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Theatres Trust announces 24 influential new Ambassadors committed to championing the past, present and future of live theatre

Jude Law, David Morrissey, Gemma Arterton, Beverley Knight, Meera Syal, Miranda Hart, Lenny Henry and Cameron Mackintosh amongst those adding their voice to the vital work of the Theatres Trust

Theatres Trust is proud to announce its first ever list of Ambassadors who will work with the organisation to ensure the UK's theatres are protected and secured for future generations to enjoy.

Theatres Trust promotes great theatre buildings through advising, funding and campaigning on behalf of theatres across the UK. In 2017, the Trust worked with around 350 theatres and hundreds of community groups and industry professionals to ensure current and future generations have access to good quality theatre buildings where they can be inspired by, and enjoy, live theatre.

Celebrated names adding their voice in support of the work of the Theatres Trust include senior industry members, theatre makers and distinguished actors working in stage, film and TV:

Samira Ahmed, Gemma Arterton, Alan Ayckbourn, Michael Ball, Pippa Bennett-Warner, Matthew Bourne, Jo Brand, Alexandra Burke, Jack Dee, Mel Giedroyc, David Hare, Miranda Hart, Lenny Henry, Beverley Knight, Kwame Kwei-Armah, Jude Law, Cameron Mackintosh, David Morrissey, Bill Nighy, Elaine Paige, Siobhan Redmond, Tim Rice, John Simm and Meera Syal

Actor **Jude Law** says, "As a child I was taken to the theatre regularly: To more intimate spaces like the Young Vic, Greenwich Playhouse, the Bush, and the Gate and also historic and magnificent spaces, such as the National Theatre and Wyndham's Theatre. Sharing the experience of live performance with others made me feel like a part of a community and was fundamental in building in me a sense of who I was as a person.

It encouraged my imagination. Performance can explain situations that are hard to articulate. You see what we can do to each other and learn to understand each other.

As an actor, the experience of working on stage has always been the highlight of my job. There is a chemistry that occurs between audience and performer that bonds you for the duration of the piece which can often be magical.

I am proud to be an ambassador for the Theatres Trust and encourage the preservation and promotion of our theatres. The UK has an important role in celebrating this art form internationally as it plays such a large part of our heritage. Let's start with diversifying our audiences."

Producer and theatre owner **Cameron Mackintosh** says, "When I started as a producer, I never thought I would end up owning some of London's most beautiful theatres. Apart from producing musicals my other passion in life has always been architecture. I discovered putting together a musical and re-inventing an historic building for the 21st century are pretty similar tasks.

To get the best out of a play you have to listen to the author and to get the best out of an old building you have to listen to the original architect. Only then can you bring something fresh and new to the project. The great theatre architects Matcham, Sprague and Phipps had a brilliant grasp of how to bond audiences and players together in an exciting yet cunningly intimate space often on difficult sites and, thanks to the tireless campaigning of the Theatres Trust, we can still enjoy many of these magnificent buildings in a level of comfort never envisaged when they were built 100 years ago.

That so many of these theatres have not only survived but are thriving is a great tribute to the Trust and I am honoured to become an Ambassador."

Singer and Actress **Beverley Knight** says, "As an actress and singer nothing compares to standing on stage and looking out to a packed audience. There is a special connection in that moment which is made even more special by the beauty of these theatre buildings. I am an Ambassador of the Theatres Trust as I want to ensure these buildings remain open for generations to come."

Actor **David Morrissey** says, "I grew up in Liverpool and much of my formative years were spent at the Everyman Theatre, starting in their Youth Theatre. Without great regional theatres like these I may not have gone on to the career I have been fortunate to have. The Theatres Trust work closely with both existing theatres and new theatres to make sure they have the right buildings to serve their communities."

TV and Radio Presenter **Samira Ahmed** says, "Theatres have played a huge part in my life since I was first taken to the Wimbledon Theatre as a schoolchild to see panto and I'm passionate about their importance to British life and identity. I'm a huge supporter of the Theatres Trust campaign to ensure we protect and renew them."

Director of the Theatres Trust, **Jon Morgan** says, "The Theatres Trust is honoured with the support of these influential Ambassadors who believe passionately in the UK's theatres and the role they play in communities, towns and cities across the country. However there is more vital work needed to be done. Our grants programmes are oversubscribed and theatres across the UK continue to close or be under threat of imminent closure or demolition. Theatres Trust seeks to influence and raise additional funds in order to increase the scope of our support by helping an even greater number of theatres. With the assistance of the Ambassadors we hope to secure the future of the UK's great theatres for future generations to enjoy."

Full list of Ambassador quotes, biographies and images:

theatrestrust.org.uk/about-us/our-ambassadors

Video interviews with new Ambassadors Michael Ball and Alexandra Burke:

Michael Ball: <https://youtu.be/LP7BSvh67os>

Alexandra Burke: <https://youtu.be/g5bUB2VoU64>

More information on the Theatres Trust:

theatrestrust.org.uk

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Protecting theatres
for **everyone**



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Theatres Trust is the national advisory public body for theatres. We believe that current and future generations should have access to good quality theatre buildings where they can be inspired by, and enjoy, live theatre. We champion the past, present and future of live theatre, by protecting the buildings and what goes on inside. We do this through providing advice on planning and development, supplying resources and advice to make theatres sustainable and offering financial assistance through grants. We help people discover more about theatres and campaign for theatres at risk. theatrestrust.org.uk