ROYAL Exchange THEATRE COMPANY

KING LEAR



This guide will help you prepare for your visit to the sensory adapted performance of

KING LEAR

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Arriving at the theatre



The theatre opens at 12pm.



You can enter through the St Ann’s entrance or the Cross Street entrance.



If you use a wheelchair, or have access requirements, you can enter through St Ann's entrance.

There is a lift.



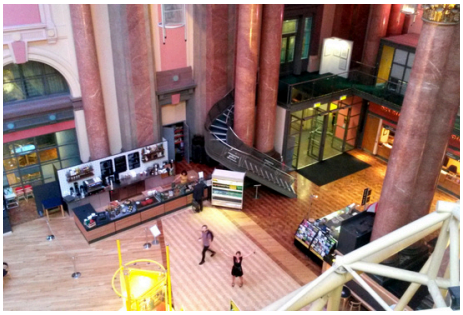
A member of staff may check your bag.

This should only take a few seconds.

Arriving at the theatre



You will be asked to show your ticket.



You will enter the Great Hall.
It may be busy and noisy.

You can buy food, drinks and souvenirs in the Great Hall.



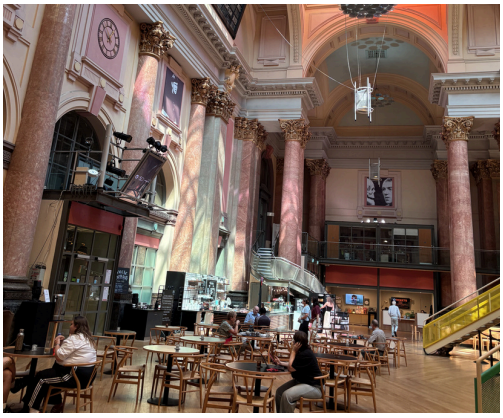
You can leave your coat in the cloakroom. Located next to door 4.

It costs £1.



You can go to your seat from 5:30pm.

The Great Hall



The Great Hall looks like this.



The toilets are near the Box Office.

The toilet entrance to the mens looks like this.



The toilet entrance to the women's looks like this.

There are accessible toilets.

Here, there is also a baby changing area.

The Great Hall



If you need your ticket, or help, go to the Box Office.

It looks like this.



There are more toilets near the Studio Theatre.

These are gender neutral.

There is an accessible toilet on the left.



There are bars and a café in the Great Hall.

They are open before the show.

Asking for help



If you need help, please ask a member of staff.

Staff wear red lanyards.

The theatre



This is the theatre.

There are seats upstairs and downstairs.



The actors perform on the round stage in the middle.

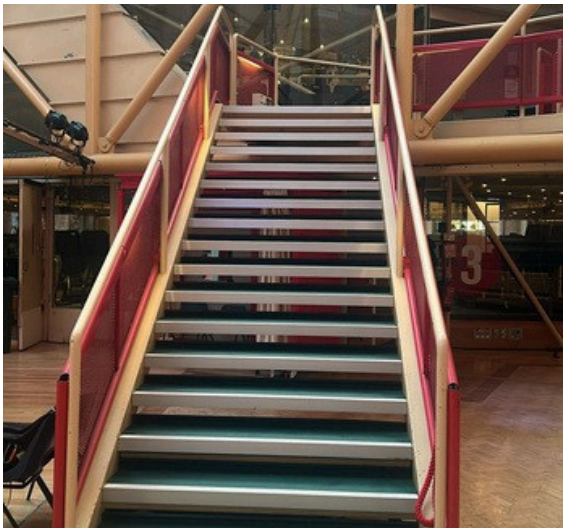
Some actors may walk close to the audience.

Entering the theatre



If you are sitting downstairs, go through the numbered door on your ticket.

The doors look like this.



If you are sitting upstairs, use the coloured staircase shown on your ticket.

The stairs look like this.



A member of staff will help you find your seat.

Your seat number matches the number on your ticket.

Watching the show



The show starts at 6pm.

The show runs for about 3 hours including an interval.



The audience sits around the stage.



Please do not take photographs.



Hot drinks are not allowed.

Cold drinks are allowed in plastic cups.

Watching the show



You can leave the theatre if you need a break.

You can come back when you are ready.

Staff can help you at any time.



It is okay to clap, laugh, talk quietly or move around.



What is different about this performance?

This is a sensory adapted performance.

- The lights in the audience will stay partly on.
- Loud sounds will be quieter.
- Lighting effects will be softer.

Things to Know Before the show



There are some things in King Lear that you may find upsetting.

The show includes:

- People shouting and arguing.
- Fighting and violence.
- Guns, knives and other weapons.
- Fake blood and injuries.
- People talking about suicide.
- Characters dying.
- People feeling sad or upset.
- Strong language and adult subjects.





The actors are pretending.

They are not really hurt.

If you would like more information, please speak to a member of staff.

Meet some of the people in the show



Isobel Akuwudike:
Cordelia



Harry Clarke:
Ned



Ed Coleman:
Cornwall



Lisa Diveney:
Regan



Jason Done:
Kent



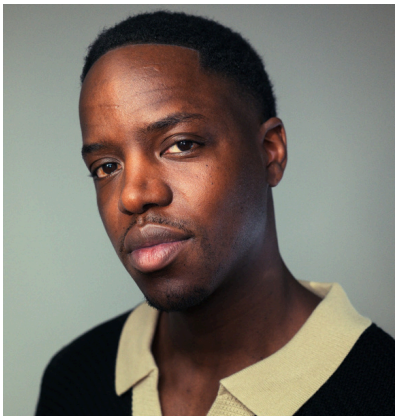
Rupert Hill:
Captain



Grace Jabbari:
Doctor and Edmund's Lover



Nicholas Karimi:
Albany and Brawn



Gabin Kongolo:
France and Curan



Jessica Mannion:
Guen and Agna



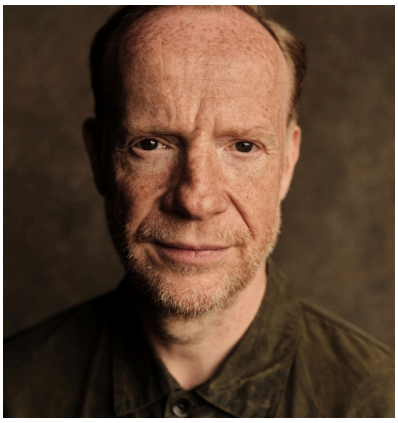
Ryan Pope:
Elias



Anwar Russell:
Oswald and Burgundy



Nadine Shah:
Goneril



Jonathan Slinger:
Gloucester



Paddy Stafford:
Edmund



David Threlfall:
King Lear



Tom Varey:
Edgar

The Stage



The weather is important in the show.

There is a storm with rain and thunder.



Columns of metal chains move up and down during the show.

They are used to separate characters and spaces.

The stage floor has cracks in it.

During the show the cracks light up.



The audience sits around the stage.

The Costumes



The costumes change during the show.

At the start of the show King Lear wears a smart suit.



As the show continues, Lear's clothes become less smart.

This shows that he is losing his power and becoming more confused.



Some characters wear clothes with a camouflage pattern.

These characters are soldiers.

The Story: Act 1



At the beginning of the show, King Lear decides to divide his kingdom between his daughters.

He gives his land to Goneril and Regan.



Lear sends his youngest daughter, Cordelia, away.

He also sends away his loyal friend, Kent.

Lear begins to talk to a Fool who no one else can see.



Edmund wants to take power from his father, Gloucester.

He tricks people into believing that his brother, Edgar, has done something wrong.



Goneril and Regan turn against Lear.

They lock him outside during a storm.

The Story: Act 2



Kent and Edgar are pretending to be different people.

They find Lear and shelter from the storm.



Gloucester tries to help Lear.

Regan and Cornwall hurt Gloucester and make him blind.



Cordelia returns to England with an army. She wants to fight against Goneril and Regan.

Lear becomes more confused and unwell. He is reunited with Cordelia.

There is a war.



By the end of the story, Lear, Cordelia, Goneril, Regan and Edmund have all died.

Edgar, Kent and Albany talk about what will happen next.

What to Expect During the Show: Throughout the show



There are scenes where characters fight.

The actors pretend to hurt each other. Nobody is really hurt.



You will see fake blood on the actors and sometimes on the stage floor.



Some characters pretend to drink alcohol.

The alcohol is not real.



Characters sometimes shout and argue.

Some sounds may still be loud, even though they have been made quieter for this performance.



There are curtains made from metal chains above the stage.

The chains move up and down during the show.

What to Expect During the Show:
Act 1 - Before the interval (break)



There is a party where some characters pretend to drink alcohol and take drugs.

The alcohol and drugs are not real.

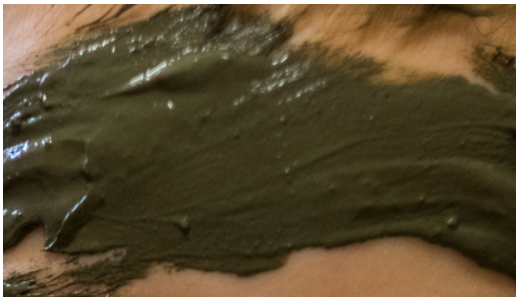


Actors use torches and other bright lights during scenes set at night.

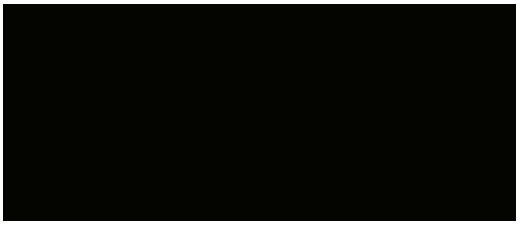


There is a storm with thunder sounds.

Water falls onto Lear during the storm.



Edgar covers his face and body with mud.



At the end of Act 1, the stage lights will go down.

What to Expect During the Show: Act 2 - After the interval (break)



The storm continues.

You will hear thunder sounds.



Edgar pretends to be someone called Poor Tom.

He runs around the stage and shouts in different voices.



Regan and Cornwall appear to pull out Gloucester's eyes.

This is created using special effects. Nobody is hurt.



You will hear the sound of a gun being fired.

This is a sound effect. No real bullets are fired.

Characters also appear to stab each other using special knives.

What to Expect During the Show: Act 2 - (continued)



Haze, made from water vapour, appears on stage.



A doctor carries a syringe.

Lear is brought onto the stage on a hospital bed. He looks very unwell. The actor is pretending to be unwell.



During the war, you will hear sounds of bombs, guns and children crying.

These sounds may be upsetting.



Some characters die on stage.

The actors become quiet and still.

At the end of Act 2, the stage lights will go down.

Need help?

You can contact the Royal Exchange Theatre.



Call Box Office on
0161 833 9833.



Email us at
access@royalexchange.co.uk



You can find more information on our website.



Talk to our staff in the theatre.

They wear red lanyards.

They are in Monday to Saturday from 12pm.