

# Young Vic

Press Release - Wednesday 1 October 2025

Images and biographies available [here](#)

## FULL CASTING ANNOUNCED AND FIRST CAST IMAGES RELEASED FOR EUROPEAN PREMIERE OF *BENGAL TIGER AT THE BAGHDAD ZOO*

- Patrick Gibson (*Dexter: Original Sin*), Sofia Asir (*two Palestinians go dogging*) and Sayyid Aki (*Community*) will join Olivier and BAFTA award-winner David Threlfall (*Shameless*), Olivier Award-nominee Arinzé Kene (*Misty*), Ammar Haj Ahmad (*The Jungle*) and Hala Omran (*I Medea*).
- The European premiere of Rajiv Joseph's Pulitzer and Tony-nominated play is directed by Omar Elerian (*Rhinoceros*) in the Young Vic Main House from 2 December 2025 to 31 January 2026
- Tickets available at [www.youngvic.org](http://www.youngvic.org)



The **Young Vic Theatre** today announces **Patrick Gibson**, **Sofia Asir** and **Sayyid Aki** will join **David Threlfall**, **Arinzé Kene**, **Ammar Haj Ammad** and **Hala Omran** in the **European premiere** of *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*. Rajiv Joseph's (*Guards at the Taj*) high-octane, surreal dark comedy, directed by **Omar Elerian** (*Rhinoceros*), runs in the **Main House** from **2 December 2025 to 31 January 2026** with opening night for press on 9 December. The first cast images with **David Threlfall**, **Arinzé Kene** and **Ammar Haj Ahmad** are also released today. Tickets are available now at [www.youngvic.org](http://www.youngvic.org)

**Patrick Gibson**, best known as the young Dexter Morgan in the Paramount+ series *Dexter: Original Sin* and recently seen on stage in *Clyde's* at Donmar Warehouse, will play the American Marine Tom. **Sofia Asir** (*two Palestinians go dogging*, *A Land without Jasmine*) will play Hadia/Iraqi Teenager and **Sayyid Aki** (*Community*, *Rule Britannia*) will play Uday/Iraqi Man. They join the previously announced Olivier and BAFTA award-winner **David Threlfall** (*Hangmen*, *Shameless*) as the Tiger, Olivier Award-nominee **Arinzé Kene** (*Misty*, *Death of A*

*Salesman*) as American Marine Kev, **Ammar Haj Ahmad** (*The Jungle*, *Macbeth*) as Musa, and **Hala Omran** (*I Medea*, *Mute*) as Iraqi Woman/Leper.

*When an atheist suddenly finds himself walking around after death, he has got some serious re-evaluating to do.*

*Iraq, well into the new millennium. A fast-talking Tiger haunts the streets, plagued by a fundamental question: "Why am I here?"*

*And he's not the only one.*

*US forces have long since toppled Saddam Hussein, yet Baghdad remains aflame. In the chaos, the lives of American Marines Tom and Kev collide with Iraqi translator Musa after their chance encounters with the Tiger. Iraqi or American, man or beast, they are all searching for meaning, revenge, forgiveness, and a solid gold toilet seat that's worth a fortune.*

Following its premiere on Broadway in 2011, the play received multiple Tony nominations and recognition as a Pulitzer Prize finalist. This new production is brought to life with Designer **Rajha Shakiry**, Lighting Designer **Jackie Shemesh**, Sound Designer **Elena Peña**, Movement Director **Annie-Lunnette Deakin-Foster**, Casting Director **Heather Basten CDG**, Dialect Coach **Khaled Abunaama**, Voice and Dialect Coach **Hazel Holder**, Costume Supervisor **Male Arcucci**, Props Supervisor **Kate Margretts**, Jerwood Assistant Director **Layla Madanat**, and Associate Designer **Yimei Zhao**.

***Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*** is the third production in **Nadia Fall's** inaugural season as **Artistic Director of the Young Vic** following Joe Orton's cult classic ***Entertaining Mr Sloane*** (until 8 Nov) and the hit Edinburgh Fringe show ***Ohio*** (until 24 Oct). Upcoming productions also include mixed reality installation ***Museum of Austerity*** (5 Dec – 16 Jan 2026), Arthur Miller's ***Broken Glass*** (21 Feb – 18 Apr), Alexander Zeldin's ***CARE*** (11 May – 11 Jul) and the world premiere of ***Sting*** by Sophie Swithinbank (18 Jun – 18 Jul).

**-ENDS-**

#### **Listings:**

Young Vic presents  
***Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo***  
By Rajiv Joseph  
Directed by Omar Elerian

Young Vic, Main House  
2 December 2025 – 31 January 2026  
Press night: 9 December 2025

#### **Access performances:**

BSL Performance (BSL interpreter Vinessa Brant): Wed 14 Jan, 2.30pm & Fri 16 Jan, 7.30pm  
Captioned Performances (captioned by Miranda Yates): Sat 10 Jan, 2.30pm & Fri 23 Jan, 7.30pm  
Relaxed Performances: Sat 10 Jan, 2.30pm & Wed 21 Jan, 7.30pm  
Audio Described Performances (audio described by Miranda Yates and Eleanor Margolies): Sat 17 Jan, 2.30pm and Thu 22 Jan, 7.30pm

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**Images and biographies:** [available here](#)

**About the Young Vic Theatre**

Founded in 1970 as a space for world-premiere productions and unexpected takes on classic plays, the Young Vic has been one of London's leading theatres for more than fifty years.

Welcoming 100,000 visitors a year, the Young Vic stands out in the nation's cultural landscape for balancing daring commercial drive and artistic flair with genuine grassroots social impact work within our community. This success is seen most vividly in the audience group for which we are famous; the most diverse, lively and engaged in London. This is the fruit of years of building involvement among local young people. We forge deep connections in our neighbourhood through our Taking Part programme, where we engage with over 15,000 people every year via a wide range of projects, from skills-based workshops to on-stage performances.

We believe great art belongs to everyone. Ticket prices are kept low and 10% of tickets are given free within the local community; enabling a unique, no-risk taste of great theatre for thousands of people.

Our unique, fully-flexible auditoria allows us to present great plays by and with the next generation of theatre artists alongside work by some of the world's great directors, actors and designers. We are proud to be a directors' theatre known for launching careers and a combination of youth and genius which makes us one of the most vibrant theatres in the UK.

Built upon the principles of access, innovation, and community, the Young Vic is deepening its roots nationally and internationally. Recent transfers include *Punch*, *Best of Enemies* and *Oklahoma!* in the West End and *Death of a Salesman* and *The Collaboration* on Broadway.

Some theatres present great plays. Some give young artists opportunities to grow. Some build strong and lasting relationships with their community. The Young Vic does all three.

**Artistic Director:** Nadia Fall

**Executive Director:** Lucy Pattison

[www.youngvic.org](http://www.youngvic.org)

**The Young Vic is grateful to be a beneficiary of public funding from Arts Council England.**

**Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo is generously supported by the Young Vic Season Circle.**

**Thank you to the additional generosity of our donors, partners, and supporters whose support each year makes our work on stage and in the local community possible.**

**We thank Lambeth Council and Southwark Council for their continued support.**