

National Theatre

Press Release

Wakefield student wins 2019 National Theatre *New Views* playwriting competition

16 year old student **Isabel Hague** from CAPA College in Wakefield is the winner of the National Theatre's annual playwriting competition for 14-19-year olds.

Isabel's play *If Not Now, When?* was selected from 350 entries across the UK and will be performed by professional actors in a full production at the National Theatre during its *New Views* Festival in July, alongside rehearsed readings of the eight other shortlisted plays in the Dorfman Theatre.

If Not Now, When? was chosen from a shortlist of nine plays by a panel of judges including playwright **Chris Bush** (*Pericles* at the NT, *The Assassination of Katie Hopkins*), NT Associate Director **Lyndsey Turner** NT Senior Dramaturg **Nina Steiger**, and NT Connections Dramaturg **Ola Animashawun**.

If Not Now, When? focuses on the relationship between Liam and his sister Chelsey. Liam is struggling with alcohol misuse but Chelsey sees his potential. They share their worries but hide their true insecurities from each other.

Reflecting the huge talent across the UK, this year's shortlisted plays introduce fresh perspectives on a wide range of contemporary issues including mental health, Brexit, fake news and relationships.

Isabel Hague said, "I can't express how proud and genuinely honoured I feel. I am so thankful for this experience and I honestly loved every moment of the process. I would recommend anybody to get involved in *New Views*, it has truly opened my eyes to a whole new pathway."

Chris Bush, playwright and member of the judging panel said, "'New Views is without doubt one of the most important things the National Theatre does. It targets young people at a crucial age where they're just starting to give serious thought to where their working lives might take them. I can think of no better introduction to the theatre, or the arts in general, than to have your debut play performed at the National, and year-in year-out these writers prove they are unquestionably up to this challenge. Isabel Hague is already a hugely accomplished, instinctive writer. From just a few lines in it was clear just what a gift her words would be for any actor. Her dialogue is honest, authentic, and crucially very funny even when dealing with some bleak subject matter. Hers is a voice we need, and one I hope to hear a lot more of."

Hundreds of students from over 70 schools nationwide took part in *New Views* this year, learning about playwriting from some of the finest writers in the industry and writing their own 30-minute plays. Participating schools and colleges take part in in-school workshops with professional writers, as well as following an online course by playwright Jemma Kennedy and having the opportunity to watch NT productions or NT Live broadcasts. Teachers receive professional development at the National Theatre at the start of the programme and partner with a professional playwright to mentor the students in school.

Performances of *If Not Now, When?* will take place on Monday 1st July at 4.30pm and 7.30pm, and on Tuesday 2nd July at 1pm in the Dorfman Theatre.

Rehearsed readings of the other eight shortlisted plays will also take place on Monday 1st July and Tuesday 2nd July in the Dorfman Theatre.

The schedule of rehearsed readings is as follows:

Monday 1st July

2.30pm – *Behind the Mask* by Ellie Wee from Guildford High School

3.15pm – *The Wrong People* by Molly Fairhead from Kesteven and Sleaford High School, Lincolnshire

5.30pm – *Personal Statements* by Emily Shurmer from Jewish Community Secondary School, New Barnet

6.15pm – *Background Noise* by Cerys Wrigley from Stopsley High School, Luton

Tuesday 2nd July

10.30am – *Last Lap* by Alice Bennett from Wolverhampton Girls' High School

11.15am – *To Charlie* by Emilia Hitching from Bancroft's School, Woodford Green

2.30pm – *Okay* by Alida Charles Damtoft from Kingsdale Foundation School, Dulwich

3.15pm – *The Closest Thing to Silence* by Aidan Hall from Bedales School, Petersfield

Tickets are on sale from Monday 3rd June. To book tickets, visit www.nationaltheatre.org.uk

Applications for New Views 2019/20 are now open! If you would like to apply, please contact Charlie at newviews@nationaltheatre.org.uk.

New Views is supported by The Mohn Westlake Foundation, Old Possum's Practical Trust, Chapman Charitable Trust, Golsoncott Foundation and The Steel Charitable Trust.

The National Theatre's Partner for Learning is Bank of America Merrill Lynch.

ENDS

To download images from last year's New Views Festival 2018, click [here](#).

For press enquiries and press tickets, please contact Rhian Bennett at rbennett@nationaltheatre.org.uk / 020 7452 3235

Notes to Editors

About National Theatre

The National Theatre's mission is to make world class theatre that's entertaining, challenging and inspiring – and to make it for everyone. It aims to reach the widest possible audience and to be as inclusive, diverse and national as possible with a broad range of productions that play in London, on tour around the UK, on Broadway and across the globe. The National Theatre's extensive UK-wide learning and participation programme supports young people's creative education through

performance and writing programmes like Connections, New Views and Let's Play. Its major new initiative Public Acts creates extraordinary acts of theatre and community; the first Public Acts production was 2018's Pericles. The National Theatre extends its reach through digital programmes including NT Live, which broadcasts some of the best of British theatre to over 2,500 venues in 65 countries, and the free streaming service On Demand In Schools, used by nearly 60% of UK state secondary schools. The National Theatre invests in the future of theatre by developing talent, creating bold new work and building audiences, partnering with a range of UK theatres and theatre companies.

For more information, please visit <https://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/>.

@NationalTheatre

@NT_PressOffice