

# National Theatre

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## Board and Leadership News from the National Theatre

**The National Theatre today announces that Sir Damon Buffini has agreed to extend his term as National Theatre Chair until mid-2027, leading philanthropist Dame Marit Mohn joins the Board, with further appointments to be announced later in the year, and Indhu Rubasingham makes her first creative appointment with Robert Hastie named as Deputy Artistic Director.**

Damon joined the National Theatre as Chair in 2016, since when he has overseen a period of immense growth and success. He is a highly experienced leader, and, at the request of the Board, Damon has agreed to extend his term and remain as Chair until mid-2027, working together with Co-Chief Executives Indhu Rubasingham and Kate Varah, to ensure a successful leadership transition as current Director and Co-Chief Executive Rufus Norris leaves the National Theatre in Spring 2025.

Damon remaining as Chair will provide valuable stability, continuity and depth of knowledge ensuring that the theatre remains thriving and vital for the nation. Continuity that is vital during a period of leadership change and as the National Theatre undertakes its most ambitious fundraising campaign in its history – *Stories Start Here*.

At this crucial time of opportunity and growth, long-term supporter of the National Theatre Dame Marit Mohn will join the National Theatre Board, where she will have responsibility for supporting the National Theatre's Learning programmes. One of the UK's leading philanthropists, Marit co-founded the Mohn Westlake Foundation. The driving force of her involvement with the NT has been her belief that all young people should experience the arts. Her support has included the underpinning of the National Theatre's nationwide work with young people, allowing the organisation to fulfil its mission to be truly national, to inspire and support young people.

**Robert Hastie** will join the National Theatre formally from January 2025 as Deputy Artistic Director alongside Director and Co-Chief Executive Indhu Rubasingham. Artistic Director of

Sheffield Theatres for eight years, Robert has overseen a period of great success for Sheffield Theatres producing landmark productions including, *Everybody's Talking About Jamie*, *Life of Pi*, and *Standing at the Sky's Edge*, the latter winning the South Bank Sky Arts Award for Theatre and Best Musical Production at the UK Theatre Awards, transferring to the Olivier Theatre and currently playing at the Gillian Lynne Theatre. It won the 2023 Olivier Award for Best New Musical. The following year the Olivier for Best New Musical was awarded to *Operation Mincemeat*, currently playing at the Fortune Theatre and also directed by Robert.

A central pillar of Robert's tenure at Sheffield Theatres has been the development of new work, and in 2022 the organisation celebrated its 50th anniversary with a trilogy of plays by Chris Bush, *Rock / Paper / Scissors* which were performed simultaneously in the Crucible, Lyceum and Playhouse in a theatrical first with cast members performing in all three venues. Tom Basden's new adaptation of *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* was produced in Sheffield in 2022, transferring to the Lyric Hammersmith and the Theatre Royal Haymarket.

Robert was Associate Director of the Donmar Warehouse from 2014 to 2019, where he directed productions including *The York Realist* and *My Night with Reg*, which transferred to the Apollo Theatre. Previously an actor, Robert spent a year at the National Theatre in 2009-2010, performing in *All's Well that Ends Well* and *Nation*. Robert will work closely with Indhu Rubasingham, incoming Director and Co-Chief Executive to support and shape the National Theatre's creative output.

Chair of the National Theatre Sir Damon Buffini said, "*The National Theatre is a creative powerhouse that attracts world leading talent to make unforgettable theatre. After a period of economic hardship post COVID, the organisation is embarking on an ambitious five-year strategic plan which will ensure it thrives for generations to come. I am pleased to be remaining as Chair to oversee and support the leadership transition from Rufus to Indhu and Kate next year, who I am confident will lead the National Theatre to great success.*

*I am delighted to welcome Marit to join the Board of Trustees. Her belief in ensuring young people have access to opportunities they otherwise would not have had, through education and performing arts, sits at the core of the National Theatre's mission. Her expertise in this area will be invaluable as the NT aims to reach every young person in the UK before they leave school.*

Director Designate Indhu Rubasingham said: *'I am delighted to welcome Robert Hastie as Deputy Artistic Director. Having been Artistic Director of Sheffield Theatres for eight years producing popular work of exceptional quality, coupled with his commitment to develop emerging talent, Robert will be an asset to the NT when he joins next year.'*

## **ENDS**

For more information and images contact Ruth Greenwood, Director of Communications [rgreenwood@nationaltheatre.org.uk](mailto:rgreenwood@nationaltheatre.org.uk)

For images click [here](#)

## **Notes to Editors**

### **National Theatre Board members**

Sir Damon Buffini (Chair)  
Sabine Chalmers  
Louise Charlton  
Dame Vikki Heywood CBE  
Simon Minty  
Vicki Mortimer  
Dame Karen Pierce  
Amanda Pritchard  
Elizabeth Pryce  
Melanie Richards CBE  
Tim Score  
Farrah Storr MBE  
Simon Warshaw

## **Biographies**

### **Sir Damon Buffini**

Sir Damon Buffini was a founding partner of Permira and was Chairman and Managing Partner from 1997-2010. In 2005 Damon became a founding Trustee of the Buffini Chao Foundation which promotes and funds access to education and activities for young people.

Damon was appointed Chair of the National Theatre in 2016 overseeing a period of great growth and success for the organisation, which now reaches 17.5million people annually through live and digital activity. In 2020 Damon was appointed by the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for DCMS as Chair of the £2billion Culture Recovery Fund which ensured the survival and sustainability of over 5000 of UK's culturally and creatively significant organisations.

Damon was co-founder (alongside Adele Blakebrough) of the Social Business Trust which provides strategic support to many social enterprises. Damon is currently Chairman of BBC Holdings a £2bn business which brings the best of British content to a global audience. He is also a non-executive member of the BBC Main Board.

He is also Chair of the Royal Anniversary Trust, a charity which works to promote world-class excellence in UK universities and colleges. Damon was Knighted in 2016 for philanthropic and voluntary services and in 2021 was selected by Harvard Business School as one of the 84 "Agents of Change" - Black alumni of Harvard Business School who have made a difference to the world.

### **Dame Marit Mohn**

Dame Marit Mohn is the co-founder of the Mohn Westlake Foundation along with her son Stian Westlake. The foundation was established in 2016 with a mission to help improve the life of disadvantaged young people through education, the arts and mental health support. The foundation has been a keen supporter of the NT's Learning programmes since 2017.

Passionate about theatre and engaging young people in the arts, Marit previously served on the board of The Rose Theatre, Kingston from 2012 - 2019, including five years as head of the Finance Committee. She is currently the Chair of the Board at the Marstia Invest company based in Norway.

Marit has extensive experience in managing engineering businesses across Norway, the US, and UK. She is also a qualified solicitor, specialising in civil litigation and employment law.

In 2024 Marit was named a Dame in the New Year's Honours list in recognition of her services to philanthropy.

### **Robert Hastie**

Robert Hastie is an award-winning director who has worked in theatre and television.

For Sheffield Theatres, he has directed *Miss Saigon* (co-director), *Standing at the Sky's Edge* (also at National Theatre and Gillian Lynne Theatre, winner Best New Musical, 2023 Olivier Awards, winner Best Musical Production, UK Theatre Awards, winner South Bank Sky Award for Theatre), *Much Ado About Nothing* (co-produced with Ramps on the Moon), *ROCK/PAPER/SCISSORS* (co-director, winner Best Director, UK Theatre Awards), *She Loves Me*, *The Band Plays On* (co-director), *Coriolanus*, *Guys and Dolls*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The York Realist* (co-produced with the Donmar Warehouse), *The Wizard of Oz*, *Of Kith and Kin* (co-produced with the Bush Theatre), *Julius Caesar*.

Other theatre credits include *Operation Mincemeat* (Fortune Theatre, winner Best New Musical, 2024 Olivier Awards); *Macbeth* (Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, Shakespeare's Globe); *Breaking the Code* (Manchester Royal Exchange, winner Best Production, Manchester Theatre Awards); *Henry V* (Regent's Park Open Air Theatre); *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (Theatr Clwyd); *Splendour* (Donmar Warehouse); *My Night with Reg* (Donmar Warehouse / Apollo Theatre); *Carthage, Events While Guarding the Bofors Gun* (Finborough Theatre); *Sixty-Six Books* (Bush Theatre); *A Breakfast of Eels* (Print Room).

## **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](https://nationaltheatre.org.uk)