

Press Release

20 November 2018

Playing with Scale: How Stage Designers use set models

Free exhibition in the Wolfson Gallery

Until 23 March 2019



This new free exhibition at the National Theatre explores how designers use set models for theatre-making. *Playing with Scale* unfolds the idea of a scale model and explains the importance of models as a design tool. The exhibition features model boxes from productions at the NT, archive materials, films, audio and photography.

The exhibition is curated by **Eleanor Margolies** (Jocelyn Herbert Fellow, Camberwell, Chelsea and Wimbledon Graduate School, UAL) and is presented in collaboration with the Jocelyn Herbert Archive.

Curator Eleanor Margolies said: “I have been looking at the models created by designer Jocelyn Herbert for the last two years and became fascinated by all the different ways that set models are used in the designer's process. So many conversations happen around and through the model - with directors and actors, set-builders and prop-makers. The exquisite miniature world of the 'final model' is only one part of the story. I feel really lucky to have had a glimpse into the usually hidden world of the studio, taking in early sketch models and digital 3D visualisations, and look forward to sharing this with visitors to the exhibition.”

The exhibition focuses on five productions designed for the Olivier stage: *The Plough and the Stars* (1977, designer Geoffrey Scott), *Antigone* (2012, designer Soutra Gilmour), *The Comedy of Errors* (2011, designer Bunny Christie), *Exit the King* (2018, designer Anthony Ward) and *Antony & Cleopatra* (2018, designer Hildegard Bechtler).

The exhibition shows how important models were for architect Denys Lasdun, who designed the Olivier auditorium, and how these five designers have responded in very different ways to this unique space.

Jocelyn Herbert was both a member of the Building Committee working with Lasdun and also designed productions for the Olivier Theatre. Scale models of the props and furniture Herbert designed for *Galileo* have been preserved within her archive at the National Theatre, and have recently been restored by Tabitha Austin, a student on the MA Conservation at Camberwell.

The exhibition explores why designers make scale models and brings attention to their collaborative work with directors, scenic artists, actors and designers of lighting and projection.

Related Talks and Events:

[Exhibition Insight with Curator Eleanor Margolies](#) Sat 1 December, 11.30am

[How Designers use Model Boxes](#) Mon 10 December, 6pm

[Out of the Model Box: stories inspired by set models](#) Sat 2 March, 12pm

[Model Box Making Workshop](#) Sat 2 March, 2pm

[Drawing Set Designs with the NT Drawing Office](#) Thu 21 March, 6pm

ENDS

For more information, contact Louisa Terry: lterry@nationaltheatre.org.uk

[Images can be downloaded here](#)

The National Theatre

At the National Theatre, we make world-class theatre that is entertaining, challenging and inspiring, and we make it for everyone. In 2016-2017, the NT staged 26 productions and gave 2,585 performances at our home on the South Bank. The NT's award-winning programme had a UK paying audience of 1.8 million, 400,000 of which were NT Live audiences.

The work the National Theatre produces appeals to the widest possible audiences with new plays, musicals, re-imagined classics and new work for young audiences. The NT's work is seen in the West End, on tour throughout the UK and internationally, and in collaborations and co-productions with partners across the country. Through NT Live, we broadcast some of the best of British theatre to over 2,500 venues in 60 countries around the world.

Our extensive Learning programme offers talks, events and workshops for people of all ages, and reaches nationwide through programmes such as Connections, New Views and Let's Play. In 2016-2017 there were 196,826 participations through the NT Learning events programme. Over 3,000 schools have signed up to the free streaming service, *On Demand. In Schools*, since its launch in September 2015.

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