

## PRESS RELEASE – 20 June 2019

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NATIONAL THEATRE WALES AND ROYAL COURT  
THEATRE

# ON BEAR RIDGE

- **CASTING IS ANNOUNCED FOR NATIONAL THEATRE WALES AND ROYAL COURT THEATRE PRODUCTION OF *ON BEAR RIDGE* BY ED THOMAS**
- **THE CAST WILL BE RAKIE AYOLA, JASON HUGHES, RHY S IFANS AND SION DANIEL YOUNG**
- ***ON BEAR RIDGE* WILL BE CO-DIRECTED BY VICKY FEATHERSTONE AND ED THOMAS**
- **THE PLAY RUNS AT THE SHERMAN THEATRE, CARDIFF FROM 20 SEPTEMBER – 5 OCTOBER. FOLLOWED BY THE ROYAL COURT THEATRE, LONDON FROM 24 OCTOBER - 23 NOVEMBER**

Casting is today announced for the **National Theatre Wales** and **Royal Court Theatre** co-production of *On Bear Ridge* by award-winning writer **Ed Thomas** (*House of America* and *Gas Station Angel*, Royal Court; *Hinterland/Y Gwyll* BBC/S4C/Netflix). Royal Court Artistic Director **Vicky Featherstone** (*The Cane* and *Cyprus Avenue*, Royal Court) and **Ed Thomas** will co-direct this semi-autobiographical story about the places we leave behind, the indelible marks they make on us, and the unreliable memories we hold onto.

The cast will include **Rakie Ayola** as Noni. She is currently performing *Strange Fruit* at the Bush Theatre. Previous stage credits include Hermione Granger in *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* (West End), *The Half God of Rainfall* (Kiln Theatre) and *Leave to Remain* (Lyric Hammersmith). On television she is best known for her long running role as Kyla Tyson in *Holby City* (BBC).

**Jason Hughes** will play The Captain. He returns to the Royal Court where his work has included *Violence and Son*, *4:48 Psychosis* and *A Real Classy Affair*. Other recent stage roles include *The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia* (West End) and *Our Country's Good* (National Theatre). On television he played Warren in *This Life* (BBC) and Detective Sergeant Ben Jones in *Midsomer Murders* (ITV). Other recent TV credits include *Marcella* (ITV), *Death in Paradise* and *Three Girls* (both BBC).

**Rhys Ifans** will play John Daniel. On stage he recently played the title role in *Exit the King* and caused a sensation in the one-man show of *Protest Song* (National Theatre). He also played the iconic role of Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* and also The Fool in *King Lear* (Old Vic). Rhys's extensive film work includes *Elizabeth* (dir. Shekhar Kapur), *Greenberg* (dir.

Noah Baumbach), *Nanny McPhee*, *Harry Potter*, *Mr Nice*, *Anonymous*, *The Amazing Spider-Man*, *Enduring Love* and of course Richard Curtis' *Notting Hill*. He won a BAFTA for his performance as Peter Cook in *Not Only But Always* and will next appear in the new comedy drama film *Misbehaviour* directed by Philippa Lowethorpe and Matthew Vaughn's latest film *Kingsman: The Great Game*.

The cast is completed by **Sion Daniel Young** as Ifan William. Sion returns to the Sherman Theatre and Royal Court following *Killology*. His credits for National Theatre Wales include *The Radicalisation of Bradley Manning*, *Mametz* and *The Village Social*. He played leading roles in *War Horse* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night* (both West End) and last year performed in *Nightfall* (Bridge Theatre). He will next appear in *Jellyfish* (National Theatre). His TV roles include *Hinterland/Y Gwyll* BBC/S4C/Netflix also written by Ed Thomas

*"One minute we had customers, the next minute there was no-one."*

In a lost village, blurred by redrawn borders, hidden under a crumb on the map, Bear Ridge Stores still stands.

After a hundred years, the family butchers and grocers – a place for odds and ends, contraband goods, and the last petrol pump for 30 miles – is now silent.

But owners John Daniel and Noni are not leaving.

They are defiantly drinking the remaining whiskey and remembering good times, when everyone was on the same side and the old language shone.

Outside in the dark, a figure is making their way towards them.

**The play will run at the Sherman Theatre in Cardiff (20 September – 5 October) followed by the Royal Court in London (24 October – 23 November).**

**-ENDS-**

**For further information please contact Laura Myers The Corner Shop PR on  
020 7831 7657**

**[laura@thecornershoppr.com](mailto:laura@thecornershoppr.com)**

## **LISTINGS**

National Theatre Wales and Royal Court Theatre

### **ON BEAR RIDGE**

by Ed Thomas

Directors Vicky Featherstone and Ed Thomas

Designer Cai Dyfan

Composer John Hardy

Sound Designer Mike Beer

Running time: TBC

Ages 14+

**Sherman Theatre, Senghennydd Road, Cathays, Cardiff, CF24 4YE**

First Performance: 20 September 2019

Final Performance: 5 October 2019

Opening Night: 24 September at 7pm

Monday – Saturday 7.30pm, matinees on Thursday 3 October and Saturday 5 October at 2pm

<https://www.shermantheatre.co.uk/performance/theatre/on-bear-ridge/>

**029 2064 6900**

Standard Tickets £20

Previews: £15 on 20, 21 and 23 September

Concessions: £18

Under 25s Half Price

Audio Described, Touch Tour and BSL: Friday 4 October 7.30pm and Saturday 5 October 2pm

Monday 30 September - Saturday 5 October – All performances Captioned on iPads provided by National Theatre Wales.

Post show talks Thursday 26th September, and matinee of Thursday 3rd October.

**Jerwood Theatre Downstairs, Royal Court Theatre, Sloane Square, SW1W 8AS**

First Performance: 24 October

Final Performance: 23 November

Opening Night: 28 October at 7pm

Monday – Saturday 7.30pm, Thursday & Saturday matinees 2.30pm

<https://royalcourttheatre.com/whats-on/onbearridge/>

**020 7565 5000**

Captioned Performances: Wednesday 6, 13 & 20 November, Friday 22 November 2019

Audio Described Matinee: Saturday 23 November 2019, 2.30pm. Touch tour at 1pm

Relaxed Environment Performance: Saturday 16 November 2019, 2:30pm

The Big Idea: In Conversation with Ed Thomas and Vicky Featherstone Tuesday 5 November post-show

Standard Tickets £12-£49 (Mondays all seats £12 available from 9am online on the day of performance)

Concessions\* £5 off Band A - C seats for previews and matinees

Under 26s

Access £15 (plus a companion at the same rate)

\*ID required. All discounts subject to availability.

**Young Court Friends Tickets** Young Court Friends is a free membership scheme for Under 26s. We offer a limited number of £15 tickets for all performances to Young Court Friends, as well as advance access to £12 Mondays in the Jerwood Theatre Downstairs.

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**BIOGRAPHIES**

**RAKIE AYOLA**

For the Royal Court: Breath, Boom, Ashes and Sand.

Other theatre includes: Strange Fruit, The Rest of Your Life (Bush); The Half God of Rainfall, King Hedley II (Kiln); Leave to Remain (Lyric, Hammersmith); Harry Potter & the Cursed Child, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time (West End); King Lear (Royal Exchange, Manchester); 4.48

Psychosis, Crave (Crucible, Sheffield); The Winter's Tale (RSC/UK tour); In The Next Room (Theatre Royal, Bath); Welcome to Thebes (National); Twelfth Night (Bristol Old Vic); Dido Queen Of Carthage (Globe); Hamlet, Twelfth Night (Birmingham Rep/UK tour); Up 'N Under, The Merchant of Venice (Sherman).

Television includes: Noughts & Crosses, Shetland, No Offence, Vera, Midsomer Murders, Under Milk Wood, Stella, Silent Witness, My Almost Famous Family, Doctor Who: Midnight, Holby City, Sea Of Souls, Canterbury Tales, Being April.

Film includes: Been So Long, King Lear, Dredd, Now is Good, Sahara, The I Inside, The Secret Laughter of Women, Great Moments in Aviation aka Shades of Fear.

As Executive Producer, film includes: Twelfth Night [Shanty Productions].

Radio includes: Dr Who: Time War II, Reading from Happiness, Foursome, Three Strong Women, Death & the King's Horseman, The Devil's Music, The Erl King, The Bloody Chamber, Torchwood.

Rakie is a patron of Childhood Tumour Trust and Eclipse Theatre and is a trustee of Actor's Children Trust.

## **JASON HUGHES**

For the Royal Court: Violence & Son, 4:48 Psychosis, A Real Classy Affair.

Other theatre includes: The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?, In Flame (West End); Our Country's Good, Look Back in Anger (National); Way Upstream (Chichester Festival); In the Next Room/The Vibrator Play (St James); Design for Living, The Fight for Barbara (Theatre Royal, Bath); Caligula, Badfinger (Donmar); Kiss Me Like You Mean It (Soho); The Herbal Bed (RSC/Tour); Snake in the Grass (Old Vic); The Illusion (Royal Exchange, Manchester); Nothing to Pay (Thin Language); Macbeth (Theatr Clwyd). Television includes: Marcella, Three Girls, Death in Paradise VI, Archer, Midsomer Murders, Pornography, This Life – 10 Years On, Mine All Mine, Waking the Dead, Casualty, Plane Jane, The Harry Enfield Show: Yule Log Chums, The Fint Street Nativity, This Life, King Girl, Strangers in the Night.

Film includes: Crow, For N(o)ne, Dead Long Enough, Dirty Bomb, Phoenix Blue, Killing Me Softly, Shooters, House!, We Are Kings.

## **RHYS IFANS**

For the Royal Court: Thyesters.

Other theatre includes: Exit the King, Protest Song, Volpone, Under Milk Wood (National); A Christmas Carol, King Lear (Old Vic); Don Juan in Soho, Accidental Death of an Anarchist, Badfinger (Donmar); Beautiful Thing (West End); Smoke, Poison Pen (Royal Exchange, Manchester).

Television includes: Berlin Station, Not Only But Always, Shakespeare Shorts, Neverland, Elementary, Gifted, A Number, The Marriage of Reason, Squalor.

Film includes: Official Secrets, The Parting Glass, Snowden, Alice Through the Looking Glass, Notting Hill, Dominion, Len & Company, Under Milk Wood, The Five Year Engagement, Serena, Another Me, The Amazing Spiderman, Anonymous, Greenberg, Nanny McPhee, Harry Potter & the Deathly Hallows, Mr Nice, The Boat that Rocked, Elizabeth: The Golden Age, Hannibal Rising: Once Upon A Time in the Midlands, Human Nature, Hotel, The Shipping News, The Replacements.

Awards include: BAFTA for Best Actor (Not Only But Always).

## **SION DANIEL YOUNG**

For the Royal Court: Killology.

Theatre includes: The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, War Horse (& West End), Jellyfish (National); Nightfall (Bridge); Mametz, The Radicalisation of Bradley Manning, (National Theatre Wales); The Welsh Boy (Theatre Royal, Bath); Llwyth (Sherman).

Television includes: Doc Martin, The Left Behind, Commoners, Hinterland, Our World War, Casualty, Tissues & Issues, Gwaith Cartref.

Film includes: Stump [short], Another Me, Private Peaceful, Daisy Chain.

Radio includes: Bisgits a Balaclafas, Hoshiko, Inside Information.

## VICKY FEATHERSTONE

For the Royal Court: *The Cane, Gundog, My Mum's a Twat, Cyprus Avenue* (& Abbey, Dublin/Public, NYC), *Bad Roads, Victory Condition, X, How to Hold Your Breath, God Bless the Child, Maidan: Voices from the Uprising, The Mistress Contract, The Ritual Slaughter of Gorge Mastromas; Untitled Matriarch Play, The President Has Come to See You* (Open Court Weekly Rep).

Other theatre includes: *What if Women Ruled the World?* (Manchester International Festival); *Our Ladies of Perpetual Succour* (& National/West End/International tour), *Enquirer* [co-director], *An Appointment with the Wicker Man, 27, The Wheel, Somersaults, Wall of Death: A Way of Life* [co-director], *The Miracle Man, Empty, Long Gone Lonesome* (National Theatre of Scotland); *Cockroach* (National Theatre of Scotland/Traverse); *365* (National Theatre of Scotland/Edinburgh International Festival); *Mary Stuart* (National Theatre of Scotland/Citizens/Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh); *The Wolves in the Walls* [co-director] (National Theatre of Scotland/Tramway/Lyric, Hammersmith/UK tour/New Victory, NYC); *The Small Things, Pyrenees, On Blindness, The Drowned World, Tiny Dynamite, Crazy Gary's Mobile Disco, Splendour, Riddance, The Cosmonaut's Last Message to the Woman He Once Loved in the Former Soviet Union, Crave* (Paines Plough).

Television Includes: *Pritilata* (from *Snatches: Moments from 100 Years of Women's Lives*), *Where the Heart Is, Silent Witness*.

## ED THOMAS

For the Royal Court: *Song from a Forgotten City, Gas Station Angel*.

For National Theatre Wales: *Mother Courage & Her Children*.

Other theatre includes: *House of America, Flowers of the Dead Red Sea, East from the Gantry* (Tramway Glasgow / International tour); *Stone City Blue* (Theatre Clwyde).

Television includes: *Satellite City, A Mind To Kill, Caerdydd, Pen Talar, Cwmgiedd/Colombia, China, Hinterland/Y Gwyll*.

Film includes: *House of America, Silent Village, Dal Yma:Nawr*.

Ed is the Creative Director and Founder of independent television and film company Fiction Factory.

## NATIONAL THEATRE WALES

National Theatre Wales has been making English-language productions in locations all over Wales, the UK, internationally and online since March 2010. It operates from a small base in Cardiff's city centre, but works all over the country and beyond, using Wales' rich and diverse landscape, its towns, cities and villages, its incredible stories and rich talent as its inspiration. National Theatre Wales is supported by the Welsh Government and the Arts Council of Wales.

## ROYAL COURT THEATRE

The Royal Court Theatre is the writers' theatre. It is a leading force in world theatre for energetically cultivating writers - undiscovered, emerging and established.

Through the writers, the Royal Court is at the forefront of creating restless, alert, provocative theatre about now. We open our doors to the unheard voices and free thinkers that, through their writing, change our way of seeing.

Over 120,000 people visit the Royal Court in Sloane Square, London, each year and many thousands more see our work elsewhere through transfers to the West End and New York, UK and international tours, digital platforms, our residencies across London, and our site-specific work. Through all our work we strive to inspire audiences and influence future writers with radical thinking and provocative discussion.

The Royal Court's extensive development activity encompasses a diverse range of writers and artists and includes an ongoing programme of writers' attachments, readings, workshops and playwriting groups. Twenty years of the International Department's pioneering work around the world means the Royal Court has relationships with writers on every continent.

Within the past sixty years, John Osborne, Samuel Beckett, Arnold Wesker, Ann Jellicoe, Howard Brenton and David Hare have started their careers at the Court.

Many others including Caryl Churchill, Athol Fugard, Mark Ravenhill, Simon Stephens, Debbie Tucker Green, Sarah Kane – and, more recently, Lucy Kirkwood, Nick Payne, Penelope Skinner and Alistair McDowall – have followed.

The Royal Court has produced many iconic plays from Lucy Kirkwood's *The Children* to Jez Butterworth's *Jerusalem* and Martin McDonagh's *Hangmen*.

Royal Court plays from every decade are now performed on stage and taught in classrooms and universities across the globe.

It is because of this commitment to the writer that we believe there is no more important theatre in the world than the Royal Court.