

ALMEIDA THEATRE

Press Release: 6 September 2017

The cast is announced for *ALBION*, a new play by Mike Bartlett, directed by Rupert Goold

ALBION

Tuesday 10 October – Friday 24 November

Press night: Tuesday 17 October at 7pm

It's England really, isn't it? A climate without cloud and rain isn't honest.

In the ruins of a garden in rural England, in a house which was once a home, one woman searches for seeds of hope.

*Albion is a new play by **Mike Bartlett**, directed by **Rupert Goold**, their first collaboration following their international award-winning production *King Charles III*.*

Joining the previously announced **Victoria Hamilton** are **Nigel Betts**, **Edyta Budnik**, **Christopher Fairbank**, **Charlotte Hope**, **Margot Leicester**, **Vinette Robinson**, **Nicholas Rowe**, **Helen Schlesinger** and **Luke Thallon**. *Albion* is designed by **Miriam Buether**, with lighting design by **Neil Austin**, sound design by **Greg Clarke** and casting by **Amy Ball**.

Victoria Hamilton plays Audrey Walters. She has previously appeared in *The Doctor's Dilemma* at the Almeida. Recent television appearances include The Queen Mother in *The Crown* and Anna in *Doctor Foster*. Other theatre credits include *Love, Love, Love* at the Royal Court; *Twelfth Night* for the Donmar Warehouse at Wyndham's Theatre; *Once in a Lifetime*, *Summerfolk* and *Money* at the National Theatre; *Suddenly Last Summer* at the Donmar Warehouse and UK Tour; *Sweet Panic* in the West End; *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg* at the Roundabout Theatre, New York and in the West End; *Home & Beauty* in the West End; *The Country Wife* and *As You Like It* at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield; *King Lear*, *The Provoked Wife* and *The Seagull* at The Old Vic; *Troilus And Cressida* and *As You Like It* at the RSC; *The Master Builder* in the West End; *Retreat* and *Memorandum* at the Orange Tree Theatre. Other television includes *Our Ex-Wife*; *The Circuit*; *Call the Midwife Christmas Special*; *The Game*; *What Remains*; *Toast*; *Larkrise to Candleford*; *Time of Your Life*; *Trial and Retribution*; *Wide Sargasso Sea*; *The Shell Seekers*; *A Very Social Secretary*; *Jericho*; *Spine Chillers*; *To the Ends of the Earth*; *The Brontes*; *Goodbye Mr Chips*; *Baby Father - I & II*; *Victoria & Albert*; *The Savages*; *King Lear*; *The Merchant of Venice*; *Persuasion* and *Pride and Prejudice*. Films include *French*; *Scoop*; *Before You Go* and *Mansfield Park*.

Mike Bartlett's plays for the Almeida include *Game* and the multi-award winning *King Charles III* (Olivier Award - Best New Play) which premiered at the Almeida before West End and Broadway transfers, and a UK and international tour. Mike's television adaptation of the play was broadcast on BBC earlier this year. Other plays include *Wild* at the Hampstead Theatre; *An Intervention* for Paines Plough and Watford

Palace Theatre; *Bull* for Sheffield Theatres, Off Broadway and the Young Vic (Olivier Award – Outstanding Achievement in an Affiliate Theatre); *Medea* for Headlong, at the Glasgow Citizens, Watford Palace and Warwick Arts Centre; *Chariots of Fire* at the Hampstead Theatre and at the Gielgud Theatre, West End; *13* at the National Theatre; *Decade* (co-writer) for Headlong; *Earthquakes in London* for Headlong and the National Theatre; *Love, Love, Love* for Paines Plough, the Plymouth Theatre Royal, the Royal Court, and the Roundabout Theatre Company, New York (Theatre Award UK – Best New Play); *Cock* (Olivier Award - Outstanding Achievement in an Affiliate Theatre), *Contractions*, and *My Child* for the Royal Court; and *Artefacts* for the Bush Theatre and Nabokov. Plays for the radio include: *King Charles III*, *Cock*, *Heart*, *The Core*, *Family Man*, and *Love Contract* for BBC Radio 4; and *The Steps and Not Talking* for BBC Radio 3. As Director: *Medea* (Headlong/Glasgow Citizens/Watford/Warwick) and *Honest* for the Theatre Royal Northampton. Television includes *King Charles III*; *Doctor Foster*; and *The Town*.

Rupert Goold is the Almeida's Artistic Director where he has previously directed *Ink*, *Richard III* (which was broadcast live to cinemas around the world in July 2016), *Medea*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *King Charles III* and *American Psycho*, which opened on Broadway in April 2016. He was Artistic Director of Headlong from 2005 until 2013 where his work included *The Effect*, *ENRON*, *Earthquakes in London* and *Decade*. Other theatre credits include *Made in Dagenham* in the West End; *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* at the Almeida; *Macbeth* at Chichester Festival Theatre, in the West End and on Broadway; and *No Man's Land* at The Gate, Dublin and in the West End. He has twice been the recipient of the Laurence Olivier, Critics' Circle and Evening Standard Awards for Best Director. He was Associate Director at the Royal Shakespeare Company from 2009 to 2012 and was Artistic Director of Northampton Theatres from 2002 to 2005. On film he directed the BAFTA nominated *Richard II*, part of *The Hollow Crown*, and *Macbeth* for the BBC, feature *True Story* starring James Franco and Jonah Hill, and a television adaptation of his production of Mike Bartlett's *King Charles III* for BBC Two. Rupert was awarded a CBE for services to drama in the 2017 New Year's Honours.

ENDS

For all press enquiries and images, contact Alexander Milward, Press and Media Relations Manager, on 020 7288 4911 or amilward@almeida.co.uk

ALMEIDA LISTINGS INFORMATION

Tuesday 10 October – Friday 24 November

ALBION

By Mike Bartlett

Directed by Rupert Goold

Press night: Tuesday 17 October at 7pm

Address Almeida Theatre, Almeida Street, London, N1 1TA

Café Bar The Almeida Café Bar is open from 11.30am -11.00pm, Monday to Saturday

Box Office **Online** almeida.co.uk

Phone 020 7359 4404 (10am – 7pm Monday – Saturday)

In person 10am – 7pm Monday – Saturday

Nearest Tube: Angel / Highbury & Islington

Website almeida.co.uk
Twitter @AlmeidaTheatre
Facebook facebook.com/almeidatheatre
Instagram @almeida_theatre

Access **Albion** Captioned performance:
Thursday 9 November at 7:30pm
Albion Audio Described performance:
Saturday 11 November at 2.30pm (Touch Tour at 12.45pm)

Talkback Post-show discussion with members of the company
Free to same day ticket holders

Albion Thursday 26 October

At least 500 £5 tickets per production are available to audiences aged 25 and under. Audiences aged 30 and under have access to 450 £15 tickets per production. See almeida.co.uk/concessions for further details.

Notes to Editors

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Nigel Betts plays Edward. His theatre credits include *Three Days in the Country* for the National Theatre and *War Horse* and *One Man Two Guv'nors* at the National Theatre and in the West End; *Wonderland* at the Hampstead Theatre; *Pastoral* at Soho Theatre; *Aladdin* at Lyric Hammersmith, *The 39 Steps*, *Up'n'Under*, *Henry IV* and *As You Like It* in the West End. His television work includes *Little Boy Blue*; *Vera*; *Death in Paradise*; *The Coroner*; *Class*; *Boy Meets Girl*; *You, Me and Them*; *The Wrong Mans*; *Doctor Who* and *Our Zoo*.

Edyta Budnik plays Kristina. Her theatre credits include *Under the Lid* at Jermyn Theatre; *Tense/Nine* for Nabokov at the Southwark Playhouse and *AA* at Trafalgar Studios. Her television work includes *The Tunnel*; *Suspects*; *The Bletchley Circle*; *The Sarah Jane Adventures*. For film, her credits include *Byzantium* and *The Comedian*.

Christopher Fairbank plays Matthew. His theatre credits include *The Pyramid Text* at Birmingham Rep; *Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Curse of The Starving Class* for Royal Lyceum Edinburgh; a UK tour of *Cleo*, *Camping*, *Emmanuelle and Dick* and *Not a Game for Boys* and *Etta Jenks* at the Royal Court. His television work includes *Taboo*; *The Secret Agent*; *Dickensian*; *Wallander*; *Wolf Hall*; *Jamaica Inn*; *Family Tree*; *Kidnap and Ransom*; *Hidden*; *Five Daughters*; *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*; *Never Better*; *Auf Wiedersehen*, *Pet*. For film, his credits include *Lady Macbeth*; *Guardians of the Galaxy*; *Hercules*;

Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides and the forthcoming *Journey to China: The Mystery of the Iron Mask*.

Margot Leicester plays Cheryl. She previously appeared at the Almeida in *King Charles III* (also West End and Broadway) and *Knot of the Heart*. Her other theatre credits include *Seventeen* at the Lyric Hammersmith; *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, *An Inspector Calls*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Habeas Corpus*, *Who's Afraid of Virginal Woolf*, *The Enemies Within*, *All My Sons* and *Ghosts* for Bolton Octagon; *A Conversation* at Royal Exchange, Manchester; and *Coriolanus* at Shakespeare's Globe. Her television work includes *King Charles III*; *Frankie*; *Margot*; *The Take* and *Five Days*. For film, her credits include the forthcoming *Night of the Lotus* and *1408*.

Charlotte Hope plays Zara. Her theatre credits include *Buried Child* at Trafalgar Studios; *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Liverpool Everyman; *Outlines* at the Old Red Lion Theatre and *Belarus* at the Arcola Theatre. Her television work includes *Game of Thrones*; *Houdini and Doyle*; *Death in Paradise*; *Marked*; *Vera*; *The Musketeers*; *Whitechapel* and the forthcoming *Diana and I*. For film, her work includes *Allied*; *A United Kingdom*; *Miss You Already*; *Testament of Youth*; *The Theory of Everything*; *The Invisible Woman*; *Les Misérables* and the forthcoming *The Nun* and *Three Christs*.

Vinette Robinson plays Anna. Her theatre work credits include *Trout Stanley* and *Tender Napalm* at the Southwark Playhouse; *Hamlet* at the Young Vic; *Welcome to Thebes* at the National Theatre; *On Darker Shores* at the Hampstead Theatre; *War and Peace* for Shared Experience; *Sugar Mummies* at the Royal Court; *Paradise Lost* for Headlong; *A New Way to Please You*, *Sejanus*, *Speaking Like Magpies*, *Thomas Moore* for the RSC and *Measure for Measure* for Complicite at the National Theatre. Her television credits include *The A Word*; *Delicious*; *Close to the Enemy*; *Black Work*; *The Red Tent*; *Death in Paradise*; *Sherlock*; *Vera* and *Hope Springs*. For film, her credits include *Morgan*; *Vera Drake*; *Imagine Me and You* and *Powder*.

Nicholas Rowe plays Paul Walters. His previous work for the Almeida includes *King Charles III* (also West End). His other theatre credits include *Donkey's Years* at Rose Theatre Kingston; *Raving* at the Hampstead Theatre; *The Madness of George III* at Theatre Royal Bath and on tour; *Victory* at the Arcola Theatre; *Whipping It Up* at the Bush Theatre and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* for English Touring Theatre. His television work includes *Riviera*; *Genius*; *The Crown*; *Doctor Thorne*; *The Last Kingdom*; *Da Vinci's Demons*; *The Borgias*; *Doctor Who: Dreamland* and *Margaret*. For film, his work includes *Mr Holmes*; *Eat Locals*; *Delicious*; *A United Kingdom*; *Snowden*; *Shanghai* and *Young Sherlock Holmes*.

Helen Schlesinger plays Katherine Sanchez. Her theatre credits include *Boys Will Be Boys* and *Whipping It Up* (also West End) at the Bush Theatre; *Frozen* at Park Theatre; *Single Spies* at the Rose Theatre Kingston; *Coriolanus* at the Donmar Warehouse; *Bracken Moor* at the Tricycle Theatre; *Fireface* at the Young Vic Theatre; *Skåne* and *Comfort with Apples* at the Hampstead Theatre; *Blue/Orange* for

Tiata Fahodzi and the Arcola Theatre; *The God's Weep*, *The Crucible* (WhatsOnStage Award for Best Supporting Actress), *The Merchant of Venice*, *Twelfth Night* for the RSC; *Wild East*, *Bear Hug*, *The Weather (The Mother)* at the Royal Court; *The Oresteia*, *War and Peace*, *An Inspector Calls* (also West End), *Inadmissible Evidence* (also West End) at the National Theatre. Her television work includes *Lewis*, *The Hour*, *Nativity* and *Trial and Retribution*. For film, her credits include *24 Hour Party People* and *Dirty War*.

Luke Thallon plays Gabriel. He recently graduated from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama where he was the recipient of the Michael Bryant Award 2017 and the Laurence Olivier Bursary Prize 2016. His theatre work includes a reading of *Bent* as part of the National Theatre's Queer Theatre season and *Out There* at Riverside Studios. He will appear in the forthcoming film *The Favourite*.

ABOUT THE ALMEIDA THEATRE

A small room with an international reputation, the Almeida began life as a literary and scientific society – complete with library, lecture theatre and laboratory. From the beginning, the building existed to investigate the world. Today, the Almeida makes brave new work that asks big questions: of plays, of theatre and of the world around us.

The Almeida brings together the most exciting artists to take risks; to provoke, inspire and surprise audiences; to interrogate the present, dig up the past and imagine the future. Whether new work or reinvigorated classic, whether in the theatre, on the road or online, the Almeida makes live art to excite, enliven and entertain. The Almeida makes argument for theatre as an essential force in an increasingly fragmented society.

Founded by Pierre Audi in 1980, his successors were Jonathan Kent and Ian McDiarmid in 1990, and Michael Attenborough in 2002. Productions including *Hamlet* with Ralph Fiennes in 2005, Rufus Norris' *Festen*, *Ruined* by Lynn Nottage and most recently *Chimerica*, *Ghosts* and *King Charles III* have given the theatre international renown.

In summer 2013, Rupert Goold joined the Almeida as Artistic Director. His first production was *American Psycho: a new musical thriller*, which transferred to Broadway in 2016. In 2014 the Almeida productions of *Ghosts* and *Chimerica* won eight Olivier Awards including Best Actress, Best Actor in a Supporting Role, Best New Play, Best Director and Best Revival and enjoyed transfers to the West End and Broadway respectively. This was followed by *King Charles III*, which transferred to the West End at the Wyndham's Theatre and won the Olivier Award for Best New Play in 2015, transferred to Broadway, and toured the UK and Sydney. This year has seen West End transfers for the Almeida productions of *Hamlet*, directed by Robert Icke, with a cast including Andrew Scott, and James Graham's *Ink* and Robert Icke's new adaptation of *Mary Stuart* transfers to the Duke of York's Theatre from January 2018. *Mary Stuart* then tours to Theatre Royal Bath, The Lowry, Salford and Cambridge Arts Theatre from April 2018.

In summer 2015, the Almeida presented *Almeida Greeks*, which included three major new productions of *Oresteia*, *Bakkhai* and *Medea*, the latter of which was directed by Rupert Goold, with a festival of events, performances, talks and readings running alongside.

Goold also co-directed *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* with Almeida Associate Director Robert Icke. Involving more than 60 readers, *The Iliad* reached an audience of over 50,000 people across the world, watching online, or in person at the British Museum and the Almeida Theatre. *The Odyssey* followed the huge success of *The Iliad*, and involved an army of artists in various locations around London. As with *The Iliad*, both theatrical events were live streamed throughout and achieved ground-breaking levels of online engagement.

In May 2017, the Almeida launched *Figures of Speech*, a major digital film project interrogating the vitality of speech and rhetoric, and what visionary leadership sounds like. The project continues with a second series of films to be released later this month. The films are available to be viewed for free through a dedicated microsite: speech.almeida.co.uk.

At least 500 £5 tickets are available to audiences aged 25 and under per production at the Almeida. Audiences aged 30 and under have access to 450 £15 tickets per production.

The Almeida is grateful to its Principal Partner Aspen, in its third term as the Almeida's most significant corporate supporter. Aspen was established in 2002 and is a leading global insurance and reinsurance company.

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