

Top creative talent takes on American classic

The New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, presents

Desire Under the Elms

by Eugene O'Neill

Fri 24 Sep – Sat 9 Oct, 2010

Press Performances: Tues 27 Sep
Thurs 30 Sep

A BAFTA nominee, a video design pioneer and an Olivier winner are amongst the cream of the creative industry coming together to take on an American classic at the New Vic.

A vivid, primal play that unfurls at a fever pitch, *Desire Under the Elms* explores the passions of five characters who are trapped in a tormented, fiery universe. This epic tale of ambition, love and passion in nineteenth century New England confirms Nobel Prize-winning Eugene O'Neill's reputation as the 'father' of American drama.

Heading a stellar creative team is one of the UK's brightest directing talents, New Vic Artistic Associate James Dacre, whose West End production of *The Mountaintop* made the headlines when it scooped a surprise Olivier Award for Best New Play earlier this year.

Joining Dacre is one of the industry leaders in projection and video design, Dick Straker. A former resident at the National Theatre, he and his company Mesmer are UK pioneers in the art form, designing for shows across the world, on Broadway and the West End. Straker will be helping to create an epic landscape for the new production in an exciting first for the New Vic.

Also making his debut at the theatre is twice BAFTA-nominated actor Gareth Thomas. An associate member of RADA and formidable Shakespearean actor, Thomas is best known for his role as Roj Blake in the 70's sci-fi series *Blake's 7*.

The 13-strong cast also includes stage and screen actor Tim Chipping (*Troy*, Warner Bros. and *The Crucible*, RSC and West End), Owen Oakeshott (*Copenhagen*, Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh) and RADA graduates Cary Crankson (*Flight Path*, Bush Theatre) and Victoria Lloyd (*Measure for Measure*, Almedia, Michael Attenborough), as well as an ensemble of student actors and musicians from Manchester Metropolitan University's drama programme.

Movement Director Lesley Hutchison also joins the team. A former Movement Director at the RSC, Hutchison has worked with Danny Boyle, Willy Russell and Arthur Miller amongst others.

Tickets for *Desire Under the Elms*, 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

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Notes for journalists:

Useful links

[New Vic plays: *Desire Under the Elms*](#)
[New Vic talent celebrates Olivier victory](#)

Cast and Creative Team

Simeon/Farmer
Eben
Abbie
Peter/Farmer/Sheriff
Ephraim

Tim Chipping
Cary Crankson
Victoria Lloyd
Owen Oakeshott
Gareth Thomas

Ensemble from Manchester Metropolitan University:
Zora Bishop, Darrell Davy, Oliver Devoti, Katrina Innes,
Rebecca Letford, Kayleigh McDonald, Majid Mehdizadeh, Cliff Myatt

Director	James Dacre
Designer	Lis Evans
Lighting Designer	Daniella Beattie
Sound Designer & Original Music	James Earls-Davis
Video Designer	Dick Straker for <i>Mesmer</i>
Musical Director	Susan Moffat
Fight Director	Philip d'Orleans
Movement Director	Lesley Hutchison
Voice & Dialect Coach	Charmian Hoare
Assistant Director	Paschale Straiton
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.

Fri 24 Sept – Sat 9 Oct: Monday to Saturday, 7.30pm
Matinee: Sat 9 Oct, 2.15pm
Captioned performance: Tues 5 Oct, 7.30pm
Audio Described performance: Sat 9 Oct, 2.15pm
Talkback (meet the cast): Tues 5 Oct, 7.30pm