

**THE YOUNG VIC ANNOUNCES YV:ID**

**A FESTIVAL EXPLORING IDENTITY**

**Kwame Kwei-Armah**, Artistic Director of **Young Vic**,today announces ***YV:ID***, a five-week festival of digital and live events taking place throughout February and March 2019, which aims to catalyse debates around the themes of identity.

***YV:ID*** festival will include: ***Soon Gone: A Windrush Chronicle***, a series of monologues commissioned by **BBC Arts** and produced in partnership with **Sir Lenny Henry**’s production company **Douglas Road Productions**, exploring themes of personal and cultural identity through the eyes of an Afro-Caribbean family from the 1940s to the present day, which will air on BBC Four in February; ***My England***, a collection of fourteen short films by writers, directors and performers from across the country, exploring the notions of Englishness and English national identity, which will be released online in March ahead of Brexit; ***The 8 Club***, is a five-part web series investigating the notion of ‘toxic masculinity’, and some of the issues facing future generations in the wake of the positive social change brought about by #MeToo.

The Young Vic will host a series of accompanying live debate events at the theatre to run parallel to each project.

**Kwame Kwei-Armah**, said today, “*The stages of the Young Vic have always been a place dedicated to asking the most profound questions in artistically compelling ways. It’s not just the art we invite into these four walls but also the discourse we send beyond them. After seven years in America, I returned home to a country which seemed amidst an identity crisis. YV:ID is a way to catalyse a debate about those perceptions, and, as part of our commitment to channelling work into the digital world, we are also bringing these discussions into the digital sphere to reach new audiences and continue the conversation outside of our four walls.”*

**#YVID**

**SOON GONE: A WINDRUSH CHRONICLE**

Commissioned by **BBC Arts** and co-produced by **Sir Lenny Henry**’s production company **Douglas Road** **Productions** and the **Young Vic**, ***Soon Gone: A Windrush Chronicle***, are eight 15-minute heartfelt monologues set in and around the front room of an Afro-Caribbean home. The monologues, which will broadcast on **BBC Four** in February, follow the highs and lows of one family from their arrival in England in the 1940s up to the present day as they explore their hopes and desires, challenges and shattered dreams.

They have been curated by the Young Vic’s Artistic Director **Kwame Kwei-Armah** and feature some of the UK’s finest acting talent including **Sir Lenny Henry** (*The Long Song*), **Vinette Robinson** (*Doctor Who*), **Montserrat Lombard** (*Upstart Crow*), **Danielle Vitalis** (*Attack the Block*), **Clifford Samuel** (*McMafia*), **Gamba Cole** (*Damilola: Our Loved Boy*), **Elliot Barnes-Worrell** (*Jericho*), **Jonathan Jules** (*Invasion Earth*), and **Olivia-Mai Barrett** (*Penny on M.A.R.S*).

The eight films are written by a team of leading writers for television and stage: **Carmen Harris** (*EastEnders*), **Angie Le Mar** (*Funny Black Women on the Edge*), **Roy Williams** (*Clubland*), **Juliet Gilkes** **Romero** (Creative Fellow at RSC), **Carol Russell** (*The Story of Tracy Beaker*), **Clint Dyer** (*Sylvia Plath* for Royal Court), **Nathaniel Martello-White** (*Blackta* for Young Vic), and **Kwame Kwei-Armah** (*Elmina’s Kitchen*).

The monologues will air on **BBC Four** in February. As part of *YV:ID*, the Young Vic will also be programming a live discussion event hosted by **Afua Hirsch** and **Kwame Kwei-Armah** at the theatre on **21 February**, around notions of cultural identity and self-definition in the 21st century.

**#SoonGoneWindrush**

**MY ENGLAND**

***My England*** is a series of fourteen filmed monologues from across England, commissioned and produced by the **Young Vic** and created by writers, actors and directors exploring how they define “Englishness” and what it means to be English right now. Half the monologues were filmed on location in the regions the writers are from, including Coventry, Halifax, Luton, Peak District, Plymouth, Middlesbrough and London, and the other half were filmed at the Young Vic, performed by actors from the local neighbourhood in collaboration with the Young Vic’s Taking Part department.

The writers include **Javaad Alipoor** (*England’s Red* with **Christopher Eccleston**), **Michael Bhim** (*The Question*), **Ishy Din** (*UTB*!), **Kenneth Emson** (*Mayday*)*,* **Lynette Linton** (*Simone*), **Zodwa Nyoni** (*On Belonging*), **Bea Roberts** (*Sir F. Mother Fucking Drake* with**Jenny Rainsford**), **Jack Rooke** (*The Game*), **Lucy J. Skilbeck** (*Big Ben*), **Stef Smith** (*How To Grow A Nation* with**Kate Dickie**), **Polly Stenham** (*Flat White* with **Ophelia Lovibond**), **Simon Stephens** (*she*), **Selina Thompson** (*I Feel Most English When*… with **Ronke Adekoluejo**) and **Jack Thorne** (*Luton?* with **Mat Fraser**). Directors include Young Vic Genesis Fellow, **Nadia Latif**, and **Rodney Charles**.

The films will be released via the Young Vic website and social media channels from **25 February**.

The Young Vic will host an accompanying event on **12 March,** bringing together members of the public with politicians, artists and social commentators to explore the identity of a nation as it’s going through a divorce, and to ask how we define “Englishness” in our potentially fractious society.

**#MyEngland**

**A Young Vic co-production with David Weale-Cochrane and Kwame (KZ) Kwei-Armah Jr.**

**THE 8 CLUB**

***The 8 Club*** is an online video series exploring the notion of ‘toxic masculinity’ and the legacy young men have inherited from the ideas of masculinity as defined by generations before them. Each episode tackles the subjects that surround and affect young men today, focussing on provocative and often unspoken topics for men, such as mental health, money, sex, violence and personal relationships and how these topics are viewed in the wake of the #MeToo movement and the wider impact this has on gender politics.

Participants in *The 8 Club* include **JJ Bola**, **Michael Brooks, Ned Dukes**, **Matt Harvey**, **Roly Hunter**, **LionHeart**, **Simon Anthony Mitchell**, **Adam Pugh**, **Michael Simon**, **Jordan Stephens**, **Elric Stockley** and **Jamell Williams**.

The films will be released via the Young Vic social media channels from **11 March**, and the Young Vic will host an accompanying live event on **21 March** which explores some of the questions around gender politics which are facing the next generation.

**#The8Club**

**IMAGES TO ACCOMPANY YV:ID:**

Image of Lenny Henry in *Soon Gone: A Windrush Chronicle*: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1h-p1Eo46tI_9Yhz8uZ7UWZS1_gkBWIYG/view?usp=sharing>

Photo credit: Carlton Dixon

My England: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1A2iL14qwRv5BcCgxlEIUpV_Y7oUrfVfa>

(no photographer credits required)

The 8 Club: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1C-Ia9nDE7Ko7QQvBZ1UKIK_wpTfDZ6qU>

Photo credit: Matthew Cutler

**Young Vic**

Based on The Cut in London’s Waterloo, we produce new plays, classics, musicals, adaptations of books, short films, digital projects and game changing forms of theatre. We attract large audiences from many different backgrounds, and forge deep connections in our neighbourhood where we provide extensive free activities. For many years the Young Vic has been synonymous with inclusivity, accessibility and creativity. We foster emerging talent and collaborate with some of the world’s finest directors, performers and creatives; creating productions that say much about the world we live in.

Artistic Director: Kwame Kwei-Armah

Executive Director: Despina Tsatsas

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

Twitter and Instagram @youngvictheatre

**The Young Vic’s Supporters**

The Young Vic receives public subsidy from Arts Council England and Lambeth & Southwark Borough Councils.



**Genesis Foundation**

The Genesis Foundation has supported the Young Vic for nearly 15 years, including the Young Vic’s director’s program since its inception. The Genesis Foundation is pleased to fund the Genesis Fellow and Genesis Fellow Production Fund, the Genesis Future Directors Awards and the Genesis Directors Network at the Young Vic.

Established by John Studzinski in 2001, the Genesis Foundation works in partnership with the leaders of prestigious UK arts organisations such as LAMDA, the National Theatre, The Sixteen and the Young Vic. Its largest funding commitment is to programmes that support directors, playwrights, actors and musicians in the early stages of their professional lives.



[genesisfoundation.org.uk](http://www.genesisfoundation.org.uk)

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