

ALMEIDA THEATRE

Press release: Thursday 12 July

The Almeida Theatre today announces the full cast for the UK premiere of Clare Barron's new play *Dance Nation*, directed by Bijan Sheibani.

UK Premiere

DANCE NATION

By Clare Barron

Direction: **Bijan Sheibani**; Choreography: **Aline David**; Design: **Samal Blak**

Costume: **Moritz Junge**; Lighting: **Lee Curran**; Sound and Composition: **Marc Teitler**

Casting: **Amy Ball**; Dialect coach: **Brett Tyne**

Monday 27 August – Saturday 6 October 2018

Press night: Tuesday 4 September 7pm

"Maybe this is the year, this is the moment, this is the dance where your lives will start!"

Somewhere in America, a revolution is coming.

An army of competitive dancers is ready to take over the world, one routine at a time.

With a pre-teen battle for power and perfection raging on and off stage, *Dance Nation* is a ferocious exploration of youth, ambition and self-discovery.

Winner of the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize and The Relentless Award, Clare Barron's explosive new play *Dance Nation* makes its UK debut in summer 2018, directed by Bijan Sheibani.

The cast includes **Brendan Cowell**, **Nancy Crane**, **Karla Crome**, **Miranda Foster**, **Sarah Hadland**, **Kayla Meikle**, **Irfan Shamji**, **Manjinder Virk** and **Ria Zmitrowicz**.

Clare Barron's play *Dance Nation* recently received its world premiere at Playwrights Horizons (NYC) in May 2018. It is the recipient of the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize and The Relentless Award established in honour of Philip Seymour Hoffman. Her other plays include *You Got Older* which received an Obie Award, Drama Desk nomination for Outstanding Play, and was a Susan Smith Blackburn finalist; *I'll Never Love Again*; and *Baby Screams Miracle*. She is the recipient of a Whiting Award for Drama, the Paula Vogel Playwriting Award at The Vineyard, and the Page 73 Fellowship; and is a member of New Dramatists.

Bijan Sheibani directs. He previously directed *The House of Bernarda Alba* and *Fixer* at the Almeida. His other theatre credits include *Circle Mirror Transformation* (HOME Manchester); *The Brothers Size* (Young Vic Theatre); *Barber Shop Chronicles*; *Romeo and Juliet*; *A Taste of Honey*; *Emil and the Detectives*; *The Kitchen* and *Our Class* (National Theatre); *You Got Older* (RADA); *Giving* (Hampstead Theatre); *Moonlight* (Donmar Warehouse); *Eurydice* (ATC and the Young Vic) and *Gone Too Far!* (Royal Court, Hackney Empire and Albany Theatre - Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in an Affiliate Theatre). His opera work includes *Tell Me the Truth about Love* (Streetwise Opera); *Nothing* (Glyndebourne) and *The Virtues of Things* and *Through His Teeth* (Royal Opera House). He was Associate Director at the National Theatre from 2010-2015 and Artistic Director of ATC from 2007-2010.

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

Monday 27 August – Saturday 6 October

Dance Nation

By **Clare Barron**

Directed by **Bijan Sheibani**

Press night: Tuesday 4 September

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:
Friday 28 September 7:30pm
Audio Described performance:
Saturday 22 September 2.30pm (Touch Tour at 12.45pm)

Talkback Post-show discussion with members of the company
Free to same day ticket holders
Thursday 27 September

Almeida Questions An eclectic programme of pre-show discussions, which consider some of the questions raised by the work on our stage
Monday 17 September 6pm – Dare To Dream

Notes to Editors

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Brendan Cowell plays Dance Teacher Pat. His theatre credits include *Life of Galileo* and *Yerma* (Young Vic); *The Wild Duck* (Barbican Theatre); *Once in Royal David's City* and *Miss Julie* (Belvoir Sydney); *The Dark Room* (Company B); *True West*, *Dissident*, *Goes Without Saying*, *Far Away*, *The Shape of Things* and *The Recruit* (Sydney Theatre Company) and *Hamlet* (Bell Shakespeare). His television work includes *Game of Thrones*; *Brock*; *Black Comedy*, *Wastelander Panda*; *The Slap*; *The Borgias* and the forthcoming *Press*. For film, his work includes *The Current War*, *Broke*; *Observance* and *The Darkside*.

Nancy Crane plays Maeve. She has previously appeared at the Almeida in *Summer and Smoke*, *Against* and *Chimerica*. Other theatre credits include *The Sewing Group*, *Now or Later*, *The Sweetest Thing in Baseball* and *The Strip* (Royal Court); *Teddy Ferrara* (Donmar Warehouse); *A Lie of The Mind* and *Next Fall* (Southwark Playhouse); *The Children's Hour* (Harold Pinter Theatre); *Design For Living* (Old Vic Theatre); *Love The Sinner* and *Angels in America* (National Theatre); *Chains of Dew* and *Trifles* (Orange Tree Theatre). Her television work includes *Patrick Melrose*; *Black Earth Rising*; *Genius*; *Nixon's The One*; *Upstairs, Downstairs* and *Cambridge Spies*. For film, her work includes *The Current War*; *Leavey*; *Florence Foster Jenkins*; *The Danish Girl*; *Woman in Gold* and *Batman: The Dark Knight*.

Karla Crome plays Amina. Her theatre work includes *Amadeus* (National Theatre) and *Linda* (Royal Court). Her television credits include *Misfits*; *The Level*; *You, Me and the Apocalypse*; *Under the Dome*; *Prisoner's Wives*; *Lightfields*; *Munroe* and *Hit and Miss*. For film, her work includes the forthcoming *Vita and Virginia*.

Miranda Foster plays The Moms/Vanessa. Her theatre work includes *Years of Sunlight* (Theatre 503); *Hamlet*, *God of Soho* and *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare's Globe); *Springs Eternal* (Orange Tree Theatre); *God of Carnage* (Nuffield Southampton Theatres); *The Talented Mr Ripley* (Royal & Derngate, Northampton) and *King Lear*; *The Futurists*; *Pravda*; *The Government Inspector* and *Animal Farm* (National Theatre).

Sarah Hadland plays Sofia. Her theatre work includes *The Way of the World* (Donmar Warehouse); *The War Has Not Yet Started* (Theatre Royal Plymouth at Southwark Playhouse); *The Norman Conquests* and *Canvas* (Chichester Festival Theatre); *What's In A Name?* (Birmingham Repertory Theatre) and *Raving* (Hampstead Theatre). Her television credits include *Hang Ups*; *Ratburger*; *Marley's Ghosts*; *The Moonstone*; *Inside No. 9*; *Hoff the Record*; *Comedy Playhouse*; *Galavant*; *The Job Lot*; *Brotherhood*; *Ballot Monkeys*; *W1A* and *Miranda*. For film, her credits include *Now Is Good*; *Leap Year* and *Quantum of Solace*.

Kayla Meikle plays Ashlee. Her theatre work includes *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Jack and the Beanstalk* (Lyric Hammersmith); *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet* (National Theatre) and *Merlin* (Nuffield Southampton Theatres). Her television work includes *Will*.

Irfan Shamji plays Luke. His theatre credits include *One for Sorrow* (Royal Court); *Mayfly* (Orange Tree Theatre); *Weathered* (Southwark Playhouse) and *Hamlet* (Kenneth Branagh Theatre Company). For television his work includes *It's Me Sugar* and *Informer*. His film credits include *Murder on the Orient Express* and the forthcoming *Red Joan*.

Manjinder Virk plays Connie. Her theatre work includes *Bodies*; *Free Outgoing* and *Workers Writes* (Royal Court); *Redcrosse* (RSC/Coventry Cathedral); *Shabnam*; *Autobiography of a Face* and *Unsuitable Girls* (Lyric Hammersmith) and *Come Out Eli!* (Recorded Delivery). Her television work includes *Bad Move*; *Midsomer Murders*; *Ordinary Lies*; *Hunted*; *The Thick of It* and *Monroe*. Her film credits include *The Sense of an Ending*; *Kaleidoscope*; *History's Future* and *The Arbor*.

Ria Zmitrowicz plays Zuzu. Her theatre work includes *Gundog*; *Bad Roads and X* (Royal Court); *Plastic* (Ustinov Studio); *The Crucible* (Manchester Royal Exchange); *Arcadia* (English Touring Theatre); *Four Minutes Twelve Seconds* (Hampstead Theatre and Trafalgar Studios); *Chapel Street* (Bush Theatre, Edinburgh Fringe, Liverpool Everyman); *God's Property* (Soho Theatre) and *Skanky* (Arcola Theatre). Her television credits include *Three Girls*; *Mr Selfridge*; *Youngers* and *The Midnight Beast*. For film, her work includes *Entebbe*; *Jellyfish*; *Kill Your Friends* and the forthcoming *Teen Spirit*.

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* (transferred to the West End and won five Olivier Awards); *1984* (transferred to West End, Broadway and Australia); *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 was adapted for BBC television) 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 (also screened on the BBC) and *Ink*,

directed by Goold, and Icke's new adaptation of *Mary Stuart* recently finished a West End run. Associate Director Rebecca Frecknall's production of Tennessee Williams' *Summer & Smoke* transfers to the Duke of York's Theatre in November 2018. 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 was launched in March 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.