

ALMEIDA THEATRE

Press release: Thursday 15 February

The Almeida Theatre today announces that Romola Garai will play the title role in the world premiere of Ella Hickson's new play *The Writer*, directed by Blanche McIntyre.

World Premiere

THE WRITER

By Ella Hickson

Directed by **Blanche McIntyre**; Designed by **Anna Fleischle**

Sound Design by **Emma Laxton**; Lighting Design by **Richard Howell**

Movement by **Sasha Milavic Davies**; Casting by **Julia Horan**

Saturday 14 April – Saturday 26 May 2018

Press night: Tuesday 24 April 7pm

"I want awe. I feel like I need blood. All the time. And anything less than that makes me feel desperate. It makes me feel like I want to die."

She wants to change the shape of the world. But a new way of thinking needs a new story. How can she make herself heard?

Ella Hickson returns to the Almeida following the success of *Oil* in 2016 with the world premiere of *The Writer*, directed by Blanche McIntyre.

Tickets for *The Writer*, alongside tickets for *Machinal* and *Dance Nation*, are now on sale to general public.

Romola Garai plays the Writer. Her previous theatre credits include *Queen Anne* at the Theatre Royal Haymarket; *Measure for Measure* at the Young Vic; *Indian Ink* at Roundabout Theatre (New York); *The Village Bike* at the Royal Court; *Three Sisters* at the Lyric Hammersmith; *King Lear* and *The Seagull* for the RSC and *Calico* at the Duke of York's

Theatre. Her television work includes *The Miniaturist*, *Born to Kill*, *Churchill's Secret*, *Legacy*, *The Hour*, *Crimson Petal and the White*, *Emma*, *Mary Bryant*, *Daniel Deronda*, *Perfect*, *Attachments* and *The Last of the Blonde Bombshells*. For film, her credits include *Suffragette*, *Dominion*, *The Last Days on Mars*, *Having You*, *Junkhearts*, *One Day*, *Glorious 39*, *The Other Man*, *Atonement*, *Angel*, *Amazing Grace*, *Renaissance*, *Scoop*, *As You Like It*, *Inside I'm Dancing*, *Vanity Fair*, *Havana Nights*, *Nicholas Nickleby* and *I Capture the Castle*.

Ella Hickson's *Oil* was produced by the Almeida Theatre in 2016 (it won the Catherine Johnson Award for Best Play in 2013). Her other plays include *Merlin*, *Wendy and Peter Pan*, *Boys*, *The Authorised Kate Bane*, *Gift* (part of Headlong's *Decade*), *Precious Little Talent* and *Hot Mess*.

Blanche McIntyre directs. Her theatre credits include *The Norman Conquests* at Chichester Festival Theatre; *Titus Andronicus* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* for the RSC; *Noises Off* at the Nottingham Playhouse; *Welcome Home*, *Captain Fox!* at the Donmar Warehouse; *The Oresteia* at HOME, Manchester; *As You Like It* and *The Comedy of Errors* at Shakespeare's Globe; *Arcadia* for English Touring Theatre and Ambassador Theatre Group; *Accolade* at St James' Theatre and also at the Finborough Theatre; *Tonight at 8:30* and *The Nutcracker* at Nuffield Southampton Theatres; *Ciphers* for Out of Joint, Bush Theatre and Exeter Northcott; *The Birthday Party* at the Manchester Royal Exchange and *The Seagull* for Headlong Theatre, Nuffield Southampton Theatres and Derby Theatre (winner of Best Director at 2013 UK Theatre Awards) and *Foxfinder* at the Finborough Theatre. McIntyre was the winner of the 2011 Critics' Circle Most Promising Newcomer Award. She will direct *The Winter's Tale* at Shakespeare's Globe later this year.

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

Saturday 14 April – Saturday 26 May 2018

The Writer

By **Ella Hickson**

Directed by **Blanche McIntyre**

Press night: Tuesday 24 April 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 – 7.30pm, Monday – Saturday)

In person 10am – 7.30pm, Monday – Saturday

Nearest Tube: Angel / Highbury & Islington

Website almeida.co.uk

Twitter @AlmeidaTheatre

Facebook facebook.com/almeidatheatre

Instagram @almeida_theatre

Access Captioned performance:
Saturday 11 May 7:30pm
Audio Described performance:
Saturday 19 May 2.30pm (Touch Tour at 12.45pm)

Talkback Post-show discussion with members of the company
Free to same day ticket holders
Thursday 3 May

Almeida Questions An eclectic programme of pre-show discussions, which consider some of the questions raised by the work on our stage
Monday 30 April

2018 SPRING/SUMMER SEASON

THE WRITER

Saturday 14 April – Saturday 26 May

Press night: Tuesday 24 April 7pm

MACHINAL

Monday 4 June – Saturday 21 July

Press night: Monday 11 June 7pm

£¥€\$ (LIES)

Wednesday 1 – Saturday 18 August

Press performances: Wednesday 1 August 6pm and 9pm; Thursday 2 August 6pm

DANCE NATION

Monday 27 August – Saturday 6 October

Press night: Tuesday 4 September

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. It 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. 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. In summer 2013, Rupert Goold joined the Almeida as Artistic Director. Under his leadership, notable productions have included *American Psycho: a new musical thriller* (transferred to Broadway); *Ghosts* (transferred to the West End and won three Olivier Awards); *Chimerica* (won eight Olivier Awards and transferred to Broadway); *King Charles III* (transferred to the West End, won the Olivier Award for Best New Play, transferred to Broadway, toured the UK and Sydney, and received a BBC

television adaptation) and *Oresteia* (transferred to the West End and won the Olivier Award for Best Director). 2017 saw West End transfers for *Hamlet*, directed by Robert Icke and *Ink*, directed by Goold, and Icke's new adaptation of *Mary Stuart* is currently running at the Duke of York's Theatre before touring to Bath, Salford and Cambridge. The Almeida was named London Theatre of the Year at the 2018 Stage Awards.

In summer 2015, the Almeida presented *Almeida Greeks*, which included three new productions of *Oresteia*, *Bakkhai* and *Medea*, and live durational readings of *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* which were both live streamed achieving 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 third series of films will be launched in spring 2018 at www.speech.almeida.co.uk. The Almeida is grateful to the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and a range of generous individual supporters for making this project possible.

3000 £5 tickets are available to audiences aged 25 and under each year for Almeida productions.

The Almeida Theatre is a registered charity and is dependent on the support of individuals, companies, trusts and foundations. Our small auditorium, even when sold out, only provides 40% of the funding we need to operate. We therefore need to raise more than £2m each year to realise our artistic ambitions, reach new audiences, and secure the financial future of the theatre.

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. www.aspen.co

The Almeida is grateful for the support of Arts Council England.