

PRESS RELEASE

Monday 26 February 2018

David Edgar celebrates 70th birthday with debut professional stage performance

- Edgar to write and perform *Trying It On*, reflecting on the legacy of the generation who were 20 in 1968
- Production to tour Midlands venues in Spring before Autumn dates at the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Royal Court Theatre
- *Trying It On* to be directed by Christopher Haydon and produced by China Plate

On the day that one of the most important British playwrights of the post-1960s generation celebrates his 70th birthday, he is also announcing his stage debut. *Trying It On* is a new play written and performed by David Edgar, which reflects on the legacy of the worldwide student revolt of 1968 (when David was 20 and at university), drawing on first person interviews with some of the leading political figures of the time, as well as contemporary activists.

Noted for his political dramas, which have been staged at the National Theatre and at the Royal Shakespeare Company, the events of 1968 - including the Vietnam war, Enoch Powell's infamous "rivers of blood" speech and the assassination of Martin Luther King - helped define David Edgar's politics and give focus to his writing. **In *Trying It On*, the 70-year-old David is confronted by his 20-year-old self, asking whether they share the same beliefs, and if not, what has changed.**

The text has been developed through interviews conducted by the playwright with activists past and present. **The production will be directed by Christopher Haydon and produced by independent studio China Plate.**

Speaking about the project, David Edgar said "The last time I performed on a stage was as Captain Bligh in a student production of *Mutiny on the Bounty*, in the early 1970s. Having spent most of the last 50 years writing things for other people to say, I thought it was time to have a conversation with myself. Performing - and seeing myself on film - has been a revelation. The autobiographical solo show has become an important theatre art-form of itself, and it's great to be working with a brilliantly creative team to make it."

David's 70th birthday year sees a number of revivals of his work. Alongside his adaptations of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (currently touring) and *A Christmas Carol* (returning to the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in December), another major David Edgar play is being revived in the autumn.

The Midlands-based playwright will debut *Trying It On* at Warwick Arts Centre (7-9 June) before moving to Birmingham Repertory Theatre (12-13 June), followed by The Other Place at the Royal Shakespeare Company in the Autumn (details announced May 2018) and London's home of new writing, the Royal Court Theatre (24-27 Oct).

@youoldchina | #tryingitonplay| <http://www.chinaplatetheatre.com/>

Company Information

Written and performed by **David Edgar** Directed by **Christopher Haydon**

Designed by **Frankie Bradshaw**

Lighting and Video Designed by **William Reynolds**

Sound Designed by **Ella Wahlström**

MOBIUS.

The Lower Vestry
St George's Bloomsbury
6-7 Little Russell St
London WC1A 2HR

Listings information

Warwick Arts Centre and China Plate present

***Trying it On* by David Edgar**

Warwick Arts Centre, University of Warwick, Gibbet Hill Rd, Coventry CV4 7AL

7-9 June, 7.45pm

<https://www.warwickartscentre.co.uk/> | 024 7652 4524

Birmingham Repertory Theatre, Centenary Square, Broad Street, Birmingham B1 2EP

12-13 June, 8pm

<https://www.birmingham-rep.co.uk/> | 0121 236 4455

01789 403493

Royal Court Theatre, Sloane Square, Chelsea, London SW1W 8AS

24-27 October 7.45pm

<https://royalcourttheatre.com/> | 020 7565 5000