

James Dacre

Director



“ A brilliant, formidable new production by James Dacre of Verdi’s *Macbeth*, that hauls the piece into the present day... one of ETO’s finest recent achievements”

The Guardian

James Dacre is an Olivier and UK Theatre Award winning Director and Creative Producer who recently founded production company Living Productions. He was Artistic Director of Royal & Derngate Theatres for ten celebrated years from 2013-2023 and acted as Guest Festival Director for Nevill Holt Opera in 2024. He is Chair of Theatre503, a Board Director of Spirit of 2012, a Trustee for The Theatres Trust and Talawa Theatre Company and a Franco-British Young Leader.

James brings a versatile musical sensibility to all his work. Recent opera directing ranges from an acclaimed tour of Verdi’s *Macbeth* (English Touring Opera) to a new operatic staging of Derek Jarman’s *Modern Nature* (The Barbican). Recent concert and cabaret stagings range from Noël Coward’s song cycle *A Most Marvellous Party* with Nicky Spence, Mary Bevan and Joseph Middleton (Wigmore Hall and touring) to Peter Gregson’s *Concrete Voids* with Aurora Orchestra (Queen Elizabeth Hall) and Gavin Bryars’ *After the Rain* (King’s Place). Recent music theatre directing ranges from Jessica Walker’s *Scene Unseen* (ETO) and Alecky Blythe’s *Family Business* with music by Adam Cork (BBC Radio 4) to a new beatbox musical adaptation of Michael Rosen’s *Unexpected Twist* by Roy Williams, Yaya Bey and Conrad Murray (UK Tour).

His musical collaborations include new work by composers including Orlando Gough, Elena Langer, Anne Dudley, Donna McKevitt, Max Richter, Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, Kele Okereke, White Lies, These New Puritans, Simon Fisher Turner, Valgeir Sigurðsson, Martha Wainwright, Guy Chambers and Rachel Portman amongst others. He recently released a charity compilation album of music that he’s commissioned for

theatre called *INCIDENTAL: Music for the Stage*.

In theatre James has directed extensively across the West End and at venues including The National Theatre, The Southbank Centre, The Royal Exchange, Hackney Empire, Theatre Royal Stratford East, The Barbican, The Traverse and four productions at Shakespeare’s Globe. World premieres of new work include Katori Hall’s *The Mountaintop* (Olivier Award) and *Our Lady of Kibeho* (Olivier Award Nominee); Anthony McCarten’s *The Two Popes* (subsequently adapted into the Oscar, Golden Globe and BAFTA-nominated film); T.S. Eliot’s *Four Quartets* with Ralph Fiennes; Arthur Miller’s *The Hook* (UK Theatre Award); Peter Whelan’s *The Herbal Bed* (UK Theatre Award); Ella Hickson’s *Precious Little Talent* (London Theatre Award) and Dan O’Brien’s *The Body of an American* (Evening Standard Award nominee).

James is also a Trustee of Britain’s primary Black-led theatre company, [Talawa](#), a Board Director of the Olympics legacy charity [Spirit of 2012](#) and a [Franco-British Young Leader](#), promoting greater cultural exchange with France.

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