

PRESS RELEASE

Monday 3 February 2026

Royal Court Theatre, Wagner Johnson Productions
Wessex Grove, Sonia Friedman Productions, Runyonland and John Mara Jr
present

John Proctor is the Villain

By Kimberly Belflower

Directed by Danya Taymor

FULL CAST ANNOUNCED FOR UK PREMIERE OF BROADWAY HIT JOHN PROCTOR IS THE VILLAIN



Top, L-R: Lauryn Ajufo, Charlie Borg, Reece Braddock, Dónal Finn, Holly Howden Gilchrist
Bottom, L-R: Clare Hughes, Miya James, Molly McFadden, Sadie Soverall.

The cast has been announced for the UK transfer of one of the most anticipated shows of the year, the seven-time Tony Award-nominated, ***John Proctor is the Villain*** by **Kimberly Belflower**, directed by Tony Award-winner **Danya Taymor** (*The Outsiders*). It arrives from a sold out, critically acclaimed run on Broadway and plays at the Royal Court from Friday 20 March - Saturday 25 April 2026 with a Press Night on Thursday 26 March 2026.

The third production in the Royal Court's 70th anniversary season, the biting funny, fresh reimagining of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, which had its London premiere at the same theatre in 1956, follows five young women running on pop music, optimism, and fury.

The full new cast for the UK will include: **Lauryn Ajufo** (Nell Shaw); **Charlie Borg** (Lee Turner); **Reece Braddock** (Mason Adams); **Dónal Finn** (Carter Smith); **Holly Howden Gilchrist** (Beth Powell); **Clare Hughes** (Ivy Watkins); **Miya James** (Raelynn Nix); **Molly McFadden** (Bailey Gallagher); **Sadie Soverall** (Shelby Holcomb). Three of the cast are making their professional debuts in the production.

Scenography is by **AMP**, featuring **Teresa Williams**, the costume design is by **Sarah Laux**, the lighting design is by **Natasha Katz**, the sound design and original composition is by **Palmer Hefferan**, projection design is by **Hannah Wasileski**, hair and make-up design by **J. Jared Janas**, movement direction is by **Tilly Evans-Kreuger**. The Voice and Dialect Coach is **Gigi Buffington**, the Casting Director is **Julia Horan, CDG**, dramaturgy by **Lauren Halvorsen** and the Associate Director is **Yanni Ng**.

'One day, maybe, the new world we were promised will actually be new...'

Five young women running on pop music, optimism, and fury are about to shed light on the darkest secrets in their small town. A story about girlhood, power, and questioning the narratives we've been taught.

The production has partnered with Time Out to make 2,000 tickets available for under 35s, priced accessibly at £25. The theatre will also offer its regular £15 Monday rush tickets throughout the run: tickets to Monday performances go on sale at 9am before the performance the same day and are all sold for £15.

John Proctor is the Villain is presented by the Royal Court Theatre, Wagner Johnson Productions, Wessex Grove, Sonia Friedman Productions, Runyonland and John Mara Jr.

Biographies

Kimberly Belflower

Theatre includes: **John Proctor Is the Villain (Broadway)**; **Lost Girl (Milwaukee Rep)**; **Forest Creature (Milwaukee Rep)**; **The Sky Game (Peppercorn)**; **Chronic Fatigue (Front Porch Arts Collective)**.

Film and television includes: **Privilege, Windy Hill**.

Audio includes: **Vane Springs**.

Awards include: **Kennedy Center Darrell Ayers National Playwriting Award (Lost Girl)**; **Elliott Norton Award, Helen Hayes Award, Drama Desk Award Outer Critics Circle Award, Dorian Award (John Proctor Is the Villain)**.

Danya Taymor

Theatre includes: **John Proctor is the Villain, The Outsiders (& Tour), Pass Over (Broadway); Trophy Boys (MCC); Jonah (Roundabout); Evanston Salt Costs Climbing, The Sensuality Party (New Group); Endgame (Gate); "Daddy" (New Group/Vineyard/Almeida); Graveyard Shift (Goodman); Familiar (Steppenwolf); Heroes of the Fourth Turning (Playwrights Horizons); queens (Lincoln Center Theater); Wyoming (Theater for the New City); My Daughter Keeps Our Hammer (Flea).**

Awards include: **Tony Award for Best Direction of a Musical (The Outsiders); Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Direction of a Play, Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Director of a Play (John Proctor is the Villain); Obie Award, Callaway Award (Heroes of the Fourth Turning); Cullman Award for Extraordinary Creativity.**

Lauryn Ajufo (she/her)

Theatre includes: **The Den (Swan Wharf).**

Television includes: **Dreaming Whilst Black, Everything Now, Tell Me Everything, Accused, The Last Bus, Holby City.**

Film includes: **Luther: The Fallen Sun, Boiling Point, Villain.**

Charlie Borg (he/him)

Film includes: ***Dog of Time.***

This is Charlie's professional stage debut.

Reece Braddock (he/him)

This is Reece's professional stage debut.

Dónal Finn

Theatre includes: **Hadestown (West End), Sing Street (Huntingdon Theatre, Boston), Albion (Almeida), Chasing Bono (Soho).**

Television includes: **Young Sherlock, The Other Bennet Sister, The Wheel of Time, SAS: Rogue Heroes, The Witcher, Cursed.**

Film includes: **Four Letters of Love, How to Build a Girl, Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore.**

Awards include: **Stalls to Stage Award for Best Actor in a Musical (Hadestown).**

Holly Howden Gilchrist (she/her)

Theatre includes: **Beauty and the Beast, Small Acts of Love (& NTS) (Citizens); Blinded By The Light (Sylvian Productions); A View From The Bridge (Tron); Anatomy of a Suicide, The Cosmonauts Last Message To The Woman He Once Loved In The Former Soviet Union, Twelfth Night (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland); Human Installation (Network Festival Romania).**

Television includes: **Murder Is Easy.**

Film includes: **I Swear, Whisky Galore!**

Clare Hughes (she/her)

Theatre includes: **Mary Page Marlowe (Old Vic); Sitting, Screaming (Old Fitz Theatre); Six Characters in Search of an Author, Picnic at Hanging Rock, Blood Wedding, Vassa Zheleznova, Hot'l Baltimore (NIDA); A View From the Bridge (WAAPA).**

Television includes: **Ponies, Ten Pound Poms, Ladies in Black.**

Miya James (she/her)

Theatre includes: **Measure for Measure (RSC); London Tide (National); The Crucible (West End/ NT Productions); The 47th (The Old Vic).**

Television includes: **Midsomer Murders.**

Molly McFadden (she/her)

Theatre includes: **Mr Burns: A Post-Electric Play, Peribáñez, The Government Inspector, The Hush Hush Men, Big Maggie, Antigone, Much Ado About Nothing (The Lir).**

This is Molly's professional stage debut.

Sadie Soverall (she/her)

Theatre includes: **The Cherry Orchard (St Ann's Warehouse/ Donmar Warehouse).**

Television includes: **Every Year After, The Gathering, Fate: The Winx Saga.**

Film includes: **Saltburn, Finding Emily, Arcadian, Little Bone Lodge.**

ENDS

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[Images here.](#)

Upcoming press Performances:

Thursday 12 February 2026	<i>The Shitheads</i> by Jack Nicholls	Jerwood Theatre Upstairs
Thursday 26 March 2026	<i>John Proctor is the Villain</i> By Kimberly Belflower	Jerwood Theatre Downstairs
Monday 20 April 2026	<i>Between The River And The Sea</i> by Yousef Sweid and Isabella Sedlak	Jerwood Theatre Upstairs
Monday 11 May 2026	<i>Krapp's Last Tape</i> by Samuel Beckett and <i>Godot's To-Do List</i> by Leo Simpe-Asante	Jerwood Theatre Downstairs
Thursday 4 June 2026	<i>Are You Watching?</i> by Georgie Dettmer	Jerwood Theatre Upstairs

Friday 26 June 2026	<i>Archduke</i> by Rajiv Joseph	Jerwood Theatre Downstairs
Friday 11 September 2026	<i>Man to Man</i> by Manfred Karge, translated by Anthony Vivis	Jerwood Theatre Downstairs
Wednesday 7 October 2026	<i>Blood of my Blood</i> by Joy Nesbitt	Jerwood Theatre Upstairs
Monday 23 November 2026	<i>The Afronauts</i> by Ryan Calais Cameron	Jerwood Theatre Downstairs
Wednesday 9 December 2026	<i>Monument</i> by Rhys Warrington	Jerwood Theatre Upstairs

LISTINGS

Wessex Grove, Sonia Friedman Productions, Runyonland and John Mara Jr
present

John Proctor is the Villain

By Kimberly Belflower

Directed by Danya Taymor

Jerwood Theatre Downstairs, Royal Court Theatre, Sloane Square, SW1W 8AS

Friday 20 March - Saturday 25 April 2026

Press Night Thursday 26 March 2026, 7pm

Monday - Friday, 7:30pm and 2:30pm

Saturday, 1:30pm and 6:30pm

Post-Show Talk Friday 27 March 2026

Chilled Saturday 18 April 2026, 1:30pm

Captioned Wednesday 22 April 2026, 7:30pm

Audio-described Saturday 25th April 2026, 7:30pm

Standard Tickets £15 - £74.50

Concessions*

Under 30s***

Access £19 (plus a companion at the same rate)

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*ID required. All discounts subject to availability

Code of Conduct

The Royal Court has devised a Code of Conduct intended for staff, freelancers, audiences, participants, supporters, independent companies and wider stakeholders. It sets out the fundamental principles for how we work together: guidelines and expectations which reflect our legal duties, as well as our values and ethics – including anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice. [Please read more here.](#)

NOTES TO EDITORS

Sonia Friedman Productions (SFP) is an international production company responsible for some of the most successful theatre productions around the world. Since it was established in 2002, SFP has

developed, initiated and produced over 300 productions and has won 67 Olivier Awards, 61 Tony Awards and 3 BAFTAs, with its founder, Sonia Friedman CBE, being described by *The New York Times* in 2025 as “the most powerful producer working in theater” today and recognised as a *Variety500* Honouree for seven consecutive years. At any one time, the company is actively developing, commissioning, and enabling more than 30 new theatrical projects worldwide.

In 2018, Friedman was named on the *TIME 100* list of the world’s most influential people. In 2019, she was awarded *Producer of the Year* at *The Stage Awards* for a record-breaking fourth time; in 2024 she was included in *The Standard 100*, celebrating London’s key power players; and in 2025 she was named one of *Vogue’s 25* most influential women working today.

Current productions include: *The Book of Mormon* (West End); *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* (West End, Broadway, Hamburg, Tokyo, The Netherlands and North American tour); *Stranger Things: The First Shadow*, a co-production with Netflix (West End, Broadway); *Paddington The Musical* (West End); *Oedipus* (Broadway); *Sunny Afternoon* (UK tour); *Stereophonic* (US tour); the global cinema distribution of *Merrily We Roll Along* (2025) and *A Friend of Dorothy* (2025).

In 2025, Sonia Friedman and Hugh Jackman, alongside director Ian Rickson, launched **TOGETHER**, a new company dedicated to creating live theatre that is intimate and accessible.

Forthcoming productions include: *1536* (West End), *John Proctor is the Villain* (Royal Court), *Mean Girls* (UK and Ireland tour) and *Dreamgirls* (Broadway).

ABOUT WAGNER JOHNSON PRODUCTIONS (WJP)

Founded in 2019 by nine-time Tony Award-winning producers Sue Wagner and John Johnson, WJP has earned a reputation as a trailblazing and relentlessly prolific producorial force on Broadway and beyond. They continue to redefine the theatrical landscape by championing bold new works, attracting world-class talent, creating history-making events, and striking a rare balance between artistic ambition and commercial appeal.

WJP has produced both the most Tony Award-nominated play of all time (*Stereophonic*) and the highest-grossing play of all time (*Good Night, and Good Luck*, starring George Clooney, which also made history with its live broadcast on CNN — a Broadway first — viewed by a global audience of more than 7 million). In 2022, they led *The Lehman Trilogy* to a Tony sweep, with five wins including Best Play, Best Direction of a play for Sam Mendes, and best Leading Actor in a play for Simon Russell Beale. The next year, they achieved the unthinkable, mounting BAM’s production of *The Sign in Sidney Brustein’s Window*, starring Oscar Isaac and Rachel Brosnahan, on Broadway in a record-breaking three weeks. The youth movement they helped spark with their production *John Proctor is the Villain* redefined the face of Broadway. They’ve also been a central force in the resurgence of Off-Broadway, bringing to smaller stages a series of highly acclaimed and profitable works, including the world premiere of Stephen Sondheim’s final musical, *Here We Are*, in 2023 and the sensation-causing production of *Vanya* starring Andrew Scott in 2025.

Current projects include *Oedipus*, starring Mark Strong and Lesley Manville; the US Tour and West End productions of *Stereophonic*; *Dog Day Afternoon*, starring Jon Bernthal and Ebon

Moss-Bachrach. Next season will include Dreamgirls, directed and choreographed by Camille Brown, and the new musical, Imitation of Life, written by Academy Award and 13-time Grammy Award winner John Legend and two-time Pulitzer Prize winner Lynn Nottage, and directed by Liesl Tommy.