



**THE NATIONAL THEATRE'S CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED PRODUCTION OF
THE OCEAN AT THE END OF THE LANE
WILL TOUR TO Theatre Royal Plymouth from 14 – 25 February 2023
AS PART OF A MAJOR UK AND IRELAND TOUR**

The National Theatre's critically acclaimed adaptation of **Neil Gaiman's** *THE OCEAN AT THE END OF THE LANE* will tour the UK and Ireland later this year, direct from the West End, visiting Theatre Royal Plymouth from 14 – 25 February 2023. Directed by **Katy Rudd** (*Camp Siegfried*) and adapted by **Joel Horwood** (*Skins, I Want My Hat Back*), the first major stage adaptation of Neil Gaiman's work is a thrilling adventure of fantasy, myth and friendship, which blends magic with memory in a tour-de-force of storytelling that takes audiences on an epic journey to a childhood once forgotten and the darkness that lurks at the very edge of it. Tickets will be on sale soon and available to purchase on the Theatre Royal Plymouth [website](#).

Returning to his childhood home, a man finds himself standing beside the pond of the old Sussex farmhouse where he used to play. He's transported to his 12th birthday when his remarkable friend Lettie claimed it wasn't a pond, but an ocean – a place where everything is possible...

Plunged into a magical world, their survival depends on their ability to reckon with ancient forces that threaten to destroy everything around them.

Touring for a total of 40 weeks, this is the largest tour mounted by the National Theatre since before the COVID-19 pandemic. It follows a celebrated six-month run of *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* at the Duke of York's Theatre in the West End, which opened in November 2021 after the production received its world premiere in the Dorfman Theatre in late 2019.

Writer Neil Gaiman said: *"The Ocean at the End of the Lane is about memory, magic, family. It's about who you were and who you are. It's not like anything else I've ever been involved in. It's not like anything else you'll ever see at the theatre. The Ocean at the End of the Lane has its own theatrical magic. It's why happy people tell you that they cried while watching it, it's why it becomes a dreamlike experience in memory, it gets bigger the further inside you follow it. Like a duck pond that contains an ocean that holds the universe..."*

Director Katy Rudd said: *"When Neil Gaiman gave the National Theatre his blessing to stage his novel The Ocean at the End of the Lane we knew that this book was treasured across the world by*

Neil Gaiman's legions of fans. The writer, Joel Horwood and I wanted to be faithful to the novel and at the same time create a big, bold, visual show with more than just a little bit of magic. Thanks to our amazing creative team we found ways to fit an ocean into a bucket, and bring huge mythical creatures like the Hunger Birds to life on stage....but at its heart, Ocean is a human story about a family and a young boy growing up, experiencing real emotion and real pain, and finding a way to get through it with the help of his friends. We hope we have created something that is both profound and visually exciting that will appeal, not only to regular theatre audiences, but also to younger people from the 'Netflix generation' who might not have been to the theatre before. It is a beautiful, rich, multi-faceted story and as this production goes on tour we are still adapting and evolving it and finding new meaning in its depths. That is the magic of live theatre and we can't wait to share it with our audiences."

National Theatre Director Rufus Norris said: *"That Joel Horwood, Katy Rudd and their formidable creative team have managed to wrestle Neil Gaiman's incredible imagination and the worlds which spring from it onto a stage is magic in itself. We're so proud to tour this work around the UK and Ireland, to share this beautiful story with audiences nationally, and to visit so many gorgeous theatres which, like ours, have recently been dark for too long."*

Neil Gaiman is known for his graphic novels, including *The Sandman* series (with a major new Netflix series scheduled for release in 2022); his novels for adults and children including *Stardust*, *Coraline*, and *The Graveyard Book*; and multiple film and television projects including *Good Omens* and *Anansi Boys*. *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* was the winner of the Book of the Year at the 2013 National Book Awards and has sold more than 1.5 million copies worldwide.

The Ocean at the End of the Lane introduces audiences to Gaiman's magical world and the much-loved characters that inhabit it, fully realised on stage. An award-winning creative team join Katy Rudd and Joel Horwood; with set design by **Fly Davis** (*Beginning; Caroline or Change*) and costume and puppet design by **Samuel Wyer** (*The Boy in the Dress*; 2022 Best Family Show Olivier Award winner for *Wolf Witch Giant Fairy*). Movement direction is by **Steven Hoggett** (*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time; Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*), composition by **Jherek Bischoff** (LA based composer and multi-instrumentalist whose collaborators include David Byrne, Amanda Palmer, and Regina Spektor), lighting design is by **Paule Constable** (5 times winner of the Olivier Award for Best Lighting Design, including for *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* in 2020), sound design by **Ian Dickinson** for *Autograph (Angels in America; Small Island; The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time)*, magic and illusions direction and design by **Jamie Harrison** (*Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*) and puppetry direction by **Finn Caldwell** (2022 Olivier Award winner for *Life of Pi; War Horse*). Tour casting is by **Sarah Hughes CDG**. Cast to be announced.

The Ocean at the End of the Lane is suitable for ages 12+.

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For further information please contact the Media and Communications team on public.relations@theatroyal.com / 01752 230439

Notes to Editors

- Production photos featuring the 2021-22 West End cast can be accessed [here](#).
- ***The Ocean at the End of the Lane (Music from the National Theatre Production)*** is the official album release from composer Jherek Bischoff, available to stream via [Spotify](#) and purchase online via [Bandcamp](#) and the [National Theatre Bookshop](#)
- Follow all the latest updates from the production on social media on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook at: @OceanOnStage

About the National Theatre

The National Theatre's mission is to make world-class theatre, for everyone. The NT creates and shares unforgettable stories with audiences across the UK and around the world. On its own stages, on tour, in schools, on cinema screens and streaming at home, it strives to be accessible, inclusive and sustainable. The National Theatre empowers artists and craftspeople to make world-leading work, investing in talent and developing new productions with a wide range of theatre companies at its New Work Department. Our nation thrives on fresh talent and new ideas, so the National Theatre works with young people and teachers right across the UK through performance, writing and technical programmes to ignite the creativity of the next generation. Together with communities, the NT creates ambitious works of participatory theatre in deep partnerships that unite theatres and local organisations – showing that nothing brings us together like theatre. The National Theatre needs your support to shape a bright, creative future.

For more information, please visit nationaltheatre.org.uk

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Theatre Royal Plymouth (TRP) is a registered charity providing art, education and community engagement in Plymouth and across the region. It engages and inspires with the aim of touching lives. Theatre Royal Plymouth presents a year-round programme of world class productions on all scales as the South West's principal centre for performing arts.

Theatre Royal Plymouth works with partners to understand the challenges people face accessing the arts, especially vulnerable and disadvantaged people. It creates pathways that are genuinely accessible to those who might otherwise never get to engage with the arts. They collaborate to co-create and co-author work that represents the community, creating the space needed for people to tell their story in their own way.

Theatre Royal Plymouth is the UK's largest regional producing theatre. With a focus on embracing the vitality of new talent and supporting emerging and established artists. It collaborates with a range of partners to provide dynamic cultural leadership for the city of Plymouth.