



PRESS RELEASE

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THE WRITERS' THEATRE LED BY WRITERS – ROYAL COURT ANNOUNCES ASSOCIATE PLAYWRIGHTS

Today **David Byrne**, Artistic Director of the Royal Court, has announced that **Mike Bartlett** (*Love, Love, Love*), **Ryan Calais Cameron** (*For Black Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When the Hue Gets Too Heavy*), **Vinay Patel** (*An Adventure*) and **Nina Segal** (*Shooting Hedda Gabler*) will join the Royal Court as Associate Playwrights, alongside **Gillian Greer** (*Boy Parts*) as Associate Playwright and Dramaturg who joined the organisation earlier in this year.

This team of Associate Playwrights puts writers at the very heart of the Royal Court. Working closely with the wider artistic leadership, they will help develop the theatre's mission, artistic programme, support of fellow writers and see the writers' theatre placed in the hands of playwrights. The Associate Playwrights will spend one day a week at the Royal Court – bringing their own unique experience, insight, flair and perspectives to the organisation, while feeding into a collective approach to the leadership of the theatre. Gillian Greer also joins full time, serving as lead dramaturg across the artistic programmes.

Alongside the five being announced today, the Royal Court is launching a **national open call** to find a sixth and final playwright to complete the team and join in shaping the theatre's future. Applicants can be based anywhere in the country and have worked in any part of the sector, but must have experience of playwriting and a track record championing the work of fellow writers or artists. The deadline for submissions is Thursday 27 May 2024.

David Byrne, Artistic Director of the Royal Court said: *“One of my first acts as Artistic Director is to bring some exceptional fellow playwrights with me into the artistic leadership behind a simple vision: the writers' theatre run by playwrights for the benefit of writers everywhere. Even from our electric early conversations, I know that this game-changing team of associates are going to help re-write the rules of what it means to support writers, creating the culture for a new generation of playwrights to thrive.*

And we've left one chair at the table empty, to allow us to find someone new, not directly appointed by me but found through an open call. Fellow playwrights – if you want to be a part of making the Royal Court a beacon for new writing nationally and internationally, come and join us. It's going to be the adventure of a lifetime – and it's the best distraction from your latest draft that you'll ever find!”

Mike Bartlett said, *“The Royal Court Theatre staged my first professional play, and gave me the support and encouragement to become a writer. It’s the most important theatre for playwrights in the world, and I can’t wait to join David, Will, and the other associates in helping to find and support new playwrights and new plays that will entertain, inform, shock and provoke us.”*

Ryan Calais Cameron said, *“Joining the Royal Court Theatre as an associate is an incredible honour and responsibility. It means I have the opportunity to contribute to a legacy of bold, thought-provoking storytelling that challenges norms and inspires change. I’m excited to collaborate with such an esteemed institution that has had such a huge impact on my life as an audience member and as an artist.”*

Gillian Greer said, *“Since I first became aware of theatre, The Royal Court and its mission has been written into my DNA. As a playwright and dramaturg, it is the stage I’ve looked to most often for inspiration, ambition and truth; where the world’s greatest playwrights have long told their boldest stories. I’m very grateful that it should be the place to combine the two opposing sides of my artistic life, where I hope to dedicate myself to supporting writers and push my own writing to the limits of my bravery and imagination.”*

Since David Byrne took up the mantle of Artistic Director, he’s spoken of taking the path of greatest adventure towards the Royal Court’s future. I couldn’t be more excited to join him and this incredible team on that path.”

Vinay Patel said, *“The Royal Court is the first place I got into an argument about a play. But that argument helped shift my thinking and knitted a connection with the person who (heavily) disagreed with me. Years later, I adore both that play and that person. The Court made me excited to see work that pushed against my expectations and, in becoming an associate, I hope to support writers in embracing a spirit of progressive provocation as a means to help us find our way to each other.”*

Nina Segal said, *“Five years ago, I made a show for the Court - created collaboratively with Milli Bhatia and Ingrid Banerjee Marvin - called Dismantle This Room. The work, which took the form of an escape room, questioned how best to effect change within our industry. Participants were asked to make a choice of working inside or outside an institution. As I join the Court now as an Associate Playwright, I am reminded of this question - of where change comes from and how. Alongside David and this brilliant team of playwrights, I’m excited to explore what change is possible - with writers at the heart of the writers’ theatre.”*

ENDS

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Images can be downloaded [here](#).

Mike Bartlett is a multi-award-winning writer for both stage and screen. Theatre includes: *Scandaltown* (Lyric Hammersmith Theatre) *The 47th* (The Old Vic); *Cock* (The Ambassadors' Theatre/Royal Court); *Mrs Delgado* (Arts at the Old Fire Station/Theatre Royal Bath/Oxford Playhouse); *Albion, Game* (Almeida); *Snowflake* (Arts at the Old Fire Station); *Wild*(Hampstead Theatre); *King Charles III* (Almeida Theatre/Wyndham's Theatre/Music Box Theatre, New York); *An Intervention* (Paines Plough/Watford); *Bull* (Sheffield Theatres/Off Broadway/Young Vic); *Medea* (Headlong/Glasgow Citizens/Watford/Warwick); *Chariots of Fire* (Hampstead Theatre/Gielgud Theatre); *13* (National Theatre); *Decade* (Headlong); *Earthquakes in London* (Headlong, National Theatre); *Love, Love, Love* (Paines Plough / Plymouth Theatre Royal/Royal Court/Roundabout Theatre Company, New York/Lyric Hammersmith Theatre); *Contractions* (Royal Court/Crucible Theatre, Sheffield); *My Child* (Royal Court); *Artefacts* (Bush Theatre/ Nabokov); Television includes: *Life, Doctor Foster SE2, King Charles III, Doctor Foster SE1* (Drama Republic/BBC); *Sticks and Stones, Trauma* (Tall Story Pictures/ITV); *Press* (Lookout Point/BBC).

Ryan Calais Cameron's *Retrograde*, was produced at Kiln Theatre, April/May 2023, is nominated for Evening Standard Award, 'Best Play' 2023. *For Black Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When The Hue Gets Too Heavy* premiered at New Diorama Theatre, transferring to Royal Court, then Apollo Theatre, West End in March 2023 (producers: Nouveau Riche/Boundless/New Diorama/Royal Court Theatre). At Black British Theatre Awards 2022 it won Best Production Play Award and Best Director Award [co-director]; at The Stage Debut Awards 2022 the ensemble were joint-winners of Best Performer in a Play.

Other productions include *Living Newspaper, My White Best Friend (and Other Letters Left Unsaid)*, (Royal Court Theatre); *Human Nurture* (Theatre Centre/Crucible Sheffield co-produced UK tour); *Queens of Sheba* [co-writer] (producers: Nouveau Riche/New Diorama/Soho Theatre) premiered at Edinburgh Festival Fringe and New Diorama, won Edinburgh Untapped Award, The Stage Edinburgh Award, Offie Award for Best Performance Piece. It toured the UK and was revived twice at Soho Theatre before its 2023 run at Chelsea Factory, New York.

Also, *Typical* (Nouveau Riche/Soho Theatre) at Edinburgh Festival Fringe and Soho Theatre; *Rhapsody* won Off West End Adopt A Playwright Award 2018 and was produced at Arcola Theatre (Nouveau Riche); *Timbuktu* produced at Black Lives Black Words Festival, Bush/Theatre Royal, Stratford East (Nouveau Riche). Ryan is the Co-Founder and Artistic Director of Nouveau Riche Theatre Company. He also writes for film and television.

Gillian Greer is an Irish writer and dramaturg based in London. As a playwright, her debut play *Petals* was nominated for the Irish Times Theatre Award for Best New Play in 2015. Her second play *Meat* was shortlisted for the Theatre503 International Playwriting Award and ran at Theatre503 in early 2020. She most recently adapted *Boy Parts*, the critically acclaimed debut novel by Eliza Clark, for the stage. *Boy Parts* ran at Soho Theatre in Autumn 2023. She promises she will write another play eventually.

As a dramaturg, Gillian has worked with Theatre503, the Abbey Theatre, the National Theatre, *Vault* Festival, Clean Break Theatre Company, Soho Theatre, Paines Plough and more. Her credits include *Shedding A Skin* by Amanda Wilkin, *The Ministry Of Lesbian Affairs* by Iman Qureshi, *BANGERS* by Danusia Samal, *Kathy & Stella Solve A Murder!* By Jon Brittain and Matthew Floyd Jones, *Strategic Love Play* by Miriam Battye and many more.

Vinay Patel's theatre debut *True Brits* premiered at Edinburgh Fringe and went on to the Bush Theatre's *Radar* Festival and the *Vault* Festival. His play *An Adventure* premiered at the Bush in 2018 where it was directed by former Artistic Director Madani Younis and had a second production at Bolton Octagon. His latest play, a sci-fi adaptation of *The Cherry Orchard* directed by James Macdonald, premiered in 2022 at The Yard Theatre. It was a Yard Theatre, ETT and HOME co-production, co-commissioned by The Yard Theatre and ETT. Vinay has several new plays in development including work with the Bush Theatre, Empire Street Productions and ETT.

Vinay's TV debut *Murdered By My Father* was commissioned for the BBC and starred Adeel Akhtar, Kiran Sonia Sawar and Mawaan Rizwan. It won 2 RTS Awards including Best Single Drama and was nominated for three BAFTAs including Best Single Drama and the Breakthrough Talent Award for Vinay. It won the BAFTA for best Leading Actor (Adeel Akhtar) and Vinay was named a BAFTA Breakthrough Brit for his work on the film. He went on to write episodes for *Doctor Who*, including the Hugo-nominated *Demons Of The Punjab* and *Fugitive Of The Judoon*. Most recently, he was a writer on the Netflix adaptation of *One Day* by David Nicholls.

Nina Segal is a playwright, working for theatre, opera and screen. Productions include: *The Odyssey (It's A Really Really Really Long Journey)* (Unicorn Theatre); *Shooting Hedda Gabler* (Rose Theatre); *War and Culture* (New Diorama); *The Good Person of Szechwan* (Sheffield Crucible, Lyric Hammersmith); *O, Island!* (RSC); *AI* (Young Vic); *Dismantle This Room* (Bush Theatre, Royal Court); *Big Guns* (Yard Theatre); and *In the Night Time (Before the Sun Rises)* (Gate Theatre). Nina's work has been produced internationally, across Germany, Italy, Mexico and the US. Her first work for opera, *We Are The Lucky Ones*, will premiere at Dutch National Opera in 2025.