



**Park Avenue Armory Announces Full Cast
for Robert Icke's *Hamlet* and *Oresteia*,
Starring Alex Lawther and Lia Williams**

**Performed in Repertory in the Wade Thompson Drill Hall,
Icke's Contemporary Adaptations Shed New Light on Classic Dramas**

June 1 – August 13, 2022



Lia Williams in Oresteia at the Almeida Theatre. Photo: Manuel Harlan

New York, NY – May 4, 2022 – Park Avenue Armory today announced the full ensemble for the North American premieres of **Robert Icke's** award-winning contemporized productions of William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and fresh adaptation of Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, performed in repertory by a single British company in the grand Wade Thompson Drill Hall this summer.

Hamlet stars **Alex Lawther** (Film: *The Imitation Game*, TV: *Black Mirror*, Stage: *The Tempest*, *South Downs*) who makes his New York stage return in one of the most challenging psychological roles in theater. Lawther made his stage debut in the critically lauded West End production of *South Downs* and was most recently seen in Peter Brook's production of *The Tempest*.

Lia Williams (TV: *The Crown*, *His Dark Materials*, Stage: *Skylight*) returns to *Oresteia* for the first time since her 2015 Oliver-nominated performance as Klytemnestra, the complicated tragic figure. Williams will also take on the role of Gertrude in *Hamlet*.

The principal cast features West End stage veterans portraying some of the most iconic roles in tragedy. Most of these actors play parts in both productions, including Angus Wright (TV: *The Crown*, *Flowers* Stage: *War Horse*, 1984) as Claudius and Agamemnon/Aegisthus; Olivier Award-winner Luke Treadaway (Stage: *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*) as Laertes and Orestes; Kirsty Rider (Stage: *The Great Wave*, *Pride and Prejudice*) as Ophelia; Peter Wight (TV: *The Crown*, Stage: *Electra*) as Polonius and Menelaus; and Joshua Higgott (Film: *Bohemian Rhapsody*, *The Machine*) as Horatio and Talthybius.

This full ensemble also includes Michael Abubakar (Film: *Artemis Fowl*, Stage: *The Tragedy of Macbeth*), David Rintoul (TV: *The Crown*, Stage: *Macbeth*), Tia Bannon (Film: *The Drifters*, Stage: *Losing Venice*), Calum Finlay (Film: *Amazon Adventure*, Stage: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Hara Yannas (Stage: *Animal Farm*, *The House of Bernarda Alba*), Gilbert Kyem Jr. (Stage: *Lest we Forget*, *Incriminating Objects*), Ross Waiton (Film: *Skyfall*, Stage: *King Lear*), Marty Cruikshank (Stage: *Richard II*, *After Electra*), Alexis Rae Forlenza, Elyana Faith Randolph, Hudson Paul, and Wesley Holloway. Ensemble and understudies include Bartley Booz, Lise Bruneau, Jacqueline Jarrold, Andrew Long, Imani Jade Powers, and Harry Smith. Full casting is listed below.

“Led by Alex Lawther and Lia Williams, this exceptionally talented ensemble will bring to life these timeless, well-known characters in a way that feels relevant and immediate to contemporary audiences. Robert Icke’s complete reimaging of these two great classics is a theatrical event not to be missed,” said **Pierre Audi, the Armory’s Marina Kellen French Artistic Director**.

“It is no small feat to stage one epic tragedy, but this stellar cast, under the singular direction of Robert Icke, will bring two to life at once. The Armory is delighted to partner with Icke in his return to the Armory for the North American premieres of these acclaimed adaptations, never before seen in repertory,” added **Rebecca Robertson, Founding President and Executive Producer of Park Avenue Armory**.

Icke’s *Hamlet* and *Oresteia* originated at the internationally acclaimed Almeida Theatre, which was founded in 1979 by Audi. At the Armory, the productions will play in repertory for the first time, allowing audiences to experience the throughlines and connections Icke explores in his pairing of these classic dramas—depicting two epic family sagas written over 2,000 years apart—which will be performed by the same cast. In his adaptations, Icke bridges antiquity and the contemporary to create worlds that enhance the psychological drama in classic texts; blurring the lines between public and private life in *Hamlet*, and heightening the courtroom tensions in *Oresteia*.

The ubiquity of *Hamlet* on the British stage allows the full creative force of the seasoned Shakespearean troupe to re-interpret these recognizable roles with modern elements and a stark reflection of the time. While often considered an intimidating role for many actors, Lawther brings a focused and wholly original portrayal of the brooding Danish prince to the Drill Hall.

Icke's contemporary adaptation of Aeschylus's seminal tragic trilogy was acclaimed in London and has since been performed around the world. In a modern context, *Oresteia* brings the prophecies and

wartime violence of the ancient Greeks into startling focus, and lays bare the cyclical interplay between loss, grief, revenge, and justice within one fated family.

CASTING

Alex Lawther, Hamlet
Lia Williams, Gertrude / Klytemnestra
Tia Bannon, Guildenstern / Electra
Luke Treadaway, Laertes / Orestes
Angus Wright, Claudius / Agamemnon, Aegisthus
Michael Abubakar, Marcellus / Calchas
Josh Higgott, Horatio, u/s Hamlet / Talthybius, u/s Orestes
Peter Wight, Polonius / Menelaus
David Rintoul, Ghost, Player King
Kirsty Ryder, Ophelia / Doctor
Calum Finlay, Rosencrantz, u/s Laertes
Hara Yannas, Bernardo, Priest / Cassandra, Athene
Gilbert Kyem Jnr, Reynaldo
Ross Waiton, Francisco, Gravedigger
Marty Cruikshank, Player Queen / Cilissa, Fury
Alexis Rae Forlenza, **Elyana Faith Randolph**, Iphigenia
Wesley Holloway, **Hudson Paul**, Young Orestes

Ensemble and understudies include **Bartley Booz**, **Lise Bruneau**, **Jacqueline Jarrold**, **Andrew Long**, **Imani Jade Powers**, and **Harry Smith**.

Additional roles played by members of the company.

Hamlet and *Oresteia* are part of Park Avenue Armory's full 2022 season. Additional upcoming Drill Hall programming at the Armory includes: ***Monochromatic Light (Afterlife)*** (September 27-October 8, 2022), a new commission by musician and composer **Tyshawn Sorey** that pays homage to Morton Feldman's iconic composition for the dedication of Houston's Rothko Chapel 50 years ago, with director **Peter Sellars** reimagining the work with a new staging designed for the Drill Hall featuring works by visual artist **Julie Mehretu**; the debut of an Armory-commissioned immersive film installation, ***Euphoria*** (November 30-January 1, 2023), by German video and film artist **Julian Rosefeldt** that takes aim at the destructive potential of capital, money, greed, and consumption, featuring original music composed by **Samy Moussa** and performed by an ensemble of jazz drummers and singers from the **Brooklyn Youth Chorus**.

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Tickets sold separately for each production. For a full schedule of performances, please visit armoryonpark.org.

Hamlet

North American premiere
A Park Avenue Armory and Almeida Theatre Production

This production had its world premiere at The Almeida Theatre in London
Produced by The Almeida Theatre and produced in the West End by Ambassador Theatre Group
and Sonia Friedman Productions

By **William Shakespeare**
Direction **Robert Icke**
Sets and Costumes **Hildegard Bechtler**
Lighting **Natasha Chivers**
Sound **Tom Gibbons**
Video **Tal Yarden**

Previews: June 1 – June 25

Performances: June 28 – August 13
Evenings at 7:00 p.m.; Matinees at 1:00 p.m.
Dates will vary. Please [check the website](#) for a full *Hamlet* schedule.

Oresteia

North American premiere
A Park Avenue Armory and Almeida Theatre Production

This production had its world premiere at The Almeida Theatre in London
Produced by The Almeida Theatre and produced in the West End by Ambassador Theatre Group
and Sonia Friedman Productions

After **Aeschylus**, in an adaptation by **Robert Icke**
Direction **Robert Icke**
Sets and Costumes **Hildegard Bechtler**
Lighting **Natasha Chivers**
Sound **Tom Gibbons**
Video **Tim Reid**

Previews: June 9 – June 20

Performances: June 21 – August 13
Evenings at 7:00 p.m.; Matinees at 1:00 p.m.
Dates will vary. Please [check the website](#) for a full *Oresteia* schedule.

TICKETS

Tickets start at \$45 and can be purchased at armoryonpark.org /
(212) 933-5812

Park Avenue Armory
643 Park Avenue at 67th Street, New York, NY

SPONSORSHIP

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ABOUT ROBERT ICKE

Robert Icke is an award-winning writer and theater director best known for his modern adaptations of classic texts. Recent original productions include *Enemy of the People* at Park Avenue Armory (2021), *Oedipus* and *After Nora* at Internationaal Theater Amsterdam (2020, 2018), and *The Doctor*, based on Arthur Schnitzler's *Professor Bernhardt* at the Almeida Theatre in London (2019). Other recent productions include Anton Chekhov's *Ivanov* at Schauspiel Stuttgart (2019) and William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* at the Almeida Theatre and West End (2017).

In 2018, Icke won the Kurt Hübner Award for his debut production in Germany, an adaptation of *Oresteia*, and was elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. He is the youngest ever winner of the Olivier Award for 'Best Director' for *Oresteia* (2015), which also won the 'Best Director' prize at both the Critics' Circle and Evening Standard Theatre Awards.

ABOUT ALEX LAWATHER

Alex Lawther is best known for his acclaimed roles in *The Last Duel*, the third series of Charlie Brooker's *Black Mirror*, and in *The End of the F***ing World*. He made his screen debut as the young Alan Turing in the Oscar-winning film, *The Imitation Game*, for which he was nominated for the "Best British Newcomer" Award at the BFI London Film Festival.

He was also the recipient of the Best Actor Award at the 2016 Dublin International Film Festival for his performance as "Elliot" in the British film *Departure*. Lawther's other screen credits include Fox Searchlight's *The French Dispatch*; Fox Searchlight's *Goodbye Christopher Robin*; and a starring role in BBC One's adaptation of *Howards End* in 2017, based on the classic E.M. Forster novel and adapted by screenwriter and playwright Kenneth Lonergan. His theater credits include: David Hare's *South Downs* (Minerva Theatre; Harold Pinter Theatre); Ali Taylor's *Fault Lines* (Hampstead Theatre); Martyn Hesford's *The Glass Supper* (Hampstead Theatre); *Crushed Shells and Mud* (Southwark Playhouse); *The Jungle* (Young Vic, The Playhouse Theatre, and St. Ann's Warehouse in Brooklyn); and *The Tempest* (Caliban/Ferdinand, Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord).

ABOUT LIA WILLIAMS

Lia Williams is an English actor and director, known for her work in theater, film, and television. Her theater credits include: *The Night of the Iguana* (Noel Coward Theatre); *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (Donmar Warehouse); *The Lover, The Collection* (Donmar Warehouse); *Mary Stuart* (Almeida/Duke of York's); *Oresteia*, for which she was nominated for an Olivier Award for Best Actress (Almeida/Trafalgar Studios); *Old Times* (Harold Pinter); *Arcadia* (Ethel Barrymore, NY); *Skylight*, which garnered Tony and Olivier nominations (NT/Royale, NY). Her film credits include *The Foreigner*, *The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey*, *Girl from Rio*, *The King Is Alive*, *Different for Girls*, *The Fifth Province*, *Firelight*, and *Dirty Weekend*. Her television credits include: *Death in Paradise*, *Riviera*, *The Capture*, *His*

Dark Materials; The Crown; Kiri; The Silkworm; The Missing; Secret State; Doc Martin; May 33rd (Bafta Best Actress nomination); *The Russian Bride* (FIPA Best Actress Award); *Imogen's Face; Shot Through the Heart; Flowers of the Forest; and Seaforth.*

ABOUT PARK AVENUE ARMORY

Part palace, part industrial shed, Park Avenue Armory fills a critical void in the cultural ecology of New York, supporting unconventional works in the performing and visual arts that cannot be fully realized in a traditional proscenium theater, concert hall, or white wall gallery. With its soaring 55,000-square-foot Wade Thompson Drill Hall and an array of exuberant period rooms, the Armory enables a diverse range of artists to create, students to explore, and audiences to experience epic, adventurous, relevant work that cannot be done elsewhere in New York.

Programmatic highlights from the Wade Thompson Drill Hall include Ernesto Neto's *anthropodino*, a magical labyrinth extended across the Drill Hall; Bernd Alois Zimmermann's harrowing *Die Soldaten*, in which the audience moved "through the music"; *the event of a thread*, a site-specific installation by Ann Hamilton; the final performances of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company on three separate stages; an immersive *Macbeth* set in a Scottish heath with Kenneth Branagh; *WS* by Paul McCarthy, a monumental installation of fantasy, excess, and dystopia; a radically inclusive staging of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* staged by Peter Sellars and performed by Sir Simon Rattle and the Berliner Philharmoniker; eight-time Drama Desk-nominated play *The Hairy Ape*, directed by Richard Jones and starring Bobby Cannavale; *Hansel & Gretel*, a new commission by Ai Weiwei, Jacques Herzog, and Pierre de Meuron about privacy and surveillance; *FLEXN* and *FLEXN Evolution*, two Armory-commissioned presentations of the Brooklyn-born dance-activist group the D.R.E.A.M. Ring, created by Reggie "Regg Roc" Gray and director Peter Sellars; Simon Stone's heralded production of *Yerma* starring Billie Piper in her North American debut; *The Let Go*, a site-specific immersive dance celebration by Nick Cave; Satoshi Miyagi's stunning production of *Antigone* set in a lake; Sam Mendes' critically acclaimed production of *The Lehman Trilogy*; the *Black Artists Retreat* hosted by Theaster Gates, which included public talks and performances, private sessions for the 300 attending artists, and a roller skating rink; *Deep Blue Sea* by Bill T. Jones and the Bill T. Jones/Arne Zane Dance Companies; *The Shape of Things*, a multi-work installation, convening, and performance series by Carrie Mae Weems; and *Assembly*, an immersive work by interdisciplinary artist Rashaad Newsome. Productions in the Armory's Social Distance Hall included works by Bill T. Jones; David Byrne, Christine Jones, and Steven Hoggett; Laurie Anderson and Robert Icke.

In its historic period rooms, the Armory presents more intimate performances and programs, including its acclaimed *Recital Series*, which showcases musical talent from across the globe within the intimate salon setting of the Board of Officers Room; the *Artists Studio* series curated by MacArthur "Genius" and jazz phenom Jason Moran in the newly restored Veterans Room, which features a diverse array of innovative artists and artistic pairings that reflect the imaginative improvisation of the young designers and artists who originally conceived the space; and a Public Programming series that brings diverse artists and cultural thought-leaders together for discussion and performance around the important issues of our time viewed through an artistic lens.

Among the performers who have appeared in the *Recital Series* and the *Artists Studio* in the Armory's restored Veterans Room and the Board of Officers Room are: Christian Gerhaher; Ian Bostridge; Jason Moran; Lawrence Brownlee; Barbara Hannigan; Lisette Oropesa; Roscoe Mitchell; Conrad Tao and Tyshawn Sorey; Rashaad Newsome; and Krecy Garcia ("El Prodigio").

Highlights from the Public Programming series include: symposiums such as Carrie Mae Weems' daylong event called *The Shape of Things*, whose participants included Elizabeth Alexander, Theaster Gates, Elizabeth Diller, and Nona Hendryx; a daylong Lenape Pow Wow and Standing Ground Symposium held in the Wade Thompson Drill Hall, the first congregation of Lenape Elders on Manhattan Island since the 1700s; salons such as the Literature Salon hosted by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, whose participants included Lynn Nottage, Suzan Lori-Parks, and Jeremy O. Harris, and a Spoken Word Salon co-hosted with the Nuyorican Poets Cafe; and most recently, *100 Years | 100 Women*, a multiorganization commissioning project that invited 100 women artists and cultural creators to respond to women's suffrage.

Current Artists-in-Residence at the Armory include two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Lynn Nottage; Obie winner and Pulitzer short-listed playwright Branden Jacobs-Jenkins and Carmelita Tropicana; Reggie "Regg Roc" Gray and the D.R.E.A.M. Ring; singer and composer Sara Serpa; Tony Award-winning set designer and director Christine Jones and choreographer Steven Hoggett; and Mimi Lien, the first set designer to receive a MacArthur Fellowship. The Armory also supports artists through an active commissioning program including such artists as Bill T. Jones, Lynn Nottage, Carrie Mae Weems, Michel van der Aa, Tyshawn Sorey, Rashaad Newsome, Julian Rosefeldt, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, and others.

The Armory also offers creativity-based arts education programs at no cost to thousands of students from underserved New York City public schools, engaging them with the institution's artistic programming and outside-the-box creative processes. Annually, more than 5,000 young adults from 50+ under-resourced public schools attend a dedicated student matinee of each Armory production with workshops by Master Teaching Artists provided in the classroom and at the site. In seven partner schools, Teaching Artists facilitate in-depth semester- or year-long residencies that support the schools' curriculum. Youth Corps, the Armory's year-round paid, monitored internship program, begins in high school and continues into the critical post-high school years, providing interns with over 14,000 hours per year of mentored employment, job training, and skill development, as well as a network of peers and mentors to support their individual college and career goals.

The Armory is undergoing a multi-phase renovation and restoration of its historic building led by architects Herzog & de Meuron, with Platt Byard Dovell White as Executive Architects.

www.armoryonpark.org

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