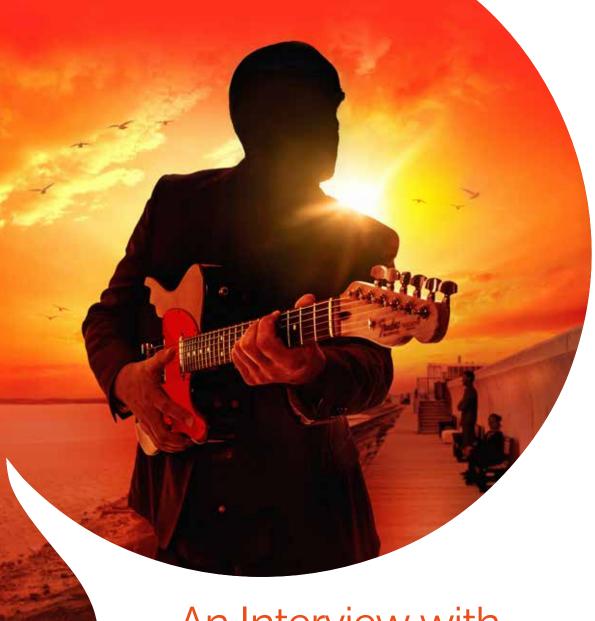
Matson **Spring season** HORNCHURCH

January 2024 Issue



An Interview with **Jonathan Maitland**

Our Spring season begins with the highly anticipated world premiere production of *Wilko*, a striking biographical play with music celebrating the extraordinary life of Wilko Johnson, a name that resonates with rock music enthusiasts and beyond.

Writer of *Wilko*, Jonathan Maitland, tells us about the show.

Wilko is the story of the iconic rock star and co-founder of the legendary Essex band Dr Feelgood, who faced a profound challenge when given a diagnosis that dramatically altered the course of his life. He was told he had terminal cancer and only 12 months to live. Despite receiving news that many would find insurmountable, Wilko Johnson chose a path of resilience. Turning away from conventional treatment, he opted to spend his remaining months seeing the people, places, and things that meant most to him during his remarkable life. Then, something surprising happened...

Maitland is an acclaimed writer, broadcaster, playwright, and former journalist having worked for the BBC across Radio 4, BBC News, and presenting and producing shows for BBC 1. Maitland's debut stage play *Dead Sheep* (2015), produced at Park Theatre, became the most successful production in the theatre's history.

Are you a Wilko Johnson fan?

I've always been a huge fan! I was mesmerised the moment I saw him careering across the stage at a Dr Feelgood gig at the Kursaal in Southend in the mid-70s. He was amazing: I was excited by the music, the image, the menace. But, it was also weirdly funny. His double act with Lee Brilleaux is one of the great pairings in rock 'n' roll.

How was the idea for Wilko born?

When Wilko was mistakenly diagnosed with terminal cancer in 2012, I thought there might be a play in it. It's a great premise: a rock star is given 12 months to live, becomes world famous again, and goes to number one. But, it turns out to be a mistake. You couldn't make it up!

Where did you get all the information you needed to write the piece?

The main source of inspiration was Wilko himself, the many TV interviews on YouTube with him, his own superb and brilliantly written autobiography, and Zoe Howe's books on him and Lee Brilleaux, the excellent 'Rock 'n Roll Gentleman'.

Wilko Johnson passed away in 2022 at the age of 75. Was he aware of the show you were creating?

Yes, he knew all about it and was very supportive. I worried he wouldn't get it but he couldn't have been more helpful, kind or enthusiastic. I went to his house and read him the entire play, doing all the voices myself. His only criticism was that I had got the details of his drug ingestion wrong. I had him down as a coke fiend but his chosen drug was in fact — as he explained amusingly and at length — speed.

How much of Wilko Johnson's music is represented in the play?

It's a play with music, not a jukebox musical. But, there are half a dozen of Wilko's best-loved songs in there.

You had a rehearsed reading of the play here at Queen's Theatre Hornchurch while it was in development, how did it go?

We did. The reading had hundreds of guests who came in to see a half-hour of the show

and give feedback. Judging by their excited reactions the piece will be like the man himself: funny, serious, edgy, literate, and unique.

Has the play changed since the rehearsed reading?

There is now a lot more of the character of Lee Brilleaux in the play. Lee was the lead singer of Dr. Feelgood and he and Wilko had an immensely fractious but also productive relationship. It was clear to me that I was shortchanging Lee a bit and I wanted to put that right – for the sake of Lee and the play.

Wilko Johnson spent a lot of his life in Essex. What areas were most important to him?

He was born on Canvey Island and grew up there and has talked very movingly and interestingly about it, particularly in his excellent autobiography. He was incredibly proud of his Canvey roots. He also had a big soft spot for Southend, where he lived most of his adult life.

You're opening this World premiere at QTH, why this venue?

The team at Queen's Theatre Hornchurch loved the play and the theatre has a great track record of telling stories rooted in Essex so it seemed the perfect fit.

Wilko's opening is just on the horizon, what's next for you?

A play about my mother, an extraordinary, glamorous and unconventional character who, in the 1970s, turned our family home in deeply conservative Epsom into Britain's first-ever hotel for homosexuals. She also spent years telling me she had six months to live....every six months. After a while, I stopped taking her seriously. And then she died. It's a very personal project as you can imagine! It's called *How to Survive your Mother* and is at the King's Head Theatre in Islington in October.

Whether you're a devoted fan of the Canvey Island legend or simply someone who appreciates a compelling story, this new play is a must-see event. *Wilko* is playing from **1 – 24 February.**



SAVE MONEY WITH A JUMP THE Q SEASON TICKET!

Three great nights out for less than the price of a West End seat.

See Wilko, My Beautiful Launderette and The 39 Steps from just £17 a show.

Saver Jump the Q Season Ticket | **£51****

Tue to Thu performances, previews, and Sat matinees.

Upgrade to our **Premium** *Jump the Q* Season Ticket | **£58****

Get all the performances above **AND** Fri and Sat evening performances.

** A QNext fee will apply to each season ticket purchased. £2.10 for three shows

Book by Saturday 24 February 2024

T&C's apply. For more information and to book, visit queens-theatre.co.uk or call the Box Office on 01708 443333.



Georgina Fairbanks

Georgina Field (she/her)

Jon House (he/him)

David John (he/him)

Johnson Willis (he/him)

WORLD PREMIERE, UPLIFTING TRUE STORY



A Queen's Theatre Hornchurch production

Wilko

By Jonathan Maitland

In 2012, Wilko Johnson, the iconic rock star and founder of legendary Essex band Dr Feelgood, was told he had inoperable cancer and a year to live. Refusing all treatment, he decided to spend his last months living meaningfully: seeing the people, places and things which meant most to him during his remarkable life. Then, a miracle happened...

This world premiere production of a new play – a mixture of words, rock 'n roll, and quotes from the man himself – tells the amazing, uplifting true story of Wilko, the Canvey Island legend.

Dugald Bruce-Lockhart (he/him)

Nicolai Hart-Hansen (he/him) Lighting Designer

Alexandra Stafford (she/her)
Sound Designer, Musical Director &
Composer

Simon Slater (he/him) QTH Creative Director Alex Thorpe (he/him) Executive Producer Mathew Russell (he/him)

Tickets: from £12.50*

Dates: 1 – 24 Feb 2024

Matinees: Thu 8 Feb, Sat 10 Feb, Thu 15 Feb, Sat 17 Feb, Thu 22 Feb & Sat 24 Feb | 2.30pm

Audio Description: All performances after Wed 7 Feb

Dementia Friendly: Thu 15 Feb | 1.30pm

Relaxed performance: Thu 15 Feb | 5.30PM

For the best experience booking an access performance, call **01708 443333** or email access@queens-theatre.co.uk

Age guidance 11+, contains strong adult language

Save money with a Jump the Q Season Ticket!

Three great nights out for less than the price of a West End seat. See *Wilko, My Beautiful Launderette* and *The 39 Steps* from just £51**

Visit queens-theatre.co.uk/jump-the-q

Offer must end 24 Feb 2024

*+70p QNext fee

+E2.10 GIVEXUEE

See page 3 for full details

BASED ON THE ICONIC OSCAR-NOMINATED SCREENPLAY



A Theatre Nation Partnerships production, produced by Curve

My Beautiful Laundrette

By Hanif Kureishi

"Could anyone in their right mind call this silly little island off of Europe their home?"

Based on Hanif Kureishi's iconic Oscar-nominated screenplay, *My Beautiful Laundrette* tells the story of young British Pakistani, Omar, who transforms his Uncle's run-down laundrette into a thriving business. After being confronted by a gang, Omar recognises school friend Johnny. And as they renovate the laundrette together, love blossoms between them...

This culture clash comedy is sprinkled with magic and joy amidst conflict and inequality, presented against a funky backdrop of 80s London and music scene, with additional original compositions by the Pet Shop Boys' Neil Tennant and Chris Lowe.

My Beautiful Laundrette was developed with the support of the National Theatre's Generate programme.

Director **Nicole Behan** Original Production directed by **Nikolai Foster**

Set & Costume Designer Grace Smart Composers Tennant/Lowe Lighting Designer Ben Cracknell Sound Designer Tom Marshall Original Curve Casting Director

Kay Magson CDG Revival Casting Director Harry Blumenau CDA

Tickets: from £12.50*

Dates: 28 Feb - 9 Mar 2024

Matinees: Thu 29 Feb, Sat 2 Mar, Thu 7 Mar & Sat 9 Mar | 2.30pm

Live Audio Description: Sat 9 Mar | 2.30pm

For the best experience booking an access performance, call **01708 443333** or email **access@queens-theatre.co.uk**

Age Guidance 15+, contains strong language and adult themes including violence and racism

Save money with a Jump the Q Season Ticket!

Three great nights out for less than the price of a West End seat. See Wilko, My Beautiful Launderette and The 39 Steps from just 651**

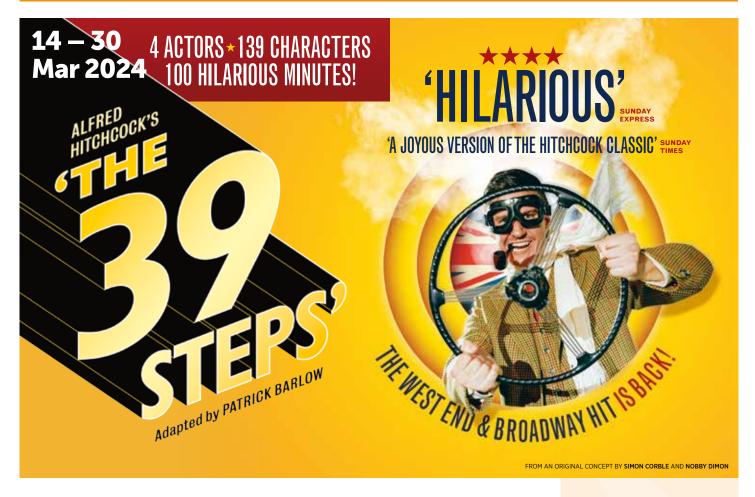
Visit queens-theatre.co.uk/jump-the-c

Offer must end 24 Feb 2024

*+70p QNext fee

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ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S CLASSIC SPY THRILLER



A Fiery Angel in association with Queen's Theatre Hornchurch production

The 39 Steps

By Alfred Hitchcock Adapted by Patrick Barlow

Alfred Hitchcock's classic spy thriller, *The 39 Steps*, brilliantly and hilariously adapted for the stage by Patrick Barlow as the smash hit Olivier and Tony Award Winning Comedy, is back out on a UK tour after nearly 10 years in London's West End, taking Broadway by storm, playing in 39 different countries across the globe, and delighting over 3 million people worldwide with its quintessentially plucky spirit and dashing sense of fun.

Follow the incredible adventures of our handsome hero Richard Hannay, complete with stiff-upper-lip, British gung-ho and pencil moustache as he encounters dastardly murders, double-crossing secret agents, and, of course, devastatingly beautiful women. This wonderfully inventive and gripping comedy thriller features four fearless actors, playing 139 roles in 100 minutes of fast-paced fun and thrilling action.

'Clever, witty and ingenious'

★★★★ The Sunday Times

'A hilarious rollercoaster... This isn't so much a send-up of cinema as a glorious celebration of theatre'

WhatsOnStage

Adapted by Patrick Barlow
From An Original Concept by
Simon Corble & Nobby Dimon
Director Maria Aitken
Tour Director Nicola Samer
Designer Peter Mckintosh
Lighting Designer Ian Scott
Sound Designer Mic Pool
Original Production Director Fiona Buffini

Tickets: from £12.50*

Dates: 14 - 30 Mar 2024

Matinees: Thu 21, Sat 23, Thu 28 & Sat 30 Mar | 2.30pm

Live Audio Description: Sat 23 Mar | 2.30pm

For the best experience booking an access performance, call **01708 443333** or email **access@queens-theatre.co.uk**

Save money with a Jump the Q Season Ticket!

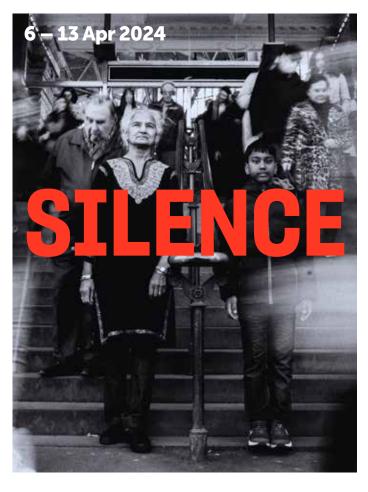
Three great nights out for less than the price of a West End seat. See *Wilko, My Beautiful Launderette* and *The 39 Steps* from just £51**.

Visit queens-theatre.co.uk/jump-the-q
Offer must end 24 Feb 2024

*+70p QNext fee **+£2.10 QNext fee

See page 3 for full details

OTHER SPRING SEASON 2024 HIGHLIGHTS



A Tara Theatre production

From an original co-production by Tara Theatre & the Donmar Warehouse

In association with Queen's Theatre Hornchurch

Written by Sonali Bhattacharyya, Gurpreet Kaur Bhatti, Ishy Din & Alexandra Wood

"It was a great tragedy. We were friends one day and enemies the next. I will take these things to my grave."

The 1947 partition of the Indian subcontinent into India and Pakistan saw millions uprooted and resulted in unspeakable violence. It would also shape modern Britain. Witnesses to this brutal moment in history live among us, yet the stories of that time remain shrouded in silence.

Silence is a new play focused on communal storytelling - presenting a shared history inspired by the remarkable personal testimonies of people who lived through the last days of the British Raj.

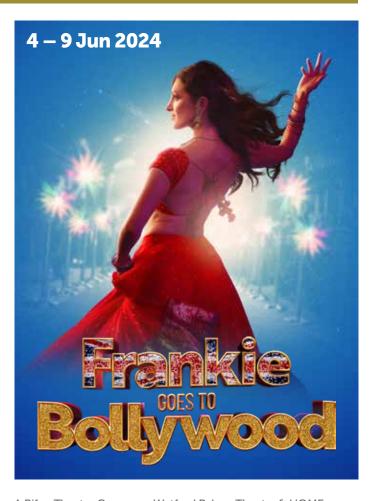
Silence is adapted from the testimonies and stories of people who lived through Partition. It is based on Kavita Puri's acclaimed book *Partition Voices: Untold British Stories* Original production directed and developed for tour by Abdul Shayek Directed by Iqbal Khan

Tickets: from £12.50*

Dates: 6 - 13 Apr 2024

Live audio description: Sat 13 Apr | 7.30pm *+70p QNext fee

For the best experience booking an access performance, call **01708 443333** or email access@queens-theatre.co.uk



A Rifco Theatre Company, Watford Palace Theatre & HOME Manchester co-production

Frankie Goes to Bollywood

Concept & Book by Pravesh Kumar Songs & Music by Niraj Chag Songs & Lyrics by **Tasha Taylor Johnson**

From the makers of Britain's Got Bhangra comes the world premiere of a new British musical

Get ready to be swept away into the dazzling world of Bollywood! Rifco's most ambitious musical yet, Frankie Goes to Bollywood is a breathtakingly colourful journey of romance, epic songs, and spectacular dance – inspired by real stories of British women caught in the spotlight of the biggest film industry in the world.

Frankie never wanted to be a star, and after a chance encounter with a director, she finds herself transported to the ruthless world of Bollywood. As she climbs the sparkling staircase of stardom, Frankie must confront what she is willing to do for fame and fortune. Can she stay in the Bollywood family and still be true to herself?

Amidst the heroes and villains, ornate costumes and sweeping sets, get ready for this tale of being British in Bollywood.

Tickets: from £19.50* Discounts available at some performances

Dates: 4 – 9 Jun 2024

For the best experience booking an access performance, call 01708 443333 or email access@queens-theatre.co.uk

*+70p QNext fee

GUEST SHOWS



Back into Hell

Auditorium

A Tribute to Meat Loaf & Jim Steinman

Join these world class musicians as they recreate such legendary anthems as Bat Out Of Hell, I'd Do Anything For Love, Paradise By The Dashboard Light, Took The Words Right Out Of My Mouth, Two Out Of Three Ain't Bad, Dead Ringer For Love and many more.

Tickets: £26* £28* £30*



Sing-a-long-a Matilda the Musical

Auditorium

Do you want to change your story and be a little bit naughty? Well, this is your chance... YOU the audience are the stars! It couldn't be easier or more fun! The first rule of Sing-a-long-a is THERE ARE NO RULES! Fancy dress is strongly encouraged and full audience participation essential.

Please note this is a screening of the movie not a live stage show.

Tickets: £17* Under 18s £14* Buy 10, get the 11th free



Sing-a-long-a The Rocky Horror Picture Show

Auditorium

The Campest Cult Classic of all time gets the Sing-a-long-a treatment it's been SCREAMING for! Featuring the film, starring Tim Curry, Susan Sarandon, Meat Loaf and Richard O'Brien, it's the most outrageous, riotous, kitsch, wonderful romp ever. Please note this is a screening of the movie not a live stage show.

Tickets: £17* Under 18s £14* Buy 10, get the 11th free



Women in Rock

Auditorium

Celebrating 5 decades of the world's greatest female rock legends

From Quatro to Joplin, Cher to Turner, Pink to Blondie, Heart to Benatar, there's endless classic hits and something for everyone.

Tickets: £23*



Down Memory Lane

The Other Stage

A show for people with Dementia & their Carers

Join Kay Carman and friends for a happy, nostalgic

Join Kay Carman and friends for a happy, nostalgic afternoon full of all your favourite melodies. This hourand-a-half-long performance includes a 20-minute break for a free cuppa and biscuit.

Tickets: £10* incl tea/ coffee & biscuits, carer free



80s Movie Mixtape

Auditorium

A journey through the iconic movies of the 80s, featuring the best songs from the decade's most beloved films. From the upbeat, feel-good hits of *The Breakfast Club* and *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* to the emotional power ballads of *Top Gun* and *Dirty Dancing*, we've got it all.

Tickets: £24* £26* £28*

GUEST SHOWS



Legend – The Music of Bob Marley

Auditorium

An unforgettable evening celebrating this musical icon in one fantastic stage show extravaganza. Combining his superb, distinctive vocals with flawless musicianship, a supremely talented cast recreates the timeless hits Could You Be Loved, No Woman No Cry, Three, Buffalo Soldier, Get Up Stand Up, I Shot the Sheriff and many more reggae classics.

Tickets: £22* £25* £28*



Spamalot

Auditorium

Presented by Shenfield Operatic Society

Spamalot retells the legendary tale of King Arthur's quest to find the Holy Grail.

Spamalot is presented through special arrangement with, and all authorised performance materials are supplied by Theatrical Rights Worldwide (TRW). theatrical rights.co.uk

Tickets: £23* £21*



Comedy Club

The Other Stage

See the stars of tomorrow, right now on your doorstep! The biggest stars of stand-up came here on their way

to stratospheric fame. See the stars of tomorrow, right now on your doorstep!

Acts contain strong language. Off the Kerb reserves the right to alter line-ups.

Tickets: £15* £12* conc. 4 tickets for £50

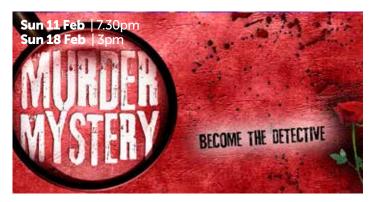


Mark Simmons

The Other Stage

Quip Off The Mark. As Seen on Mock The Week

This year Mark's parents have sold the house he grew up in and he has to collect his box of stuff from the loft. Discover what's in the box in this top-level one-liner show structured in a way you've never seen before. Tickets: £17* £15* conc.



Murder Mystery: Manifesto for Murder

The Other Stage

Watch the events unfold before your eyes and hear what the suspects have to say before dinner is served, giving you chance to discuss and debate with your fellow detectives. Can you and your fellow detectives crack the mystery?

Tickets: £24* incl meal

DON'T MISS OUT!

This is only a selection of our fantastic shows!

See our full list at queens-theatre.co.uk

*+70p QNext fee



Youth Theatre

Do you know someone who would love to get involved with our youth theatre programme? We have limited spaces available in our QYouth groups on Wednesday evenings, for ages 11-18, from January (waiting lists are available for all other groups and ages).

Our resident youth theatre company provides opportunities for over 200 young people every week with a vibrant introduction to theatre craft. Weekly workshops use drama and theatre to develop creativity, unlock potential, celebrate identity and have fun. Groups are divided by age and are open to everyone.

We believe that finances should never be a barrier to participating in the arts and so a limited number of bursary spaces are available.

Get in touch for more information.

Backstage Tours

From our scenic workshop to the wardrobe department, take a peek behind the scenes at one of the country's few remaining producing theatres to find out what goes in to creating professional theatre.

Are you part of a community group that might be interested in a backstage tour? Or just interested in learning more about your local theatre with a group of friends?

Backstage tours can be booked for up to 30 participants and last an hour. We ask for a minimum donation of £30 per tour.

Music Bugs

Join us on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday for awardwinning infant development sessions where parents are welcome to join. Join us for noisy nursery rhyme fun with percussion, puppets, hobby horses, floaty scarves, pom-poms, parachutes, bubble machines and lots more fun!

To book email **romford@musicbugs.co.uk** or call Sarah on **07517 199869**.

Our vibrant Communities programme offers opportunities for all ages all year round both at the theatre and across the community, enabling people to express themselves and their stories through the arts. Read on for a taste of what we're currently up to...

unities

Baby Sensory

We host 8 very popular Baby Sensory sessions every week on Tuesday and Friday mornings. These award-winning development classes are designed for babies and their parents. Explore stimulation techniques, sensory experiences to encourage learning, and activities for language development that can be easily repeated at home.

To book email **brentwood@babysensory.co.uk** or call Shelley on **07930 877009**.

Over 50's Musical Theatre Workout

Join in with our Over 50's Musical Theatre Workout! Sing and dance along to your musical favourites – a fantastic way to keep fit, have fun and meet new friends.

Wednesdays | 9.45am | 10.45am | 11.45am | £6 per session To book, contact our box office via **boxoffice@queens-theatre.co.uk** or **01708 443333**.

Contact Us

We'd love to hear from you! For more information on any of our Communities activities please contact us by calling **01708 462373**, emailing **communities@queens-theatre.co.uk**, or visiting **queens-theatre.co.uk**

Communities is supported by







Spotlight on...

Working in partnership with the National Theatre

As a partner in the National Theatre's Theatre Nation Partnership, we have lots of exciting projects for schools and young people running throughout 2024!

Rehearsals have begun for the National Theatre's upcoming touring production of Evan Placey's radical reimagining of *Jekyll & Hyde*. Following the success of the *Jekyll & Hyde* schools tour in 2022, the production will tour 5 schools in Outer East London and South Essex between 4-8 March through partnership with Queen's Theatre Hornchurch.

Directed by Kirsty Housley, the 9-week tour will be watched by over 10,000 students with the production visiting school halls across the country. Alongside Hornchurch, the production will be seen by students in schools across Greater Manchester, Sunderland, Leicester, Stoke, Peterborough, Wakefield, Doncaster, Wolverhampton and North Devon.

In a reimagining of Robert Louis Stevenson's classic tale, this new version sees Victorian England merged with the modern day as it explores how the repression of female voices can be as prevalent today as it was in the 19th century. Confronting contemporary social issues such as identity, online personas,

culpability and the right to protest, the

production aims to bring education beyond the classroom and inspire students to engage with topical issues through the arts.

We are also continuing our partnership with the National Theatre's *Speak Up* programme in five secondary schools in Outer East London and South Essex.

Speak Up is a secondary school programme that sees young people working in collaboration with local artists and teachers to co-create artistic responses to issues that are most important to them. The programme aims to encourage new ways for young people to think, see and bring about change. From 2022 to 2025, Speak Up will engage with 140,000 young people in 55 selected secondary schools nationwide.

Speak Up is a secondary school programme that sees young people working in collaboration with local artists and teachers to co-create artistic responses to issues that are most important to them.

The Speak Up partner schools with QTH are Hornchurch High School, The Brittons Academy, Lime Academy Forest Approach, Sanders Draper and St Edward's C of E Academy. Students have been taking part in a variety of creative sessions to empower them to tell their own stories and connect with each other and their local communities.

The young people taking part in *Speak Up* are currently exploring a whole range of real-world issues including what it means to feel safe, the housing crisis, who holds power and who should hold power, supporting good mental health as a young person in 2023, and lots more! Each group will create a response to their chosen issue supported by professional artists which will be shared as part of the Havering *Speak Up Festival* at Queen's Theatre Hornchurch in July 2024.

Two students from Brittons Academy sit on the *Speak Up Council*, putting young people at the heart of the programme's decision-making. They meet throughout the year, alongside 14 other young people from across nine of the *Speak Up* areas, teachers and artists.

Keep your eyes peeled for more exciting projects including a mainstage takeover with *NT Connections Festival* in April 2024 and our 6 partner companies – Roding Valley High School, Ormiston Rivers Academy, Shenfield High School, The King Edmund School, The Sydney Russell School and Green Shoes Arts Young Actors Club.

Kerry Hunt, Community Partnerships Manager

Visiting U



How To Book

Tickets can be purchased 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through queens-theatre.co.uk. You can also purchase tickets from the Box Office in person or by phone on 01708 443333.

Payments can be made by Debit and Credit Cards or by Society of London Theatre Tokens. Please note that we are cash free.

Concessions are available for those aged over 60 and under 26, customers with access requirements or on income support (for select shows). Companion tickets are also available. We also offer group discounts and school discounts (for select shows).

Please visit queens-theatre.co.uk/your-theatre/ planning-your-visit for further details.



Support Us

Support our work through regular donations helping us to invest in our community, nurture artistic talent and make theatre accessible by becoming a Queen's Angel. Queen's Angels donate from £60 annually or £5 a month and receive benefits that include a monthly newsletter and priority booking.

You can also help to support us and raise vital funds by becoming a member of the **Queen's Theatre Club**. Queen's Theatre Club members pay an annual fee of £17 and receive benefits that include a monthly newsletter and coffee mornings.

For a full list of benefits, or other ways to support us please visit: queens-theatre.co.uk/join-support/why-support-us



Access

Access tickets if you identify as disabled and Companion tickets for additional support during your visit are available. (Some exceptions or limitations may apply).

- The main auditorium entrance is on ground level. There are four wheelchair spaces and 20 seats with level access.
- Accessible toilets & baby changing facilities on the ground level and a lift down to the Learning Space and toilets.
- Audio Described performances and Touch Tours to assist visually impaired customers.
- British Sign Language Interpreted to assist D/deaf customers.
- Hearing system to assist hard-of-hearing customers.
- Relaxed Performances and Dementia Friendly Performances.



QCafé & QBar

QCafé: Fancy a bite to eat? Choose from a selection of light lunches, snacks, sweet treats, hot and cold drinks.

QBar: Relax in our Bar area and treat yourself to a pre-show or interval drink. You'll find a great selection of drinks, including flavoured gins, and local wines and beers.

For more information and our opening times, please visit queens-theatre.co.uk/about-us/food_drink

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