



It is with a huge sense of sadness I am announcing that our tour of Macbeth this summer is postponed. This decision is based on the latest Government advice and projections following the outbreak of Covid-19.

The production was due to begin rehearsals on April 20th, open on May 29th and run until September 27th visiting more than 70 venues in 6 countries across 18 weeks.

Many of our venues have already shut down and will remain closed for the foreseeable future. The Government has strongly advised against mass gatherings and may move to ban them completely. We don't know how things will develop over the coming months and cannot risk continuing under those circumstances.

As well as going against Government guidelines we feel that it is unsafe and inappropriate for us to continue. It is unsafe from a health and safety perspective to ask you to congregate in large groups, it is risky at best and, at worst, irresponsible. It is also unsafe and, again, irresponsible to ask our actors to risk their health and safety. Throughout the rehearsal period and tour, they work in close quarters for almost 6 months. In the current circumstances that is an unbelievable health risk. Were one actor diagnosed with or to present any symptoms everyone would need to isolate, and the production would grind to a halt.

Additionally, it is particularly unsafe for us financially. We exist solely on income from ticket sales with no back up of any kind or additional funding. With the current circumstances we cannot guarantee venues will be open and if audiences will be able to risk coming even if they wanted to. That risk is far too great and threatens our continued existence as a company.

This decision, as painful as it is, is the only decision that ensures the health and safety of the wonderful actors and creatives that we work with and you, our cherished audience. It is also the only option that ensures the company can survive and continue into the future. It will be an extraordinarily difficult year ahead for the company, many other people in the entertainment industry, other affected industries and, particularly, for those faced with the very real consequences of this pandemic.

The good news is that we will return and rise again. We will be bringing you our production of Macbeth next summer. This year's production is merely postponed. The pre-production work looks excellent and our tour this year was set to be our best to date. We will be working together with our venues to reschedule bookings; I cannot wait to bring you this production in 2021.

More good news. Later this year, once we are safely able to do so, we will be bringing you a new and exciting event. At select venues throughout the country, we will present an evening in conversation with the Artistic Director, where we will take you behind the scenes of *The Lord Chamberlain's Men*. The history of the company from 1594 to now will be brought to life, you will get an exclusive look at how our productions go from page to stage and there will be an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the company's work. There will be production photography, video footage, anecdotes from 15 years of life on the road and an opportunity to see some of our fantastic hand-made costumes and props from previous shows up close. This will enable us to see you this year and give you an exciting and interesting insight into how we do what we do. We will provide you with more details on this soon.

If you have already bought a ticket you will be able to get a full refund, please contact your ticket provider to organise this. Once you have received your refund, we ask if you would consider donating the amount you paid for your ticket to help the company. We have set up a gofundme page and ask, if you are able to, to donate the cost of your ticket or whatever you can. This page is open to all and, if you haven't bought a ticket yet but would like to help, please do consider donating. We will use the money raised to meet any production costs already incurred, costs that are yet to come and to support those already attached to the production who may be out of work for some time.

Keep up to date with the company, our upcoming event and next year's tour of *Macbeth* by signing up to the mailing list on our website or liking and following us on social media.

"To be or not to be" is the question we have recently had to ask ourselves and as a company we have taken the decision to close in the short term so that we can still "be" in the future. We hope that you understand this decision. It has been a difficult one to arrive at but is the best and safest decision all round.

We will see you again soon. In the meantime, please take care.

Very best wishes,

Peter Stickney
Artistic Director