

## Audiences turn detective as *CSI* meets a Dickens masterpiece

A New Vic Theatre premiere

### *Bleak House*

By Charles Dickens

adapted and directed by Theresa Heskins

Sat 3 – Sat 24 July

Press Nights: Tuesday 6 July

Thursday 8 July

Foggy London meets the forensics of *CSI* as a thrilling New Vic premiere promises to immerse audiences in the world of a Dickens' novel.

Theatre-goers are being invited to turn detective for *Bleak House*, a new stage adaptation of Dickens' masterpiece by New Vic Artistic Director, Theresa Heskins. In a New Vic first, the fast-moving and lively production will see audiences talk to characters, sift through evidence and explore the scene of the crime before the performance begins.

Explains Heskins: *"Throughout the building, we'll be creating some of the environments mentioned in the story, offering an opportunity to observe characters, evidence and settings of the novel at close quarters. The endless court case; the mysterious bottle shop; the poor crossing sweeper will all be brought to life.*

*"During the course of the journey the audience will collect clues to solve the mystery at the heart of the story, whilst those who already know the novel will enjoy the challenge of seeking out the needle in the haystack. It will be an epic theatre experience to match this epic novel.*

*"Promenade events like this have been capturing the imaginations of theatre-goers all over the country, so it's great to offer our audiences an unusual and interactive theatre experience. After last year's *The Wicked Lady*, when we worked with aerial dance company *Upswing* to create horses, beds and a breathtaking gallows in mid-air, lots of people stopped me to ask 'What's the next adventure?' Here it is!"*

Recently announced as one of the UK's top Women to Watch by the Cultural Leadership Programme, the New Vic Artistic Director is adapting the Dickens classic following her critically-acclaimed revisionings of *Great Expectations* and the record-breaking *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* last Christmas. The adaptation will be one of the rare occasions that the Dickens' novel has been put on stage.

An award-winning creative team includes Designer Liz Cooke (*The Wicked Lady* at the New Vic, *Pericles* and *The Merchant of Venice* at Shakespeare's Globe and *Monkey!* at the West Yorkshire Playhouse) and New Vic Lighting Designer, Daniella Beattie, who last year scooped a TMA Award for her work on *The Wicked Lady*.

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The 11-strong *Bleak House* cast includes regular TV and film actress Dido Miles (*Rosemary and Thyme*, British indie horror film *Mum and Dad*), actor Jack Blumenau from CBBC's *Noah and Saskia*, Martin Hyder, last seen in BBC1's *The Omid Djalili Show* and DreamThinkSpeaks *Absent* at the Royal Opera House, as well as *Grange Hills* Mr. Deverill, Nicholas Tizzard. The company are also joined by members of the New Vic's Youth Theatre.

Audiences will be able to experience the interactive promenade 30 minutes before the performance begins. Tickets for *Bleak House*, which cost £8.50 – £17.50 (with concessions available), can be booked by calling the New Vic's Box Office on 01782 717962, or online at [www.newvictheatre.org.uk](http://www.newvictheatre.org.uk)

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## Notes for journalists:

### Useful links

[New Vic plays: Bleak House](#)

[New Vic Artistic Director named as a creative 'Woman to Watch'](#)

### Theresa Heskins

Since joining Staffordshire's producing theatre in January 2007 Theresa Heskins has adapted and directed many successful productions including the hugely popular *Great Expectations*, *The Wicked Lady* (by Bryony Lavery) and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, which became the theatre's most successful ever production earlier this year. Before that she was artistic director of Pentabus Theatre, establishing its reputation as a centre for innovative new writing. Productions there included Bryony Lavery's outdoor epic *Precious Bane*, acclaimed by The Guardian as one of the ten best site-specific shows ever.

Theresa writing credits include work with The Royal Court Young Writers' Festival, ITV, Midlands Arts Centre and BBC Radio. She is currently adapting *Wives and Daughters* for Radio 4's *Women's Hour*.

### Cast and Creative Team

Jack Blumenau.....Richard Carstone/ Grandfather Smallweed  
Andrew Dennis.....Krook/ Mr George  
Stephen Finegold.....Tulkinghorn  
Morgan George.....John Jarndyce/Lord Chancellor  
Dennis Herdman.....Guppy/ Mr Woodcourt  
Martin Hyder.....Sir Leicester Dedlock/ The Brickmaker  
Dido Miles.....Lady Dedlock/ Jenny  
Emma Pallant.....Esther Summerson  
Charlotte Palmer.....Miss Flite/ Hortense/ Mrs Pardiggle  
Nicholas Tizzard.....Tangle/ Inspector Bucket  
Kirsty Wood.....Ada Clare/ Poor Jo

Director & Dramatist.....Theresa Heskins  
Designer.....Liz Cooke  
Lighting Designer.....Daniella Beattie  
Sound Designer.....James Earls-Davis  
Music Composed & Performed by.....Mary Keith  
Fight Director.....Philip d'Orleans  
Casting Associate.....Anji Carroll CDG

For further press information, images or to arrange review tickets, interviews, photography or filming, please contact Clare Hargreaves on 01782 717954 ext 317 or e-mail [chargreaves@newvictheatre.org.uk](mailto:chargreaves@newvictheatre.org.uk).

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**Sat 3 – Sat 24 July:** Monday to Saturday, 7.30pm (Promenade from 7.00pm)

**Matinee:** Sat 24 July, 2.15pm (Promenade from 1.45pm)

**Captioned performance:** Tues 20 July, 7.30pm

**Audio Described performance:** Sat 24 July, 2.15pm

**Talkback (meet the cast):** Tues 20 July (free, post show)