

ALMEIDA THEATRE

Press release: Friday 21 February

The Almeida Theatre announces that Anne-Marie Duff will play the role of Constance in the forthcoming World Premiere of Beth Steel's *The House of Shades*, directed by Blanche McIntyre.

World Premiere

THE HOUSE OF SHADES

by **Beth Steel**

Direction: **Blanche McIntyre**; Design: **Anna Fleischle**; Costume: **Anna Fleischle** and **Liam Bunster**; Lighting: **Richard Howell**; Sound: **Gregory Clarke**; Movement; **Lucy Hind**;
Casting: **Annelie Powell**

Monday 18 May – Saturday 27 June 2020

Press night: Tuesday 26 May 7pm

Nothing cuts into us like the family knife.

The Webster House.

1965. 1979. 1985. 1996. 2019.

Death silences no one, least of all the dead.

Blanche McIntyre (*The Writer*) directs the world premiere of Beth Steel's (*Wonderland*) new play which spans five decades of the lives, and deaths, of the Webster family.

Inside their home, set against the ever-changing industrial landscape of working-class Britain, some chase dreams of a brighter future and others are haunted by the nightmares of the past.

Cast includes: Anne-Marie Duff, with further casting to be announced soon.

Beth Steel's plays include *Labyrinth*, *Wonderland* and *Ditch*. She was awarded the Charles Wintour Award for Most Promising Playwright at the Evening Standard Theatre Awards 2014.

Blanche McIntyre directs. She returns to the Almeida having previously directed *The Writer*. Her other credits include *Botticelli in the Fire* (Hampstead Theatre); *Bartholomew Fair*, *A Winter's Tale*, *As You Like It* and *The Comedy of Errors* (Shakespeare's Globe); *Tartuffe* (National Theatre); *The Norman Conquests* (Chichester Festival Theatre); *Titus Andronicus* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (RSC); *Noises Off* (Nottingham Playhouse); *Welcome Home*, *Captain Fox!* (Donmar Warehouse); *The Oresteia* (HOME, Manchester); *Arcadia* (English Touring Theatre and Ambassador Theatre Group); *Accolade* (Finborough Theatre); *Tonight at 8:30* and *The Nutcracker* (Nuffield Southampton Theatres); *Ciphers* (Out of Joint, Bush Theatre and Exeter Northcott); *The Birthday Party* (Royal Exchange Theatre) and *The Seagull* (Headlong Theatre, Nuffield Southampton Theatres and Derby Theatre – winner of Best Director at 2013 UK Theatre Awards); *Foxfinder* and *Accolade* (Finborough Theatre). She was the winner of the 2011 Critics' Circle Most Promising Newcomer Award.

Anne-Marie Duff plays Constance. She returns to the Almeida having previously appeared in *Oil* in 2016 and in the Almeida's 1999 production of *Vassa* at the Albery Theatre. Her other theatre credits include *Sweet Charity*, *Berenice*; *Days of Wine and Roses* (Donmar Warehouse); *Macbeth*; *Common*; *Husbands and Sons*; *Strange Interlude*; *Saint Joan*; *King Lear*; *War and Peace*; *La Grande Magia* (National Theatre); *Cause Célèbre* (Old Vic); *The Soldier's Fortune*; *The Daughter in Law*; (Young Vic); *Playboy of the Western World* (Druid Theatre Company); *A Doll's House* (Shared Experience Theatre Comp) and *Collected Stories* (Haymarket Theatre Royal). For television, her work includes *Sex Education*; *His Dark Materials*; *Watership Down*; *From Darkness*; *Murder*; *The Accused Mo's Story*; *Parade's End*; *Margot*; *The History of Mr Polly*; *The Virgin Queen*; *Shameless*; *Doctor Zhivago*; *Wild West*; *The Way We Live Now*; *Aristocrats*; *Amongst Women*. Her film credits include *On Chesil Beach*; *Suffragette*; *Before I Go to Sleep*; *Molly Moon*; *Sanctuary*; *Closed Circuit*; *Nowhere Boy*; *The Last Station*; *Is Anybody There*; *French Film*; *Born Equal*; *Garage*; *The Waiting Room*; *Magdalene Sisters* and *Enigma*.

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 18 May – Saturday 27 June 2020

The House of Shades

by **Beth Steel**

Directed by **Blanche McIntyre**

Press night: Tuesday 26 May 7pm

Address	Almeida Theatre, Almeida Street, London, N1 1TA
Café Bar	The Almeida Café and 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: Thursday 18 June 7:30pm Audio Described performance: Saturday 20 June 2:30pm (Touch Tour at 12.45pm)
Talkback	Post-show discussion with members of the company Free to same performance ticket holders Thursday 18 June
Almeida Questions	An eclectic programme of pre-show discussions, which consider some of the questions raised by the work on our stage Monday 15 June 6pm – Do artists lack imagination in representing the working-class?

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); *Oresteia* (transferred to the West End and won the Olivier Award for Best Director) and *The Hunt*. Recently, there have been West End transfers for *Ink* directed by Goold (also Broadway), Associate Director Rebecca Frecknall's production of *Summer & Smoke* (winner of Best Play Revival and Best Actress at the 2019 Olivier Awards) and Robert Icke's productions of *Hamlet* (also screened on the BBC) and *Mary Stuart* and his production of *The Doctor* transfers to the Duke of York's Theatre in April 2020. 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. Therefore, more than £2m each year needs to be raised in order 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.