

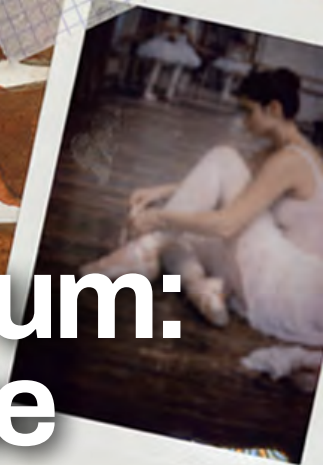
PARK
90

Freesheet



Park Theatre, London Metropolitan University and the
Andover Estate Community Centre present

The Talking Drum: Voices from the Andover Estate



An introduction to the play

Every word you will hear tonight began as a conversation between local Councillors and academics in 2022 about social and population changes in the Finsbury Park area and the negative perceptions of some estates by outsiders. It was agreed that there was a strong case to record the history of these changes and the experiences of living in the area, from the perspectives of the residents themselves. The Andover Estate was chosen, partly because of its public notoriety and partly because its 50-year-old history was within living memory of some of its residents. The reporting of the findings of *Life on the Andover Estate* prompted further conversations with Tony Graham and Park Theatre that ultimately led to *The Talking Drum*. The project team continues to volunteer on the estate and has been in close contact with residents throughout the process.

This is a verbatim theatre performance and the script is drawn directly from recorded interviews from the *Life on the Andover* oral history project, preserving the rhythms, humour, emotion and honesty of those who generously shared their stories. While the material has been carefully edited and woven together for the stage, the voices remain authentic.

Across generations, these stories reveal a community shaped by movement, belonging and change. They speak of journeys from around the world to North Islington, of finding home in

new places, of overcrowded flats and changing estates, of neighbours who became family, and of the challenges and hopes that come with building a life. They also confront difficult realities, associated with the fears and hopes of those determined to create better lives for themselves and their children.

Verbatim theatre invites us not only to listen but to witness. It asks us to hear lived experience without judgement and to recognise the extraordinary within everyday lives.

Tonight's performance is a celebration of the people whose voices make up this production. Their memories, reflections and experiences form a living archive of North Islington, past, present and still unfolding.

**London Metropolitan University
Project Team (Professor John
Gabriel, Dr Alya Khan and Gulser
Rose Kaya)**

Cast

Biographies



Sanya Adegbola

Theatre includes: *The School for Scandal* and *Titus Andronicus* (Royal Shakespeare Company); *Quiz* (Chichester Festival Theatre); *Around The World In 80 Days* (Theatre By The Lake & Hull Truck); *Interiors* (Vanishing Point & Barbican Theatre); *The High Table* (Bush Theatre); *Botticelli In The Fire* (Hampstead Theatre); *Red Dust Road* (National Theatre of Scotland); *Richard III* (Headlong); *The Convert* and *The Christians* (Gate Theatre); *After Independence* (Arcola Theatre); *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Comedy of Errors* (Shakespeare's Globe); *Widowers' Houses* (Orange Tree Theatre); *Othello* (Riverside Studios); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Michael Grandage Company).

Film includes: *The New Girl*, *Anemone*, *The Mire*.

Television includes: *Apollo Has Fallen*, *Enterprise* (Amazon Prime); *Doctor Who* (BBC & Disney+); *Doctors*, *EastEnders*, *Blitz* (BBC); *McDonald and Dodds* (ITV); *Abraham Lincoln* (History); *The Lazarus Project* (Sky).



Andy de la Tour

Theatre includes: *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* (national tour); *Medea* (Almeida Theatre); *The Cutting of the Cloth* (Southwark Playhouse, Off-West End Theatre Best Actor nomination); *The Last Yankee* (The Print Room, Off-West End Theatre Best Actor nomination); *Blue Heart* (Orange Tree Theatre, Off-West End Best Theatre Ensemble nomination). For the National Theatre, he appeared in Harold Pinter's *No Man's Land* and Alan Bennett's *People*. He also appeared in the premiere of Harold Pinter's *Celebration* at the Almeida Theatre and the Lincoln Centre, New York.

Film includes: *Star Wars: Rogue One*; *La Confessioni*; *Dough*; *44inch Chest*; *Notting Hill*; *Oliver Twist*; *Asylum* and *Pandemonium*.

Television includes: *The Scarlet Pimpernel*; *Kavanagh Q.C.* (also writer); *The Wimbledon Poisoner*; *Downtown Lagos*; *A Perfect Spy*; *Driving Ambition*; *Clem* (also writer); *King and Castle* (also writer); *Casualty*; *Holby City*; *Doctors*; *The Young Ones*; *Happy Families*; *Saturday Live*; *Bottom*; *The Entertainers*; *The Man from Auntie*; *Strike and Blood*, *Sex and Royalty*; *Ann Boleyn*.



Victoria Evaristo

Theatre includes: Her self-penned one woman show *Ma Joyce's tales from the Parlour* (Edinburgh Festival 2025); *Windrush the Journey* (Pegasus Opera); *Someone, Somewhere isn't us* (Pavilion Works); *Woven* (Edinburgh Festival); *Mummylogues* (Old Red Lion Theatre); *WOW Festival* (Royal Festival Hall); *Baring the Weight* (New Diorama); *The Rally* (Stockwell Playhouse); *Big Bad world* (Comedy Central); *Ma Joyce's Tales from the Parlour* (Oval House); *Do you know where your daughter is?* (Hackney Empire); *Angel Point* (New Peckham Varieties Theatre); *Tell Me You Love Me* (Landor); *Sankofa, Adizdo Dance ensemble* (Royal Festival Hall); *Big Splash* (Oily Cart); *Treemonisha* (Battersea Arts centre); *Soul Sisters Melody* (Everyman Liverpool). Screen credits include: *Brian and Maggie* (Baby Cow C4); *The Pay Day* (Praxima Films). Directing work includes: *Disparity 2.0* (Drayton Arms Theatre); *The Sweet Science of Bruising* (Young Actors Theatre); *Just Aretha* (Edinburgh Fringe 2024 Redbridge Drama Centre and LTF); *Mummylogues* (Old Red Lion Theatre); *In search of a white Identity* (Actors Centre On Demand Season).



Géhane Strehler

Theatre includes: *La Fille A La Mode* (National Theatre, Theatre Royal Haymarket, Barbican); *Wild Girl/Mirad The Boy From Bosnia* (Bristol Old Vic); *The Boy With Two Hearts* (Wales Millenium Centre); *The Storm Whale* (York Theatre Royal, Little Angel Theatre); *Rattle Of A Simple Man* (Nuffield Theatre Southampton); *Shaft Of Sunlight* (Watford Palace Theatre); *4.48 Psychosis* (Arcola Theatre); *Twelfth Night/Red Fortress/Sleeping Beauty* (Unicorn Theatre); *Operation Magic Carpet/Beauty & The Beast/Alice In Wonderland* (Polka Theatre); *Burn My Heart* (Trestle Theatre). Musical: *Slavery* (Bottle Factory New York, Hudson Theatre Los Angeles); *Up The Greek* (Electric Theatre Guildford); *Colours Of Your Life* (Eden Theatre USA). Screen: *The Child In Time* (BBC); *EastEnders* (BBC); *The Bill* (ITV); *Veils* (Film Foundry); *Seed* (Film London); *The Slow Sword* (Old Red Lion); *Letters* (Apex Arts); *The Truth Seekers* (Bud Films); *Photographic Memory* (Centripetal Films USA); *Unspoken* (Ladibird Productions); *Learning To Fly* (Pursued By A Bear); *Gemma's Garden* (Dandy TV); *Morris 2274* (Channel Five).

Creative Team

Biographies

Tony Graham

Writer & Director

Originally, a drama teacher in London, Tony became an Associate and then Artistic Director for TAG Theatre (based at the Citizens Theatre, Glasgow) from 1989 making work for young audiences across Scotland. He directed a hugely popular tour of *Sunset Song* for TAG. It was subsequently co-produced by the Edinburgh International Festival in 1993.

In 1997 Tony became Artistic Director of the Unicorn Theatre. He instigated and opened the Unicorn's award-winning theatre near London Bridge in 2005. At the Unicorn for fourteen years, Tony created an acting ensemble. His shows included a new opera based on Philip Pullman's *Clockwork*, the award-winning *Tom's Midnight Garden* (which toured to New York), his own adaptation of Michael Morpurgo's *Billy The Kid* and Adrian Mitchell's adaptations of Beatrix Potter. He left the Unicorn in 2012 and has since directed as a freelancer.

Tony has directed over a hundred professional productions in the UK and abroad including ten shows in South Korea, principally for the National Theatre Company Korea. Most recently, in May 2026, he directed David Greig's *Yellow Moon* at the prestigious Myeongdong Theatre, Seoul. He regularly directs for E15 Drama School and is a Rose Bruford College Honorary Fellow where he directs and teaches. He was an artist-in-residence at NYU's Steinhardt School in 2012 and also the Korea National University of the Arts. He was a Creative Associate and directed several shows for the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry including Carl Miller's *Ostrich Boys*.

Kal Chapman

Company Stage Manager

Kal trained in Stage Management at Guildhall School of Music & Drama. Theatre Credits include: *Un Ballo in Maschera* (Opera Holland Park); *A Mirrored Monet* (Charing Cross Theatre); *The Meat Kings! inc. of Brooklyn Heights* (Park Theatre); *L'Italiana in Algeri* (Longhope Opera); *Don Pasquale* (Longhope Opera); *Bob the Super Dog* (The Woodville).

Lewis Champney

Production Manager for eStage

Lewis trained at RCSSD. Productions for Park Theatre include: *Whodunnit [Unrehearsed] 4*, *When it Happens to You*, *The Marilyn Conspiracy*, *Whodunnit [Unrehearsed] 3*, *Kim's Convenience*. Theatre includes: *Robin Hood*, *The Disappearing Man* (Queens Theatre Hornchurch); *Sherlock Holmes & Napoleon of Crime*, *The Three Musketeers* (Oxford Playhouse); *Captain Amazing* (Southwark Playhouse); *The Rat Trap*, *The Forsythe Saga Parts 1 and 2* and *A Single Man*, *Farewell Mister Haffmann*, *23.5 Hours*, *Sorry We Didn't Die At Sea* (Park Theatre); *The Gods of Salford* (The Lowry); *Cutting The Tighrope* (Edinburgh International Festival); *A Fine Idea*, *Cutting the Tighrope*, *As Long As We Are Breathing*, *Gigi & Dar* (Arcola Theatre); *Puppy* (Kings Head Theatre); *A Christmas Fair* (Oldham Coliseum) *Sweeney Todd*, *A Very Expensive Poison*, *Next to Normal* (Mountview); *This Restless House [Part 1,2 & 3]*, *Lysistrata* (RCSSD).

Rachana Jadhav

Set, Costume & Video Designer

Rachana is an award-winning British South Asian Theatre Designer and Illustrator, and has been practising design for theatre, dance and opera for more than 20 years. During that time she has created a diverse portfolio of work incorporating illustration, animation and film with spatial design and live performance.

Design works include collaborations with prominent artists such as Clare Cunningham with *Menage a Trois* a contemporary dance piece (National Theatre Scotland); Seeta Patel with *Shree* a solo dance piece complimenting *The Rite of Spring* (Sadler's Wells/ The Lowry); Emma Rice and her adaptation of *The Buddha of Suburbia* (RSC/Barbican); Tim Crouch with *Total Immediate Collective Imminent Terrestrial Salvation*, [Royal Court/ National Theatre of Scotland] and *The Tempest* (The Globe, London). Rachana is also Co-Artistic Director of Brolly Productions who develop under-represented artists through their original artistic works and make visible the hidden and sensitive histories of minority communities in contemporary Britain. Training: As an architect at Edinburgh College of Art, MA in Scenography at Central St Martin's College.

Tate Hingorani-Short

Sound Designer

Tate is a London based composer and sound designer working eclectically across genres and mediums. From Opera to the dance floor, his work intertwines a unique sonic approach with the building of narratives both grand and gritty and everything in between.

Jodie Underwood

Lighting Designer

Jodie's recent design credits include: *The Man Who Thought He Knew Too Much* (Pleasance); *Invisible Me* (Southwark Playhouse); *A Mirrored Monet* (Charing Cross Theatre); *A Christmas Carol* (Barn Theatre); *I Dream of Theresa May* (Tara Theatre); *After The Act* (Royal Court and UK Tour); *Our Cosmic Dust* (Park200); *Redacted: A Cover-up of the Cover-Up of a Cover-Up* (Pleasance and UK Tour); *The Law of Mayhem* (Haymarket, Basingstoke); *The Crawl* (Pleasance); *Worn Out* (Lowry Theatre); *Jab The Play* (Park 90); *Community* (Birmingham Rep); *Wormholes* (Omnibus Theatre); *Love & Rebellion* (Birmingham Rep); *English Kings Killing Foreigners* (Camden People's Theatre); *A Christmas Carol* (Taunton Brewhouse); *Cheeky Little Brown* (UK Tour); *The Life Sporadic of Jess Wildgoose* (Pleasance Courtyard, Edinburgh); *DNA* (Tara Theatre); *Blow Down* (Theatre Royal Wakefield and Leeds Playhouse); *The Boys Are Kissing* (Theatre 503); and *Horse-Play* (Riverside Studios).

Her recent Associate credits include: *Crybabies: The Scaring* (Associate to Bethany Gupwell, Pleasance and Soho Theatre); *Ruckus* (Associate to Simeon Miller, UK Tour); *The Book Of Will* (Associate to Simeon Miller, Shakespeare North Playhouse); *Ride* (Associate to Jamie Platt, Leicester Curve and Southwark Playhouse); *Pigs Might Fly* (Associate to Aaron Dootson, Theatre Peckham); and *When Darkness Falls* (Associate to Bethany Gupwell – UK Tour).

About Park Theatre

An inviting and accessible venue, delivering work of exceptional calibre in the heart of Finsbury Park. We work with writers, directors and designers of the highest quality to present compelling, exciting and beautifully told stories across our two intimate spaces. Our programme encompasses a broad range of work from classics to revivals with a healthy dose of new writing, producing in-house as well as working in partnership with emerging and established producers. We strive to play our part within the UK's theatre ecology by offering mentoring, support and opportunities to artists and producers within a professional theatre-making environment. Our Creative Engagement strategy seeks to widen the number and range of people who participate in theatre, and provides opportunities for those of all ages with little or no prior contact with the arts. In everything we do we aim to be warm and inclusive; a safe, welcoming and wonderful space in which to work, create and visit. Park Theatre was recently accredited by the Mayor of London as a Dementia Friendly building.

As a registered charity [number 1137223] with no regular public subsidy, we rely on the kind support of our donors and volunteers. To find out how you can get involved visit parktheatre.co.uk

Jez Bond

Artistic Director

Catherine McKinney

Executive Director

**With thanks to all of our supporters,
donors and volunteers.**

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Phone: 020 7870 6876*

*Telephone booking fee applies.

Thank you to the Andover Community Centre

Thank you to Zubair Matin, Sue Burbidge and all of the team for their support on the project.

Located in the heart of the Andover Estate, the Andover Community Centre is a thriving multi-purpose hub whose aim is to improve and enhance the lives of local residents by providing projects and activities for a wide variety of needs and interests.

Special thanks to...

With special thanks from the company to Nilgun Johnson; Laura Long; Angelo Zanfardino; Lizzie Pilbeam; Amberliegh Drumming Group; Guildhall School of Music & Drama; Karina Fernandez; Nicholas Khan; Carl Miller; Rosamunde Hutt; Adam Rowley; Amelia Cherry; Kim Longinotto; Jack Baxter.



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