Welcome to this introduction to **Manhunt** written and directed by Robert Icke.

The audio-described performance will be on Saturday the 26th of April at 1.30pm with a touch tour at 12pm. The introductory notes will start 15 minutes before the performance. The production lasts for approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes without an interval. Late comers will not be admitted, and there is a no re-entry policy. It will be audio described by Jenny Stewart Cosgrove and Miranda Yates.

This show has an age recommendation of 14+ and contains strobe, haze, and loud noises. One scene plays out as a prolonged period of complete blackout.

The Royal Court website tells us. *On July 1st, 2010, Raoul Moat was released from Durham Prison. The events of the next few days would leave a man murdered, a police officer blinded, a woman fighting for her life – and spark the biggest manhunt in UK history.*

The story follows those events whilst also taking us back and forth in the timeline of Raoul Moats life, using short vignettes to weave together a picture of the man and his experiences. Scenes change quickly and fluidly using overlapping dialogue, entrances and exits and a combination of live and recorded video footage. The action unfolds in the Northeast of England and most characters speak with Tyneside accents.

The stark and industrial style setting is initially viewed through the bars of a black metal grid - a cage-like wall that stretches the eight metre width and height of the space. Stretching across in front is a forestage a couple of metres deep. Behind the cage is a rectangular platform about eight metres wide and 5 metres deep, painted in a dull pale grey. The platform is raised about 40 centimetres higher than the forestage and surrounding stage floor to the far sides which is also darker in tone. At the back of the stage is a narrow corridor backed by tall panels of beaten steel, lending a cold, metallic feel to the space. About a metre in front of the steel panels are four tall opaque screens a metre and a half in width. These create versatile openings to the various locations we visit including prison cells and houses. Initially harsh lighting spills from 4 strip lights that hang high above head height along the corridor.

The live and recorded video projections that feature throughout the production, appear across the bars of the cage and on the brushed steel wall at the back. Initially the cage transforms into a semi-translucent screen, and through it, we see Raol pacing behind its bars, while simultaneous overhead, surveillance-style footage of him plays out across the screen.

The story is punctuated at points by the bright white text of significant dates as well as images of text messages and social media posts displayed on a metre wide banner that runs across the top of the cage. Props and other items are minimal, with just a couple of plain white topped tables and chairs to indicate locations.

Later in the story, as Raol goes on the run in the Northumbrian countryside the space is deconstructed to just the bare steel walls at the back and the platform. The walls are lit to reflect a cloudy evening skyline and the platform is covered by moorland scrub, with a ragged blue one-man pop-up tent resting in between one of several clumps of tangled bushes.

There is a cast of eight actors, five men and three women. Some of the actors play more than one role.

**Raoul Moat** is a white man of thirty-seven. Mid height he has an athletic build with a muscular torso and arms, a thick set neck and his head is shaved smooth, glistening with sweat as the action progresses, the blue veins by his temples bulging when he flies into a rage. His brown eyes glower with unnerving intensity and he blinks with frenetic exaggeration. They are hooded by thick, dark eyebrows. His thin-lipped mouth is hard set and serious, he only smiles as a challenge to others, raising his eyebrows and goading with a jerky nod of his head. He is dressed in black joggers and a black zip-up hoodie, with white trainers. When he takes the hoodie off, he reveals a grey vest top that shows off a huge, black, and blue ink tattoo that covers the whole of his upper left arm. It is two hands bursting up from the earth, the fingers coiled around the base of a flaming torch, the flames lick his shoulder and lines of light radiate out across the top of his chest.

Later he appears in a vivid orange T-shirt, black canvas trousers and has a blue denim baseball cap. Raoul prowls rather than walks, pacing with a barely concealed anger, and when roused, flares in violent physical outbursts. We also meet Raoul as a little boy of about 8. Skinny and blonde dressed in denim shorts, scuffed trainers, and an orange T-shirt.

**Samantha** or **Sam** is Raoul’s girlfriend and mother to his child. She is a white woman in her early twenties with a petite build, pale skin, and intelligent blue eyes. She has a mass of blonde curly hair that she wears tied up in a bouncy ponytail, small gold hoops glitter on her ear lobes and a thin gold chain with a heart shaped trinket hangs around her slender neck. Sam is dressed in light blue, denim flared jeans teamed with a dusty pink vest top worn under a pale pink hoodie with a zipped front. Later Sam appears in a loose-fitting floral summer dress with thin straps and a flowing skirt, her hair hangs loose, and her feet are bare.

The couple have a **little girl** of about five years old. She has blonde hair in a small ponytail and a bright eyed, smiling face. She scampers in wearing faded blue denim jeans and a baby pink fleece.

**Karl** is Raoul’s childhood friend. A white man in his thirties with a soft featured face, blue eyes, shaggy light brown hair, and a short beard. He is tall, with large physique that gives his step a heavy plod. He is dressed in black joggers worn with a Khaki green T-shirt and a Navy-blue shell-suit jacket and finished with scuffed white trainers. Later he changes his top for a grey jersey body warmer. Karl stands impassive, arms limply hanging by his side, toes turned in a little, looking to others for cues as to how he should behave or react.

**Julie** is a friend and neighbour of Sam’s. A white woman in her late fifties with a birdlike frame encased in skinny jeans, her grey top worn off her bony shoulders, her bare feet slipped into flat worn pumps. Julie’s wispy blonde hair hangs thinly to her collar and her blue eyes burn with malice. She has a fag clamped between her fingers and takes long, rapid drags as she speaks. The same actor also plays the following small parts; **Raoul’s** **Nana**, also a smoker she shuffles in, in brown slippers and has a long rust coloured cardi pulled tightly around her thin body. A **Social Worker** with a rigid posture and a superior air. Dressed in a grey straight skirt, sheer tights, and black loafers. She has a smart white blouse and a mustard-coloured cardigan. A **Doctor** with an RP accent and an expensive pale blue blouse and a **Prosecutor** in a black gown, with a serious expression.

**Andy** is another friend of Raoul’s. A tall, angular white man in his late fifties with short, light grey hair sticking out from underneath a flat cap. His weathered face has a ruddy hue, and he has tired blue eyes. He wears dark grey, canvas overalls and workmen’s laced boots. The same actor also plays a **Solicitor** who sits hunched over a table of papers, elbows resting on it, palms open in exasperation. He peers at his client through black framed glasses with thick lenses. His grey/blue suit is crumpled and his light grey shirt creased. He has a coordinating tie and black leather shoes. At one point he plays **Raoul’s Mum’s Boyfriend** storming in, towering over the little boy, fists clenched. Later, this actor appears as **Paul Gascoigne “Gazza.”** He shambles in clutching a plastic a carrier bag and sits on the ground with his feet flat and his knees angled towards him arms resting on his kneecaps. He is animated, his face coming alive with every emotion he feels passing across his brow. He is dressed in a shapeless green T-shirt and grey fleece jacket and faded blue jeans.

Raoul is questioned by a **Female Prosecutor**. A white woman in her forties with a professional air, measured stance and considered gestures. She has collar length brown hair held back from her make-up free face in a neat low bun. She is dressed in black trousers with flat black shoes and a white blouse, over this she wears her barrister’s black robe, it hangs to her calf and has bat wing sleeves. The same actor also plays the following small parts; **Raoul’s Mum** when he is a little boy and when he is a grown man, firstly in a pink and grey checked shirt - she bristles with indifference and fusses around her boyfriend. When older she has a long, shapeless grey cardigan gathered around her and a stoop to her narrow shoulders.

We also meet **Chris,** Sam’s new boyfriend. A tall, athletic man of mixed heritage in his late twenties he is dressed for a night out in an ironed, pale blue shirt, tucked into blue jeans and teamed with spotless white trainers. His black hair is cropped very short, and he has an easy, relaxed manner, large brown eyes, and a warm smile. Later, he plays another friend of Raoul’s, **Sean** in a Newcastle United football shirt with Northern Rock emblazoned across the front, worn under a Navy shell suit and battered trainers. He has a gormless expression and shifts awkwardly from foot to foot as he listens. This actor also plays one of two **Police Officers**. Both wear the uniform of black trousers and white short sleeved shirts with black epaulettes on the shoulders with white lettering on them that reads HMP Service. The other is a white man in his late forties with brown hair slicked back and a snarling curl to his lip. He is physical and rough, handy with his fists and with little to say.

**CAST AND PRODUCTION CREDITS**

**Samuel Edward-Cook,** plays Raol Moat

**Sally Messham** plays Raoul’s partner Samantha

**Trevor Fox,** plays Raoul’s solicitor, his friend Andy and Gazza

**Leo James,** plays Sean

**Danny Kirrane p**lays Karl

**Patricia Jones** plays Julie, Raoul’s Nana and a Prosecutor

**Angela Lonsdale** playsRaoul’s Mum**,** Sam’s Mum, and a Prosecutor

**Nicolas Tennant** plays PC David Rathband

The children are played by – **Odhran Riddell, Zoe Bryan, Nathan Jago, and Madeline Mckenna**

Designer is Hildegard Bechtler

Lighting Designer is Azusa Ono

Sound Designer is Tom Gibbons

Video designer is Ash J Woodward

Manhunt is written and directed by Robert Icke

This is the end of the introduction to MANHUNT at the Royal Court Theatre, if you have any questions or need further assistance please contact the box office on 020 7565 5000.