

National Theatre

EMBARGOED TILL 10:30AM Wednesday 29 May 2024

PROGRAMMING ANNOUNCED FOR LONDON'S LARGEST FREE OUTDOOR FESTIVAL RIVER STAGE AT THE NATIONAL THEATRE



Image link available [here](#).

- London's largest free outdoor arts festival, **River Stage**, returns to the National Theatre for the eighth year this summer, over four weekends from **5 - 28 July 2024**
- Sing along to pop-hits with **Jonny Woo**, experience ballroom dance and lip-sync to hits, catch an extract of Rambert's dance theatre production ***Peaky Blinders: The Redemption of Thomas Shelby***, watch a free **NT Live** screening of the Olivier Award-winning production ***Dear England*** and more

- This year’s River Stage partners are **The Glory** (5-7 July), **Greenwich+Docklands International Festival** (12-14 July) and **Rambert** (19-21 July)
- The **National Theatre** (26-28 July) will host the closing weekend of River Stage

From pop-hit singalongs to runway fashion, a NT Live film screening, free tours and iconic lip-sync performances – the National Theatre’s free arts festival **River Stage** on London’s South Bank will have something for everyone this summer.

Now in its eighth year, River Stage invites some of UK’s leading arts and culture organisations to take over the riverside for four unforgettable weekends in July, filled with theatre, music, dance, comedy and a diverse offering of food and drink to suit everyone’s palate.

Opening the festival on **Friday 5 July**, East London’s iconic queer venue **The Glory** return to the River Stage for the first time since launching their latest bar **The Divine**. Dance the night away to club classics at **DJ John Sizzle’s Disco** and singalong to showtunes at **Jonny Woo’s Showtime Extravaganza**. A collective of queer performers of Turkish, Kurdish, Cypriot and Southwest Asian heritage, **Harem of Noone**, will bring pop-cultural delights for everyone to enjoy. **Lipsync 1000 V Man Up**, one of UK’s biggest contests for drag kings and queens, will be back at the South Bank showcasing the stars of tomorrow. The amazing **Barbs** on piano will soundtrack your Sunday afternoon with some Chopin and Phillip Glass. **Big Gay Songbook** will bring the weekend to a close with a mash-up of the best of The Glory plus their talented mates from Margate.

Greenwich+Docklands International Festival (GDIF) will bring their much-loved inclusive programming celebrating Deaf, disabled and neurodivergent artists from **12 to 14 July**, one month ahead of GDIF 2024. Roll onto the riverside with **Les Patineurs** for a joyful battle on roller skates and join the **Family Catwalk Extravaganza** for some runway fashion, ballroom dance and lip syncing. **Jeanfer Jean-Charles MBE** will bring **Black Victorians**, a powerful dance piece exploring a complex and often forgotten Black presence in pre-Windrush Britain. **Perhaps Contraption** bring their multi-award winning, progressive brass band party to River Stage for a truly unique musical experience; melding elements of jazz and pop. Fresh from her tour with Ed Sheeran, **Fletch@ bridges** signs her way through a hit-list that will captivate and delight audiences from all backgrounds at **Sign Song**.

The brilliant **Rambert** will take over the festival’s third weekend from **19 to 21 July** for an explosive celebration of dance. Choreographer **Marion Motin**, who worked with Christine and the Queens

and Dua Lipa brings her hip-hop influenced style to the South Bank with an excerpt from **Rouge** created for and performed by Rambert's dancers. Rambert's very own **Liam Francis** and **Aishwarya Raut** will present their bold choreography with the company with their pieces **Where to Start?** and **Tension Funfair**. Catch an excerpt of **Peaky Blinders: The Redemption of Thomas Shelby**, created by the writer of the TV series Steven Knight with Rambert's Artistic Director Benoit Swan Pouffer – the thrilling stage adaptation with an iconic soundtrack from a live on-stage band or put on your dancing shoes and join in the fun with **Paradigmz's Soca Workshop** and **Coco's K-Pop workshop**. Experience a real-life dance-off with dancers of Rambert, participate in a family yoga workshop with **Eryck**, grab a cowboy hat for a line-dancing class and more!

The **National Theatre** will host the closing weekend from **26 to 28 July** by inviting everyone to dive into the diverse delights of our South Bank venue. **Diane Chorley** returns with her legendary 80s club *The Flick* for her only show of 2024 bringing the very best of character comedy, infectious music, queer cabaret and some special guests. Everyone is welcome to have a look behind the scenes with our **free backstage tours** giving audiences a glimpse of the magic of the NT. For one day only, James Graham's Olivier Award-winning hit show, **NT Live: Dear England**, will be screened for free. NT's former artist in residence and Sky Arts Portrait Artist of the Year, **Curtis Holder**, will lead a portrait workshop where musicians **Fenella Humphreys**, **Kasia Ziminska** and **Cara Berridge** become his muses. **Chisara Agor** brings the festival to a close with a boundary-pushing musical performance exploring themes of visibility, magic and solidarity.

Behind the scenes, the River Stage team is joined by **National Theatre Young Technicians Alumni** in the delivery of the GDIF and Rambert weekends of the festival. Launched in 2017, Young Technicians is the NT's flagship technical training programme for young people aged 14-18, taking place both at the NT and nationwide to offer in-depth training for free to young people from groups currently underrepresented in the technical theatre industries. Participants work with the NT's production team to develop practical skills across a variety of backstage roles, including lighting, sound, video and more. Applications for the Young Technicians Programme delivered at the National Theatre are open now on the [website](#), and close on 1 July.

Alongside **The Understudy** and the riverside bar, **KERB** will be serving up a range of London's most exciting independent street food. **Baba Dhaba**, **Mexclub**, **Chicken Bandits**, **Oh My Dog** and **Poke Nom** bring an array of delectable flavours whilst **Hackney Gelato** serve delicious, refreshing ice-cream. KERB will be partnering with **Two Tribes** on the bar for some of the finest cold beer,

and **Sen Noods, Meltdown Cheeseburgers** and **Sireli** will be serving up mouth-watering delicacies at The Understudy.

The River Stage festival will run from 5-28 July. All events are free. For more details and the full programme with schedule, please visit the [website](#).

Ends

For further press information contact NT Press Coordinator: Anoushka Chakrapani
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Image link available [here](#).

The Glory

The Glory is East London's legendary queer bar, drag hothouse, LGBTQIA+ performance venue, nightclub and curators of major events and festivals across the country. Opened in 2014 by iconic London drag queens Jonny Woo and John Sizzle, plus infamous party-starter, and TV director Colin Rothbart, with many of their staff being influential creatives and some of their performers such as Bimini and Crystal, to name but two, end up gracing the UK's television sets! Not just a pub, The Glory can be found at leading festivals like Glastonbury, Latitude and Mighty Hoopla and regularly features on documentaries and features.

Greenwich+Docklands International Festival

Recently described in the Guardian as "one of the best free festivals in the UK" and an event "whose annual contribution to the happiness of the people of London is unrivalled", Greenwich+Docklands International Festival is London's leading free festival of outdoor theatre and arts which takes places in public spaces across the Royal Borough of Greenwich, East London and the City of London each Summer. In 2023 GDIF became the first festival in the UK to be awarded the Platinum level for accessibility by Attitude is Everything, recognising the festival's profound commitment to removing barriers between audiences and arts.

Founded in 1996, GDIF is the flagship annual event produced by FESTIVAL.ORG, one of the UK's leading outdoor arts producing organisations and charities, renowned for producing ambitious, inclusive and accessible outdoor events in the UK and beyond.

Rambert

What if...

...there was a dance company where brilliant and daring people could show up and be supported to push themselves to move the world forward.

Welcome to Rambert.

We believe that to give brilliant and daring people the chance to inspire others is to give them the power to change the world for the better. As one of the world's most diverse companies of dancers we transform everyday spaces by making dance that is awe-inspiring, adventurous, dynamic, and relevant, and taking it to our neighbourhood, the nation and the world. We want to hear the most exciting and radical ideas wherever they may come from and connect with brilliant and daring audiences and participants from all backgrounds. Through performances; dance and wellness classes and courses for people of all ages and abilities we want to ensure we are inspiring, engaging and relevant to everyone.

Rambert's Chief Executive is Helen Shute and Benoit Swan Pouffer is Artistic Director. Rambert is a National Portfolio Organisation of Arts Council England.

@RambertDance on Instagram, TikTok and Facebook

About the National Theatre

The National Theatre makes theatre 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 theatre. Of the new productions developed each year with a wide range of theatre companies, a third of that research and development resource is dedicated to shows staged at theatres outside London.

Through touring our work to local theatres and schools and nationwide education and community programmes, we are active in 71 of the 109 levelling 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 theatre.

For more information, please visit nationaltheatre.org.uk

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