

PRESS RELEASE - THURSDAY 28 MAY 2026
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ROYAL COURT THEATRE ANNOUNCES RYAN CALAIS CAMERON AND MONIQUE TOUKO AS CO-DIRECTORS OF THE AFRONAUTS



Imagery by **Sèverine Howell-Meri** for the Royal Court Theatre

Royal Court Theatre today announces *The Afronauts* writer **Ryan Calais Cameron** (*For Black Boys...*, *Retrograde*) and **Monique Touko** (*Jaja's African Hair Braiding*, *Marie and Rosetta*), two of the most exciting theatremakers in Britain today, as co-directors of the World Premiere play. *The Afronauts* marks the finale of the Royal Court Theatre's 70th anniversary, and runs from Saturday 14 November until Saturday 19 December 2026, with press night on Monday 23 November 2026.

The news comes as the Royal Court was last week awarded a Gold Award as part of the 2026 Chelsea in Bloom flower festival. Monique and Ryan are pictured alongside the winning floral arrangement which was created by Moyses Stevens. Celebrating *The Afronauts*, the display featured a life-size astronaut rising from Sloane Square amid a facade of African and Tropical flowers, embodying this year's 'Out of This World' theme.

Zambia, 1964: the space race has a new contender. As the world's great powers set their sights on the moon, a schoolteacher gathers a group of misfit dreamers and trains them for lift-off. The Afronauts tells the true(ish) story of the Zambian Space Program, and a nation's defiant dream to reach for the stars.

Monique Tuoko was last at the Royal Court Theatre for World Premiere sold-out play *G* by Tife Kusoro and Ryan Calais Cameron is as Associate Playwright at the Royal Court, following recent West End run *Retrograde*.

Genesis Next Generation at The Royal Court - A Genesis Foundation Project.

ENDS.

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Upcoming press Performances:

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| 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 |