



National Theatre Drama Teacher Conference

About the Drama Teacher Conference


Friday 17 and Saturday 18 February 2023

The National Theatre's Drama Teacher Conference provides drama teachers with the opportunity to work with some of the finest artists, makers and companies in the industry every February half term.

We focus on upskilling teachers, encouraging confidence in exploring new and contemporary artists in school and in signposting students on to further opportunities and careers.

Here, we recognise that drama teachers are not working alone, and are part of an incredible community as diverse and talented as the industry they represent.

The conference is a time for you to experiment, create and develop your practice. This year, the conference is entirely in-person. The NT is committed to supporting teachers and looks forward to welcoming you soon.





In this programme

On the following pages you will find:

- A timetable of each conference day
- The title and description of each available session

As part of the conference, you will also have the opportunity to attend a National Theatre evening performance on Friday 17 or Saturday 18 February. This year, we are offering one complimentary ticket per attendee to *Standing at the Sky's Edge* or *Romeo and Julie*. You will be asked to indicate which production you would prefer to attend, but do note that we cannot guarantee everyone will receive their first choice.

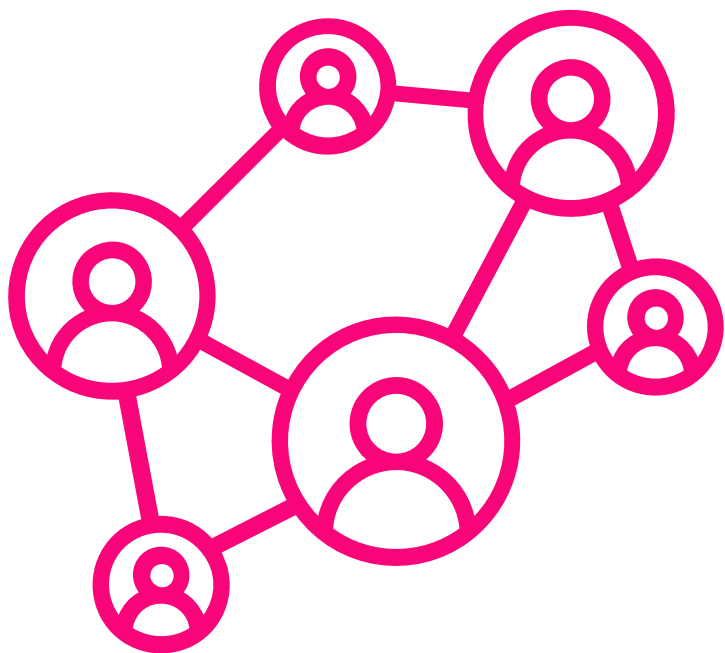
If you have any questions at all, please email dramateachers@nationaltheatre.org.uk

Friday 17 February

Time	Available Sessions				
9.30-10.00	Complimentary Breakfast				
10-10.30	Welcome				
10.30-12.30	Jai Morjaria - <i>Can You See Me?</i>	Toby Olié - <i>Table-Top Puppetry</i>	Gecko - <i>The Gecko Approach to Devising Movement and Emotional Physicality</i>	Lung - <i>Devising: Using Verbatim Theatre</i>	The Paper Birds - <i>Devising Theatre in The Style of The Paper Birds</i>
12.30-13.30	Lunch – catering not provided				
13.30-15.30	Jai Morjaria - <i>Can You See Me?</i>	Toby Olié - <i>Table-Top Puppetry</i>	Gecko - <i>The Gecko Approach to Devising Movement and Emotional Physicality</i>	Vamos - <i>Revealing the Mask</i>	The Paper Birds - <i>Devising Theatre in The Style of The Paper Birds</i>
15.30-16.00	Break				
16.00-17.00	Vocal Warm-Ups with Jeannette Nelson, Head of Voice at the National Theatre	Exploring the NT Archive and NT Collection	Drama Teacher Network – <i>Skill Sharing</i>	National Theatre Backstage Tours	
17.00-17.15	Break				
17.15-19.00	Drinks Reception				

Saturday 18 February

Time	Available Sessions				
9.30-10.00	Complimentary Breakfast				
10.00-10.30	Welcome				
10.30-12.30	James Blakey and Tarek Merchant - <i>Directing Your School Production</i>	Trybe House Theatre - <i>Amplifying Young Black Voices through Storytelling</i>	Lung - <i>Devising: Using Verbatim Theatre</i>	Lucy Sierra - <i>Set Design: Concept and Craft</i>	Vamos - <i>Revealing the Mask</i>
12.30-13.30	Lunch – catering not provided				
13.30-15.30	Lyndsey Turner, Associate Director, National Theatre - <i>Textual Analysis for Students</i>				
15.30-15.45	Break				
15.45-16.45	Sophie Ivatts - <i>Beyond The Syllabus: A Discussion-Based Workshop</i>	Lit in Colour - <i>Increasing Representation in the Curriculum with mezze eade</i>	David Bellwood - <i>Radical Kindness: Accessible Practice in Theatre</i>	Drama Teacher Network – <i>Skill Sharing</i>	
16.45-17.30	Panel Discussion - <i>Making the Case for Creativity</i>				



Two-Hour Workshops

Gecko - The Gecko Approach to Devising Movement and Emotional Physicality

Join Gecko, the award-winning and internationally acclaimed theatre company, for a physical, playful and inspiring workshop providing an insight into their creative process and style. Gecko are proud to be a recommended practitioner on various GCSE, A/AS Level and IB syllabuses and this workshop is the perfect opportunity to experience first-hand the tools used by the company to devise and create their visceral, poetic and provocative productions.

This 2-hour session welcomes you into a safe space to physically embody Gecko's methodology. The workshop will include preparatory exercises, group discussions, and techniques that teachers can use in their own practice. We will explore how to devise from a stimulus and how to layer and develop movement and ideas. You will delve into the use of breath and language to express, and open doors to accessing emotion through physicality. Gecko's latest show 'KIN' will be premiering at the National Theatre in January 2024.

Jai Morjaria - *Can You See Me?*

Do you have students interested in learning more about lighting? This workshop will focus on how to support your students with this. It doesn't need to be complicated or overpowering. Lighting can be so exciting and tell stories in a way that no other mediums can. We'll have a look at the terminology, experiment with some 'tricks of the trade' and discuss routes into lighting so you can support your students to reach their full lighting potential. You don't have to be great at English and Drama to explore lighting. It's an art in itself, and often a way we can express ourselves without being on stage.

Jai Morjaria is a Lighting Designer who trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) in Lighting. He attended high school in North London followed by college in West London where he studied a BTEC in Production Arts. National Theatre credits include *Othello* and *Wuthering Heights* (both UK and US tours). West End productions include *Cruise* and *My Son's a Queer (but what can you do?)* as well as productions at the Donmar Warehouse and Young Vic theatre in the past year.



Lung - *Devising: Using Verbatim Theatre*

Award winning theatre company LUNG (*Who Cares, E15, Trojan Horse*) explores the different techniques of verbatim theatre and how they can be translated into the devising process. Led by Co-Artistic directors Matt Woodhead (Director's Guild Best Newcomer) and Helen Monks (BBC 2's *Upstart Crow*) this practical workshop will explore how to use real life stories as a source of inspiration for students to make their own work (whilst keeping the exam board happy!)

Founded in Barnsley in 2012, LUNG is a campaign led verbatim theatre company that tours work nationally. They work closely with different communities to make hidden voices heard. They are Graduate Associate Artists at The Lowry and Creative Associates on the National Theatre Learning's *Speak Up* programme in secondary schools.

The Paper Birds - *Devising Theatre in The Style of The Paper Birds*

Join us for a practical introduction to devising thought provoking political theatre in the style of The Paper Birds! Together we will explore exercises sampling each of the 5 key ingredients of our work; Verbatim, Movement, Exposing the Method, Character and Narrative & Motif. The course will be accompanied by a PDF resource pack, enabling you to run the exercises back at school with your own students.

Vamos - Revealing the Mask

Revealing the Mask is a creative, high energy and inspiring session that gives participants a thorough introduction to full mask technique. Through games, exercises and shared exploration, the workshop introduces mask characterisation, mask physicality, and techniques such as clocking, stillness, and isolation, helping to build confidence and understanding of teaching and directing mask performance. The workshop comes with full digital notes with links to show snippets to demonstrate the techniques.

Trybe House Theatre - Amplifying Young Black Voices through Storytelling

Trybe House Theatre works with young black men, engaging them in workshops that encourage self-expression. This workshop introduces some of our practices, encouraging positive well-being and reflective storytelling. The session will consist of games and exercises, followed by a discussion about our methodology and how we amplify voices that aren't often heard.



Lucy Sierra - Set Design: Concept and Craft

Set design is a crucial, powerful and yet sometimes subtle element of the storytelling of a production. How does a designer work with a director? What design choices can be made? How are decisions made? Why? How do they impact an audience? And how can we articulate them?

Join designer Lucy Sierra to discuss both the conceptual and technical choices that can be made. Using examples of her own work and short exercises participants will look at how to inspire exciting and imaginative performance environments.

Lyndsey Turner, Associate Director, National Theatre - Textual Analysis for Students

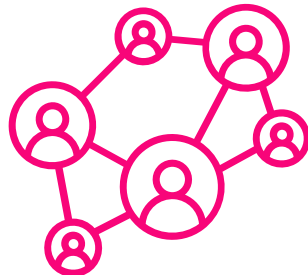
This session offers a series of exercises, prompts and practical tools designed to empower students to conduct their own exploration of dramatic texts. Based on her own practice, Lyndsey will offer a framework for investigating text which aims to free the teacher from the role of 'spoon feeder in chief' and encourage a more playful and creative approach to 'table work'. **This session will be open to all attendees at the conference on Saturday afternoon.**

James Blakey and Tarek Merchant - *Directing Your School Production*

The school play is a place of radical joy, inclusion, and intergenerational collaboration. It's a chance to have a break from the curriculum, lead from your values, create your own process, and exercise your own artistic muscles.

This session will offer practical insights into developing and rehearsing ambitious new works of large-scale theatre with people of all ages, backgrounds and body types, including how to adapt existing works to serve your community, rehearsal techniques and inclusive practice. We will also explore a range of music-making techniques to build confidence and collaboration, both to inform rehearsal process, and that can be practically used in performance.

The session will be led by Director James Blakey (NT Public Acts) and Composer/Musical Director Tarek Merchant, who will hope to offer insights that may benefit a wide range of rehearsal environments.



Toby Olié - *Table-Top Puppetry*

Create puppets from everyday items and learn how to animate them through a range of playful and dynamic exercises. Discover how to puppeteer a single character as a group and explore the relationship between the puppet and its manipulators.

Toby Olié is a director, designer and puppeteer who originated the role of Joey in War Horse at the National Theatre.





One-Hour Workshops

Vocal Warm-Ups with Jeannette Nelson, Head of Voice at the National Theatre

Jeannette Nelson has worked extensively as a voice coach on the West End, with Shakespeare's Globe and the Royal Shakespeare Company, as well as working regionally and internationally, in film and TV.

Jeannette will be running a 1-hour session on vocal warm-ups, perfect for school plays, live assessments and looking after your own voice. Please wear comfortable clothing during this workshop.

Lit in Colour - *Increasing Representation in the Curriculum with mezze eade*

This workshop will support teachers with finding and working with students on texts by writers of the global majority and with global majority characters.

mezze eade is a creative engagement practitioner and director. mezze is currently Talent Development Manager at Donmar Warehouse and an Education Associate at The Old Vic. mezze has worked with the National Theatre, UEL (University of East London), Young Vic and Oxford Playhouse and is a Bloomsbury Lit in Colour Advisor.

Sophie Ivatts - *Beyond The Syllabus: A discussion-based workshop*

This session will give an insight into *Beyond The Syllabus*, a new cultural learning programme for schools and will explore the notion of "cultural capital" and ways to harness it to benefit pupils.

Sophie is a writer and director who worked for the NT on *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*. She is currently the artistic director of Macclesfield Barnaby Festival and senior commissioning script-reader for Channel 4 Drama. After doing a PGCE during the pandemic, she has now set up *Beyond The Syllabus*, a university access programme focused on cultural capital.

David Bellwood - *Radical Kindness: Accessible Practice in Theatre*

This discussion will explore how theatres implement accessible practices to reinvent ideas of story-telling, to increase engagement across the widest possible audience, and to give agency in theatre-making to deaf, disabled and neurodivergent creatives. Teachers will be provided with ideas and practices to apply back in their school environments.

David Bellwood is the Head of Access at the National Theatre.



Exploring the NT Archive and NT Collection

In this session you'll have the opportunity to find out how the National Theatre's wealth of Archive and digital resources can support your students' learning. You'll explore prompt scripts, production notes, programmes, production recordings and our online resources. The session will be led by Erin Lee, Head of NT Archive and Jane Ball, NT Collection Education Manager.

National Theatre Backstage Tours

Take a guided tour of the National Theatre and discover the secrets of one of the most iconic buildings on the South Bank.

Your tour will be led by one of our expert guides and will take you to the heart of Denys Lasdun's concrete masterpiece. You will have the opportunity to see what is being made in our on-set carpentry, props and scenic painting workshops and discover how we create our world-class productions.

Drama Teacher Network – Skill Sharing

An opportunity for teachers to come together to share experiences and best practice through group discussion and practical activities.



Discussion Panel

Making the Case for Creativity in Schools

Saturday 18 February

On Saturday we will host a panel of leading experts, who will be discussing the topic *Making the Case for Creativity in Schools*.

You will have the opportunity to submit questions to this discussion in advance.



Theatre Tickets

Standing at the Sky's Edge

A castle built of streets in the sky.

Poppy wants to escape her old life in London. Joy and Jimmy want to spend the rest of their lives together. Rose and Harry want the new life they've been promised.

A love letter to Sheffield and a history of modern Britain told through the stories of one iconic estate, *Standing at the Sky's Edge* charts the hopes and dreams of three generations over the course of six tumultuous decades. Set to the irresistible songs of legendary Sheffield singer-songwriter Richard Hawley, it is a heartfelt exploration of the power of community and what it is we call home.

This award-winning new British musical makes its London premiere, directed by Robert Hastie, Artistic Director of Sheffield Theatres.



Romeo and Julie

A modern love story inspired by Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

Romeo is a single dad hanging on tight. Julie is fighting to follow her dream of studying at Cambridge. Two Welsh teens raised a few streets apart – but from entirely different worlds – crash into first love and are knocked off their feet. But at the crossroads to the rest of their lives, Julie's family fears the worst in a world of unequal opportunity.



Please note that ticket allocations are given on a first come, first served basis.

We look forward to seeing you there

To book your ticket to the Drama Teacher Conference please visit the National Theatre website

Tickets are £100 for one day, or £150 for two days. If you believe you are eligible for a bursary, please email dramateachers@nationaltheatre.org.uk

If you have any questions, please do let us know

