acclaimed writers having written extensively for stage, television and film.  He is the author of over 30 full length plays, his first, *Slag*, was produced in 1970. Hare is the winner of multiple international awards including a BAFTA for *Licking Hitler*, an Olivier award and a Critics’ Circle award for *Racing Demon*, an Evening Standard Drama award for *Pravda* and a Tony award for *Skylight*.  He is also a two-time Academy award nominee for *The Hours* and *The Reader* and was knighted in 1998.

Nicholas Hytner co-founded the London Theatre Company with Nick Starr. For the Bridge Theatre he has directed *Young Marx, Julius Caesar*, *Allelujah!*, *Alys, Always, A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *Two Ladies.* Previously he was Director of the National Theatre from 2003 to 2015. Hisbook *Balancing Acts* is published by Jonathan Cape.

ALAN BENNETT’S

T A L K I N G H E A D S

Following the television broadcast in June this year, eight of Alan Bennett’s *Talking Heads* monologues will be performed in repertoire at the Bridge Theatre. The performance schedule can be found below.

During April and May, while the Bridge Theatre was closed, the London Theatre Company worked with the BBC to produce Alan Bennett’s landmark *Talking Heads*monologues. They were broadcast on BBC One in June.

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*Eight of Alan Bennett’s Talking Heads come to the stage in a series of unique double bills, all of them with the same leading actors whose performances were universally acclaimed on television. Each of the short plays is a perfectly distilled masterpiece, sometimes disturbing, often hilarious and always profoundly humane.*

Monica Dolan in *The Shrine* directed by Nicholas Hytner

Tamsin Greig in *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* directed by Marianne Elliott

Lesley Manville in *Bed Among the Lentils* directed by Nicholas Hytner

Lucian Msamati in *Playing Sandwiches* directed by Jeremy Herrin

Maxine Peake in *Miss Fozzard Finds Her Feet* directed by Sarah Frankcom

Rochenda Sandall in *The Outside Dog* directed by Nadia Fall

Kristin Scott Thomas in *The Hand of God* directed by Jonathan Kent

Imelda Staunton in *A Lady of Letters* directed by Jonathan Kent

Designs are by Bunny Christie, with lighting by Jon Clark, video designs by Luke Halls, sound by Gareth Fry and music by George Fenton.

Alan Bennett has been one of our leading dramatists since the success of *Beyond the Fringe* in the 1960s. His television series *Talking Heads* has become a modern-day classic, as have many of his works for the stage including *Forty Years On*,*The Lady in the Van* (together with the screenplay), *A Question of Attribution*,*The Madness of George III* (together with the Oscar-nominated screenplay *The Madness of King George*) andan adaptation of Kenneth Grahame's*The Wind in the Willows.* At the National Theatre, *The History Boys* (also a screenplay) won numerous awards including Evening Standard and Critics' Circle awards for Best Play, an Olivier for Best New Play and the South Bank Show Award. On Broadway, *The History Boys*won five New York Drama Desk Awards, four Outer Critics' Circle Awards, a New York Drama Critics' Award, a New York Drama League Award and six Tonys.

Alan Bennett’s collections of prose are *Writing Home*,*Untold Stories* (PEN/Ackerley Prize, 2006) and *Keeping On, Keeping On*.  *Six Poets: Hardy to Larkin*contains Bennett's selection of English verse, accompanied by his commentary. His recent fiction includes *The Uncommon Reader*and *Smut: Two Unseemly Stories*.

*Allelujah!* marked the tenth collaboration between Alan Bennett and Nicholas Hytner, presented at the Bridge Theatre in 2018, a working relationship which began in 1990 with *The Wind in the Willows,* and continued with *The Madness of King George III, The Lady in the Van* and *The History Boys* (all three also adapted for film), followed by *The Habit of Art*, *People* and the double bill *Untold Stories.*

The *Talking Heads* monologues were first broadcast on the BBC in 1988 and 1998, breaking new ground for television and widely celebrated as Alan Bennett’s masterpieces. The monologues won two BAFTAs, an RTS award and have also since been included on the A-level and GCSE English Literature syllabus.

The recent BBC One television series was produced by Nicholas Hytner and Kevin Loader for the London Theatre Company (LTC) and co-produced by Steve Clark Hall. Executive Producers were

Nick Starr, Andrew Leveson and Medwyn Jones for LTC and Piers Wenger for the BBC. The series was commissioned by Piers Wenger, Controller of BBC Drama and Charlotte Moore, Director of BBC Content. Ten of the original pieces were re-made with the addition of two new ones written by Bennett last year.

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For these performances at the Bridge, Alan Bennett has generously waived his royalty.

Earlier this summer, he and the actors, directors, producers and senior crew of the new BBC1 series of *Talking Heads* donated their fees to NHS Charities Together - generating over £1m that will be used to support NHS staff, volunteers and patients as they continue to tackle the Covid crisis and its aftermath.

INUA ELLAMS AND FUEL PRESENT

A N E V E N I N G W I T H A N I M M I G R A N T

Written and performed by Inua Ellams, The Bridge will present Ellams’ and Fuel’s production of *An Evening with an Immigrant*, with music selection by DJ Sid Mercutio. The performance schedule can be found below.

*Born to a Muslim father and a Christian mother in what is now considered by many to be Boko Haram territory, Inua Ellams left Nigeria for England in 1996 aged 12, moved to Ireland for three years, before returning to London and starting work as a writer and graphic designer. Littered with poems,*

*Born to a Muslim father and a Christian mother in what is now considered by many to be Boko Haram*

*territory, Inua Ellams left Nigeria for England in 1996 aged 12, moved to Ireland for three years, before returning to London and starting work as a writer and graphic designer. Littered with poems, stories and anecdotes, Ellams will tell his ridiculous, fantastic, poignant immigrant-story of escaping fundamentalist Islam, directing an arts festival at his college in Dublin, performing solo shows at the National Theatre and drinking wine with the Queen of England, all the while without a country to belong to or place to call home.*

Inua Ellams is an award-winning poet, performer, playwright, graphic artist and designer.  He started performing in cafes in 2003 and has since worked in venues including the Royal Albert Hall, Sydney Opera House, Nuyorican Poets Cafe and Glastonbury Music Festival.  He is the recipient of an Edinburgh Fringe First Award for his autobiographical award-winning play *The 14th Tale*.  He has also undertaken several commissions, including those for Louis Vuitton and Soho Theatre. Following two sell-out runs at the National Theatre and a world tour, his play *Barber Shop Chronicles* (A Fuel, National Theatre and Leeds Playhouse co-production) also ran at the Roundhouse in 2019. His adaptation of *Three Sisters* was co-produced by the National Theatre and Fuel in 2019-2020.

Fuel says: “Fuel leads the field in independent producing in the UK’s live performance sector. They work with brilliant artists to make fresh experiences for adventurous people. To date, many of these experiences have been theatre, whether that is in an actual theatre, on the streets, in community settings, or in purpose-built structures. All of the artists Fuel works with produce shows, performances or experiences which have clear, direct and playful relationships with their audiences. They appeal to the emotions and the intellect. Things that make you laugh and cry. These artists see the world in a different way; they respond to challenges and difficulties with ingenuity and ideas; they create something unexpected which articulates something new to audiences. Fuel was founded in 2004 and is led by Kate McGrath. Fuel is supported by Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation, Fenton Arts Trust, the Garrick Trust, the Backstage Trust, the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, the Garfield Weston Foundation and the Wellcome Trust through Sustaining Excellence. www.fueltheatre.com”

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YOLANDA MERCY’S

Q U A R T E R L I F E C R I S I S

Yolanda Mercy will perform her one woman play *Quarter Life Crisis*, directed by Jade Lewis at The Bridge. The performance schedule can be found below. Previously seen in London at Soho Theatre in 2017 and 2018, *Quarter Life Crisis* was adapted for radio and broadcast on BBC Radio 1xtra.

*Alicia is a hot mess. She doesn’t know what she’s doing with her life. Swiping left, swiping right to find the perfect match. Even though she’s a Londoner, born and bred, the scent of Lagos peppers her existence in the ends. Everyone around her seems to know where they’re going in life, but she’s just trying to find ways to cheat growing up and keep her 16-25 railcard. What does it mean to be an adult and when do you become one?*

London based writer and performer Yolanda Mercy's first play was *On the Edge of Me* presented at Soho Theatre where she is currently on attachment (as a Soho Six). Earlier this year saw her television writing debut with *BBW*, a comedy drama for Channel 4 as part of their BAFTA nominated anthology - *On the Edge*. She is a published author with Oberon Books for *Quarter Life Crisis.*

Jade Lewis is a writer and director.  Her theatre credits include *Astro Babies* at Ovalhouse which she wrote and directed.  Her directing credits include *Superhoe*at the Royal Court Theatre and the Brighton Festival, *Extinguished Things*at Summerhall Festival, *Quarter Life Crisis* which played at Underbelly, Soho Theatre and internationally as well as *On The Edge of Me* which toured nationally.  Her Resident Director credits include *Nine Night* at National Theatre and Trafalgar Studios.  Lewis was a Boris Karloff Trainee Assistant Director at the Young Vic, Creative Associate at The Gate Theatre and one of Ovalhouse’s Emerging Artist team.  She has also directed and assisted on community projects for Southwark Playhouse, Southbank Centre, Company 3 and the Young Vic. In 2019 Lewis was nominated for Best Director at the Stage Debut Awards for her work on *Superhoe*.

THE LEEDS STUDIO PRODUCTION OF ZODWA NYONI’S

N I N E L I V E S

Poet and playwright Zodwa Nyoni’s *Nine Lives* will be performed by Lladel Bryant and directed by Alex Chisholm, presented by The Bridge. The performance schedule can be found below. Developed at West Yorkshire Playhouse (now Leeds Playhouse), *Nine Lives* received a UK national tour before it received its London premiere at the Arcola Theatre.

*Fleeing from his home where a fresh wave of homophobia threatens his life, Ishmael has sought sanctuary in the UK.  Dispersed to Leeds, Ishmael waits to hear his fate, he waits for a new life to begin amongst strangers.  But not everyone is bad… can he find a place to call home again? Some of us wanted to stop being afraid. Some of us wanted to find ourselves. Some of us wanted to belong. Zodwa Nyoni threads together humour and humanity to tell the real personal story behind asylum headlines*.

Zodwa Nyoni is a playwright, poet and screenwriter. She was the 2014 Writer-in-Residence at West Yorkshire Playhouse/Channel 4 and a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize. She has made short films with the Young Vic, National Trust, Tyneside Cinema, BBC Films and BFI Film Hub North. Currently under commission by the Kiln Theatre and Manchester Royal Exchange Theatre, Nyoni is published by Bloomsbury.

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As well as previously performing *Nine Lives*, Lladel Bryant’s theatre credits include *The Night Before Christmas* and *A Christmas Carol* for Leeds Playhouse, *Shed Crew* and *Bittersweet Sunshine* for Red Ladder Theatre Company and *Concrete Jungle* for Manchester Fringe Festival. His screen credits include *DCI Banks* and *The Raven Tournament.*

Alex Chisholm is the Co-Artistic Director of Freedom Studios in Bradford. Chisholm directed *Nine Lives* forWest Yorkshire Playhouse, a UK tour and the Arcola Theatre and *Conscientious* for the West Yorkshire Playhouse and a UK tour. While Associate Director at the West Yorkshire Playhouse her credits include *Schoolboy/Lover*, *Dust*, *Mela*, *Scuffer, Tender Dearly*, *Non-Contact Time* and *Huddersfield.*

Leeds Playhouse says: “In 2018 West Yorkshire Playhouse relaunched as Leeds Playhouse, a creative hub for the city and beyond, a place where people and communities come to tell and share stories, to experience world class theatre that is pioneering, invigorating and relevant. Dedicated collaborators seek out the best companies and individual artists locally, nationally and internationally to create inspirational theatre in Leeds at the heart of Yorkshire. Leeds Playhouse develops work with established practitioners and finds new voices that they believe should be heard, providing a creative space for new writers, emerging companies and individual theatre artists, making work with national and international ambitions yet locally rooted with their distinctiveness informed by where they are from. The Leeds Playhouse production *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* was presented at the Bridge Theatre in association with Elliott Harper Productions in 2019/20.”

IMAGES

[www.dropbox.com/sh/yv8k7267n6vjt17/AABadIHVtJPJiMczmsJvUghVa?dl=0](http://www.dropbox.com/sh/yv8k7267n6vjt17/AABadIHVtJPJiMczmsJvUghVa?dl=0)

BRIDGE THEATRE FAQ’s RE COVID-19

www.[bridgetheatre.co.uk/frequently-asked-questions/](https://bridgetheatre.co.uk/frequently-asked-questions/)

LISTINGS INFORMATION

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Website www.bridgetheatre.co.uk

Twitter @\_bridgetheatre

Instagram \_bridgetheatre

Facebook bridgetheatrelondon

SCHEDULE

Saturday 29 August 2pm, 5pm and 8pm Beat the Devil

Monday 31 August 5pm and 8pm Beat the Devil

Tuesday 1 September 5pm and 8pm Beat the Devil

Wednesday 2 September 5pm and 8pm Beat the Devil

Thursday 3 September 5pm and 8pm Beat the Devil

Friday 4 September 5pm and 8pm Beat the Devil

Saturday 5 September 2pm, 5pm and 8pm Beat the Devil

Monday 7 September 8pm Talking Heads: Bed Among Lentils and The Shrine

Tuesday 8 September 2pm and 5pm Talking Heads: Bed Among Lentils and The Shrine, 8pm Beat the Devil

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Wednesday 9 September 8pm Talking Heads: The Hand of God and The Outside Dog

Thursday 10 September 5pm and 8pm Talking Heads: The Hand of God and The Outside Dog

Friday 11 September 2pm and 5pm Talking Heads: Bed Among Lentils and The Shrine, 8pm Talking Heads: The Hand of God and The Outside Dog

Saturday 12September 2pm and 5pmTalking Heads: Bed Among Lentils and The Shrine, 8pm Beat the Devil

Monday 14 September 5pm and 8pm Talking Heads: Bed Among Lentils and The Shrine

Tuesday 15 September 5pm Talking Heads: Bed Among Lentils and The Shrine, 8pm Talking Heads: The Hand of God and The Outside Dog

Wednesday 16 September 2pm and 5pm Talking Heads: Bed Among Lentils and The Shrine, 8pm Talking Heads: The Hand of God and The Outside Dog

Thursday 17 September 2pm and 5pm Talking Heads: Bed Among Lentils and The Shrine, 8pm Talking Heads: The Hand of God and The Outside Dog

Friday 18 September 2pm and 5pm Talking Heads: Bed Among Lentils and The Shrine, 8pm An Evening with an Immigrant

Saturday 19 September 2pm and 5pm Talking Heads: Bed Among Lentils and The Shrine, 8pm An Evening with an Immigrant

Monday 21 September 2pm and 5pm Talking Heads: Bed Among Lentils and The Shrine, 8pm Talking Heads: The Hand of God and The Outside Dog

Tuesday 22 September 2pm Talking Heads: The Hand of God and The Outside Dog, 5pm and 8pm Talking Heads: Bed Among Lentils and The Shrine

Wednesday 23 September 5pm and 8pm Talking Heads: The Hand of God and The Outside Dog

Thursday 24 September 2pm and 5pm Talking Heads: The Hand of God and The Outside Dog, 8pm An Evening with an Immigrant

Friday 25 September 2pm and 5pm Talking Heads: The Hand of God and The Outside Dog, 8pm An Evening with an Immigrant

Saturday 26 September 2pm Talking Heads: The Hand of God and The Outside Dog, 8pm An Evening with an Immigrant

Monday 28 September 8pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches

Tuesday 29 September 5pm and 8pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches

Wednesday 30 September 8pm Talking Heads: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet

Thursday 1 October 2pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches, 5pm and 8pm Talking Heads: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet

Friday 2 October 2pm and 5pm Talking Heads: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet, 8pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches

Saturday 3 October 2pm Talking Heads: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet, 5pm and 8pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches

Monday 5 October 5pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches, 8pm Talking Heads: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet

Tuesday 6 October 5pm Talking Heads: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet, 8pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches

Wednesday 7 October 8pm Quarter Life Crisis

Thursday 8 October 2pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches, 5pm Talking Head: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet, 8pm Quarter Life Crisis

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Friday 9 October 2pm Talking Heads: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet, 5pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches, 8pm Quarter Life Crisis

Saturday 10 October 2pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches, 5pm Talking Head: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet, 8pm Quarter Life Crisis

Monday 12 October 5pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches, 8pm An Evening with an Immigrant

Tuesday 13 October 5pm Talking Heads: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet, 8pm An Evening with an Immigrant

Wednesday 14 October 2pm Talking Heads: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet, 5pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches, 8pm An Evening with an Immigrant

Thursday 15 October 2pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches, 5pm Talking Heads: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet, 8pm An Evening with an Immigrant

Friday 16 October 2pm Talking Heads: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet, 5pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches, 8pm Quarter Life Crisis

Saturday 17 October 2pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches, 5pm Talking Head: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet, 8pm Quarter Life Crisis

Monday 19 October 5pm and 8pm Talking Heads: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet

Tuesday 20 October 5pm and 8pm Talking Heads: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet

Wednesday 21 October 2pm and 5pm Talking Heads: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet, 8pm Beat the Devil

Thursday 22 October 5pm Beat the Devil, 8pm Nine Lives

Friday 23 October 2pm Beat the Devil, 5pm Talking Heads: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet, 8pm Nine Lives

Saturday 24 October 2pm Talking Heads: Nights in the Gardens of Spain and Miss Fozzard Finds her Feet, 5pm Beat the Devil, 8pm Nine Lives

Monday 26 October 5pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches, 8pm Beat the Devil

Tuesday 27 October 2pm and 8pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches, 5pm Beat the Devil

Wednesday 28 October 2pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches, 5pm Beat the Devil, 8pm Nine Lives

Thursday 29 October 2pm Beat the Devil, 5pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches, 8pm Nine Lives

Friday 30 October 2pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches, 5pm Beat the Devil, 8pm Nine Lives

Saturday 31 October 2pm Talking Heads: A Lady of Letters and Playing Sandwiches, 5pm Beat the Devil, 8pm Nine Lives