

Orange Tree Theatre

Annual Review 2017/18



Orange Tree Theatre 2017/18 in numbers



BIGGEST AUDIENCE YET

89,176

55,726 IN RICHMOND

33,450 OT ELSEWHERE

CO-PRODUCERS

11



21

VENUES BEYOND RICHMOND

21 AWARD NOMINATIONS



116

PERFORMERS EMPLOYED

69

CREATIVES EMPLOYED

MEMBERSHIP & FUNDRAISING
£390,865

31% INCREASE ON 2016/17

27.5%

VISITED THE ORANGE TREE FOR THE 1ST TIME

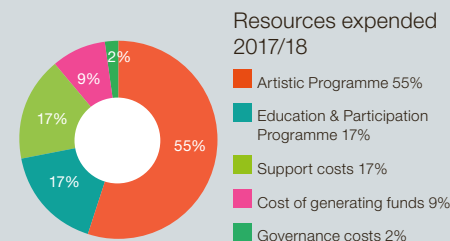
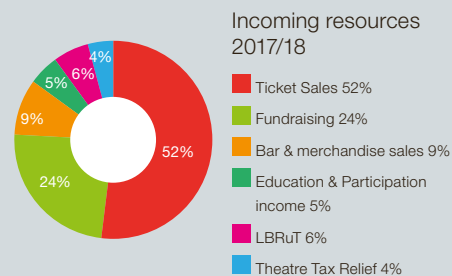
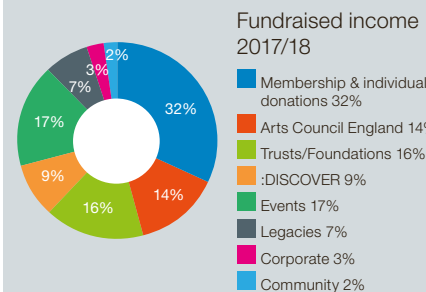
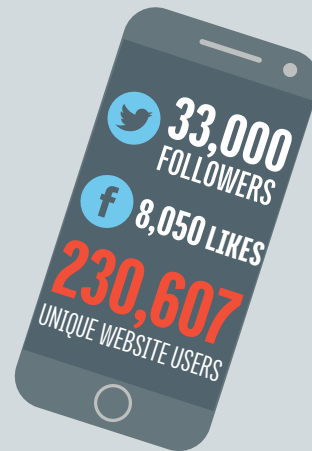
3,475

UNDER 30



22,577

SAW NEW PLAYS



Welcome

Our 2017/18 Season featured an array of brilliant theatre in the Orange Tree's signature mix of rare rediscoveries, exciting emerging writers and important contemporary revivals. It was our fourth season at the helm of the OT since we started in 2014, and we couldn't be prouder of the work, of the artists we've brought to the Theatre and of the permanent team who make it all happen.

Every play we do tries to bring a new aspect of the world to the Orange Tree in entertaining, revealing and sometimes challenging ways. Each of the writers this year, including David Storey, Duncan Macmillan, Lot Vekemans, Bernard Shaw, Elinor Cook, Brad Birch, Sarah McDonald Hughes, Charlotte Jones, Joe White and Emily Schwend, has done this in their own distinctive voice.

We're proud to be a year-round producing theatre, and enjoy collaborating with other theatres and companies to make extraordinary things happen: this year has been no exception. Up in Arms, Paines Plough, Theatr Clwyd, Wizard Presents, Little Angel, English Touring Theatre and Flute Theatre have each proved to be invaluable creative partnerships.

And as well as bringing the world in to the OT, we love taking the OT out into the world. *Winter Solstice, The End of Hope, Jess and Joe Forever* and, famously, *An Octoroon*, all enjoyed transfers and tours both within and out of London in 2017/18.

Our Education & Participation Programme is second to none for a theatre of our scale, and 2017/18 was another outstanding year. Reaching 10,000 young people both in schools and through Youth Theatre groups and our Young Company, **our work enriches and develops people in ways that found us celebrated in Parliament** (see page 25). From our specially devised project with Flute

Theatre for young people with autism to our vocational MA in Theatre Directing with St Mary's University, to our Over 60s group, we offer something for everyone here at the OT.

All this work is exciting and demanding to produce; it's been a richly rewarding year. But the team here couldn't have done it without all the support we receive: from Patrons, donors and Members; the leaders of Richmond council; our volunteers and Front of House staff who make a visit to the OT special; and, crucially, you, our audience. Our unique space means that you make it what it is.

We've already started the 2018/19 Season and have announced exciting plans taking us to July 2019. Thank you for coming on this special journey with us.

We are proud to be an independent producing theatre, making high quality work here in Richmond and reaching out to the world.

Paul Miller, *Artistic Director* and Sarah Nicholson, *Executive Director*



COVER: EVELYN HOSKINS IN MAYFLY PHOTO: HELEN MURRAY PHOTO: RICHARD DAVENPORT

The Orange Tree, a theatre that punches far above its weight

Lyn Gardner, *The Guardian*



PHOTOS: HELEN MAYBANKS/THE OTHER RICHARD

PHOTO: POISON THE OTHER RICHARD

Artistic highlights



The March on Russia

We opened our autumn season with David Storey's *The March on Russia*, in association with Up in Arms. Directed by Alice Hamilton, this was the play's first major production since premiering at the National Theatre in 1989 and was commended for its warm, moving evocation of a family and a retreating way of life.

★★★★★ **'Alice Hamilton's exemplary revival'** Dominic Cavendish, *The Telegraph*

★★★★ **'...a gentle elegy to modern old age.'** Kate Maltby, *The Times*

★★★★ **'There could be no better tribute to David Storey'** Michael Billington, *The Guardian*



Every Brilliant Thing

After sell-out performances at the OT with Jonny & the Baptists, Jonny Donahoe returned with the first major London run of Paines Plough and Pentabus Theatre Company's *Every Brilliant Thing*. Written by Duncan Macmillan and directed by George Perrin, this one-man show has been a worldwide smash hit, and played to full houses at the OT.

★★★★ **'Every Brilliant Thing may be the funniest show about depression you've ever seen... about finding reasons to live rather than reasons to die. And those reasons can be as minute as wearing a cape and as big as falling in love.'**

Elisabeth Vincentelli, *New York Post*



Poison

During November, Paul Miller directed the UK premiere of the European-wide hit *Poison* by Dutch writer Lot Vekemans, translated by Rina Vergano: an extraordinary two-hander about a separated couple trying to move on from the death of their child.

★★★★ **'superbly acted'** Michael Billington, *The Guardian*

★★★★ **'deeply felt'** Henry Hitchings, *Evening Standard*

★★★★ **'heartbreaking'** Sam Marlowe, *The Times*

4 OFFIE nominations:
Best New Play – Lot Vekemans
Best Female – Claire Price
Best Male – Zubin Varla
Best Director – Paul Miller

One of the most excitingly programmed venues in London

Mark Shenton, *The Stage*



PHOTOS: HELEN MAYBANKS/THE OTHER RICHARD/JONATHAN KEENAN

PHOTO: MISALLIANCE HELEN MAYBANKS



Misalliance

Through December and into January, Bernard Shaw's eerily prescient play, *Misalliance*, about a weakened patriarchy tottering when faced with a full-on assault by strong, clever women, received its first major revival in 30 years. Paul Miller directed, following acclaimed productions of Shaw's *The Philanderer* and *Widowers' Houses* for the OT.

★★★★ 'Paul Miller's expertly cast, wonderfully well performed, and entirely – at times convulsively – entertaining revival of *Misalliance*... a treasurable, scintillating gem'
Dominic Cavendish, *The Telegraph*



Kika's Birthday

Over the Christmas period, the OT co-produced the delightful family production *Kika's Birthday*, by John and Danyah Miller, with Wizard Presents and Little Angel Theatre. Following the Christmas 2015 success of Michael Morpurgo's *I Believe in Unicorns*, award-winning storyteller Danyah Miller returned to the Theatre to tell an enchanting interactive story for children aged 3+ and their families, featuring music, puppets and live baking.

★★★★ 'A master storyteller at work and it's a delight to watch'
Shaïdi Ramsurrun, *LondonTheatre1*

'It was one of my favourite shows ever!'
Douglas, aged 6

'Amazing. We loved it.'
Aurelia, almost 5

Awards for Paines Plough Roundabout Triple Bill:

Out of Love Finalist for Susan Smith Blackburn Prize
How To Be A Kid Writers' Guild Award for Best Play for Young Audiences
Black Mountain Wales Theatre Award Nomination: Best New Play in the English Language
Black Mountain 4 OFFIE nominations: Best Director – James Grieve / Best Female Performance – Katie Elin-Salt / Best Lighting – Peter Small / Best Sound – Dominic Kennedy



Paines Plough Roundabout

An Orange Tree Theatre, Paines Plough and Theatr Clwyd co-production. Direct from critically acclaimed performances in Edinburgh and a nationwide tour, *Black Mountain* by Brad Birch, *How To Be A Kid* by Sarah McDonald-Hughes and *Out of Love* by Elinor Cook brought a whole new flavour: sharp-edged plays in equally sharp productions, played in repertory by three extraordinarily versatile actors and directed by James Grieve.

★★★★ 'This tightly written psychological thriller... keeps you guessing right to the end.'
Ann Treneman, *The Times* on *Black Mountain*

★★★★ 'A fiery, tender story of female friendship.'
Lyn Gardner, *The Guardian* on *Out of Love*

★★★★ 'A fast-paced comedic romp... lives that are turned around through communication, hope and love.'
Kelly Apter, *The Scotsman* on *How To Be A Kid*



Humble Boy

In April, the OT brought a burst of sunshine to the stage with a revival of Charlotte Jones' acclaimed *Humble Boy*, which premiered at the National Theatre in 2001. Directed by Paul Miller, this witty family comedy featured a living garden set by Simon Daw, and was nominated for no less than 7 OFFIEs.

★★★★ 'A sparkling revival of a modern classic... both very clever and very funny'

Ben Lawrence, *The Telegraph*

★★★★ 'Paul Miller's superb revival'

Michael Billington, *The Guardian*

7 OFFIE nominations:

- Best Female Performance – Belinda Lang
- Best Male Performance – Jonathan Broadbent
- Best Supporting Female – Selina Cadell
- Best Supporting Male – Paul Bradley
- Best Set Design – Simon Daw
- Best Director – Paul Miller
- Best Production



Mayfly

The summer months brought with them a new play: *Mayfly*, the professional debut of Orange Tree Writers Collective alumnus Joe White. Directed by OT Literary Associate Guy Jones in his OT directorial debut, *Mayfly* was lauded by critics and audiences alike for its remarkable portrayal of a family searching for new beginnings in the wake of tragedy. This production was supported by Arts Council England Grants for the Arts.

★★★★★ 'A warm, wise, sad, enthralling debut' Dominic Cavendish, *The Telegraph*

'Joe White's debut is another special play from a special theatre'

Miriam Gillinson, *Exeunt*

2 OFFIE nominations:

- Most Promising Playwright – Joe White
- Best Male Performance – Irfan Shamji

Nominated:

The Stage Debut Award for Best Writer



Utility

The Season was rounded off with the European premiere of *Utility* by Emily Schwend, one of America's most exciting emerging playwrights, directed by Caitlin McLeod. The winner of the Yale Drama Prize in 2016, *Utility* interrogated the subtle double standards present in contemporary parenting, whilst taking a naturalistic look at a family struggling to stay afloat.

★★★★ 'This prize-winning American play by Emily Schwend is the latest hit in an astonishing run of form for the Orange Tree'

Fiona Mountford, *Evening Standard*

★★★★ 'Brings an unpatronising candour to its graceful, low-key depiction of life in breadline America'

Maxie Szalwinski, *The Sunday Times*

OFFIE nomination:

Best New Play

PHOTOS: MANUEL HARLAN/HELEN MURRAY

PHOTO: UTILITY HELEN MURRAY

I am left, once again, marvelling at the vision and quality control of this little powerhouse of a theatre

Victoria Sadler



OT Elsewhere

In 2017/18 we achieved our largest OT Elsewhere audience to date, with shows playing across 21 other venues throughout the UK.

An Octoroon at the National Theatre

In the Summer, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' hit *An Octoroon* transferred from the OT to the Dorfman stage at the National Theatre, where it played for 5½ weeks. Described by *The New York Times* as "this decade's most eloquent statement on race in America today", Jacobs-Jenkins' extraordinary play had a sold-out run at the OT. This co-production with the National Theatre sold out for the entirety of its run, and garnered further critical acclaim, both for the play and the OT, playing to over 12,000 people.

The End of Hope at the Soho Theatre

Created as part of the OT MA Directors' Festival in 2017, Max Elton's production of David Ireland's *The End of Hope* transferred to the Soho Theatre in the autumn. The production was nominated for an Off West End Award for Best New Play, and achieved great acclaim in the national press.

★★★★ **'Freewheeling, majestically entertaining.... Absolutely hilarious.'**

Chris Bennion, *The Times*



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Paines Plough – National Tour

Black Mountain by Brad Birch, *How To Be a Kid* by Sarah McDonald-Hughes and *Out of Love* by Elinor Cook, toured the UK in the Paines Plough Roundabout before arriving at the OT in 2018. Co-produced by the Orange Tree, Paines Plough and Theatr Clwyd, and directed by James Grieve, the three plays opened at Theatr Clwyd and then toured to Salford, Kendal, Margate, Lincoln, Darlington, Poole, Stoke and Luton, and enjoyed a critically acclaimed run at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2017. Over these ten venues, the productions were seen by more than 10,000 people nationally.

Winter Solstice – National Tour

Following a run at the OT in early 2017 which played to 99% capacity – Roland Schimmelpfennig's *Winter Solstice* toured nationally in 2018 in a co-production with Actors Touring Company. With a new cast directed by Alice Malin, the show toured to Oxford, Manchester, Bath, Plymouth, Edinburgh, and Scarborough.

Kika's Birthday at the Little Angel Theatre and Pleasance Theatre Edinburgh

Kika's Birthday, our Christmas 2017 family show, co-produced with Wizard Presents and Little Angel Theatre, enjoyed two further successful runs in the new year: at the Little Angel Theatre, Islington, and the Pleasance Theatre, Edinburgh. Performed by Danyah Miller (with some performances by Marie Fortune) *Kika's Birthday* was also live-streamed, particularly to schools and libraries, during its run at Little Angel: a first for an Orange Tree Theatre production.

Jess and Joe Forever at the Edinburgh Fringe

Following its critically acclaimed London run in 2016 at the OT, *Jess and Joe Forever* travelled to the Traverse Theatre in August 2017, produced by Farnham Maltings, as part of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Derek Bond returned to direct the original cast – Nicola Coughlan and Rhys Isaac-Jones – in the production, seen by over 2,000 people during the Festival.

★★★★ **'a small play with a big heart, a romantic comedy that's genuinely funny but also unexpectedly powerful'**

Henry Hitchings, *Evening Standard* on *Jess and Joe Forever* at the OT

The future of theatre depends on theatres like the Orange Tree, which take chances on new talent.

Aliya Al-Hasan, *Broadway World*



PHOTOS: AN OCTOROON HELEN MURRAY/THE END OF HOPE ROBERT DAY

Literary

In 2017/18 the Orange Tree has produced an exciting range of new work and premieres: the world premiere of *Mayfly* by Joe White; the European premiere of *Utility* by Emily Schwend; and in co-production with Theatr Clywd and Paines Plough, *Black Mountain* by Brad Birch, *How to Be a Kid* by Sarah McDonald-Hughes and *Out of Love* by Elinor Cook. Our new work was also seen elsewhere in London and around the country, with the Paines Plough shows touring in the Roundabout, and our production of *An Octoroon* transferring to the National Theatre.



PHOTO: MAYFLY HELEN MURRAY

OT New Artists

We continue to support theatre practitioners in the development of their ideas for the Orange Tree through OT New Artists. In 2018 we were particularly proud to bring Writers Collective alumnus Joe White's professional debut *Mayfly* to audiences in Richmond. This marks our commitment to finding pathways to production for playwrights whose work we develop through writers' groups here. We continue to work with Chris Bush (OT Writers Collective 2016/17) on a commission, and are also working with James Fritz on a commission supported by Cockayne – Grants for the Arts and the London Community Foundation.

Zoe Cooper's play *Out of Water*, co-commissioned by the OT and the RSC, will be produced at the Orange Tree in 2019, following the OT's critically acclaimed and much loved production of *Jess and Joe Forever* in 2016.

The OT's 2018 production of *Mayfly* by Joe White was supported by Arts Council England Grants for the Arts

Writers Collective

'the increasingly impactful Writers Collective'

Fiona Mountford, *Evening Standard*

The OT continues to develop the most exciting emerging playwrights through the OT Writers Collective, a talent development programme comprising a series of workshops and masterclasses supporting the participants to develop their craft as writers.

In July a showcase of short plays by the six writers were performed in the OT auditorium at *Uprising*, directed by Roy Alexander Weise (*Nine Night*, National Theatre).

'Really really enjoyed *Uprising* @ OrangeTreeThtr! Fab night of new writing by excellent playwrights from the Orange Tree Writers Collective' (Twitter feedback)



In 2018, the OT Writers Collective were: Samuel Bailey, Zoë Guzy-Sprague, Femi Keeling, Freddie Machin, Carmen Nasr, Ross Willis

'Being welcomed into the fabric of a working theatre and being given skilled and thoughtful dramaturgical support had a really significant impact on the confidence I have in my writing, and in understanding what makes my 'voice' unique.' Writers Collective member 2018

This project was generously supported in 2017/18 by the Idlewild Trust and the Garrick Charitable Trust.

Playwrights on attachment

Sonali Bhattacharyya (OT Writers Collective 2016/17) was announced as one of the winners of the Channel 4 Playwrights' Scheme, winning a bursary to be our Playwright on Attachment for 2018 and develop a new play.

The Sonia Friedman Productions Award (formerly the Catherine Johnson Best Play Award) which is given to the writer of the best play written by one of the previous year's bursary recipients from the Channel 4 Playwrights' Award, was jointly awarded to Melissa Bubnic for her play *Monkey Work, Baboon Chop*, developed whilst on attachment to the OT.

'I've never felt more welcomed into a building, and more encouraged to continue doing what I'm doing. I found the freedom to explore and read and chat really exciting, and loved the people I was able to do it with.'

Writers Collective member 2018

Orange Tree Theatre Education & Participation

PARTICIPANTS

4,418

RICHMOND RESIDENTS

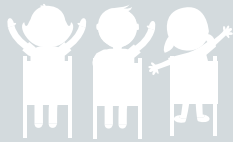
including

3,678

in school

5,174

FROM BEYOND RICHMOND



IN-SCHOOL SHAKESPEARE PROJECTS

98%
VERY SATISFIED

YOUNG PEOPLE FROM

99

schools & colleges took part
in our Shakespeare projects

A *MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*
for autistic people
& their families: 80%
INCREASE FROM 2016

Young people report that arts and cultural learning in school can act "as a valve for releasing the pressures they experience elsewhere in their lives... [and] this improves their health, wellbeing and happiness."¹

The 2017 All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing Inquiry drew the conclusion that "the arts can be a powerful and cost-effective agent of better health and wellbeing. During [childhood, adolescence and young adulthood] arts engagement contributes to an improved environment and leads to enhancements in health and wellbeing."²

"Participation in structured arts activities can increase cognitive abilities by 17%."³ Improving children's cognitive skills makes them better learners, more able to apply the knowledge they acquire.

"Students from low-income families who take part in arts activities at school are three times more likely to get a degree ... [Education advantages to] students with high arts involvement appeared to increase over time, and 'arts-engaged low-income students tend to perform more like higher-income students.' This suggests a role for the arts in schools as a way of combating inequality."⁴

"Employability of students who study arts subjects is higher and they are more likely to stay in employment. The creative economy accounts for one in 11 jobs in the UK. NESTA found in 2015 that 87% of highly creative jobs are at low or no risk of automation, compared with 40% of jobs in the UK workforce as a whole."⁵

¹ The Tracking Arts Learning and Engagement Project (TALE), Time To Listen Summary Report (<https://researchtale.files.wordpress.com/2018/10/time-to-listen-report2.pdf>, p.2)

² All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing Inquiry Report, Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing July 2017 (http://www.artshealthandwellbeing.org.uk/appg-inquiry/Publications/Creative_Health_Inquiry_Report_2017.pdf, p.99)

³ Culture and Sport Evidence Programme (CASE). Understanding the impact of engagement in culture and sport (London: DCMS, 2010, p.29)

⁴ Cultural Learning Alliance, Key Research Findings, Finding 4: Getting a degree (<https://culturallearningalliance.org.uk/evidence/key-research-findings-the-case-for-cultural-learning/finding-4-getting-a-degree/>)

⁵ Cultural Learning Alliance, Key Research Findings, Finding 5: Employability (<https://culturallearningalliance.org.uk/evidence/key-research-findings-the-case-for-cultural-learning/finding-5-employability/>)

Education & Participation

In 2017/18, just under 10,000 people took part in our Education & Participation projects which offer opportunities to learn and be creative to people of all ages. Representation, inclusivity and accessibility are part of the DNA of every project, ensuring that everyone feels welcome.

This Season we have consolidated and refined our established projects, in order to strengthen ties with our local communities. We carefully monitor each project to ensure that we can be responsive to changes in the education and arts sectors, strengthen our relationships with our funders and partners, but – most importantly – **give participants and audiences extraordinary experiences that help everyone to better understand themselves and the world around them.**

Education Projects

'We have made this an annual event ... A wonderful project that makes Shakespeare joyful for our pupils.'
St Augustine's Priory Primary School

The core of our Education programme focuses on making Shakespeare accessible for everyone – with productions aimed at Primary, Secondary and SEN (special educational needs) schools, in which the audience are always at the heart of the experience. Being involved in the performance itself or taking part in surrounding workshops encourages young people to forget their fears about Shakespeare's language, and connect with the characters and their stories, up close and in depth.

***A Midsummer Night's Dream* for audiences with autism spectrum conditions (ASC) and their families**

'What was breathtaking, was the way the actors immediately adapted what [my son] was experiencing and communicating with his behaviour into the performance [...] they entered into his world rather than demanding that he enter theirs. He relaxed, he felt accepted for himself [...] I noticed that I had relaxed too, both physically and mentally, in a way that almost never happens... because [my son] was with people who really "got" him and understood how to work with autism.'
Parent of participant, 2017

For the second year running we co-produced with Flute Theatre in October. 211 people with autism, aspergers and other SEN came to take part in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Flute Theatre, led by Kelly Hunter, use the iambic heartbeat of the play to encourage those with autism and other

SEN to communicate more freely. At each performance, up to 15 participants join seven actors on stage to play sensory games. Everyone is gently encouraged to take part, working at their own pace.

We also took the production out into the community to groups of older people with additional needs, in residential homes and social centres, as well as inviting children affected by the Grenfell disaster to take part. A teacher from Oxford Gardens Primary (the school closest to the Grenfell site) commented: 'Each child got something from the experience which will stay with them for a long time to come. As Inclusion Manager I see the children who came often struggling with everyday tasks ... you have showed our children with SEN that they can achieve more than they ever dreamed they could'.

Over the two years we have co-produced with Flute Theatre, we have increased the number of people taking part by 80% and strengthened links with a number of SEN schools, who have become champions of the project, recognising the huge benefits it brings to their students.

Shakespeare Up Close: *Romeo and Juliet*

'The students absolutely loved the production. They are all EAL [English as an additional language] students so Shakespearean language will be a challenge for them when we start studying the text but your production I think will have forever changed their perception of what Shakespeare is all about. Such a positive experience for them and they are begging me to take them to the theatre again.'

Teacher, Southfields Academy

This year, 3,831 young people took part in Shakespeare Up Close – reaching the largest audience this project has had. We re-mounted Gemma Fairlie's 2016 production of *Romeo and Juliet* which was such a hit with teachers and students, and once more played both at the Theatre and in schools. One of the strengths of this project is its focus on helping young people to connect with the play and to understand how it relates to them. One audience member, who came with her family to a performance in half term commented: **'My nephew is mixed race 15-year-old and is not being engaged by school... Today he had a completely different experience of theatre. It was excellent. You gave him a voice. You let him see that Shakespeare belongs to him and his generation. Thank you!'**

Primary Shakespeare: *The Merchant of Venice*

'Absolutely brilliant! Fast paced, riveting, absolutely on the edge of our seats – the students were engaged and enthralled throughout. We hope you keep doing the Primary Shakespeare Project for many years to come! So enjoyable for pupils and teachers alike.'

Teacher, Lycee Francais

This year just under 4,000 children took part in Primary Shakespeare, our longest running Shakespeare project. The project consists of two stages: a workshop at school and a performance at the OT.

Each workshop is led by one of the four actors in the company. Through a series of active drama games, children are introduced to the characters and their actions, putting themselves in their shoes and thinking through the choices they make. Both the workshop and production took care to approach the play sensitively for a younger audience, combining fun elements with more serious moments that helped children to understand the world around them. For Shylock's story the focus was on how we all have similarities and differences, but we should always endeavour to treat others with respect.

Shakespeare Residencies

Each year we run week-long Residencies in primary schools that have been identified as most in need of access to cultural activities. This year 240 children from seven schools in Richmond took part entirely for free.

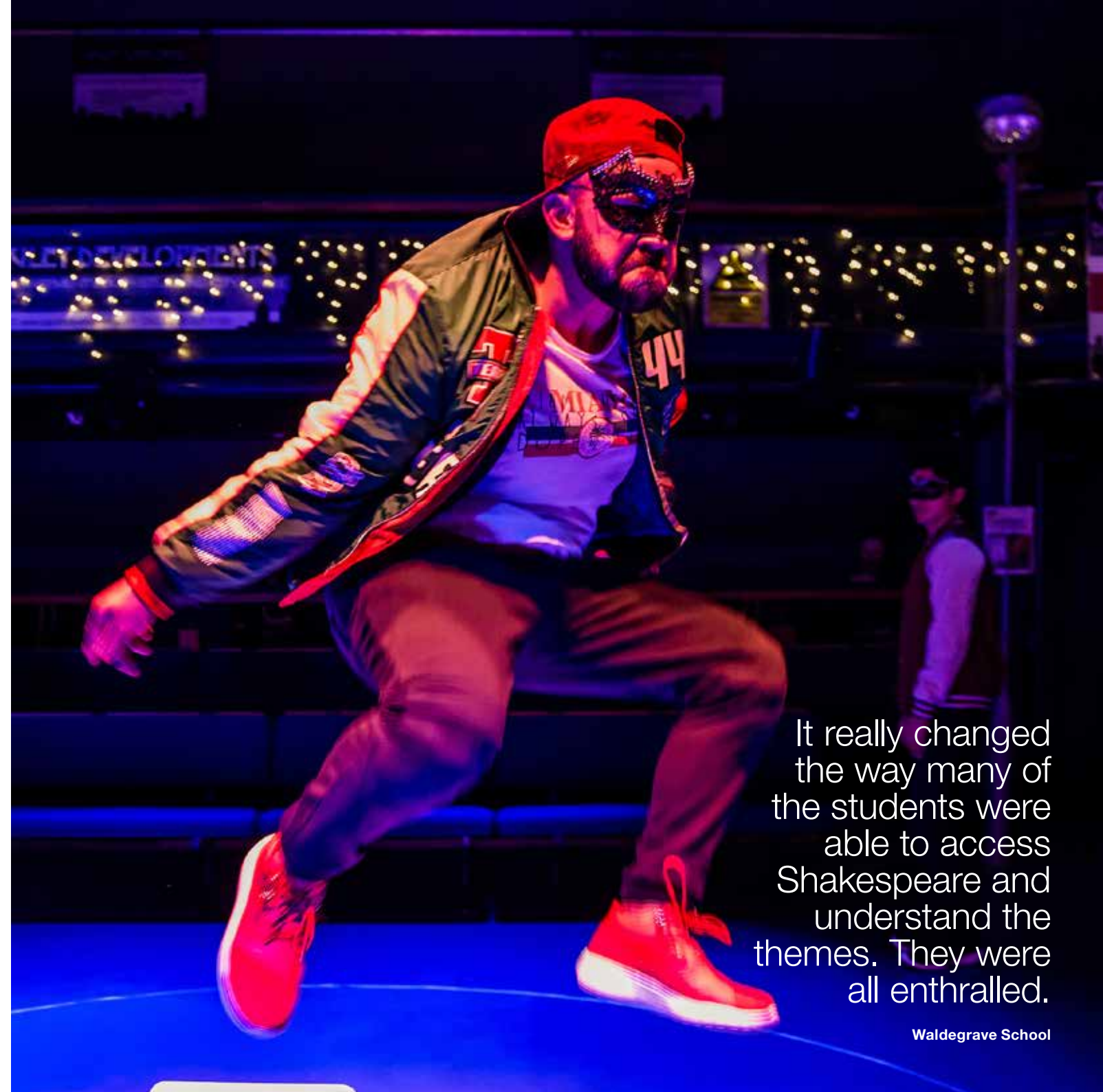
The schools offered the project have high numbers of children from disadvantaged backgrounds, or who speak English as an additional language; we ask the local council to help us identify the schools most in need.

Teachers report how this project actively encourages more confident communication in their pupils, as well as promoting teamwork and an enthusiasm for Shakespeare's language and stories. One teacher from St Richard's C of E Primary School, commented that the project had had a significant impact on children's communication skills:

'Several children who are usually a bit shy/quiet felt able to speak up and perform. Many have carried that back into class when answering questions during lessons.'

'The pace, cast, contemporary interpretation and the setting of the theatre itself all help to make it extremely accessible to the students. It will be particularly helpful in enabling them to remember key quotes, the order of the scenes and character traits, all of which are essential for the new English Literature GCSE' *Christ's School*

PHOTO: ROMEO AND JULIET THE OTHER RICHARD



It really changed the way many of the students were able to access Shakespeare and understand the themes. They were all enthralled.

Waldegrave School

Participation Projects

Youth Theatre, Young Technicians and Summer Schools

Our five popular weekly Youth Theatre groups stand at the heart of our Participation programme. The sessions for ages 7–16 years, offer the chance to make friends, build skills and increase confidence. Led by professional theatre directors and actors, all groups have the opportunity to perform at the OT at the end of the year.

We also offered five Young Technicians the opportunity to learn from our professional stage managers throughout the year. They put their new skills to the test by programming

lighting and sound for the end of year Youth Theatre performances. This is a great chance for us to help young people to discover career paths beyond performing.

We offered two week-long Summer Schools: for 7–11 years and 12–16 years. Each group of 20 participants meets on Monday, and by Saturday performs a piece they've created themselves.

Parents tell us of the positive impact being part of the Youth Theatre has on other areas of their children's development. The skills promoted such as working together, valuing others' views, and of bravery to challenge

themselves, support them through their schooling, and beyond. One parent said: *"[My daughter] is suffering from chronic social anxiety at the moment and is out of school so has been struggling ... but she wants to [keep attending YT sessions] and we hope that, coupled with therapy she will get back into school. As ever, the Orange Tree family has been amazing and we don't know what we'd do without you! Thank you thank you".*

Young Company for 16–19 year olds

The only group formed through open auditions, the Young Company gain a Season-long experience that really stretches their theatremaking skills.

We've taken part in the National Theatre's Connections Festival for the last six years, and this Season performed Alice Birch's *[BLANK]*, a free-wheeling play with over 60 scenes, from which the group selected 20 to create their unique take on the play. Led by Youth Theatre Programme Director Freyja Winterson, assisted by Education & Participation Assistant Izzy Cotterill, the group performed both at the OT and at the Lyric, Hammersmith.

In the Summer term, the Young Company devised their own performance in response to seeing the OT's *An Octoroon* at the National Theatre. Director Ned Bennett and other theatremakers worked with the group to inspire their creativity.

At the end of the Season, some of the Young Company headed off to drama schools, some to university places, some onto work or gap years. One member of the Company

sent us this: *"I just wanted to say a huge thanks for the two years I have been a part of the Orange Tree Young Company. It has been the best thing I have ever done. From performing at the National, to being in my first professional play, the Orange Tree have offered me so much. Last week I started at Leeds University studying Politics. Don't worry, I am not giving up acting; I have joined the theatre society and the film making society. I know this is not the end of my relationship with the Orange Tree."*

Over 60s Theatre Group

Our weekly Over 60s group continued this year, with a mix of new and returning members. At the end of the year they created their own plays and performed at the OT, alongside our Youth Theatre groups. In a weekend filled with lively and imaginative work that grappled with playful forms and striking content, it was a fitting way to celebrate the hard work, enthusiasm and teamwork of everyone that comes to the OT weekly to take part.

MA in Theatre Directing

The OT has a long history of supporting emerging directors, and by working in partnership with St Mary's University, we've created a unique master's degree which places practice at the centre of a rigorous training programme. The year culminates in a Festival of plays chosen by the students, and fully supported by the OT production team. Following the success of the first year of the programme, this year's students, Dominique Chapman, Evangeline Cullingworth and Samson Hawkins, have trained within a professional environment, supported by academic study at the university. At the end of the year they presented three exciting contemporary plays which all garnered 4 and 5 star reviews, with one commenting that **'if the directors taking part in the Directors' Festival at The Orange Tree are the future of theatre, then we can expect some exciting times ahead'** *Reviewshub*.

Looking forward to next year already!
It's one of the highlights of the year!

Barnes Primary School

:DISCOVER

The :DISCOVER campaign was launched in November 2016, and is now at the end of its second year.

:DISCOVER is a fund created to enable the OT to develop emerging writers, tour the UK and produce new and contemporary plays that you wouldn't see anywhere else. Through :DISCOVER, OT audiences are invited to:

EXPERIENCE the next generation of theatre talent

EXPERIMENT with ground-breaking new plays and

EXPLORE lesser-known contemporary plays that inspire theatremakers today.

Arts Council England are matching donations to :DISCOVER £1 to £1 through Catalyst: Evolve investment. To date, :DISCOVER has raised over £70,000 to directly impact the work we produce on stage.



PHOTOS: MAYFLY HELEN MURRAY; POISON THE OTHER RICHARD; THE MARCH ON RUSSIA HELEN MAYBANKS

PHOTO: KATIE JOHNSTONE ROBERT DAY



EXPERIENCE

Since November 2017 we have produced five new plays including the showcasing of two international writers and one professional writing debut. Through :DISCOVER we champion new theatre talent and continue to support their development in the early stages of their career. Highlights this year included:

- Joe White's professional debut *Mayfly* was nominated for three industry awards
- The OT Writers Collective worked with Roy Alexander Weise, director of National Theatre hit *Nine Night*, for their showcase *Uprising*
- Vivian Oparah and Lola Evans, who made their major professional debuts in *An Octoroon*, reprised their roles when it transferred to the National Theatre



EXPERIMENT

:DISCOVER supports new work at the Theatre by enabling us to commission and produce plays by emerging writers from the UK and abroad.

- With the RSC we co-commissioned Zoe Cooper to write a new play, *Out of Water*, which is being produced at the OT in 2019 in association with the RSC
- Past Writers Collective member Chris Bush (*Pericles*, National Theatre) is currently under commission to the OT
- We remain committed to producing new work from outside the UK, such as *Poison* by Lot Vekemans (nominated for four OFFIES)



EXPLORE

:DISCOVER is helping the OT to embed revivals of lesser-known contemporary plays into the artistic programme. In 2017/18 this included:

- *The March on Russia* by David Storey and directed by Alice Hamilton. Seen by over 6,000 in its four-week run at the OT, it was a sell-out success
- *Humble Boy* by Charlotte Jones and directed by Paul Miller. Not seen in London since its National Theatre premiere in 2001, it was attended by 7,390 people at the OT and nominated for seven OFFIES

Thank you to everyone who has supported :DISCOVER in its first and second year.

As we look to 2018/19, this is the final year that Arts Council England will match donations to :DISCOVER. Donate before June 2019 and double the impact of your support.

To discuss supporting, or if you have any questions, please contact Development Manager Rebecca Frater on 020 8940 0141 or at rebecca.frater@orangetreetheatre.co.uk

Events & Extras



Under the Orange Tree

Following our sold out first *Under the Orange Tree* (UTOT) with Dame Judi Dench in June 2017, we were delighted to welcome Dame Maggie Smith in November 2017 and Dame June Whitfield in June 2018, for more unique talks in our intimate auditorium. The events provided an unrivalled opportunity to see these great artists interviewed up-close, and together raised over £17,000 for the OT.

Many thanks to OT Ambassador Gyles Brandreth who returned to host brilliantly.

A Midsummer's Night

On Friday 22 June 2018, the OT held an extraordinary fundraising event, *A Midsummer's Night*. Hosted by OT Ambassador Peter Davison, the evening at Ham Polo Club raised funds for the OT's :DISCOVER campaign.

A Midsummer's Night featured incredible performances by Dickie Beau, Samantha Bond, Richard Clifford, Peter Davison, Evelyn Hoskins, Derek Jacobi and Julien Van Mellaerts as well as our talented Young Company members.

A live auction, hosted by Stephen Mould from Sotheby's, saw guests bidding on unique experiences such as a week in a private home in Bermuda, tickets and meeting the cast of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, and the unmistakable voice of Samantha Bond to record an answerphone message.

The event raised an incredible £45,000 towards :DISCOVER.

Thank you to:
Samantha Bond; the *A Midsummer's Night* committee; Our sponsors: Bhuti, The Bingham Hotel, Boatyard Distillery, Impress; and everyone who donated a prize to our live or silent auction.

OT Extras

Our Artistic Programme was once again complemented this year by a vibrant selection of OT Extras – a series of performances of the best music, theatre and comedy, curated by Matthew Poxon.

Artists performing at the OT for the first time included jazz singer Clare Martin, Olivier Award-winning actor Clive Rowe, whilst Danyah Miller and Lily Bevan & Sally Philips returned to perform new work.

We also hosted return performances from internationally-acclaimed jazz and cabaret singer Barb Jungr, celebrated performance poet Lemn Sissay, and the ever-popular Allegri Quartet, as well as much-loved actor Martin Jarvis, whose readings of Richmal Crompton's *Just William* tales played to sold-out houses.

PHOTOS: DEREK JACOBI AND A MIDSUMMER'S NIGHT ALI WRIGHT



A Midsummer Night's Dream

In November 2018 we were proud to work with Flute Theatre for the third year running in co-producing *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for audiences with ASC, Aspergers and other educational needs. This unique and impactful participatory production ran for three weeks in the OT auditorium during the daytime.

★★★★ **'Groundbreaking Shakespeare... a unique theatrical experience – part performance and part workshop – which genuinely puts the sense of play back into Shakespeare and that is truly interactive.'**

Lyn Gardner, *The Guardian* on *The Tempest*

'Thank you so much to everybody, yesterday was phenomenal. The way the cast seemed to entrance and captivate each pupil at any given time was a pleasure to watch. All the staff left the theatre like myself, with excellent praise.'
Headteacher, Strathmore School



PHOTO: A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM TRISTRAM KENTON

Education & Participation – The House of Lords

On 1 November 2018, Lord Haskel spoke about the Orange Tree's Education & Participation Programme in the House of Lords during a Motion to take note of 'Children: Welfare, Life Chances and Social Mobility', advocating the OT's work with children and young people.

'In Richmond we have an excellent small theatre (...) for some 30 years now, it has run an education and participatory programme based on theatre (...) I have no doubt that these activities give children and young people the opportunities to develop communication skills and aspiration and to become more resilient' Lord Haskel, House of Lords

'[I'm v]ery proud that Lord Haskel spoke extensively about the Orange Tree Theatre Education & Participation Programme this morning in the House of Lords. Enabling young people to engage with the arts is so important and is at the heart of what we do at the Orange Tree Theatre.'
OT Artistic Director Paul Miller

Events

During autumn 2018, we have continued our fundraising programme of discussion events with some of our most distinguished actors.

In September, Philip Glenister and John Simm were reunited for an exclusive *In Conversation at the OT*, chaired by OT Artistic Director Paul Miller.

In October, we welcomed Derek Jacobi to the OT stage for the next instalment of our *Under the Orange Tree* series of fundraising events, hosted by Gyles Brandreth.

Partnership with the JMK Trust

In December 2018, we announced a new partnership with the JMK Trust in which the OT will play host to the James Menzies-Kitchin Young Director Award from 2019. Each year, the JMK Trust provides talented young and emerging theatre directors with awards, guidance and development opportunities; we are proud to be able to take part by supporting the winning director and their production as part of our 2019/20 Artistic Programme.

Most Welcoming Theatre

In September 2018, we were delighted to win Most Welcoming Theatre in London at the UK Theatre Awards for a record-breaking third year in a row. Part of the annual UK Theatre Awards, Most Welcoming Theatre is an opportunity for audiences across the country to celebrate their local theatre, with an unprecedented 56,000 votes being cast.

'To win Most Welcoming Theatre for the third year running says so much about all our wonderful colleagues who work hard every day front of house, behind the scenes, as well as the actors who often find themselves mingling with our audiences. We are thrilled: thank you to everyone who voted and who contributes in some way to our intimate powerhouse!' OT Executive Director Sarah Nicholson



Executive Director Sarah Nicholson steps down

In November 2018, after four years at the Orange Tree, Sarah Nicholson announced that now was the right time for her to step down as Executive Director.

During her time at the Theatre, we have achieved great success with our work on stage and much of this has been down to her dedication to us maintaining standards and practices at the highest levels. Sarah's reputation within the business for fair dealing and high ethical standards is second to none.

Offstage, Sarah has led a process of enormous organisational change. Under her management, we have refreshed our governance, refined our business model and successfully launched a major fundraising effort.

That we are now a thriving, independent, producing powerhouse, making all the amazing work detailed in this Review, is in large measure down to Sarah. We will miss her but wish her all the very best in her next endeavours. *Paul Miller*

The Orange Tree would like to thank the following for their support in 2017/18:



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Orange Tree Theatre
1 Clarence Street
Richmond-upon-Thames
TW9 2SA

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With special thanks to

Dame Maggie Smith and Dame June Whitfield, our *Under the Orange Tree* guests;
Baroness Ronny van Dedem;
Rob Devey;
everyone who made *A Midsummer's Night* such a success;
and to our 1,000 dedicated Members whose support enables the OT to deliver an ever-evolving programme of high-quality theatre.
Thank you.

Ambassadors

Michael Attenborough
Samantha Bond
Gyles & Michèle Brandreth
Judith Coke
Peter Davison
Philip Glenister
Beth Goddard
Alexander Hanson
Elizabeth Heery
Baroness Kramer
Sally Phillips
Paulette Randall MBE
Fionn Whitehead

Trustees 2017/18

David Antrobus
Carolyn Backhouse
Harriet Devey
Steven Elder
Kate Ellis (Vice Chair)
Nigel Hall
Vivien Heilbron
Richard Humphreys (Chair)
Sunita Pandya
India Semper-Hughes
Rosalind Sweeting
Duncan Tatton-Brown
Stephanie Turner
Raymond Warner

Development Committee

Harriet Devey (Chair), Alessio di Capua,
Maggie Collier, Elizabeth Heery, Vivien Heilbron,
Annie Rushton, Ros Sweeting, Sarah Tippett

Company of 2017/18

Robyn Addison; Valerie Antwi; Kristin Atherton;
Sarah Belcher; Joseph Black; Paul Bradley;
Jonathan Broadbent; Anna Leong Brophy;
Selina Cadell; Tom Chapman; Jackie Clune;
Rebecca Collingwood; Finlay Cormack;
Marcello Cruz; Jessica Dennis; Hassan
Dixon; Donaghy Pip; Jonny Donahoe; Katie
Elin-Salt; Tas Emiabata; Ian Gelder; Oliver
Grant; Tom Hanson; Ziggy Heath; Rebekah
Hinds; Evelyn Hoskins; Georgia May Hughes;
Rhys Isaac-Jones; Michael Jean-Marian;
Matt Jessup; Reuben Johnson; Belinda
Lang; Gabrielle Lloyd; Robert Lonsdale;
Sally Messham; Jordan Mifsúd; Danyah
Miller; Neurer Nenda; Ronald Nsubuga;
Claire Price; Christopher Ravenscroft; Paula
Rodríguez; Lara Rossi; Simon Scardifield;
Elizabeth Schenk; Irfan Shamji; Simon
Shepherd; Siu Marli; Katy Stephens; Matt
Sutton; Luke Thallon; Colin Tierney; Rebecca
Todd; Zubin Varla; Stuart Vincent; Connie
Walker; Sue Wallace; Niky Wardley



BROCHURE DESIGN ANNE RUSHTON | PRINT IMPRESS

The Orange Tree, under artistic director Paul Miller and executive director Sarah Nicholson, is all heart. It's a theatre I keep returning to, in the hope that I might stop thinking so much about theatre and let myself feel.

[...] recent Orange Tree productions have floored me with their openness, compassion and generosity. All these plays have made me cry. Here is a theatre that isn't afraid to be human – small when it needs to be, modest when necessary, and dazzling only when the play demands it. That sort of humility and humanity is a much rarer quality than you might imagine.

Miriam Gillinson, *Exeunt*