

# ALMEIDA THEATRE

Press release: Thursday 17 October

The Almeida Theatre announces the full cast for Associate Director Rebecca Frecknall's new production of John Webster's revenge tragedy *The Duchess of Malfi*.

Also announced today is a week's extension, with the production now finishing on Saturday 25 January 2020.

## THE DUCHESS OF MALFI

by John Webster

Direction: **Rebecca Frecknall**; Design: **Chloe Lamford**

Costume: **Nicky Gillibrand**; Light: **Jack Knowles**; Sound: **George Dennis**

Monday 2 December 2019 – Saturday 25 January 2020

**Press night: Tuesday 10 December 7pm**

*"Whether we fall by ambition, blood or lust  
Like diamonds, we are cut with our own dust"*

**You fall in love.**

**You get married.**

**You have children.**

**~~You live happily ever after.~~**

Joining the previously announced **Lydia Wilson** are **Khalid Abdalla, Hadassah Allen, Leo Bill, Jersey Blu Georgia, Ioanna Kimbook, Michael Marcus, Ciarán Owens, Shalini Peiris, Jack Riddiford, Jethro Skinner** and **Kalungi Ssebandeke**.

Almeida Associate Director Rebecca Frecknall follows her Olivier Award-winning production of *Summer and Smoke* and *Three Sisters* with *The Duchess of Malfi*, John Webster's

electrifying revenge tragedy about rage, resistance and a deadly lust for power.

**John Webster** (1580 – 1634) was an English dramatist and contemporary of William Shakespeare, best known for his tragedies *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi*.

**Rebecca Frecknall** is Associate Director at the Almeida Theatre. For the Almeida, she has directed *Three Sisters*, *Summer and Smoke* (also West End and winner of two Olivier Awards including Best Revival) and worked as Associate Director on *Ink* at the Almeida/Duke of York's Theatre and Movement Director on *Albion*. She was previously on the Almeida's Resident Director programme. Away from the Almeida, her production of *Steel* by Chris Bush ran in the Sheffield Crucible Studio in 2018. She was Resident Director at Northern Stage from 2015-2016 after winning the acclaimed RTYDS Bursary. During this time she directed *Idomeneus; What Are They Like?* and *Julie* by Zinnie Harris. Before taking up this role, she worked as a freelance director in London and has worked with the National Theatre, RSC and Young Vic. She was the 2012 recipient of the National Theatre Studio's Resident Director Bursary and was awarded one of the Young Vic's Jerwood Assistant Director Bursaries in 2011.

**ENDS**

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

### **ALMEIDA LISTINGS INFORMATION**

Monday 2 December 2019 – Saturday 25 January 2020

***The Duchess of Malfi***

by **John Webster**

Directed by **Rebecca Frecknall**

**Press night: Tuesday 10 December 7pm**

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

**Café Bar** The Almeida Café Bar is open from 11.00am -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 20 December 7:30pm  
Audio Described performance:  
Saturday 4 January 2:30pm (Touch Tour at 12.45pm)

**Talkback**                              Post-show discussion with members of the company  
Free to same performance ticket holders  
Thursday 2 January (after 7:30pm performance)

**Almeida Questions**      An eclectic programme of pre-show discussions, which consider some of the questions raised by the work on our stage  
Saturday 11 January 6pm – Does power corrupt?

### Notes to Editors

### **CAST BIOGRAPHIES**

**Khalid Abdalla** plays Antonio. He previously appeared at the Almeida in *Shipwreck*. His other theatre credits include *An Injury* (Ovalhouse); *Why It's Kicking Off Everywhere* (Young Vic); *The Suppliants* (Battersea Arts Centre) and *Tamburlaine The Great* (Rose Theatre). His television work includes *Hanna*; *Moving On*; *Electric Dreams* and *Spooks*. For film, his work includes *Underdogs*; *Assassin's Creed*; *Tigers*; *Our Kind of Traitor*; *The Square*; *The Narrow Frame of Midnight*; *Birds like Us*; *In the Last Days of the City*; *Green Zone*; *The Kite Runner* and *United 93*.

**Leo Bill** plays Bosola. He previously appeared at the Almeida in *The Tragedy of King Richard the Second*. His other theatre credits include *Mephisto [A Rhapsody]* and *Dear Elizabeth* (Gate Theatre); *Curtains* (Rose Theatre Kingston); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Glass Menagerie* (Young Vic); *Hamlet* and *School for Scandal* (Barbican); *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire* and *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (National Theatre); *Secret Theatre* (Lyric Hammersmith); *The Silence of the Sea* (Donmar Warehouse) and *Posh* (Royal Court and West End). His recent television work includes *The Long Song*; *Strike*; *Taboo*; *The White Queen*; *The Borgias* and *Pramface*. His film credits include *Rare Beasts*; *Peterloo*; *In Fabric*; *Alice through the Looking Glass*; *Mr Turner*; *A Long Way Down*; *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*; *Kinky Boots*; *Vera Drake*; *28 Days Later* and *Gosford Park*.

**Ioanna Kimbook** plays Cariola. She recently graduated from Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. Her theatre credits include *Bitter Wheat* (Garrick Theatre) and her television work includes *Inside No. 9*.

**Michael Marcus** plays the Cardinal. His theatre credits include *Valued Friends* (Rose Theatre Kingston); *The Inheritance* (Young Vic and Noel Coward Theatre); *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (RSC); *Richard II* (Donmar Warehouse) and *Jumpy* (Royal Court). His television work includes *Siblings*; *Lucan*; *Ripper Street*; *The White Queen* and *Misfits*. For film, his work includes *Their Finest*; *The Theory of Everything*; *The Physician* and *The Invisible Women*.

**Ciarán Owens** plays Delio. His theatre credits include *Love and Information* (Sheffield Crucible); *Tumulus* (Vault Festival); *Abigail's Party* (Theatre Royal Bath and tour); *Disco Pigs* (tour); *The Brink* (Orange Tree Theatre); *King John* (Shakespeare's Globe); *So Here We Are* (Manchester Royal Exchange/High Tide); *The Crocodile* (The Invisible Dot/Manchester International Festival); *Oh What a Lovely War* (Theatre Royal Stratford East); *Candide*, *A Mad World My Masters* and *Titus Andronicus* (RSC); *Mercury Fur* (Old Red Lion/ Trafalgar Studios) and *Our Country's Good* (Out of Joint). His television work includes *The Last Kingdom*; *Strike Back*; *Crazyhead* and *Arthur and George*. And for film, his work includes *Red Joan* and *Where Hands Touch*.

**Shalini Peiris** plays Julia. Her theatre credits include *Hobson's Choice* (Manchester Royal Exchange); *Lions and Tigers* (Shakespeare's Globe); *The House of In Between* (Theatre Royal Stratford East); *Macbeth* (Tara Arts); *Little Stitches* (Theatre503); *Drawing the Line* (Hampstead Theatre); *The Usual Auntijies* (Belgrade Theatre); *The House of Bilquis Bibi*

(Tamasha/Hampstead Theatre); *Lotus Beauty* and *Zindabad* (Tamasha/Gate Theatre). Her television work includes *Danny and Mick*, *Vera* and *The Athena*.

**Jack Riddiford** plays Ferdinand. His theatre credits include *The Inheritance* (Noel Coward Theatre); *A View from the Bridge* and *Macbeth* (Tobacco Factory Theatre) and *Junkyard* (Headlong). His television work includes *Invisible* and *Poldark*. For film, his work includes *Guns Akimbo*, *Dunkirk* and *Journey's End*.

**Jethro Skinner** plays Pescara/Roderigo/Servant/Executioner. He previously appeared at the Almeida in *The Hunt*. His other theatre credits include *Tis Pity She's A Whore* (Shakespeare's Globe); *Twelfth Night*, *Richard III* (West End/Broadway); *Skåne* (Hampstead Theatre); *The Odyssey* (The Factory and Creation Theatre); *A Soldier's Tale* (Mid Wales Chamber Orchestra); *Hamlet*; *The Seagull* and *Cymbeline* (The Factory); *Romeo and Juliet* (Vienna's English Theatre); *The Snow Queen* (Library Theatre, Manchester). His television work includes *The Royals* and *Wire in the Blood*. For film, his work includes *Plyus Odin* for which he won Best Actor Award at the Sochi Open Russian Film Festival 2008.

**Kalungi Ssebandeke** plays Malateste/Grisolan/Servant/Executioner. His theatre credits include *Blood Knot* (Orange Tree Theatre); *Image of an Unknown Young Woman* (Gate Theatre); *We Are Proud to Present* (Bush Theatre) and *One Monkey Don't Stop No Show* (Eclipse Theatre/Kiln Theatre/Sheffield Theatres). For television, his work includes *Doctor Who*. As a writer, his plays include *Assata Taught Me* (Gate Theatre).

**Lydia Wilson** plays the Duchess. She previously appeared at the Almeida in *King Charles III* (also West End and Broadway – nominated for Best Actress at 2015 Olivier Awards). Her other theatre credits include *Fool for Love* (Found 111); *Hysteria* (Hampstead Theatre); *'Tis Pity She's A Whore* (Cheek By Jowl); *The Acid Test* and *The Heretic* (Royal Court Theatre); *Blasted* (Lyric Hammersmith); *Pains of Youth* (National Theatre) and *The House of Special Purpose* (Chichester Festival Theatre). For television, her work includes *Flack*; *Requiem*; *Ripper Street*; *Misfits*; *Black Mirror*; *The Crimson Petal and the White*; *South Riding*; *Any Human Heart* and *Peter Versus Life*. Her film work includes, *Star Trek Beyond*; *Love Is Thicker than Water*; *About Time* and *Never Let Me Go*.

## ABOUT THE ALMEIDA

The Almeida Theatre 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.

Since 2013, the Almeida has been led by Artistic Director Rupert Goold. During his tenure, 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). Recently, there have been West End transfers for Robert Icke's productions of *Hamlet* (also screened on the BBC) and *Mary Stuart, Ink* directed by Goold (also Broadway) and Rebecca Frecknall's production of *Summer and Smoke* (winner of Best Play Revival and Best Actress at the 2019 Olivier Awards). The Almeida was named London Theatre of the Year at The Stage Awards in both 2015 and 2018.

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. The 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. Find out more about supporting here: [almeida.co.uk/support-us](http://almeida.co.uk/support-us).

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](http://www.aspen.co)

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