

ALMEIDA THEATRE

Press release: Monday 19 February 12pm

The programme is today announced for *Almeida For Free – Summer & Smoke*, the Almeida Theatre’s free festival for anyone aged 25 and under taking place from Tuesday 3 – Thursday 5 April.

In addition to three performances of Rebecca Frecknall’s production of Tennessee Williams’ *Summer and Smoke* performed entirely for free to 25s and under, the festival features a programme of free live theatre, music, cabaret and comedy, exclusive masterclasses with creative professionals and panel discussions.

The line-up includes:

- Late night performances from drag girl band **DENIM** and award-winning comedian **Jayde Adams**.
- The first London run of immersive binaural Edinburgh Fringe hit **Séance**.
- Masterclass workshops from playwrights **Inua Ellams** and **Lulu Raczka**, theatre-maker **Emma Frankland** and physical theatre director **Kane Husbands**.
- ***So You Think You’re A (Female) Director?*** – a panel discussion about being a female theatre director in today’s industry.
- A series of events curated and produced by the **Almeida Young Producers** and **Almeida Young Critics**.

Alongside the festival, the Almeida Participation team is running an outreach programme, connecting with local youth organisations and schools to provide workshops, tickets and opportunities to perform on the Almeida stage as part of the Almeida’s commitment to engaging with new audiences.

Almeida Theatre Artistic Director **Rupert Goold** said today, “I can’t wait to throw open the doors of the theatre to young people for the second Almeida For Free festival, three days crammed full of fearless performance, thought-provoking debates and inspiring workshops. Last year 1600 people aged 25 and under saw *Hamlet* for free and 69% of the participants in the festival had never visited the Almeida before. This is why it’s so incredibly important that the festival is returning again during *Summer and Smoke* and, alongside our commitment of 3000 £5 tickets per year for people aged 25 and under, it demonstrates the value we place on getting young people into the building.”

Tickets to all events will be entirely free and available to book from midday on Tuesday 20 February.

Go to almeida.co.uk/almeidaforfree

This year's festival has been made possible through the generous support of **The Taylor Family Foundation**. The Taylor Family Foundation, set up in 2007 by Ian and Cristina Taylor, supports charities giving opportunities to children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to improve their chances of attaining success; improving access and engagement in the performing arts and helping the homeless and struggling families to overcome their challenges. <http://www.thetaylorfamilyfoundation.co.uk/>

FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

REBECCA FRECKNALL DIRECTING MASTERCLASS

Tuesday 3 April 12pm-2pm

Workshop led by Rebecca Frecknall, director of *Summer and Smoke*.

SO YOU THINK YOU'RE A (FEMALE) DIRECTOR?

Tuesday 3 April 2:30pm-4:30pm

A panel of the theatre's leading female directors will talk about what it means to be a woman in the industry and how they navigated their journey to where they are today. The event will be live captioned.

ACTING MASTERCLASSES

Tuesday 3 April 2:30pm-4:30pm and Thursday 5 April 2:30pm-4:30pm

Led by members of the *Summer and Smoke* cast, these workshops will look specifically at Tennessee Williams' text drawing on techniques used in rehearsals.

EMMA FRANKLAND THEATRE-MAKING MASTERCLASS

Tuesday 3 April 4:45pm-6:45pm

Theatre-maker Emma Frankland explores making theatre using yourself and your story.

SÉANCE

Tuesday 3 April 8pm-11pm; Wednesday 4 April 3:30pm-6:30pm and 8pm-11pm; Thursday 5 April 3:30pm-6:30pm and 8pm-11pm (Each performance lasts 20 minutes)

A presentation in complete darkness. Proceed with an open mind.

This intense sonic performance from Darkfield explores group psychology and superstition in an unnerving exercise in suspense and surprise.

DENIM: WORLD TOUR

Tuesday 3 April 10:45pm-11:45pm

Experience DENIM's unique take on drag as they present a vibrant carousel of twisted pop classics and original songs interspersed with stand-up and sketch comedy.

DESIGN MASTERCLASS

Wednesday 4 April 10am-2pm

An insight into the everyday practicalities of working as a theatre designer.

REIMAGININGS

Wednesday 4 April 2pm-3pm

Three local youth organisations, led by industry directors, present reimaginings of Tennessee Williams' *Summer and Smoke*.

INUA ELLAMS WRITING MASTERCLASS

Wednesday 4 April 3pm-5pm

Poet, playwright and performer Inua Ellams (writer of *The Barber Shop Chronicles*) leads this writing workshop exploring his work and process.

ANSWERS BACK: YOUNG, ANXIOUS AND OVER IT

Wednesday 4 April 4pm-5:30pm

A panel of guest speakers discuss everyday pressures and their effects on young people.

KANE HUSBANDS MOVEMENT MASTERCLASS

Wednesday 4 April 5pm-7pm

Artistic Director of physical theatre company The Pappy Show, Kane Husbands leads this masterclass exploring the use of movement in theatre.

JAYDE ADAMS: JAYDED

Wednesday 4 April 10:45pm-11:45pm

Acclaimed comedian (nominated for 2016 Edinburgh Comedy Best Newcomer Award) is back with a new show about popularity.

LULU RACZKA WRITING MASTERCLASS

Thursday 5 April 10am-12pm

Award-winning playwright Lulu Raczka shares her approach to playwriting in this interactive masterclass.

BETWEEN THE LINES WITH THE ALMEIDA YOUNG CRITICS

Thursday 5 April 12pm-1:30pm

The Almeida Young Critics deconstruct the alchemy of *Summer and Smoke* with a panel discussion.

ALMEIDA YOUNG PRODUCERS OPEN MIC

Thursday 5 April 4pm-6pm

Two hours of talent, ideas and new work from young artists, curated by the Almeida Young Producers.

***So You Think You're A (Female) Director?* will be live captioned and the performance of *Summer and Smoke* on Tuesday 3 April will be both live captioned and audio described.**

ENDS

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

For images please use this link: <https://we.tl/0zH7IPmuQV>

NOTES TO EDITORS

ALMEIDA YOUNG PRODUCERS

The Almeida Young Producers programme offers a group of 15–25 year olds the chance to learn about producing and planning creative projects for young people. The group collaborates with the Participation team to create festivals, events and workshops. They meet staff from across the Almeida team and learn what goes into putting on productions and running the building.

ALMEIDA YOUNG CRITICS

The Almeida Young Critics group is made up of 10 young people aged 15–25 who work with the Participation department over six months to produce responses to theatre both here at the Almeida and across London. As well as having the opportunity to watch a huge variety of theatre, they'll develop the skills to engage with the work produced on stage more rigorously. They will have a chance to explore different journalistic styles, from formal written reviews, podcasts and blogging to filmed interviews, in order to capture their responses.

LISTINGS INFORMATION

Saturday 24 February – Saturday 7 April 2018

Summer and Smoke

By **Tennessee Williams**

Directed by **Rebecca Frecknall**

Press night: Wednesday 7 March 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 – 7.30pm, Monday – Saturday)

In person 10am – 7.30pm, Monday – Saturday

During the week commencing 2 April, the box office hours will be:

Monday 2 April: 12pm – 7:30pm

Tuesday 3 April: 10am – 10:45pm

Wednesday 4 April: 9am – 10:45pm

Thursday 5 April: 9am – 10:45pm

Friday 6 April 10am – 10:45pm

Saturday 7 April 10am – 7:30pm

Nearest Tube: Angel / Highbury & Islington

Website almeida.co.uk

Twitter @AlmeidaTheatre

Facebook facebook.com/almeidatheatre

Instagram @almeida_theatre

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.