

THE SHED Press Release

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THE SHED AND THE NATIONAL THEATRE, IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE JAMIE LLOYD COMPANY, PRESENT LUCY PREBBLE'S ACCLAIMED PLAY *THE EFFECT*

Directed by Jamie Lloyd
Featuring Michele Austin, Paapa Essiedu, Kobna Holdbrook-Smith, and Taylor Russell

At The Shed's Griffin Theater, March 3 – 31, 2024



Paapa Essiedu and Taylor Russell. Photo by Marc Brenner

“Critic’s Pick: Paapa Essiedu and Taylor Russell are terrific [in] Lucy Prebble’s thought-provoking play.” —*The New York Times*

“Michele Austin and Kobna Holdbrook-Smith [in] captivating performances” —*Time Out*

“Jamie Lloyd is the most exciting director working today” —*Evening Standard*

“An exhilarating production. Dazzling” —*Sunday Times*

“It’s the kind of theatre that lives with you, turning over in the mind long after” —*The Stage*

NEW YORK, NY, December 11, 2023 — The Shed’s Artistic Director **Alex Poots** and Chief Executive Producer **Madani Younis** today announced the exclusive US presentation of a new production of *The Effect*, the acclaimed play examining love and ethics by **Lucy Prebble** (HBO’s *Succession*) and directed by **Jamie Lloyd** (*Cyrano de Bergerac* at BAM, *A Doll’s House* and *Betrayal* on Broadway). Presented with the National Theatre in association with The Jamie Lloyd Company, *The Effect* plays for a strictly limited four-week run in The Shed’s Griffin Theater, March 3 – 31, 2024, opening March 13.

The Effect features **Paapa Essiedu** (*I May Destroy You*, *The Lazarus Project*) as Tristan and **Taylor Russell** (*Bones and All*, *Waves*) as Connie, participants in a clinical drug trial who begin an illicit romance, alongside **Michele Austin** (*This Is Going to Hurt*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*) as Dr. Lorna James and **Kobna Holdbrook-Smith** (*Tina Turner: The Musical*) as Dr. Toby Sealey.

As Connie and Tristan explore their attraction to each other, how can they be sure it’s the real thing and not an exhilarating side effect of the new antidepressant

they're taking? The supervising doctors begin to ask themselves questions too: where do they draw the line between love and ethics?

"The concurrent mastery of cinematic performances, sculptural lighting design, and immersive hip-hop influenced score is just the kind of interdisciplinary theater making that is so compelling for our times. It's an honor to premiere The National Theater's production of this modern classic for our New York audiences," said Alex Poots, The Shed's Artistic Director.

"In this production, Jamie Lloyd, one of the world's great theater directors, again demonstrates the urgency of his work and its ability to attract diverse and intersectional audiences while Lucy Prebble, a global icon of contemporary writing, displays her intellectual rigor and imagination in drawing us into the moral dilemma of the play. Complemented by a revered cast, whose chemistry is compelling and seductive, this production forces us to confront its exploration of courage and vulnerability along with the characters on stage," said Madani Younis, Chief Executive Producer.

"Lucy Prebble's *The Effect* first entranced our audiences at the National Theatre in 2012 and we were ecstatic to have it back this summer with Jamie Lloyd's bold direction. This wonderful cast brought a new-found intensity to this unique love story that I hope will resonate as beautifully in New York as it has in London. We are delighted to be back presenting work in New York and collaborating with The Shed for the first time," Rufus Norris, National Theatre Director.

The creative team includes set and costume design by Soutra Gilmour, lighting design by Jon Clark, composition by Michael "Mikey J" Asante, sound design by George Dennis, movement direction by Sarah Golding and Yukiko Masui (SAY), fight direction by Kate Waters, intimacy coordination by Ingrid Mackinnon, and casting by Alastair Coomer CDG.

This production of *The Effect* was originally produced in London by the National Theatre in association with The Jamie Lloyd Company and ran August 1 through October 7, 2023. The play was first produced in 2012 in London by the National Theatre.

Ticketing

Tickets for *The Effect* go on sale on December 14 (Shed member presale begins on December 12). For tickets and additional information about the production, visit TheShed.org.

Support

Major support for *The Effect* is provided by M&T Bank, Founding Bank of The Shed.

The creation of new work at The Shed is generously supported by the Lizzie and Jonathan Tisch Commissioning Fund and the Shed Commissioners.

Major support for live productions at The Shed is provided by the Charina Endowment Fund, with additional support from the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

The Cast and Creative Team

Michele Austin (Dr. Lorna James)

Michele Austin's theater credits include *Cyrano de Bergerac* in the West End and at Brooklyn Academy of Music; *The Hunt*, *Medea*, and *The Chain Play* at the Almeida; *White Teeth* at Kiln; *Instructions for Correct Assembly*; *Breath, Boom and Been So Long* at the Royal Court; *The Seagull* at the Lyric Hammersmith; *Pride and Prejudice* at Sheffield Crucible; *The House That Will Not Stand* and *The Riots* at the Tricycle; *I Know How I Feel About Eve* and *Out in the Open* at Hampstead; *To Kill a Mockingbird* at Regent's Park; *Generations* at the Young Vic; *50 Revolutions* for Oxford Stage Company; *Our Country's Good* for Out of Joint; and *It's a Great Shame* at Theatre Royal Stratford East. On television she has appeared in *Boat Story*, *This Is Going to Hurt*, *The Dumping Ground*, *Meet the Richardsons*, *Dark Heart*, *EastEnders*, *The Coroner*, *The Casual Vacancy*, *Death in Paradise*, *Harry and Paul*, *Holby City*, *Peep Show*, *Silent Witness*, *Britannia High*, *Outnumbered*, *Never Better*, *Secret Life*, *The Bill*, *The Wife of Bath*, *Ugetme*, A&E, *Clare in the Community*, *Doctors*, *Gimme Gimme Gimme*, *Babes in the Wood*, *Kiss Me Kate*, and *The Perfect Blue*. Film credits include *The Children Act*, *What We Did on Our Holiday*, *Another Year*, *The Infidel*, *All or Nothing*, *I'll Sleep When I'm Dead*, *Second Nature*, and *Secrets and Lies*.

Paapa Essiedu (Tristan)

In London's West End, Paapa Essiedu's credits include *Pinter One* and *The Moment Before I Am Powerful*. Other productions include *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *The Mouse and His Child* for the RSC; *A Number* at the Old Vic; *Passover* at Kiln; *The Convert* at the Young Vic; *Racing Demon* at Theatre Royal, Bath; *Romeo and Juliet* and *The School for Scandal* for Shakespeare at the Tobacco Factory; *You for Me for You* at the Royal Court; *Have Mercy on Liverpool Street* for Talawa; *A Marked Man* for HighTide; *Black Jesus* at the Finborough; *Outside on the Street* at the Arcola; and *Dutchman* at the Orange Tree. Television credits include *Black Earth Rising*, *Black Mirror*, *The Lazarus Project*, *The Capture*, *Anne Boleyn*, *Gangs of London*, *I May Destroy You*, *Kiri*, *Press*, *Revolting*, *The Miniaturist*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Not Safe for Work*, and *Utopia*.

Kobna Holdbrook-Smith (Dr. Toby Sealey)

In London's West End, Kobna Holdbrook-Smith's theater credits include *TINA: The Tina Turner Musical* and *Hamlet*. Other productions include *The Low Road* at the Royal Court; *Feast*, *The Changeling*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *A Respectable Wedding*, and *The Water Engine* at the Young Vic; *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire* at the Arcola; *Detaining Justice*, *Seize the Day*, *Category B*, *Fabulation*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *Walk Hard – Talk Loud*, and *The Playboy of the West Indies* at the Tricycle/Kiln; *Love's Labour's Lost* at Shakespeare's Globe; *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* at Manchester Royal Exchange; and *Mother Courage and Her Children* at Nottingham Playhouse and on tour. Television includes *The Veil*, *The Accused*, *His Dark Materials*, *Red Election*, *The Split*, *Ragdoll*, *Motherland*, *Dark Heart*, *Class*, *Capital*, *The Last Panthers*, *Frankie*, *The Cafe*, *Sirens*, *Sorry I've Got No Head*, *Taking the Flak*, *Harry and Paul*, *Star Stories*, *The Bill*, *Pulling*, *Little Britain*, *Mike Bassett*, *Casualty*, and *Judge John Deed*. Film credits include *Wonka*, *Apartment 47a*, *The Gorge*, *Mary Poppins Returns*, *Gwen*, *Ghost Stories*, *Paddington 2*, *Justice League*, *The Commuter*, *Doctor Strange*, *Worricker*, and *The Double*.

Taylor Russell (Connie)

Taylor Russell is a Gotham Award-winning and Film Independent Spirit Award-nominated actress who most recently made her stage debut as Connie in *The Effect* at the National Theatre in London. She gave critically acclaimed performances as Maren in Luca Guadagnino's *Bones and All* and Emily in Trey Edward Shults's *Waves*. Recently, Russell appeared in Niclas Larsson's feature film *Mother Couch*, and upcoming, she will begin production on Na-Hong Jin's new film *Hope*. Russell served as a producer and made her co-directorial debut with the award-winning short film *The Heart Still Hums*.

Jamie Lloyd

Jamie Lloyd's directing credits for The Jamie Lloyd Company include *Sunset Boulevard* (Savoy Theatre; Evening Standard Theatre Award for Best Director), *A Doll's House* (Hudson Theatre, New York; nominated for six 2023 Tony Awards including Best Direction of a Play and Best Revival of a Play), *The Seagull* (Harold Pinter Theatre), *Cyrano de Bergerac* (Playhouse Theatre/Harold Pinter Theatre/Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York; Olivier Award for Best Revival), *Betrayal* (*Pinter at the Pinter*, Harold Pinter Theatre/ Bernard B. Jacobs Theatre; nominated for four 2021 Tony Awards including Best Direction of a Play and Best Revival of a Play), *Pinter One, Two, Three, Six, and Seven* (*Pinter at the Pinter*, Harold Pinter Theatre), *The Maids*, *The Homecoming*, *The Ruling Class*, *Richard III*, *The Pride*, *The Hothouse*, and *Macbeth* (Trafalgar Studios).

Lucy Prebble

Lucy Prebble is a writer for film, television, games, and theater. She was an executive producer and writer on the BAFTA, Golden Globe, and Emmy Award-winning HBO drama *Succession*, for which she has also won a WGA and a PGA Award. She is the writer and co-creator of *I Hate Suzie* and *I Hate Suzie Too*, which was nominated for five BAFTAs including Best Drama, Best Writer, and Best Actress and won her the Royal Television Society Award for Best Writer. She is also the creator and writer of the TV series *Secret Diary of a Call Girl* (ITV/Showtime).

For theater, Prebble recently had a rewritten version of her award-winning play, *The Effect*, at the National Theatre, directed by Jamie Lloyd. She wrote the political and emotional meta-thriller *A Very Expensive Poison*, which was a sell-out, five-star hit for the Old Vic in 2019 and was Olivier nominated for Best New Play. She is the writer of the infamous *Enron*, a hugely successful piece about the infamous corporate fraud, which transferred to the West End after sell-out runs at both the Royal Court and Chichester Festival Theatre. Her first play, *The Sugar Syndrome* (2003), won her the George Devine Award and was performed at the Royal Court.

About the National Theatre

The National Theatre makes theater that entertains and inspires using its creativity, expertise, and unique reach. The National Theatre shares unforgettable stories with millions of audience members across the UK and around the world—on its own stages, on tour, in schools, on cinema screens, and streaming at home.

World-leading artists make their best work at the National Theatre with the widest possible audience and impact. The National Theatre invests in talent and innovation on stage and off, taking seriously its role as the nation's theater. Of the new productions developed each year with a wide range of theater companies, a

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third of that research and development resource is dedicated to shows staged at theaters outside London.

Through touring our work to local theaters and schools and nationwide education and community programs, the National Theatre is active in 71 of the 109 leveling-up priority areas in the UK. A registered charity with deeply embedded social purpose, the National Theatre works with hundreds of schools and communities across the UK to fire imagination and inspire creativity, and to develop skills and pathways for careers in theater.

For more information, please visit nationaltheatre.org.uk.

The Jamie Lloyd Company

The Jamie Lloyd Company creates groundbreaking productions with the very best acting talent in the world. Recent productions include radical reappraisals of *A Doll's House*, *The Seagull*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Betrayal*, and currently, *Sunset Boulevard* with Nicole Scherzinger running at the Savoy Theatre until January 6, 2024.

The Shed

Under the leadership of CEO Meredith “Max” Hodges and founding Artistic Director Alex Poots, The Shed is a cultural institution of and for the 21st century. We produce and welcome innovative art and ideas, across all forms of creativity, to build a shared understanding of our rapidly changing world and a more equitable society. In our highly adaptable building on Manhattan’s west side, The Shed brings together established and emerging artists to create new work in fields ranging from pop to classical music, painting to digital media, theater to literature, and sculpture to dance. We seek opportunities to collaborate with cultural peers and community organizations, work with like-minded partners, and provide unique spaces for private events. As an independent nonprofit that values invention, equity, and generosity, we are committed to advancing art forms, addressing the urgent issues of our time, and making our work impactful, sustainable, and relevant to the local community, the cultural sector, New York City, and beyond.

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