



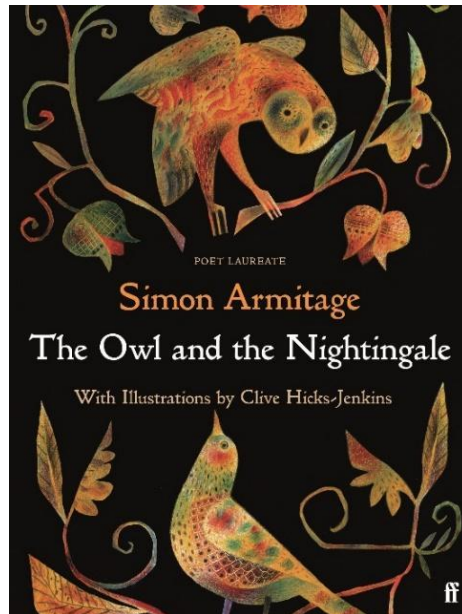
PRESS RELEASE

Thursday 10 February 2022

**THE OWL AND THE NIGHTINGALE BY SIMON ARMITAGE TO BE PERFORMED
IN A READING AT THE ROYAL COURT THEATRE FRIDAY 4 MARCH 2022**

- Read by Maxine Peake and Meera Syal with Simon Armitage

- [Tickets on sale now](#)



Front Cover Illustrated by Clive Hicks-Jenkins

The Owl and the Nightingale will be performed as a reading at the Royal Court Theatre Jerwood Theatre Downstairs on Friday 4 March 2022 at 4pm.

The event was previously planned for December 2021 but had to be postponed due to restrictions around coronavirus.

In a new translation by the Poet Laureate Simon Armitage, this witty and enchanting edition of the medieval debate poem will be directed by John Tiffany and read by Maxine Peake and Meera Syal with Simon Armitage.

Following his acclaimed translations of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and *Pearl*, Simon Armitage shines a light on another jewel of Middle English verse. The disputed issues within the piece still resonate - concerning identity, cultural attitudes, class distinctions and the right to be heard.

Following the performance there will be a book signing in the Balcony Bar.

Tickets are £5 <https://royalcourttheatre.com/whats-on/the-owl-and-the-nightingale/>

The Owl and the Nightingale reading is supported by The Institute of Digital Archaeology.

It is published by Faber.



Royal Court Press Contact Anoushka Warden AnoushkaWarden@royalcourttheatre.com
Faber & Faber Press Contact Kate Burton kate.burton@faber.co.uk

Notes to Editors:

For images see [here](#).



Photo credit: Maxine Peake (BP Photography), Meera Syal (Simon Annand).

Biographies:

Simon Armitage (Writer)

Simon was born in West Yorkshire and is Professor of Poetry at the University of Leeds. A recipient of numerous prizes and awards, his poetry collections include *Seeing Stars* (2010), *The Unaccompanied* (2017), *Sandettie Light Vessel Automatic* (2019), *Magnetic Field* (2020) and his acclaimed translation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (2007). He writes extensively for television and radio, and is the author of two novels and the non-fiction bestsellers *All Points North* (1998), *Walking Home* (2012) and *Walking Away* (2015). His theatre works include *The Last Days of Troy*, performed at Shakespeare's Globe in 2014. *A Vertical Art* (2021) brought together his vibrant and engaging lectures from his tenure as Professor of Poetry at the University of Oxford, and, in 2018, he was awarded the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry. Simon Armitage is Poet Laureate.

John Tiffany (Director)

For the Royal Court: **the end of history... Road, The Twits, Hope, The Pass, Let the Right One In (& National Theatre of Scotland/West End/St Ann's, NYC).**

Other theatre includes: **Harry Potter and the Cursed Child, The Glass Menagerie, Once (Broadway/West End); The Ambassador (BAM, NYC); Pinocchio (National); Enquirer, Macbeth, Peter Pan, The House of Bernarda Alba, Transform Caithness: Hunter, Be Near Me, Nobody Will Ever Forgive Us, The Bacchae, Black Watch, Elizabeth Gordon**



Quinn, Home: Glasgow (National Theatre of Scotland).

Awards Include: Tony & Olivier Awards for Best Director of a Play (Harry Potter and the Cursed Child); Sky Arts South Bank Show Award (Let the Right One In); Tony Award for Best Direction of a Musical (Once); Olivier Award for Best Director, Critics Circle Award for Best Director, Sky Arts South Bank Show Award (Black Watch).

John is a former Associate Director at the Royal Court and from 2010 to 2011 he was a Radcliffe Fellow at Harvard University.

Maxine Peake (Performer)

For the Royal Court: How To Hold Your Breath, Mother Teresa is Dead.

Other theatre includes: Avalanche: A Love Story (Barbican); Happy Days, The Skriker, Hamlet, Miss Julie, The Children's Hour, Rutherford & Sons (Royal Exchange, Manchester); The Welkin, Robin Hood, Luther, The Relapse, The Cherry Orchard (National); The Nico Project, The Masque of Anarchy (Manchester International Festival); Loyalty (Hampstead); The Deep Blue Sea, Hamlet (West Yorkshire Playhouse); Leaves of Glass (Soho); On the Third Day, Miss Julie (West End); Sergeant Musgrave's Dance (Oxford Stage); Early One Morning (Octagon).

Television includes: Rules of the Game, Mandy, Alan Bennett's Talking Heads, Inside No. 9, The Bisexual, Three Girls, Red Top, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Village, Silk, Henry IV, Room at the Top, The Secret Diaries of Miss Anne Lister, Criminal Justice, The Street, Marple, Red Riding 1980, Hancock & Joan, Little Dorrit, The Devil's Whore, Bike Squad, Cinderella, Confessions of a Diary Secretary, See No Evil, Faith, Shameless, Christmas Lights, Early Doors, The Way We Live Now, Victoria Wood & All the Trimmings, Dinnerladies, Clocking Off.

Film includes: Gwen, Peterloo, Funny Cow, Fanny Lye Deliver'd, The Falling, The Theory of Everything, Keeping Rosie, Run & Jump, Svengali, Private Peaceful, Best Laid Plans, Edge, Clubbed, All or Nothing, Girls Night.

Awards include: Manchester Theatre Award for Best Actress (Miss Julie); RTS North Award for Best Actress (See No Evil); Manchester Evening News Theatre Award for Best Actress (The Children's Hour).

Meera Syal (Performer)

For the Royal Court: a profoundly affectionate, passionate devotion to someone (-noun), If You Don't Let Us Dream We Won't Let You Sleep, Serious Money (& West End/Broadway), The Great Celestial Cow, Minor Complications, True Dare Kiss, Byrthrite.

Other theatre includes: Noises Off (Lyric, Hammersmith/West End); Peter Pan (Hippodrome, Birmingham); Pinter at the Pinter (West End); Romeo & Juliet (Kenneth Branagh/West End); Behind the Beautiful Forevers, Rafta Rafta, Peer Gynt (National); Much Ado About Nothing (RSC); The Killing of Sister George (Arts); Shirley Valentine (Menier/Trafalgar); Bombay Dreams (Really Useful/West End); The Vagina Monologues (Old Vic/West End/Broadway); One of Us (Edinburgh International Festival/Off-Broadway); Kissing God (Hampstead); Blood Wedding (Half Moon & UK Tour); The School for Scandal (Bristol Old Vic); Kirti Sona & Ba (Haymarket, Leicester); My Girl (Theatre Royal, Stratford East); Goodness Gracious Me (UK tour).

Television includes: Roar, The Wheel of Time, The Devil's Hour, Back to Life, Beena & Amrit, Code 404, Kate & Koji, Riviera, Walliams & Friends, The Musketeers, Midsomer Murders, Broadchurch, The Brink, The Boy in the Dress, Psychobitches, The Job Lot, The Kumars at No. 42, Crackanory, Silk, Bollywood Carmen, Family Tree, Hunted, Mr





Swallow, The Jury, Doctor Who, Little Crackers, Jekyll, The Amazing Mrs Pritchard, The Secretary Who Stole £4 Million, Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee, Goodness Gracious Me, Who Do You Think You Are?, Linda Green, Fat Friends, Mrs Bradley Mysteries, Absolutely Fabulous, Sean's Show, Jo Brand's Through the Cakehole, My Sister Wife, Crossing the Floor, The Real McCoy, Kinsey, A Little Princess, Secret Diary of Adrian Mole.

Film includes: **The Almond & the Seahorse, Yesterday, Nativity Rocks, Patrick, Murder on the Orient Express, Paddington 2, The Nutcracker & the Four Realms, Dr Strange, Alice Through the Looking Glass, Absolutely Anything, All in Good Time, You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger, Desert Flower, Mad Sad & Bad, Jhoom Barabar Jhoom, Scoop, Anita & Me, Girls Night, Beautiful Thing, It's Not Unusual [short], A Nice Arrangement, Sammy & Rosie Get Laid.**

Radio includes: **Small Town Murder, Bindi Business, Everyday Story of Afghan Folk, Leaving Normal, Kipling in Love, Verse Universe, Ladies Excuse Me, Poetry Please, Wicked Words, Morning Story, Book At Bedtime, Pankhiraj, Goodness Gracious Me, Gossip & Goddesses.**

Awards include: **British Comedy Award, RTS Award (Goodness Gracious Me); International Emmy Award, Peabody Award (The Kumars at No. 42); AFA Award (My Sister Wife); WhatsOnStage Award for Best Solo Performance (Shirley Valentine); RIMA Media Personality of the Year; Asian Women of Achievement: Chairman's Award; Women in Film and Television's Creative Achievement Award.**

Meera was awarded the CBE for Services to Drama and Literature in 2015. She is also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.



www.faber.co.uk



The Institute for Digital Archaeology is a UK-based academic consortium dedicated to promoting public engagement around history and culture.

The Institute for Digital Archaeology

