

8 June 2022

**DEREK JACOBI AND JOHN SIMM CELEBRATE CHICHESTER ACROSS THE
DECADES IN *VISIONARY STAGES*:**

A ground-breaking virtual recreation of the 1962 Festival Theatre

***Visionary Stages* launches *Digital Stages*: five special digital events marking CFT's
60th Anniversary**

DIGITAL STAGES, five dynamic digital events celebrating Chichester Festival Theatre across the decades, will be released over CFT's birthday week in July for audiences across the globe. They range from VR tours and online performances to a brand-new virtual game created by CFT's community companies for adults with learning disabilities.

Visionary Stages – from Sunday 3 July, £5

Actors **Sir Derek Jacobi** and **John Simm**, author and playwright **Kate Mosse** and designer **Joanna Scotcher** join CFT Artistic Director **Daniel Evans** and the Artistic Director of the Stratford Festival Theatre in Ontario, Canada, **Antoni Cimolino**, for a virtual meet-up using cutting-edge technology to recreate Chichester's 1962 stage.

Daniel and his special guests will talk about 60 years of extraordinary theatre and the shared history of the two buildings (the Canadian theatre inspired the founding and design of CFT), reliving some favourite productions and memories as they travel through the decades.

During lockdown, the Festival Theatre auditorium was scanned by the specialist company Preevue with LiDAR technology, enabling them to recreate the 1962 stage using plans, photographs and archive records of the furniture and fittings. The event was filmed by technical solutions specialist White Light, using their innovative and award-winning SmartStage®. For the first time, this technology enabled a historical design to be brought back to life – by placing real, precise scans of the physical theatre into an immersive video environment. The solution also allowed for Antoni Cimolino to be virtually 'teleported' from Ontario to join Daniel Evans on the SmartStage for the discussion.

A trailer for *Visionary Stages* can be seen at
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sh_rdhF27M8

Visionary Stages will be streamed online from Sunday 3 July at 3pm and available on demand thereafter. Tickets £5.

Backstage Virtual Tour – from Tuesday 5 July, FREE

An immersive VR backstage tour allowing audiences to encounter actors as they prepare to go on stage and see the inner workings of the Theatre in virtual reality. Available using VR headsets in the Theatre foyer, or via a 360-degree video version on CFT's YouTube channel.

Your Dream – from Wednesday 6 July, FREE

Anyone who fancies themselves as the next Laurence Olivier has the chance to take part in a mammoth online performance of a scene from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Choose your stage and your costume and send in a video of yourself performing part of the 'rude mechanicals' play of Pyramus and Thisbe. All submissions will be edited together for online screening on CFT's YouTube channel. The deadline for submissions is Friday 17 June; visit cft.org.uk/YourDream for full details.

Digital Diorama – from Thursday 7 July, FREE

A digital diorama sharing memories and anecdotes attached to 60 pieces from CFT's fascinating archive will be on virtual display. Model boxes, props, costumes, set designs, footage, programmes, artwork, time-lapses, interviews and sound bites will tell the story of the Theatre through the last six decades, including Gerald Scarfe's rhino costume for *Born Again*; Ralph Koltai's model box for *The Tempest*; the Arctic sledge from *Terra Nova*; and the lamppost from *Singin' in the Rain*.

Game Changer – released from Friday 8 July, FREE

CFT's creative 'Wednesday and Friday' Community Companies for adults with learning disabilities have combined gaming technology with theatrical storytelling and music to create a new virtual theatre experience.

The Friday Company have worked with Brighton-based BRiGHTBLACK, a digital company specialising in interactive and immersive playable artwork. Using a highly accurate scan of the Festival Theatre auditorium, a parallel universe has been created on the digital stage with clay characters animated by 3D scanning technology. Meanwhile, the Wednesday Company have worked alongside songwriter and musician Michael Fry to create a soundscape to accompany the digital story, offering an immersive utopia.

Visit www.cft.org.uk/DigitalStages for further details and to book.

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