

Part 3: Into the Spotlight...  
2000 – 2013  
Fri 19 July, Olivier

The turn of the century and prominent playwrights included Inua Ellams, Kwame Kwei-Armah, Debbie Tucker Green and Roy Williams. Adrian Lester's Hamlet visited from Paris, Clive Rowe's panto dame became an annual treat at the Hackney Empire, and Chiwetel Ejiofor played Trigorin in *The Seagull* at the Royal Court. Meanwhile a slow exodus took many black actors to America, lured by serious leading roles in Hollywood.

3pm

6pm



**Kwame Kwei-Armah, director, actor and playwright**

Acting work includes *Mamma Decemba* (Temba); *Carmen Jones* (Old Vic); *Casualty* and *Skins* on TV. Plays include *A Bitter Herb* (Bristol Old Vic, Peggy Ramsey award); *Elmina's Kitchen*, *Fix Up*, *Statement of Regret* (NT); *Let There be Love* (Tricycle); and *Beneath's Place* (Centerstage Baltimore). Directing work includes *Things of Dry Hours* at Centerstage; Artistic Director there since 2011.

**Tanya Moodie, actor**

Currently appearing as Rose in *Fences* (Duchess). Other work includes *The Overwhelming* (NT); *Trade* (RSC); *Incomplete and Random Acts of Kindness* (Royal Court); *A Doll's House* and *Medea* (West Yorkshire Playhouse); *The Suit* (Peter Brook Company); *Skins* and *Sherlock* on TV.

Check the website for updates. Programme details are published in good faith but changes may occasionally be necessary

Part 4: Centre Stage...  
a celebration  
Sun 21 July, 1pm Lyttelton

A unique performance capturing the 50-year journey of black theatre, through some of the words, music and people at the heart of this story. Guests include Sharon D Clarke, Lenny Henry, Cush Jumbo and Clive Rowe.

National Theatre  
Platforms

# Walk in the Light

A series of events  
celebrating  
50 years of  
black artists in  
British theatre

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**A week of events, led by actor Giles Terera, honouring the rich contribution that black artists have made to British theatre over the past 50 years. In the afternoon events, actors recall their favourite memories that form part of this extraordinary story. In the evenings, theatre-makers talk about their experiences of the period. On the Sunday, the series culminates in a celebration in words and music with special guests.**

**Part 1: In the Wings... 1960 – 1980  
Mon 15 July, Olivier**

In the early days of the 20th century roles for black actors were conspicuously limited, until the 60s brought the emergence of alternative and groundbreaking voices. The 70s saw Arts Council subsidy for Temba Theatre during an era of strange racial TV sitcoms, black theatre writing began to flourish with work by Mustapha Matura and Wole Soyinka, while the West End saw bizarre incongruities such as Norman Beaton as Nanki Poo in *The Black Mikado*.



**3pm**

**Mona Hammond**

Co-Founder member of Talawa in 1985. Work includes *The Wind in the Willows* (NT), *King Lear* (Talawa), *Playboy of the West Indies* (Tricycle), *Macbeth* (Roundhouse); *EastEnders* on TV; and the film *Coriolanus*.

**Jeffery Kissoon**

Work includes *Henry IV*, *Fix Up*, *Oedipus*, *The Coup* (NT), *Julius Caesar*, *The Tempest* (RSC), *Waiting for Godot* (Talawa), *Antony and Cleopatra* (Liverpool), *Hamlet*, *The Mahabharata* (for Peter Brook), *Julius Caesar*, *Spooks*, *Grange Hill*, *Space*: 1999 on TV, and the film *Ham and the Piper*.

**Giles Terera (Chair)**

Currently in *The Book of Mormon* (Prince of Wales). Work includes *Death and the King's Horseman*, *Hamlet and Candide* (NT); *The Tempest* (RSC); *Six Degrees of Separation* (Sheffield Crucible); *Avenue Q* (Noël Coward); *Rent* (Prince of Wales); *The Tempest* (Haymarket); *Horrible Histories* on TV; and his forthcoming documentary *Muse of Fire*.

**5.45pm**



**Yvonne Brewster, director**

Co-founded The Barn in 1977 (Jamaica's first professional theatre company), and Talawa in 1985 (Artistic Director until 2003). Work includes *The Road*, *King Lear*, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Talawa); *Blood Wedding* (NT). Edited Mixed Company: *Three Early Jamaican Plays* to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Jamaican independence in 2012.

**Oscar James, actor**

Co-founded Temba Theatre Company in 1972, the first British black theatre company to receive an annual Arts Council subsidy in 1974. Work includes *Julius Caesar*, *Coriolanus* (RSC, 1960s), *The Merchant of Venice*, *Elmina's Kitchen* (NT), *Of Mice and Men* (Old Vic); *Emmerdale Farm* (1972), *EastEnders* (original cast); and the film *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.

**Mustapha Matura, playwright**

Co-founded the Black Theatre Co-operative in 1978. First full-length play in 1971 was *As Time Goes By* (Traverse, Royal Court; John Whiting and George Devine awards). Other work includes *Play Mas* (Evening Standard award for Most Promising Playwright, 1974), *Rum 'N Coca Cola* (Royal Court), *Playboy of the West Indies* (Oxford Playhouse, Tricycle), *The Coup* (NT), *Three Sisters/Trinidad Sisters* (Birmingham Rep/Donmar).

**Part 2: Onto the Stage... 1980 – 2000  
Thu 18 July, Olivier**

As black playwrights and actors started taking more prominent places in the theatre, 1981 saw an all-black *Measure for Measure* at the National and *The Playboy of the West Indies* stormed into the Tricycle in 1983. Yvonne Brewster formed Talawa in 1986 and the colour-blind/colour-conscious casting debate heated up around Clive Rowe's *Mr Snow* in *Carousel*. In 2000, David Oyleowo's gentle *Henry VI* was RSC's first black Shakespearean king.

**3pm**



**Gary Wilmot**

Began his TV career on *New Faces* in the 70s. Work includes *Me and My Girl* (Adelphi); *Carmen Jones* (Old Vic); *Copacabana* (Prince of Wales); *One for the Road* (Bristol Old Vic); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Regent's Park); tours of *Oliver!*, *Travels with My Aunt*, *Radio Times*; solo album *The Album*; and *Showstoppers*, *Cue Gary* on TV.

**David Harewood**

Work includes *Welcome to Thebes*, *Henry IV*, *His Dark Materials*, *Othello* (NT); *The Mountaintop* (Trafalgar Studios); *The Misanthrope* (Chichester); *Antony and Cleopatra* (New York and UK tour); *King Lear* (Talawa); *Romeo and Juliet* (Temba); *Homeland*, *Mrs Mandela*, *Doctor Who* and *The Vice* on TV; and the film *The Hot Potato*.

**6pm**



**Bonnie Greer, author and playwright**

Studied theatre in Chicago and New York; was playwright-in-residence at Soho (winning the Verity Bargate Award for Best Play), and at the Black Theatre Co-operative. Work includes *Reflecting Skin* (BBC); *Marilyn and Ella* (Stratford East, Apollo); *Yes* (ROH's Linbury Studio); and the biography *Langston Hughes: the Value of Contradiction*.

**Hugh Quarshie, actor**

Work includes *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (NT); *Titus Andronicus*, *Henry IV*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Julius Caesar* (RSC); *Othello* (Oxford Playhouse); *Small Island*, *Holby City* on TV; and the films *La Chiesa*, *Star Wars Episode 1: The Phantom Menace*.

**Paulette Randall, director**

Associate Director for the Opening Ceremonies of the 2012 London Olympics, and former Artistic Director of Talawa Theatre. Work includes producing *Desmond's and Porkpie* on TV; directing *The Amen Corner* (Bristol Old Vic); *Blest Be the Tie* (Talawa); *Three Sisters* (Birmingham Rep); *Radio Golf* (Tricycle); *Gem of the Ocean* (Arena Stage Washington DC); *Fences* (Bath/Duchess).