

Press release
For immediate release:



Barbican announces Theatre & Dance productions for spring 2025

- MimeLondon returns with four spellbinding international shows, from micro-cinema to whale-sized puppetry
- The Pit celebrates ground-breaking new work and major anniversaries
- World premiere of **THE SEAGULL** in the Barbican Theatre

MimeLondon, 14 Jan – 1 Feb 2025

- Barbican Theatre presents London premiere of **Moby Dick** by **Plexus Polaire** (Norway/France, 22-25 Jan)
- UK premiere of **La Pendue's La Manéchine** in The Pit (France, 14-18 Jan)
- UK premiere of **Brú Theatre's Not a Word** in The Pit (Ireland, 21-25 Jan)
- UK premiere of **Frau Trapp's Five Lines** in The Pit (Switzerland, 28 Jan-1 Feb)

The Pit

- UK premiere of **Belarus Free Theatre's KS6: Small Forward** (UK, 5-8 Feb)
- World premiere of **HighRise's Lil.Miss.Lady** (UK, 12-15 Feb)
- **FuelFest** celebrates 20 years of innovative new work (UK, March dates tba)
- London premiere of **Moving Eastman** by vocal and movement artist **Elaine Mitchener** and choreographer and director **Dam Van Huynh** (UK, 3-4 Apr) - part of Barbican Contemporary Music programme
- UK premiere of **When the Cloud Catches Colours**, part of **Queer East** festival (Singapore, 24-26 Apr)
- **Passion Fruit** by **Dior Clarke** and **Stephanie Martin**, directed by **Rikki Beadle-Blair** (UK, 30 Apr – 3 May)

Barbican Theatre

- Previously announced world premiere of **THE SEAGULL** starring **Cate Blanchett** and **Tom Burke** in **Chekhov's** classic, adapted by **Duncan Macmillan & Thomas Ostermeier**, directed by **Thomas Ostermeier** (26 Feb – 5 Apr)

The Barbican today announces its upcoming programme of Theatre and Dance productions from 14 January to 3 May 2025, including the previously announced world premiere of **THE SEAGULL** starring Cate Blanchett and Tom Burke, directed by Thomas Ostermeier in a new adaptation by Duncan Macmillan and Thomas Ostermeier.

This spring, the Barbican presents some of the world's boldest and bravest storytellers through a bumper line up of exciting new work in its experimental studio space, **The Pit**, collaborating with ground-breaking UK-based companies and presenting premieres from Switzerland to Singapore.

Tickets for the Barbican season are now on sale to Barbican Premier Patrons, Principal Patrons, Director's Circle Patrons, Barbican Patrons and Barbican Members Plus, and will go on sale at 4pm today to Barbican Members. Tickets go on general sale tomorrow, Thursday 17 October, from 10am via barbican.org.uk. Tickets for **THE SEAGULL** are available now.

The city's favourite cure for the January blues, **MimeLondon** returns to the Barbican with four companies from across Europe who create spellbinding worlds to bring contemporary adaptations of classic tales and visions of the future to life through large scale puppetry, masks and micro-cinema.

The season continues in **The Pit**, the Barbican's unique space for artists to develop the future of thrilling and meaningful live experiences. This spring is a time for celebration, marking major

anniversaries of several UK-based companies at the forefront of creating ground-breaking new work. Reuniting with Olivier Award-nominated **Belarus Free Theatre** for the UK premiere of their searing new production, **KS6: Small Forward** is based on the extraordinary life story of Belarusian Olympic basketball player and political activist, **Katsiaryna Snytsina**, and launches the company's 20th year. Winners of the 2022 Oxford Samuel Beckett Theatre Trust Award and celebrating their 10th anniversary, **HighRise Entertainment** (*The UK Drill Project*) return to The Pit to present a journey into the history of Grime with **Lil.Miss.Lady**, a multimedia, genre-smashing, interactive-rave-experience starring MC Lady Lykez, exploring what it takes for a trailblazing female MC to navigate her way through a male-dominated industry. And the Barbican collaborates with pioneering producers **Fuel** for the first time with a two-week takeover in their 20th year, with new works from artists spanning multiple artforms, each piece grappling with the big questions of our time.

Crucial to the Barbican's mission is supporting audiences to connect with new generations of artists, alongside more established companies. Following several years of successful film screenings in the Barbican Cinema, this year's collaboration with cross-disciplinary festival Queer East festival includes the UK premiere of **When the Cloud Catches Colours** in The Pit, by Singaporean theatremaker **Chng Yi Kai**. While London-based artists **Dior Clarke** and **Stephanie Martin** bring a new production of their play, **Passion Fruit**, to The Pit, following their Black British Theatre Award-winning debut at the New Diorama in 2022. Both shows explore themes of discovering identity, pride and safety in hostile or ignorant society.

Toni Racklin, Head of Theatre & Dance at the Barbican, said: *"I'm delighted to announce our programme for early 2025, celebrating our longstanding collaborations and welcoming fresh work to our Barbican stages. This season, we spotlight brilliant new work in The Pit, introducing audiences to innovative storytelling from the UK and beyond. We proudly champion artists who call out injustice and empower communities to stand together."*

Artistic relationships are at the heart of our work. We are excited to platform Queer East in The Pit this year alongside our Cinema, while celebrating significant anniversaries with HighRise, Belarus Free Theatre, and Fuel. We are thrilled to continue offering a London home to breathtaking theatremaking that speaks to us through visual languages through our partnership with MimeLondon. And of course, we are delighted to welcome back Cate Blanchett, Thomas Ostermeier, and Duncan Macmillan to the iconic Barbican Theatre for a remarkable adaptation of The Seagull."

Throughout the Barbican Centre, further programme highlights taking place this year include:

Barbican Art Gallery

This spring, **Barbican Art Gallery** presents largest international retrospective to date of the work of late American painter **Noah Davis** (6 Feb – 11 May). Bringing together over 50 works, this touring exhibition is the first of its kind and offers a comprehensive look at Davis' extraordinarily broad artistic practice, as well as his work in curating and community-building as co-founder of The Underground Museum in Los Angeles.

Indonesian artist **Citra Sasmita** (b.1990) will transform **The Curve** gallery for **[Into Eternal Land](#)** (30 Jan – 20 Apr), her first solo exhibition in the UK. Working fluidly across the mediums of painting, sculptural installation, embroidery and scent, Sasmita will invite visitors on a symbolic, multi-sensory journey through the 90-metre-long gallery, exploring ideas of ancestral memory, ritual and migration.

Classical Music

Across its recently announced spring and summer classical music season, the Barbican presents a series of events that highlight the untold stories of marginalised figures, as bass baritone **Davóne Tines** presents an intimate theatrical portrait of singer and campaigner Paul Robeson (**[15 Feb](#)**), **Cassie Kinoshi** explores the life and work of Caribbean artist Boscoe Holder (**[27 May](#)**), **Nadine Benjamin** performs **Shirley J Thompson's** love letter to the resilient women of the Windrush

generation ([20 Feb](#)) and **Elaine Mitchener** and **Dam Van Huynh** present a new sonic dance exploration of Julius Eastman ([3 & 4 Apr](#)).

The season also features musical pioneer **Jordi Savall** and his own remarkable **Hespèrion XXI** early music ensemble with guests – for a journey into the unknown with a man considered by many to be the greatest traveller of all time: Ibn Battuta ([17 Mar](#)). Finally, composer Luke Styles presents his heart-stopping symphonic song-cycle inspired by *No Friend but the Mountains* by Kurdish-Iranian writer, journalist and former refugee Behrouz Boochani, here given its **UK premiere** by Barbican Resident Orchestra the **London Symphony Orchestra** and baritone **Jonathan Lemalu** ([19 Jun](#)).

To see the full Barbican Classical Music programme, [click here](#).

Contemporary Music

A key event in the Barbican's contemporary music programme during this period will see Polish pianist and composer, **Hania Rani** make her Barbican debut, presenting her album *Ghosts* in a special arrangement for large ensemble.

Rani released her 70-minute-long double album *Ghosts* (Gondwana Records) in 2023 and will perform the full and complete album alongside a large ensemble including string, woodwind, and brass instruments. She will be joined by long-time collaborators and friends of Rani's, from cellist **Dobrawa Czocher** to bassist **Ziemowit Klimek**, each coming from versatile music backgrounds. More commonly used to performing solo, surrounded by multiple keyboards, Rani will present the complete album at the Barbican as part of a tour with her ensemble in a way that its orchestral and tangled nature wouldn't permit it to be performed alone. The performance will also be accompanied by new light and set design by **Stuart Bailes**.

To see the full Barbican Contemporary Music programme, [click here](#).

Creative Collaboration & Cinema

Celebrating its 10th anniversary year, the Chronic Youth Film Festival 2025 returns to the Barbican cinemas on Saturday 26 & Sunday 27 April, 2025, with a bold and exciting programme curated and delivered by this year's cohort of Barbican Young Film Programmers. The free Young Film Programmers scheme is a six-month talent development programme where young people work collaboratively to turn their love for cinema into a dynamic experience. This culminates in the Young Film Programmers determining the themes, film programme, and connected public events for the festival. Details of the next April's festival will be announced in the New Year.

Read on for more information about the Theatre & Dance spring 2025 programme

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2025/series/theatre-and-dance-winterspring-2025>

MimeLondon

La Pendue: *La Manéchine*

Tue 14 – Sat 18 Jan 2025

The Pit

Press performance: Tue 14 Jan, 7.45pm

UK premiere

Blending puppetry, storytelling and a live one-man orchestra, **La Pendue** brings the UK premiere of ***La Manéchine*** to The Pit, Barbican, this January as part of MimeLondon 2025. Created and directed by master puppeteer-performer **Estelle Charlier** and musician **Martin Kaspar Orkestar**, who had been haunted by a medieval tale for many years, their latest production is a dark and timeless fable of true love and female emancipation.

Based on the Grimm Brothers', *The Girl Without Hands*, this striking production tells the story of a poor miller who naively makes a deal with the devil, unwittingly promising him his daughter. The Devil, finding that he cannot possess her, demands the miller's help to claim his prize – and that's just the start of this thrilling tale of deception, disappearance, love and finally, happiness ever after.

Founded by Estelle Charlier and Romuald Collinet in 2003, La Pendue creates distinctive puppetry performances that tackle complex narratives. Based in Grenoble, the company has toured all over the world with acclaimed productions including *Tria Fata* (Jackson's Lane/LIMF 2020) and *Poli Degaine* (inspired by the anarchic classical hand puppet tradition of Polichinelle (Punch)). Estelle and Romuald hold residencies at several prestigious organisations including the International Festival of Puppet Theaters in Charleville-Mézières and are also behind the striking puppetry created for Leos Carax's Cannes award-winning feature film, *Annette* (2021).

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MimeLondon

Brú Theatre: *Not a Word*

Tue 21- Sat 25 Jan 2025

The Pit

Press performance: Tue 21 Jan, 7.45pm

UK premiere

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ *"An artistic and theatrical triumph"* The Arts Review

"An evocative heart-rending piece about yearning and forgotten lives that weaves a spell" Irish Times

Galway-based **Brú Theatre** marks its first appearance in the UK with ***Not a Word*** in The Pit, part of MimeLondon 2025. Merging mask, music, and movement, this new piece of physical theatre is dedicated to the forgotten Irish navvies who worked hard, faltered and slowly faded from memory. Devised with performer **Raymond Keane** and onstage fiddle and viola player **Ultan O'Brien**, the production is directed by **James Riordan**, with mask design by **Orla Clogher**.

A day's labouring done, in a place that has never quite felt like home, a silent man plays a beautiful old tune as memory dances amongst his workman's boots and few cherished trinkets.

Celebrating those who 'took the boat', a forgotten class of Irish emigrants who helped build countries that were not their own, this poignant production offers a moving portrait of one emigrant that echoes many people's stories today. An ode to a self-exiled labourer, which seeks the beauty in the banal and the poetry between the cracks.

Established by theatre maker James Riordan and producer Jill Murray in 2018, Brú Theatre produces work that explores the intersection between contemporary theatre forms and the languages, literature and landscapes of the West of Ireland. Their bilingual, multidisciplinary work incorporates mask, Virtual Reality, dance, original music and new writing, showcasing the vibrancy of the region through a modern lens. They tour nationally and internationally, including at Galway International Arts Festival, Brightening Air Festival (Dublin), Solas Nua (Washington D.C), Canada Ireland Foundation (Toronto), Green Season (Montreal) and Children's Festival (Ottawa).

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MimeLondon

Plexus Polaire: *Moby Dick*

Wed 22 – Sat 25 Jan 2025

Barbican Theatre

Press performance: Wed 22 Sep, 7.45pm

London premiere

Returning to the UK following critically acclaimed appearances at the London International Mime Festival, **Plexus Polaire** make their Barbican debut with their 'exquisite' (New York Times) production of ***Moby Dick***, filled with large-scale puppetry, live action, video projection and music. The company's artistic director, Yngvild Aspeli, directs this spectacular stage adaptation of Herman Melville's classic

about ambition, obsession and the power of nature, drawing inspiration from her own family's seafaring heritage.

Featuring seven actors, fifty puppets, a drowned orchestra and a whale-sized whale, Plexus Polaire's award-winning show offers a contemporary perspective on the epic tale of redemption, an expedition into the inner storms of the human heart and the unexplained mysteries of life.

Plexus Polaire is a French-Norwegian theatre company who, through the use of life-sized puppets, acting, music, light and video, develop visual worlds that bring our most buried feelings to life. On tour, *Moby Dick* has been celebrated across Europe (including the UK's Brighton Festival), South & North America and Asia, and received awards including Norway's prestigious Hedda Award (Best Audiovisual Design 2022). Director, actress, puppeteer and puppet-maker, Yngvild Aspeli, has directed seven shows for the company including *Ashes* and *Chambre noire* (Jackson's Lane/ LIMF 2017 & 2019), and current touring productions *A Doll's House* and *Dracula – Lucy's Dream*.

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MimeLondon

Frau Trapp: *Five Lines*

Tue 28 Jan – 1 Feb 2025

The Pit

Press performance: Tue 28 Jan, 7.45pm

UK premiere

Frau Trapp make their UK debut at the Barbican with their first production, *Five Lines*, exploring human nature through the lens of one couple's relationship in a dystopian world shaped by today's extreme greed. Led by founders **Mina Trapp** (designer) and **Matteo Frau** (musician), the company's micro cinema-theatre hybrid style of performance brings together miniature models, music, acting and projection. Questioning their role as artists, in an era dominated by political, social and climatic insecurity, they found even in the darkest of situations we can imagine and create better worlds.

Narrated by a disembodied voice off-stage, *Five Lines* transports us to a stark reality, where resource scarcity threatens our freedom and people retreat into their cocoons, forgetting that change is possible. Driven by love and an unquenchable lust for life, this intimate production challenges us to consider whether our relentless pursuit of dreams leads to a better life or blinds us to what truly matters.

Frau Trapp company was established in 2021 and *Five Lines* is its first production. The company is deeply fascinated by miniature worlds that can be brought to big screens and reflect our current era. Founders Matteo Frau (musician) and Mina Trapp (designer) met at a Micro-Cinema-Theatre workshop in 2016. Since then, they have played together in several music bands, created a street theatre piece and together they run the cultural centre Can Pink i Boogie (Mataró, Barcelona). *Five Lines* is a co-production between FrauTrapp and Bern's Schlachthaus Theatre (CH), which premiered at Barcelona's IX Puppet Festival 'Rombic' in 2023 and has since toured across venues and festivals throughout Europe.

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HighRise: *Lil.Miss.Lady*

Wed 12 – Sat 15 Feb 2025

The Pit

Press performance: Thu 13 Feb, 7.45pm

BSL & Relaxed performance: Fri 14 Feb 7.45pm

World premiere

Following the success of the award-winning *The UK Drill Project* in 2022, **HighRise Entertainment** celebrate their 10th anniversary with a return to The Pit before a nationwide tour of this immersive exploration of the history of Grime starring **MC Lady Lykez**, revealing what it takes for a female MC to navigate her way through a heavily male-dominated industry in the early 2000s.

Part rave, part drama, this bold piece of gig theatre takes audiences on a journey through the sounds and visuals of Black-British bass music culture, from the early stages of Jungle, through UK Garage, Sub-Low, Funky House, Dubstep and Grime.

Featuring original music from by **Lady Lykez and Dominic Garfield**, mixed by live DJs including **DJ Kaylee Kay**, and inspired by a series of interviews with influential women in the Grime scene (Lady Stush, Lioness, Queenie, Baby Blue), **Lil.Miss.Lady** celebrates Grime and its women while holding a bass-fuelled microscope over one of Britain's biggest sub-cultures.

Following sold-out R&D performances of **Lil.Miss.Lady** in 2018 at The Roundhouse and Latitude Festival, this genre-defying production is written and directed by HighRise's Artistic Director **Dominic Garfield**. His practice blends playful, immersive and thought-provoking theatre with Hip Hop and Grime music to connect and inspire young audiences and participants. His previous work includes hit shows *The UK Drill Project* (Barbican), *The Concrete Jungle Book* (ArtsDepot / The Pleasance) and *Merryville* (Camden People's Theatre) as well as collaborations with The National Theatre, Royal Exchange Manchester and the V&A.

For a decade **HighRise** have used music, theatre and first-hand testimonies to represent unheard voices in inner-city Britain. The cross-arts collective won the Oxford Samuel Beckett Theatre Trust Award in 2022 with *The UK Drill Project*, which challenged myths about the genre. Partners have included Nike, HOODRICH, The National Theatre and the Barbican Centre as well as specialised art conservatoires including East 15 Acting school, Italia Conti and Central School of Speech and Drama.

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Belarus Free Theatre: *KS6: Small Forward*

Wednesday 5 - Sat 8 Feb 2025

The Pit

Press performance: Thu 6 Feb, 7.45pm

UK premiere

KS6: Small Forward is theatre turbocharged with the electrifying energy of a basketball match, inviting audiences into sports phenomenon **Katsiaryna (Katya) Snytsina's** world. It traces the stratospheric highs of twenty years on the court and the events that set her on a new path as an activist, political dissident and "extremist lesbian".

Directed by Olivier Award-nominated **Belarus Free Theatre's** co-founding Artistic Directors **Natalia Kaliada** and **Nicolai Khalezin**, this new production launches their 20th anniversary in 2025, a landmark year to celebrate two decades on the world stage challenging dictators and building a movement for democracy, human rights and artistic freedoms.

Delivered in BFT's iconoclastic, expressionistic style, Katya tells her own story alongside clubland's rising star, **DJ Blanka Barbara** in this soul-shaking show about being fearlessly true to yourself. Performances follow a successful premiere at La MaMa Experimental Theater Club in New York and the show will continue its world tour with performances in June 2025 at Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg.

Originating some of the world's most provocative and breathtakingly physical theatre, internationally acclaimed **Belarus Free Theatre** are the only theatre company in Europe banned by its government on political grounds. ***KS6: Small Forward*** marks BFT's return to the Barbican following the critically and publicly acclaimed stage productions *Dogs of Europe* (2022) and *King Stakh's Wild Hunt* (2023).

Katya Snytsina is a women's basketball star, the first and only popular sports figure in the history of Belarus to have openly come out as gay, and who now lives in exile as an outspoken, frontline activist against the dictatorship in her native country. She was part of the Belarusian team that won a bronze medal at the 2007 European Championships and placed sixth in the 2008 Olympic Games. This production depicts Katya's bravery and determination as she experienced tremendous highs and crushing lows while smashing sporting records, stood up to dictators in the wake of widespread protests in Belarus in 2020, and came out as a lesbian when she fell in love with a longtime BFT company member.

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Fuel: *FuelFest*

The Pit

March 2025 (dates TBA)

Award-winning independent producer **Fuel** takes over The Pit this spring with a celebration of 20 years of fresh work for adventurous people by inspiring artists. Marking the Barbican's first collaboration with Fuel, ***FuelFest*** will comprise four new ambitious and fresh works from some of the UK's most exciting theatremakers. Spanning multiple artforms, each piece grapples with the big questions of our time.

“Pioneering production company Fuel pushes the boundaries of form and scale” - The Stage
“The maverick theatre group pushes new boundaries and makes theatre production sexy” - The Guardian

Co-founded by Artistic Director Kate McGrath in 2004, the company has collaborated with artists and produced imaginative, boundary-pushing work that has travelled around the globe. The two-week festival forms part of the company's 20th anniversary season, creating space for artists and audiences to experiment and innovate. The Pit is the Barbican's Peter Brook Empty Space Award-winning venue that has long supported artists to test new ways of working, create bold new projects and reimagine what live theatre can be.

The full line-up and lead artists will be announced in November.

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Moving Eastman

Thu 3 – Fri 4 Apr

The Pit

London premiere

Moving Eastman is a new dance and sonic performance led by movement artist, experimental vocalist and composer **Elaine Mitchener**, with original concept and choreography by director **Dam Van Huynh**. Taking inspiration from the intersectional life of the Black American composer Julius Eastman, staging is informed by found materials such as images, notes, interviews and sounds.

Eastman, who died in 1990 aged just 49, is a key figure in late 20th century American music but was marginalised during his lifetime. A black, gay, contemporary music composer, he lived every aspect of his identity to its fullest. His attitude was a total assault on the status quo. Inspired by his life and legacy, ***Moving Eastman*** responds to Mitsuye Yamada's quote, “invisibility is not a natural state for anyone”, sparking a discussion on who controls the narrative and who tells these stories.

The work combines improvisation, contemporary music theatre and performance art, drawing from multiple global vocal traditions, both traditional western classical, and embodies Eastman's unconventional approach to making art across genres and disciplines in a quest for artistic freedom. Elaine Mitchener is joined onstage by long-time collaborators, saxophonist **Jason Yarde**, bassist **Neil Charles** and **Xhosa Cole** on saxophone and percussion (together they form the ongoing performance project **The Rolling Calf**).

Elaine Mitchener's previous full scale staged works include commissions *On Being Human as Praxis* (2020), *the then + the now = time* (2019) and *SWEET TOOTH* (2017), all collaborations with Dam Van Huynh, and orchestra work *b r e a d t h b r e a t h* (2018). Works researched, developed and produced by Elaine Mitchener Projects arise out of Elaine's philosophy of encounter-enact-engage to create intimate and experimental music theatre performance pieces.

Dam Van Huynh is an award-winning dancer, choreographer and director. He has collaborated with Elaine Mitchener since 2009, exploring the possibilities of performance through the use of sound and body. His choreographic works have been performed internationally, and he has worked with a variety of artists including Merce Cunningham, Richard Alston, and Tom Morris & Lee Hall. He founded the

Van Huynh Company in 2008, is Director of the Hackney-based charity Centre 151, and Associate Director of the biennial Dance Bridges Festival (Kolkata, India).

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Queer East: *When the Cloud Catches Colours*

Thu 24 – Sat 26 Apr 2025

The Pit

Press Night: Thu 24 Apr, 7.45pm

International premiere

When the Cloud Catches Colours is a thought-provoking piece of verbatim theatre about the experience of two queer Singaporeans as they grow older. Delving into relationships, family, insecurity, kindness and safety, the show is written and directed by **Chng Yi Kai**, based on true accounts contributed by many people in queer communities across the country, interviewed by Chng Yi Kai over several years. The production was first staged in 2023 by Drama Box in Singapore.

Qing & and E are navigating life as queer individuals in their fifties. Qing is struggling to deal with the aftermath of a relationship ending after 20 years, and E is the sole-caregiver to a mother who doesn't fully accept her. On a shifting, technicolour landscape (set design by **Lim Wei Ling**), performers **Julius Foo** and **Judy Ngo** explore what lies ahead for people who have spent most of their lives in the margins.

When the Cloud Catches Colours is part of Queer East, a festival that showcases boundary-pushing LGBTQ+ cinema, live arts, and moving image work from East and Southeast Asia and its diaspora communities. For a sixth year, Queer East will be screening a selection of films in the Barbican Cinemas. The full programme will be announced in the new year.

Chng Yi Kai is a theatre artist who aspires to create socially-conscious theatre works that extend our capacities as humans and communities. A graduate from Yale-NUS College with a major in Anthropology, his foray into theatre began as an actor on the second cohort of Drama Box's youth wing ARTivate, after graduating from Singapore Polytechnic's Diploma in Applied Drama and Psychology. He was previously the Resident Artist at Drama Box theatre company as a playwright, director and ARTivate co-lead facilitator.

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Dior Clarke and Stephanie Martin: *Passion Fruit*

Wed 30 Apr – Sat 3 May 2025

The Pit

Press Night: Wed 30 Apr, 7.45pm

BSL & Relaxed performance: Thu 1 May, 7.45pm

Written by **Dior Clarke and Stephanie Martin**, Black British Theatre Award-winning play ***Passion Fruit*** returns to the stage in a new production, directed by **Rikki Beadle-Blair MBE** for The Pit, following an acclaimed run and rapturous audience responses at the New Diorama Theatre in 2022.

Brimming with joyful movement and music, brutal honesty and tender insight, this coming-of-age comedy-drama follows the life of Romeo (performed by Dior Clarke), a Black, Gay, Working Class, British-Jamaican boy growing up in North London.

Passion Fruit is a self-love story about finding yourself and staying true to your roots. From the first teenage moments of lust, surviving adolescent violence, family struggles, falling in love for the first time to the thrills and spills of the hedonism of the gay scene. Romeo's arrived at this moment: vibrant, bruised, fiercely ambitious and ready to share his story.

Dior Clarke is an actor, writer, director and producer, whose recent works include *Batty Boy* (Sky Arts), TV pilot *The Prince* (produced by Clarke's production company, Loquaciously Unfiltered), feature film *This Love Isn't Taught* and its stage production (currently in development at Cambridge Junction). He returns to the Barbican following his work with The PappyShow, including performing in the award-winning *BOYS* (2022) and 10th Birthday Pit Party (2023).

Stephanie Martin's debut play *Joy* is currently in development as a feature film with the BFI (working title *Girl Almighty*). Further playwrighting for the stage includes *Alkaline* (Park Theatre), *Juniper and Jules* (Theatre 503, Vault Festival 'Show of the Week', Soho Theatre), *Rage, but Hope* (Summerhall, Streatham Space Project), and Shakespeare's Globe short play commission *Letter to Bathsheba*. Recent work includes a commission from Soho Theatre for a new play co-written with Dior Clarke and award-nominated *Thirsty* (Vault Festival).

Rikki Beadle-Blair MBE is a writer, director, composer, choreographer, designer, producer and performer working in film, theatre, television and radio. He has written and directed 40+ plays over the last 20 years along with several feature films, shorts, TV episodes and series. Awards include a Sony Award, Los Angeles Outfest Screenwriting and Outstanding Achievement awards, and he has received an MBE for contributions to drama and an honorary doctor of letters from the University of Warwick. As well as annually hosting UK Black Pride, Rikki has hosted Voguing balls around the country for the last 15 years.

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Previously announced

Wessex Grove: **THE SEAGULL**

Tue 26 Feb – Sat 5 Apr 2025

Barbican Theatre

Press performance: Thu 6 Mar 7pm

World premiere

Directed by **Thomas Ostermeier**, this new production of **Anton Chekhov's** classic ***The Seagull***, adapted by **Duncan Macmillan** and **Thomas Ostermeier**, marks a return to the Barbican stage for **Cate Blanchett**, following her performance in Botho Strauss' *Big and Small (Gross und Klein)* in 2012.

Academy-award winning actor **Cate Blanchett** stars as Arkadina, a celebrated actress whose larger-than-life presence dominates both the stage and her personal relationships. Arriving at her family's country estate for the weekend, she finds herself caught up in a storm of conflicting desires. Her playwright son, Konstantin (**Kodi Smit-McPhee**), struggles to step out of her shadow as he pursues his own artistic ambitions and her lover Trigorin (**Tom Burke**), becomes the object of affection for the aspiring young actress Nina (**Emma Corrin**).

As their lives entwine and they each grapple with their desires, ambitions, and disappointments, Chekhov's timeless story unfolds in a gripping tale of vanity, power, and the sacrifices made in the name of art.

The Seagull marks a return to the Barbican Theatre for **Thomas Ostermeier**, following the critically acclaimed 2014 run of *An Enemy of the People*, and for **Duncan Macmillan**, following *The Forgotten Zone* in 2016.

ENDS

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Images

Images can be downloaded here:

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/798o2q1d5px9lrczjfmw6/ABeoBTQeEZ_zTiNbbkj3X5c?rlkey=n9ajas9zrzc4hns1afk5fy1j1&st=8c480s83&dl=0

LISTINGS

Full programme here: <https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2025/series/theatre-and-dance-winterspring-2025>

MimeLondon

La Pendue: La Manéchine

UK premiere

The Pit, Barbican

Tue 14 – Sat 18 Jan 2025 (6 performances)

Tue 14 – Sat 18 Jan at 7.45pm, and Sat 18 Jan at 2.30pm

Press performance: Tue 14 Jan 2025, 7.45pm

Running time: 70mins (no interval)

Age guidance: 10+

From £18 plus booking fee; £5 Young Barbican tickets available

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2025/event/mimelondon-la-manekine>

Performed in French, with English surtitles

Post-show talk, Thu 16 Jan, BSL interpreted by Samuel Rojas. Free to same-day ticket holders

Creative team

With **Estelle Charlier** and **Martin Kaspar Orkestar**

Estelle Charlier Concept, artistic direction, puppets and masks

Martin Kaspar Orkestar Music

Estelle Charlier and **Romuald Collinet** Stage direction

Romarc Sangars Adaptation and texts

Anthony Lopez Light and technical manager

Andi Luchsinger Sound management

Anthony Lopez, Andi Luchsinger, Estelle Charlier, Martin Kaspar Orkestar & Romuald Collinet Set and props

Estelle Charlier & TMG - Atelier de confection de costumes Costumes

Sarah Charlier Collaboration on choreography

Pavína Vimmrova Video editing

Presented by the Barbican

MimeLondon

Brú Theatre: *Not a Word*

UK premiere

The Pit, Barbican

Tue 21- Sat 25 Jan 2025, 7.45pm (6 performances)

Tue 21 – Sat 25 Jan at 7.45pm, and Sat 25 Jan at 2.30pm

Press performance: Tue 21 Jan, 7.45pm

Running time: 1 hour (no interval)

Age guidance: 12+

From £18 plus booking fee; £5 Young Barbican tickets available

Post-show talk, Wed 22 Jan, BSL interpreted by Lorna Patterson. Free to same-day ticket holders

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2025/event/mimelondon-not-a-word>

Creative team

James Riordan Director

Raymond Keane Performer

Ultan O'Brien Musician

Sarah Jane Shiels Lighting design

Andrew Clancy Set design

Saileóg O'Halloran Costume design

Orla Clogher Mask design
Jill Murray Producer
Jenny O'Malley Sound design

Presented by the Barbican

MimeLondon

Plexus Polaire: *Moby Dick*

London premiere

Wed 22 – Sat 25 Jan 2025, 7.45pm (4 performances)

Press performance: Wed 22 Jan 2025, 7.45pm

Barbican Theatre

90mins (no interval)

Age guidance: 12+

From £16 plus booking fee; £10 Young Barbican tickets available

Performed in English

Post-show talk, Fri 24 Jan, BSL interpreted. Free to same-day ticket holders

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2025/event/mimelondon-moby-dick>

Creative team

Yngvild Aspeli Director

Julian Spooner, Sarah Lascar, Daniel Collados, Alice Chéné, Viktor Lukawski, Maja Kunsic, Andreu Martinez Costa Actors and puppeteers

Vera Rozanova, Yann Claudel, Olmo Hidalgo, Cristina Iosif, Scott Koehler, Laëtitia Labre. Alternating with

Guro Skumsnes Moe, Ane Marthe Sørlien Holen and Havard Skaset Music

Lou Renaud-Bailly, Georgia Wartel Collins et Emil Storlökken Åse Alternating with

Polina Borisova, Yngvild Aspeli, Manon Dublanc, Sébastien Puech, Elise Nicod Puppet makers

Elisabeth Holager Lund Scenography

Xavier Lescat and Vincent Loubière Light designer

David Lejard-Ruffet Video designer

Benjamin Moreau Costume designer

Vincent Loubière or Marine David Light technicians

Hugo Masson, Pierre Hubert or Emilie Delforce Video technicians

Raphaël Barani, Simon Masson or Damien Ory Sound technicians

Benjamin Dupuis, Xavier Lescat or Margot Boche Stage technicians

Benoît Seguin Assistant director (on tour)

Pierre Tual Assistant director (creation)

Pauline Thimonnier Dramaturg

Clair Costa Production Director and Tour Booking

Anne-Laure Doucet and Gaedig Bonabesse Administration

Noémie Jorez Producer

Presented by the Barbican

MimeLondon

Frau Trapp: *Five Lines*

UK premiere

The Pit, Barbican

Tue 28 Jan - Sat 1 Feb 2025, 7.45pm (6 performances)

Tue 28 Jan – Sat 1 Feb at 7.45pm, and Sat 1 Feb at 2.30pm

Press performance: Tue 28 Jan, 7.45pm

Running time: 1 hour (no interval)

Age guidance: 14+

£18 plus booking fee, £5 Young Barbican tickets available

Post-show talk, Wed 29 Jan, BSL interpreted by Anna Kitson. Free to same-day ticket holders

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2025/event/mimelondon-frau-trapp>

Creative Team

Matteo Frau/Natalia Barraza/Mina Trapp Script

Natalia Barraza Direction

Matteo Frau/Natalia Barraza/Mina Trapp/Sebi Escarpenter/Ariel F. Verba Interpretation and manipulation

Matteo Frau Original music

Sebi Escarpenter/Ariel F. Verba Camera/Technique/Editing

Mina Trapp Miniature/Scenography

Mina Trapp Costume

Ivan Tomasevic Light design

Sebi Escarpenter Miniature light design
The Frau Trapp Company Production
Mina Trapp/Matteo Frau Promotion

Presented by the Barbican

Belarus Free Theatre: *KS6: Small Forward*

UK premiere

The Pit, Barbican

Wed 5 - Sat 8 Feb 2025 (5 performances)

Press performance: Thu 6 Feb, 7:45pm

Post-show talk: Fri 7 Feb, 7:45pm

Wed 5 – Sat 8 Feb at 7:45pm, Sat 8 Feb at 2:30pm

90 mins (no interval)

Age guidance: 14+

From £18 plus booking fee; £5 Young Barbican tickets available

Performed in English

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2025/event/belarus-free-theatre-ks6-small-forward>

Creative team

Directed by **Natalia Kaliada** and **Nicolai Khalezin**

Original Play by **Nicolai Khalezin**

Javier De Frutos Movement Director and Choreographer

Anthony Matsena Consultant Choreographer

Nicolai Khalezin Set Design

DJ Blanka Barbara Composer and Sound Design

Peter Small Lighting Design

Dmytro Guk Video Design

Darya Andreyanova, Mikalai Kuprych, Raman Shytsko Creative Associates

Michael Attenborough CBE. D Litt. Performance Mentor to Katsiaryna Snytsina and Script Editor

Daniella Kaliada Translator

Penny Dyer, Barbara Houseman Voice Coach

Performed by: **Katsiaryna Snytsina, DJ Blanka Barbara, Raman Shytsko, Darya Andreyanova, Mikalai Kuprych, Jay O. Sanders** (Voice Over), **Tahir Hajat MC** (Voice Over)

Presented by the Barbican

KS6: Small Forward is a Belarus Free Theatre production based on conversations with Katsiaryna Snytsina, and dramaturgically adapted for the stage by Natalia Kaliada and Nicolai Khalezin

HighRise Entertainment: *Lil.Miss.Lady*

Wed 12 Feb - Saturday 15 February 2025 7:45pm (4 performances)

Press performance: Thurs 13 Feb 7:45pm

BSL and relaxed performance: Fri 14 Feb 7:45pm

Wed 12 Feb 7:45pm, Thurs 13 Feb 7:45pm, Fri 14 Feb 7:45pm, Sat 15 Feb 7:45pm

The Pit

90 mins (no interval)

Age guidance: 14+

From £18 plus booking fee; £5 Young Barbican tickets available

BSL interpreted post-show talk: Fri 14 Feb 7:45pm

Performed in English

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/event/highrise-entertainment-lil-miss-lady>

Creative team:

Writer and Director: Dominic Garfield

Lyrics: Lady Lykez, Dominic Garfield and Company

Company Producer: Elizabeth Peace

Research partners: Lioness, Queenie, Stush, Baby Blue and Girls of Grime

Vocal Coach: Toni 'Reese' Robinson

Outgoing Head of Programmes: Libby Liburd

Executive Director: Janet Tam

Full list of performers to be announced.

Presented by the Barbican

HighRise are supported by Arts Council England, Vogue World Foundation & Something To Aim For (Slight changes here to confirmed support at this stage)

THE SEAGULL By Anton Chekhov

A new version by Duncan Macmillan & Thomas Ostermeier

World premiere

Barbican Theatre

Wed 26 Feb—Sat 5 Apr 2025

Press performance: Thur 6 Mar 7pm

Audio described performance: Tue 18 Mar 7:15pm

Captioned performance: Wed 19 Mar 7:15pm

Running time: approx. 2 hours 30 minutes (with interval)

Age guidance: 12+

£20 plus booking fee

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2025/event/the-seagull>

Conceived & Directed by **Thomas Ostermeier**

Magda Willi: Set Design

Marg Horwell: Costume Design

Tom Gibbons: Sound Design

Cast: **Cate Blanchett** (Arkadina), **Priyanga Burford** (Polina), **Tom Burke** (Trigorin), **Emma Corrin** (Nina), **Zachary Hart** (Medvedenko), **Paul Higgins** (Shamrayev), **Tanya Reynolds** (Masha), **Kodi Smit-McPhee** (Konstantin), **Jason Watkins** (Sorin)

Wessex Grove and Gavin Kalin Productions.

In association with the Barbican

FuelFest

The Pit, Barbican

March 2025

More details to be announced soon

Moving Eastman

World premiere

The Pit

Thu 3 – Fri 4 Apr 2025, 7.30pm

Running time: tbc

£20 plus booking fee, £5 Young Barbican tickets available

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2025/event/moving-eastman>

Performers

Elaine Mitchener vocals, movement and music direction

Dam Van Huynh concept, choreography and direction

The Rolling Calf:

Jason Yarde saxophone, electronics

Neil Charles bass, electronics

Xhosa Cole saxophone, percussion

Produced by the Barbican

Moving Eastman was commissioned in partnership with Deep Time, Fruitmarket's festival of new music with further support from Utopia Festival - The Hague, Hellerau - Dresden, Britten Pears Arts, the Barbican and Centre 151.

Queer East: *When the Cloud Catches Colours*

International premiere

The Pit, Barbican

Thu 24 – Sat 26 Apr 2025, (4 performances)

Thu 24 Apr 7:45pm, Fri 25 Apr 7:45pm, Sat 26 Apr 2:30pm & 7:45pm

Press Night: Thu 24 Apr, 7:45pm

Running time: approx. 1 hour 10 mins (no interval)

Age guidance: 14+

£18 plus booking fee, £5 Young Barbican tickets available

Post-show talk, Fri 25 Apr 7:45pm. Free to same-day ticket holders

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2025/event/queer-east-when-the-cloud-catches-colours>

Performed in English, Mandarin and Singaporean Hokkien, with English surtitles.

Cast

Judy Ngo as E

Julius Foo as Qing

Creative team

Chng Yi Kai Playwright and Director

Kok Heng Leun Dramaturg

Sarah Tang Executive Producer (UK)

Jo Lam Producer (Drama Box)

Lim Wei Ling Set Designer

Cheng Xin Rui and **Hang Qian Chou** Translator (interviews)

Presented by the Barbican

Dior Clarke/ Stephanie Martin: *Passion Fruit*

The Pit, Barbican

Wed 30 Apr – Sat 3 May 2025, 7.45pm (5 performances)

Press performance: Wed 30 Apr, 7.45pm

BSL & Relaxed performance: Thu 1 May, 7.45pm

Running time: 2 hours (inc. interval)

Age guidance: 16+

£18 plus booking fee, £5 Young Barbican tickets available

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2025/event/passion-fruit>

Creative team

Written by Dior Clarke and Stephanie Martin

Directed by Rikki Beadle-Blair MBE

Full creative team to be announced

Presented by the Barbican

Supported by The PappyShow and New Diorama

NOTES TO EDITORS

About the Barbican

The Barbican is a catalyst for creativity, sparking possibilities for artists, audiences, and communities. We showcase the most exciting art from around the world, pushing traditional artistic boundaries to entertain and inspire millions of people, create connections, provoke debate, and reflect the world we live in.

We are an international arts and events centre rooted firmly in our own neighbourhood, collaborating with local communities and putting the City of London on the map as a destination for everybody. Central to our purpose is supporting emerging talent and shaping opportunities that will accelerate the next generation of creatives.

As a not-for-profit, we rely on the generosity of individuals and organisations, including our principal funder the City of London Corporation. Every ticket purchased, donation made, and pound earned supports our arts and learning programme and enables the widest possible range of people to experience the joy of the arts.

Opened in 1982, the Barbican is a unique and audacious building, recognised globally as an architectural icon. As well as our theatres, galleries, concert halls and cinemas, we have a large conservatory with over 1,500 species of plants and trees, a library, conference facilities, public and community spaces, restaurants, bars, and a picturesque lakeside oasis.

We're proud to be the home of the [London Symphony Orchestra](#), and a London base of the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#). We regularly co-commission, produce and showcase the work of our other associates and partners including the [Academy of Ancient Music](#), [the BBC Symphony Orchestra](#), [Boy Blue](#), [Britten Sinfonia](#), [Cheek by Jowl](#), [Darbar Festival](#), [Doc'n Roll Film Festival](#), [Drum Works](#), [EFG London Jazz Festival](#), [London Palestine Film Festival](#), [Serious](#), and [Trafalgar Entertainment](#).

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