



PRESS RELEASE - 2 JUNE 2023

THE ROYAL COURT THEATRE ANNOUNCES CAST FOR *CUCKOO* BY  
MICHAEL WYNNE DIRECTED BY VICKY FEATHERSTONE IN ASSOCIATION  
WITH LIVERPOOL EVERYMAN & PLAYHOUSE

ROYAL COURT THEATRE  
THURSDAY 6 JULY – SATURDAY 19 AUGUST 2023

LIVERPOOL EVERYMAN  
WEDNESDAY 6 - SATURDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2023



Clockwise from top left: Michelle Butterly, Emma Harrison (Photographer: YellowBelly), Sue Jenkins (Photographer: Michael Pollard), Jodie McNee (Photographer: YellowBelly).

The Royal Court Theatre in partnership with Liverpool Everyman & Playhouse today announced the cast of Olivier and BAFTA-Award winning playwright **Michael Wynne's** dark comedy *Cuckoo*. Royal Court Artistic Director, **Vicky Featherstone** directs **Michelle Butterly**, **Emma Harrison**, **Sue Jenkins** and **Jodie McNee**. Michael was born in Birkenhead and the production is set in the writer's hometown with an all-Scouse cast.

*Cuckoo* runs at the Royal Court Jerwood Theatre Downstairs from Thursday 6 July to Saturday 19 August 2023, before transferring to Liverpool Everyman from Wednesday 6 to Saturday 23 September 2023. Press night is on Wednesday 12 July 2023 at 7pm at The Royal Court Theatre.

*Cuckoo* is designed by Peter McKintosh, with lighting design by Jai Morjaria and sound design by Nick Powell.

*"I do love some David Attenborough, but even he can be a bit of a miz bag now, always going on about climate change ... You don't want to think about the end of the world before you go to bed on a Sunday night."*

Doreen and her two grown up daughters sit at the table – eating fish and chips, distracted by their phones.

Upstairs, 17-year-old Megyn has locked herself in her grandmother's bedroom and refuses to come out. And no one is entirely sure why...

Michael Wynne's dark comedy explores the safety of home and the different ways we cope in our increasingly uncertain world.

*Cuckoo* has been generously supported by a lead gift from Charles Holloway.

Further support has been received from members of our Production Circle.

There will be a post-show talk with Michael Wynne on Tuesday 18 July 2023.

***Playwright Michael Wynne said:*** *"Cuckoo follows three generations of a matriarchal family as they try to live their lives in what can feel like difficult and crazy times. They're dealing with financial insecurity, economic decline, all pervasive technology and the potential impact of climate change - amongst other things.*

*I was interested in exploring how different generations discuss issues and how having opposing opinions has become much more fraught - even within close families.*

*The last few years have taken their toll on all of us and I came across this term historical narcissism. It forces us to question whether this really is the worst period of modern times, or if it's just the way we're living our lives - with news flashes pinged to us at all hours etc ... or are we lacking in perspective?*

*This might sound quite heavy but fundamentally it's a comedy about a family trying to get on with their lives and each other.*

*We're also taking Sloane Square to Birkenhead and it's going to be great to have the Liverpool dialect on stage - with a fully authentic all Scouse cast - before we head up to Merseyside."*

**ENDS**

Please find an image [here](#):

Photography by Rich Southgate

Retouch by Madison Coby

Art direction by Louise Richardson

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**Biographies:**

**Michael Wynne (writer)**

Michael is a playwright and screenwriter. Cuckoo is his 8th play for the Royal Court.

For the Royal Court: **I'm Not Here – Living Newspaper Edition 4, Who Cares, The Red Flag, Friday Night Sex, The Priory, The People Are Friendly, The Knocky.**

For Liverpool Everyman & Playhouse: **The Star and Hope Place**

Other theatre includes: **We Are Here (La Mama, New York); Collider (Science Museum/Nissen Richards Studio); Canvas (Minerva Theatre, Chichester); Tits/Teeth (NYT/Soho); Dirty Wonderland, Sell Out (Frantic Assembly); The Boy Who Left Home (ATC/Lyric Hammersmith); Too Cold for Snow (The Prada Foundation).**

Television includes: **Being Eileen, Lapland, Little Crackers: The Daltons/Sheridan Smith, The Catherine Tate Show, Eastenders, The Gil Mayo Mysteries, Sugar Rush, Eyes Down, As If, UGetMe, Don't Eat the Neighbours, Reach for the Moon, Grafters, Where the Heart is.**

Film includes: **My Summer of Love.**

Awards include: **BAFTA for Outstanding British Film (My Summer of Love); Evening Standard Award for Best Screenplay (My Summer of Love); Olivier Award for Best New Comedy (The Priory); Meyer Whitworth Award for Best New Play (The Knocky).**

**Michelle Butterly (Carmel)**

For Liverpool Everyman & Playhouse: **The Star, Hope Place and Dead Heavy Fantastic.**

Theatre includes: **Betty! A Sort Of Musical, A Streetcar Named Desire, Hamlet (Manchester Royal Exchange); The Last Testament Of Lillian Bilocca (The Guildhall, Hull); Blair's Children (Cockpit); One For The Road (Royal & Derngate Theatre, Northampton); Gaslight (Theatre Clwyd); Road (Wolsey Theatre, Ipswich); Queen Of The Nile (Hull Truck Theatre); I Like Mine With A Kiss (Bush); Ma Vie en Rose (Young Vic); Gone To Earth (Lyric Hammersmith); Laundry Room At The Hotel Madrid (Gate); Noughts And Crosses, A New Way To Please You, Believe What You Will, Speaking Like Magpies, A Servant to Two Masters (& Young Vic/West End), Thomas More (RSC).**

Television includes: **Craith, Anthony, Little Boy Blue, McMafia, Benidorm, Beautiful People, Midsummers Murders, Minder, No Angels, Eyes Down, Casualty, Dangerfield, Pie in the Sky, Hetty Wainthrop Investigates, Soldier Soldier.**

#### **Emma Harrison (Megyn)**

Emma recently graduated from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. This is Emma's professional debut.

#### **Sue Jenkins (Doreen)**

For the Royal Court: **The People are Friendly.**

Other theatre includes: **Maybe Tomorrow (Royal Exchange); The Changeling (Contact Theatre); The Price (Library Theatre Company); 20th Century Boy (Bolanic Productions); The Vagina Monologues (Mark Goucher Ltd); Wizard of Oz (The Lowry); School For Wives, The Devils, Educating Rita, Tom Jones (Leeds Playhouse); Othello, As You Like It, Twelfth Night (Bolton Octagon).**

Television includes: **Doctor Who, It's a Sin, Home from Home, Being Eileen, It's Okay to be Ray, Heartbeat, Midsomer Murders, Dalziel and Pasco, The Beiderbecke Affair, The Girls Who Came to Stay, The Royal, In Deep, Casualty, Doctors, Coasting, Holby City, How We Used To Live, Brookside, In Suspicious Circumstances, Coronation Street.**  
Radio includes: **Over 250 radio plays, audio books, stories & classic adaptations including Wuthering Heights, Middlemarch, Vilette, The Citadel, A Clockwork Orange.**

#### **Jodie McNee (Sarah)**

For the Royal Court: **Anatomy of a Suicide, Maryland.**

For the Liverpool Everyman & Playhouse: **My White Best Friend, Canary, When We Are Married, Twelfth Night.**

Other theatre includes: **Orlando (MGC); Adult Children (Donmar); Faustus That Damned Woman (Headlong); Nora A Doll's House, The Night Watch, Hamlet, Orpheus Descending, A Taste of Honey (Royal Exchange, Manchester); An Oak Tree, Our Country's Good, Three Winters (National); Game (Almeida); Venice Preserved, A Life of Galileo, Written on the Heart, Measure for Measure (RSC); Hobson's Choice (Regent's Park Open Air); The Empty Quarter (Hampstead); When We are Married (West End); The Frontline, King Lear (Globe); Seagull, Knives in Hens, Double Portrait, Jenufer (Arcola); Cymbeline, The Changeling (Cheek by Jowl/Barbican/International tour); Mother Courage, This Happy Breed (ETT); The Burial at Thebes (Playhouse, Nottingham).**

Television includes: **Breathtaking, Mrs Sidhu Investigates, Culprits, Hollington Drive, Anthony, Unprecedented/Fear Fatigue, Britannia 1-3, Agatha and the Death of X, Vera, Little Boy Blue, Ripper Street, Criminal Justice, Poirot.**

Film includes: **Judy, Official Secrets, Film Stars Don't Die in Liverpool, The Physician, Collider, One Happy Moment, A Picture of Me.**

Radio includes: **The American Grandmother, Zola: Blood Season, With Great Pleasure.**

**Listings information:**

### All upcoming press performances:

Thursday 8 June 2023, 7pm	<i>all of it</i> by Alistair McDowall	Jerwood Theatre Downstairs
Friday 9 June 2023, 7pm	<i>Hope has a Happy Meal</i> by Tom Fowler	Jerwood Theatre Upstairs
Wednesday 12 July 2023, 7pm	<i>Cuckoo</i> by Michael Wynne	Jerwood Theatre Downstairs
Wednesday 26 July 2023, 7pm	<i>Word-Play</i> by Rabiah Hussain	Jerwood Theatre Upstairs
Monday 22 January 2024, 7pm	<i>Dana H.</i> by Lucas Hnath	Jerwood Theatre Downstairs

### Listings Information:

**Full run dates**

**Captioned Performance**

**Relaxed Environment Performance**

**Press Performance**

**Post-show talk**

**Standard Tickets**

**Concessions\***

**First Look Tickets\*\***

**Under 27s\*\*\***

**Access** £17.50 (plus a companion at the same rate) across all Bands (excluding Band E) and all performances

\*ID required. All discounts subject to availability

### Tickets: Ways to Save

**Concessions\*** - available for previews and matinees. Limited to Band A – B in the Jerwood Theatre Downstairs. Concessions are available for Over 65s, Students, recipients of Jobseekers Allowance, and members of Equity, BECTU, Stage Directors UK or the Writers' Guild of Great Britain.

**First Look Tickets\*\*** - as most of the plays we stage at the Royal Court have never been seen before, the first few performances in front of an audience are the final part of a long creative process that starts with the playwright. Our First Look Performances, which are sold at a reduced price, are an integral part of the process. If you book tickets for a First Look Performance (usually the first three previews of a new play), you'll be asked for your feedback which is then shared with the artistic team during the preview period, potentially influencing the final piece.

**Under 27s Tickets\*\*\*** – We have extended our Under 26s ticket offer to Under 27s due to a year of missed discounts during the Covid-19 pandemic. We offer a limited number of £15 tickets for all performances in the Jerwood Theatre Downstairs. Available on Band B tickets, subject to availability.

**£12 Mondays** – all tickets £12 on selected Mondays. Available on the day of the performance from 9am online. A limited number are available in advance, subject to availability, to Friends and Supporters.

## **ABOUT LIVERPOOL EVERYMAN AND PLAYHOUSE**

Two brilliant theatres, here for artists and audiences and the magic that happens when they come together. A local artistic force with national significance and an international reputation, we use the power of theatre to inspire, entertain and nurture positive social change. Whether you visit us at the Everyman or the Playhouse, see our work online or out in the community, a warm welcome awaits you. We're grateful for the continued support of Arts Council England, Liverpool City Council, our donors, patrons, partners and our audiences.

Chief Executive, Mark Da Vanzo

Creative Director, Suba Das

[www.everymanplayhouse.com](http://www.everymanplayhouse.com)