

# CREATIVE INSIDER

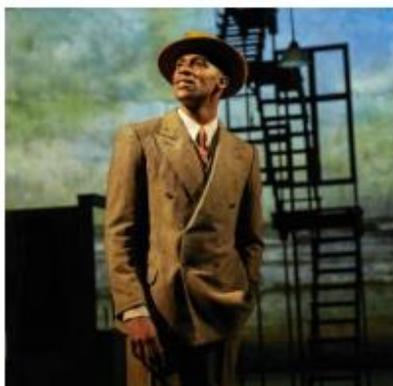
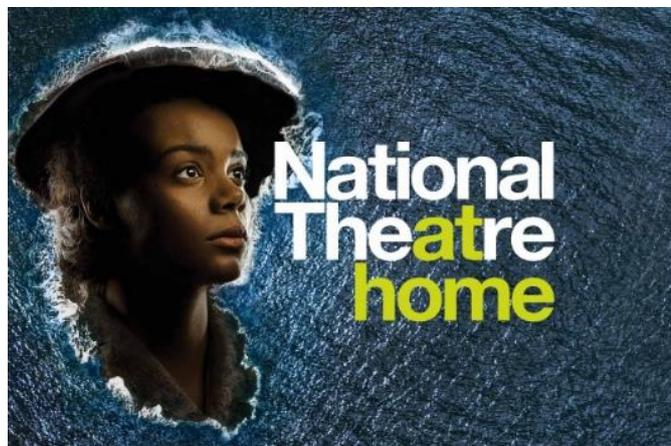
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## Welcome

Welcome to edition number 6 of your **Creative Insider**. With recent events initiating a much greater awareness of the BLM movement, theatre has responded by making available powerful productions pertinent to the global and national issue of racism. Whilst it is vital to develop our knowledge of statistics, the arts often go further, developing deep, emotive responses to issues through applying knowledge of statistics to characters to become more attached to, making clearer the impact on an individual's humanity. In this issue you will find some of the brilliant shows that help develop a greater awareness of issues such as colonialism and the Windrush generation alongside other outstanding productions filmed in front of live audiences.

## *Small Island* at The National Theatre

Trace the tangled history between Jamaica and the UK, as we follow three intricately connected stories on a journey through the Second World War to 1948 – the year the HMS Empire Windrush docked at Tilbury.



Hope and humanity meet stubborn reality as ***Small Island*** traces our characters dream of a better world. Hortense yearns for a new life away from rural Jamaica, Gilbert dreams of becoming a lawyer, and Queenie longs to escape her Lincolnshire roots, in three intricately connected stories.

Filmed live during its sold-out run in 2019, this epic production of Andrea Levy's prize-winning novel ***Small Island*** seems perfectly timed theatre, not least because it is available to watch on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, marking Windrush Day 2020. If you can't catch it on Monday, don't worry as you can watch it later this week until June 25<sup>th</sup>. This performance is suitable for both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 students.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pac-Furijsw>

For a greater insight into the making of the show, you can also watch a clip of Windrush passenger Alfred Gardner meeting the team of actors and directors during rehearsals by visiting the link below.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9jq18ukL74&list=PLJgBmjHpqgs43x7ldbJs6sqm\\_E5JaYm7b&index=10&t=0s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9jq18ukL74&list=PLJgBmjHpqgs43x7ldbJs6sqm_E5JaYm7b&index=10&t=0s)



### Leah Harvey on *Small Island*: 'We are sharing the story of why our country is the way it is'

Interview by Arifa Akbar



For further information about Britain, the Windrush and the Black Lives Matter movement, click on the link below to read an interview in this week's *Guardian* featuring actor Leah Harvey who plays Hortense.

<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2020/jun/16/leah-harvey-on-small-island-national-theatre-andrea-levy>

### A Storm on the Horizon



*'A society prepares to drive out its colonial present and claim an independent future. Tshembe, returned home from England for his father's funeral, finds himself in the eye of the storm.'*

Suitable for KS4 students, from 2<sup>nd</sup> July The National Theatre will be showing **Les Blancs**, a powerful play that celebrates Xhosa culture in a dramatic, challenging and illuminating story.

Of particular interest to Drama students who may have studied her earlier work *A Raisin in The Sun*, in **Les Blancs** Lorraine Hansberry transports the audience to an African country teetering on the edge of civil war.

The production will be available until 9<sup>th</sup> July via The National Theatre's website and youtube channel. Some of the content may be unsuitable for KS3 students.

## A Different Kind of Lockdown Reading

"I am a man. I am just a man."

To gain a greater understanding of the BLM movement, over the past weeks many people have turned to recommended reading lists. Fascinating books such as *Freedom Is A Constant Struggle* by Angela Davis give insight into the complex picture of inequality in the US... but this is a different sort of reading.



In a lockdown version of their previous performances, the Young Vic and JMK Trust have joined forces to produce a reading of the script for **The Mountaintop** that takes audiences back to the height of the Civil Rights Movement. Set on the eve of the assassination of Dr Martin Luther King Jr, **The Mountaintop** is a moving exploration of a view of America that contextualises much of the current situation.



"It is April 3, 1968. Room 306, the Lorraine Motel, Memphis. The smell of cigarettes and coffee hangs thick in the air as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. winds down from a day of preaching and marching..."



In an intimate look into the quieter moments of King's life, **The Mountaintop** chips away at the myth of MLK Jr to expose his fears about his family, his country and the ever-looming threats to his life.

"It's an opportunity to listen, really listen and to learn; with your families and those you are connected to."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvoJuPD0pgY>

- Roy Alexander Weise, Director

**Note: This show is unsuitable for KS3 students.**

## Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream

Moving on to other themes, Key Stage 3 and 4 students are in for a real treat this month with not just one but two excellent productions of Shakespeare's **A Midsummer Night's Dream**.



A firm favourite amongst theatre lovers of all ages, this play within a play is packed with magic, unexpected twists and much needed fun.

The Globe Theatre is streaming its original 2013 performance for free from now until Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> June. Anyone fortunate enough to see the live show will remember how well the Globe used its audience within the organised chaos that operates at the heart of the show. For much needed escapism in these unprecedented times, this show is hard to beat.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cAwaNRIEF8>

Once this has been watched *The Bridge Theatre* is offering its own smash hit version from Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June. For one week only, this production featuring actors such as Gwendoline Christie (*Game of Thrones*), Oliver Chris (*Green Wing*), David Moorst (*Allelujah!*) and Hammed Animashaun (*Barber Shop Chronicles*) is available to astound the whole family. In this incredible show, the theatre becomes a forest, a dream of wild, flying fairies, contagious fogs and moonlight revels. Like the Globe's production, this is a captivating example of immersive theatre, with part of the audience always involved in the action.

Watching both productions is also strongly advised for students looking to take GCSE Drama.



<https://bridgetheatre.co.uk/>

## *The Magic Flute*



Continuing the theme of magical transportation, and suitable for both key stages, Mozart's famous opera *The Magic Flute* is free to view via The Royal Opera House's youtube channel from now until 3<sup>rd</sup> July.

Prince Tamino has sworn to rescue Pamina, daughter of the Queen of the Night, from the evil Sarastro. With the help of Papageno, a bird catcher, and a magic flute, he sets off on his mystical quest. But be warned, nothing is as it seems...

## *RSC Productions on iPlayer*

A solid half-dozen star-studded RSC productions have just been added to iPlayer as part of the theatre's "Culture in Quarantine" programme. Where else would you get to see the likes of Paapa Essiedu, Christopher Eccleston, Patsy Ferran and more?

Embrace these opportunities. Enjoy the fruits of others' creativity. Enjoy your own creativity. **You all matter.**

