

PRESS RELEASE – 18 July 2019

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NATIONAL THEATRE WALES AND ROYAL COURT
THEATRE

ON BEAR RIDGE

- **FIRST PUBLICITY IMAGES OF THE PLAY *ON BEAR RIDGE* RELEASED TODAY. AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD [HERE](#)**
- **DIRECTED BY VICKY FEATHERSTONE AND ED THOMAS. THE CAST IS RAKIE AYOLA, JASON HUGHES, RHYS IFANS AND SION DANIEL YOUNG**
- **A SITE-SPECIFIC INSTALLATION AND VR EXPERIENCE WILL COMPLEMENT PERFORMANCES OF THE PLAY**
- ***ON BEAR RIDGE* RUNS AT THE SHERMAN THEATRE, CARDIFF FROM 20 SEPTEMBER – 5 OCTOBER 2019. FOLLOWED BY THE ROYAL COURT THEATRE, LONDON FROM 24 OCTOBER - 23 NOVEMBER 2019**

The first images from **National Theatre Wales** and **Royal Court Theatre**'s production of ***On Bear Ridge*** have been released today. They are available to download [here](#).

National Theatre Wales and Royal Court Theatre have today also announced that a site-specific installation will be created in the upper Swansea Valley bringing to life the world of the new play. Audiences at the Sherman Theatre Cardiff and the Royal Court London will also be able to experience this through a VR film that will be available to watch at both theatres making the landscape of *On Bear Ridge* accessible in the centre of these busy cities.

Written by **Ed Thomas** (*Hinterland/Y Gwyll* BBC/S4C/Netflix) *On Bear Ridge* is a semi-autobiographical story about the places we leave behind, the indelible marks they make on us, and the unreliable memories we hold onto. It will be co-directed by Royal Court Artistic Director **Vicky Featherstone** and **Ed Thomas**. The cast is **Rakie Ayola** (*Strange Fruit*, Bush Theatre), **Jason Hughes** (*Violence and Son*, Royal Court), **Rhys Ifans** (*Exit the King*, National Theatre) and **Sion Daniel Young** (*Mametz*, NTW and *Jellyfish*, NT).

NTW and the Royal Court Theatre are working with Ed Thomas and the *On Bear Ridge* creative team to create the outdoor, site-specific installations that will coincide with the opening of the play in Cardiff. The installations will be constructed on Penwyllt in the upper Swansea Valley, close to Thomas' childhood home. They can be experienced in person by visiting the site in Wales or through a VR experience created in collaboration with Film and VR production company **Cuckoo Nest**.

The installations will temporarily exist in the landscape as fragmented remains of what was once there - a collection of lost things, half-forgotten sounds and memories, slowly sinking

back into earth and rock. They will offer visitors glimpses of a vanished world, allowing them to digitally listen at a door and hear whispered voices, half-truths and unfinished stories from a way of life grown silent. A story that was never told. An act of remembering the forgotten.

“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.

On Bear Ridge will be directed by **Vicky Featherstone** and **Ed Thomas**, designed by **Cai Dyfan**, composed by **John Hardy Music** with sound design by **Mike Beer** and lighting design by **Elliot Griggs**. **Edie Morris** is Assistant Designer and **Izzy Rabey** is Emerging Director.

***On Bear Ridge* 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 at The Corner Shop PR on 020 7831 7657 / 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

Lighting Designer Elliot Griggs

***On Bear Ridge* installations:**

These installations will be free to experience to anyone visiting Penwyllt between 30 August and 13 October 2019.

The installations are outdoors on an unmanned site, open to the elements and will take approximately 30 minutes to explore. Each installation is accompanied by a short multimedia track, which audiences can access via a QR code. More information on how to explore the site, and access the tracks, can be found at nationaltheatrewales.org.

The site will be closed from 9-11 September for filming purposes.

Installation Address: Ogof Ffynnon Ddu, National Nature Reserve, 1-10 Powell St, Swansea, SA9 1GQ.

Audiences attending On Bear Ridge in Cardiff can experience the VR from 3 - 5 October 2019 at Sherman Theatre.

Audiences attending On Bear Ridge in London can experience the VR for the duration of the run (24 October – 23 November 2019) at the Royal Court Theatre.

On Bear Ridge the play:

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/>

Running Time: TBC

Age: 14+

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* and *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*, *Trial & Retribution*, *The Two Franks*, *Judas & the Gimp*, *Night Shift*, *Spatz*, *Burning Love*, *Review*, *Gifted*.

Film includes: *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*, *Harry Potter & the Deathly Hallows*, *Greenberg*, *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.

CUCKOO NEST

Cuckoo Nest is a film, TV and VR production company focusing on international co-productions of quality content. We support new voices by collaborating with micro budget filmmakers as well as contributing to the development of promising short films. Currently we have a major network series in production, details to be released in the following months.

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.