

## Sir John Gielgud's programme note for the 1964 Broadway production of *Hamlet*

This is a Hamlet acted in rehearsal clothes, stripped of all extraneous trappings, unencumbered by a reconstruction of any particular Historical Period. This performance is conceived as a final run-through, as actors call it. When a play has been thoroughly prepared, there is always a full final rehearsal of the text and action played straight through, without interruption from the director.

### John Gielgud

Used with the permission of the Sir John Gielgud Charitable Trust

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# National Theatre Live

A production from

National Theatre  
NEAL STREET PRODUCTIONS

## The Motive and the Cue

a new play by Jack Thorne  
directed by Sam Mendes

### Cast, alphabetical order

**Dillon Evans (Osric)**.....Aaron Anthony  
**Mick Burrows (Stage Manager)**...Tom Babbage  
**Hume Cronyn (Polonius)**.....Allan Corduner  
**Eileen Herlie (Gertrude)**.....Janie Dee  
**Susannah Mason (Stage Manager)**.....Elena Delia  
**George Voskovec (Player King)**.....Ryan Ellsworth  
**Richard Burton (Hamlet)**.....Johnny Flynn  
**Sir John Gielgud (Director and Ghost)**.....Mark Gatiss  
**Linda Marsh (Ophelia)**.....Phoebe Horn  
**Jessica Levy (Assistant to Sir John)**.....Aysha Kala  
**Elizabeth Taylor (a world apart)**.....Tuppence Middleton  
**William Redfield (Guildenstern)**....Luke Norris  
**Frederick Young (Barnardo)**....Huw Parmenter  
**Clement Fowler (Rosencrantz)**.....David Ricardo-Pearce

**Alfred Drake (Claudius)**.....David Tarkenter  
**Christine Cooper (Player Queen)** .Kate Tydman  
**Hugh McHaffie (a further world apart)**..Laurence Ubong Williams  
**Robert Milli (Horatio)**.....Michael Walters

### Production Team

**Director**.....Sam Mendes  
**Set Designer**.....Es Devlin  
**Costume Designer**.....Katrina Lindsay  
**Lighting Designer**.....Jon Clark  
**Composer**.....Benjamin Kwasi Burrell  
**Sound Designer**.....Paul Arditti

### Broadcast Team

**Director for Screen**.....Matthew Amos  
**Technical Producer**....Christopher C. Bretnall  
**Lighting Director**.....Bernie Davis  
**Sound Supervisor**.....Conrad Fletcher  
**Script Supervisor**.....Laura Vine

*The Motive and the Cue* is inspired by *Letters from an Actor* by William Redfield and *John Gielgud Directs Richard Burton in Hamlet* by Richard L. Sterne.



**Running time:** 2 hour and 40 minutes, including a 20-minute interval



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## Hamlet's appeal for actors and audiences

An extract from *The Motive and the Cue*

National Theatre programme by Sarah Crompton

Not all actors want to play Hamlet. But for a surprising number it remains the yardstick against which they wish to be measured. Max Beerbohm suggested it was 'a hoop through which every eminent actor must, sooner or later, jump'. TS Eliot called it a 'Mona Lisa of literature', the part so infinite in possibility that there are as many variations of the character as there are actors willing to play it.

Simon Russell Beale, who appeared in John Caird's production at the National Theatre in 2000, once said: 'The role of Hamlet is very hospitable. It will take anything you throw at it.' Later, in Jonathan Croall's book *Performing Hamlet*, he explained 'No other part, not even Lear, requires you to be more just you.'

Let be – it's like saying to the audience, I'm sorry folks, but this is me, which is why my Hamlet will never be the same as another actor's Hamlet. At the end you are standing there in your raw humanity, going "This is what a human being is".'

That sense of revelation, of an actor laying themselves bare, perhaps accounts for the fact that the play was one of Shakespeare's most performed works in his lifetime and is still today one of the most revived. Audiences want to witness what a particular actor makes of the moody Dane, what trajectory they carve through a story that can be seen through many prisms of interpretation, a play so full of mysteries and questions.

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# Nye

by Tim Price  
directed by Rufus Norris

**Broadcast live 23 April**

Michael Sheen plays Nye Bevan in the epic Welsh fantasia following one man's dream of the NHS.

★★★★★

**'Michael Sheen is perfect in this surefire hit'**

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