

PRESS RELEASE - 8 MAY 2026

ROYAL COURT THEATRE ANNOUNCES FULL CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM FOR *ARCHDUKE*



From L-R Top Stanley Morgan, Abraham Popoola, Chris Walley.
From L-R Bottom Marc Wootton, Janice Connolly.

The Royal Court Theatre in association with **Brian & Dayna Lee** today announce the full cast and creative team for the European Premiere of *Archduke* by Pulitzer Prize finalist **Rajiv Joseph** (*Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*), directed by **Lyndsey Turner** (*1536*) and designed by **Es Devlin** (*The Lehman Trilogy*). The production runs at the Royal Court in the Jerwood Theatre Downstairs from **Saturday 20 June** to **Saturday 25 July 2026**, with press night on **Friday 26 June 2026**.

The full, multi-award-winning cast features stars of stage, screen and comedy: Olivier Award-winner **Chris Walley** (*The Lieutenant of Inishmore*, West End; cult BBC comedy *The Young Offenders*), **Abraham Popoola** (Warner Bros' *Shiver*), **Stanley Morgan** (Lyndsey Turner's *The Little Foxes*, *Young Vic*), **Janice Connolly** (*Peter Kay's Phoenix Nights* and comedy circuit headliner as her alter ego Mrs Barbara Nice) and British Comedy Award and Rose d'Or Award Winner **Marc Wootton** (*Nativity!*, National Theatre's *Till The Stars Come Down*).

An irreverent reimagining of a pivotal moment in history, *Archduke* blends mounting tension with biting wit in a timely European premiere for an age of restless young men. Set in Belgrade, 1914, three hungry young men are offered something to eat (and the chance to change the course of history). Their mission: kill Archduke Franz Ferdinand and set the century alight.

The Lighting Designer is **Neil Austin**, Sound Designer is **Tingying Dong**, Costume Designer is **Evie Gurney**, Illusion Designer is **Skylar Fox**, Casting Direction from **Julia Horan CDG**. **Ryan O’Conner** joins for props. The Associate Designers are **Alice Hallifax** and **Temitayo Shonibare** and the Fight Director is **Sam Lyon-Behan**.

Archduke has been supported by a lead gift from Charles Holloway OBE.

ENDS

For the Royal Court press team, please contact:

Maisie Lawrence on maisie@breadandbutterpr.uk

Chloe Heard on chloe@breadandbutterpr.uk

Natasha Ryszka-Onions on NatashaRyszka-Onions@royalcourttheatre.com

Images:

[Please find images here.](#)

Biographies

Upcoming press Performances:

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

Janice Connolly (She/Her)

Originally from Stockport Janice has lived in Birmingham for over 40 years .

Stage work includes: Mrs Purnell in "Tartuffe" and Mrs Worrall in "Anita and Me" at the Birmingham Rep Main house and Stratford East. "Glitterball " Rifco Theatre Co Watford Palace/Oldham Coliseum /Riverside Studios. "White Open Spaces " at Pentabus / Soho theatre / Sweden and "When we are Married" at the Donmar Warehouse. She has written and starred in many shows in the Birmingham Rep studio including "Stuff" a critically acclaimed one woman show about Hoarders.

Janice Connolly was the artistic director of triple award winning Birmingham based women and Theatre. As a founding member of the company Janice has over 38 years of making theatre that people want to see and she has researched, written and directed multiple projects including pieces around women's health and social care. Janice is also an accomplished comedian and TV and radio actress .

TV work includes playing Holy Mary in "Peter Kay's Phoenix nights", "Coronation Street", "Doctors " and "Man like Mobeen". Other TV work includes "Meet The Richardsons" with Lucy Beaumont and John Richardson. For CBBC Janice starred as Mazel in the award winning " So Awkward " .

Film includes the new "Ghosts " film, "Eaten by Lions", and "Linda" by Joe Lycett, for which she won a best actress award.

Janice has worked in Pantomime with Paul O'Grady in Manchester and Bristol and is a comedy circuit headliner as her comedy alter ego Mrs Barbara Nice - stage diving house wife extraordinaire. An Edinburgh festival veteran Janice as Barbara has garnered 5 star reviews for her one woman shows which she has toured nationally to venues including the Lowry, Hull Truck and the Soho Theatre. Janice wrote and starred in her own BBC radio 2 sitcom Barbara Nice.

Stanley Morgan (He/Him)

Television includes: THE WESTIES (MGM+, Amazon), A THOUSAND BLOWS S2 (Hulu), SERPENT QUEEN S2 (Starz), SEXY BEAST (Paramount+), THE SANDMAN (Netflix)

Theatre includes: THE LITTLE FOXES, (dir. Lyndsey turner, Young Vic), THE BREACH (dir. Sarah Francom, Hampstead Theatre)

Film includes: ARGYLLE (Apple Original Films, dir. Matthew Vaughn), I USED TO BE FAMOUS (Netflix, dir. Eddie Sternberg)

Abraham Popoola (He/Him)

Abraham is currently shooting SHIVER opposite Keanu Reeves, which Tim Miller is directing for Warner Bros. He recently wrapped on PIG VILLAGE alongside Korean Star Don Lee. The film is directed by Lee Sang-yong and marks the first large-scale English language feature produced in the country. He plays a regular role, alongside Nicolas Cage & Brendan Gleeson in SPIDER-NOIR, part of the Marvel universe, which will premiere on Amazon in May. He played a recurring role in the latest series of Apple TV's hit SLOW HORSES. He was seen opposite Jennifer Lopez, Simu Liu & Sterling K Brown in ATLAS, directed by Brad Peyton for Netflix. Other film credits include; THE MARVELS, the Captain Marvel feature sequel directed by Nia DaCosta; MORBIUS for Columbia, CRUELLA for Disney, JINGLE JANGLE for Netflix & a supporting role opposite Ana de Armas in the John Wick spin-off BALLERINA, which Len Wiseman directed for Lionsgate.

For television his other credits include 2 series of THE RIG for Amazon; EXTRAORDINARY, Sid Gentle's new Superhero Comedy series for Disney+; THE CURSE, Tom Davis and James de Frons Ch4 comedy series in which he plays a regular role and a recurring role in ANDOR, Tony Gilroy's Star Wars series for Disney+.

Abraham's first job after his graduation from RADA was playing OTHELLO, for which he won Best Actor at the Stage Debut Awards. His other stage credits include working with Nick Hytner in JULIUS CAESAR at the Bridge Theatre, PITY in which he starred at the Royal Court and with Jamie Lloyd for his PINTER AT THE PINTER Season.

Chris Walley (He/Him)

Chris is best known for his award-winning performance as JOCK in Peter Foot's acclaimed cult comedy feature THE YOUNG OFFENDERS and the BBC TV adaptation of the same name. Chris can most recently be seen in his IFTA-nominated turn in Netflix's BODKIN, Lisa Mulachy's LIES WE TELL and André Øvredal's THE LAST VOYAGE OF THE DEMETER, alongside Corey Hawkins and Liam Cunningham. His TV credits also include Jed Mercurio's BLOODLANDS for the BBC opposite James Nesbitt. On stage, Chris starred in JUNO & THE PAYCOCK opposite Mark Rylance and J. Smith-Cameron, THE SUGAR WIFE at The Abbey Theatre, Dublin, Carrie Cracknall's PORTIA COUGHLAN at the Almeida Theatre and Martin McDonagh's LIEUTENANT OF INISHMORE at the Noel Coward Theatre directed by Michael Grandage. Chris won an Olivier & Critic's Choice Award for his performance. Other credits include UNWELCOME alongside Douglas Booth & Hannah John-Kamen and Sam Mendes' Oscar-nominated 1917. He can currently be seen in Brendan Canty's feature CHRISTY and has just finished filming Kieron J. Walsh's feature film SKINTOWN. He recently finished playing the role of TREAT in Lyle Kessler's ORPHANS at the Jermyn Street Theatre.

Marc Wootton (He/Him)

Theatre credits include: *When We Were Married; The Same Deep Water As Me (Donmar Warehouse); Till The Stars Come Down; Season's Greetings (National Theatre); Bull (Young Vic); A Midsummer Night's Dream (RSC); Shirley Ghostman's Spooktacular* on national tour and *Cyderdelic* at Edinburgh and Melbourne Comedy Festivals.

Television credits include: *Things I Should Have Done, The Completely Made-Up Adventures of Dick Turpin, Inside Number 9, Midsomer Murders, Psychobitches, Way to Go, Nighty Night and Gavin & Stacey*. He created, wrote and starred in *High and Dry, La La Land, Marc Wootton: Exposed, High Spirits with Shirley Ghostman, Cyderdelic* and *My New Best Friend*.

Film credits include: *Greatest Days, The Bad Education Movie, Arthur Christmas, The Harry Hill Movie, Frequently Asked Questions About Time Travel, Nativity! and Confetti*.

Marc Wootton is the recipient of a British Comedy Award and a Rose d'Or Award.