

WESTON PLAYHOUSE THEATRE COMPANY
LONDON THEATRE TOUR
November 6 - 15, 2018

DRAFT ITINERARY

*All events subject to change, owing to performance schedules and availability of guest speakers;
all times are approximate until the final itinerary is published.*

Tuesday 6 November

- 7:30am *We recommend Flight BA0238/AA6175, departing Boston Logan for London Heathrow. Steve Stettler will be on this flight and will meet all tour members at the gate. Members arriving at other times/from other airports must arrange their own transport to the hotel.*
- 6:50pm **Arrive** at Heathrow Terminal 5 and transfer by private coach to **The Montague on the Gardens**, a 4-star hotel adjacent to the famed British Museum in tranquil, park-filled Bloomsbury. With its historic Georgian architecture and handsomely landscaped private gardens, the Montague offers maximum comfort and superior service within easy access of London's main attractions. Rooms available for **check-in** upon arrival.
- 10pm **Welcome**: We gather in the hotel conservatory with Tour Director Giles Ramsay for drinks and a late bite to eat, as he distributes tickets and welcome packets and provides a **briefing** on all aspects of the tour.

Wednesday 7 November

- 10:30am **Lecture/Orientation**: Giles will present a brief **lecture** on one of the playwrights whose work will be featured during our trip, followed by an optional **walking tour** of the neighborhood, pointing out ATM's, tube stations, shops, cafes, and other favorite spots.
- 1:30pm Coach departs for **Performance One: A VERY VERY VERY DARK MATTER** by Martin McDonagh at Sir Nicholas Hytner's thrilling new theatre, **The Bridge**. In a townhouse in Copenhagen works Hans Christian Andersen, a teller of exquisite and fantastic children's tales beloved by millions. But the true source of his stories dwells in his attic upstairs, her existence a dark secret kept from the outside world. As dangerous, twisted, and funny as his National Theatre and Broadway hit, *The Pillowman*, McDonagh's new play travels deep into the abysses of the imagination.
- 7:30pm Coach departs for a convivial **Welcome Dinner**, perhaps at **Clos Maggiore** in nearby Covent Garden. Echoing the charming country inns of Provence and Tuscany, Clos Maggiore's warmly muted décor, low lighting and welcoming log fire provide a romantic setting for its seasonally inspired classic French cuisine coupled with impeccable service. Get to know one another over wine and fine food as we conclude our first day in London.

Thursday 8 November

- 10am **The State We Are In**. We meet in the conservatory with a **leading political journalist** to discuss British, European, and American politics, including Brexit, Trump, Russia, etc. – always a lively and thought-provoking exchange.

AFTERNOON FREE – a perfect time to take in an exhibition at a favorite museum.

6:45pm Coach departs for **Performance Two:** Marianne Elliott directs **COMPANY**, Stephen Sondheim and George Furth's musical comedy about life, love, and marriage at **the Gielgud Theatre** on London's West End. Elliott (*War Horse, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, Angels in America*) presents this iconic musical with the lead role of "Bobby" reimagined for the first time as a woman. Rosalie Craig stars as "Bobbi" and Tony and Olivier Award-winner Patti LuPone is Joanne.

Friday 9 November

9:45am Coach departs for a **private tour of Southside House** in Wimbledon. Described by connoisseurs as an unforgettable experience, Southside House provides an enchantingly eccentric backdrop to the lives and loves of generations of the Pennington Mellor Munthe families. Maintained in traditional style without intrusive refurbishment and crowded with centuries of art and family possessions, Southside offers a wealth of fascinating stories. The house has associations with Queen Natalie of Serbia and her son Alexander, and the family also have mementos from the Duke of Wharton, Lady Hamilton and others. A **sandwich lunch** follows at a local pub across the Green from Southside.

6:30pm Coach departs **Performance Three: EAR FOR EYE**, Debbie Tucker Green's startling new play about race, at the famed **Royal Court Theatre** in stately Sloane Square, where the English Stage Company continues a 60-year tradition as the country's major focus for new writing. Patience is running out, times have changed. And progress isn't enough. Black British. African American. Here. There. Now.

Saturday 10 November

10am **Discussion Session with Steve Stettler.** A chance to talk with members of the group about the first three productions we have seen. Compare opinions and sharpen your critical skills in a friendly and stimulating atmosphere. Followed at 11am by a **Guest Speaker**, an actor, director, playwright or designer from one of our chosen productions.

1:00pm Coach departs for **Performance Four:** A major new revival of Friedrich Schiller's **DON CARLOS** starring Tom Burke at the **Rose Theatre Kingston**. This great romantic drama forms part of the celebrated Rose's 10th anniversary season in Southwest London. A double edge story of loyalty, love, and friendship, and the abuses of power and statesmanship, *Don Carlos* is as resonant today as it was in its time. Famed Israeli theatre director Gadi Roll brings his trademark dynamic imagery and haunting soundscapes to Schiller's masterpiece.

EVENING FREE – perhaps enjoy a special dinner at one of London's fine restaurants and/or a West End hit of your own choosing.

Sunday 11 November

TBD Enjoy a **classical concert** at one of London's finest concert halls such as the Barbican, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Royal Albert Hall, Royal Festival Hall, or Wigmore Hall.

MORNING or AFTERNOON and EVENING FREE – we'll provide a list of attractions, exhibits and performances available at this time.

Monday 12 November

MORNING & AFTERNOON FREE – a good time for a quick day trip out of London.

- 6:15pm Coach departs for **Performance Five**: Perhaps at the flagship of British Theatre, the **Royal National Theatre**, based in a magnificent 3-stage complex on London's lively South Bank, the home of international hits like *War Horse* and *One Man/Two Guvnors*. Followed by a brief **post-performance discussion** with a member of the cast.

Tuesday 13 November

- 10:30am Meet with a **Guest Speaker** linked to one of the productions that we will be seeing.

AFTERNOON FREE – perhaps to visit an historic site or enjoy a London Walk.

- 6:15pm Coach departs for **Performance Six**: Perhaps a new show at one of London's hottest theatres, the smartly renovated **Almeida Theatre** in tony Islington, or London's newest theatre, the stunning **Hampstead Theatre** in Swiss Cottage. Under the dynamic leadership of artistic directors Rupert Goold and Edward Hall, the Almeida and the Hampstead are attracting major artists and a hip, vibrant audience to their stylish spaces and offbeat locations, sending productions like *King Charles III* and *Chariots of Fire* to the West End and Broadway.

Wednesday 14 November

- 10:30am **Discussion Session with Steve Stettler**. A chance to discuss the last three plays we've seen. Followed by the ever-popular **Critical Round-Up**, where you can compare your views with one of London's leading reviewers (finish 12:30pm).

AFTERNOON FREE – a last chance to shop, take in a matinee, or begin to pack.

- 6:45pm We travel by coach for a special **Farewell Dinner** at **The Goring Hotel**, the last remaining family-owned hotel in London, located in the shadow of Buckingham Palace in elegant Belgravia. With its Michelin starred restaurant and its century-old reputation for impeccable manners and a subtle streak of wit and wonder, The Goring is the only hotel to have been awarded a Royal Warrant by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. We dine in the private Garden Room – a sumptuous space that features its own conservatory with a sliding wall of glass, leading out to The Goring Gardens. Enjoy a final opportunity to share the company of friends both old and new and to toast a memorable time together in London.

Thursday 15 November

- 8:00am **Departure for US** (*coaching guaranteed only to coincide with the group flight*). Luggage outside rooms at 7am for porter pick-up, then an 8am coach departure for the airport, with check-in assistance from Giles and Steve. Group flight BA0213/AA6164 departs Heathrow Terminal 5 at 11:15am for Boston, arriving 1:55pm at Terminal E.

LONDON THEATRE TOUR
prepared expressly for the
WESTON PLAYHOUSE THEATRE COMPANY

SUMMARY

- DATES** November 6 - 15, 2018
- ACCOMMODATION** 9 nights in classic doubles at The Montague on the Gardens, London
- FOOD & DRINK** Full English breakfast daily
Welcome dinner
Lunch at a Wimbledon Pub
Farewell dinner at The Goring Hotel
- PERFORMANCES (6)** A VERY VERY VERY DARK MATTER at The Bridge
COMPANY at the Gielgud Theatre
EAR FOR EYE at the Royal Court Theatre
DON CARLOS at the Rose Theatre Kingston
TBA at the Royal National Theatre
TBA at the Almeida Theatre or the Hampstead Theatre
- DISCUSSIONS (8)** Lecture with Giles Ramsay
The State We Are In: Journalist TBA
2 Group Discussions with Steve Stettler
3 Meetings with actors and other theatre artists
Critical Round-Up
- OTHER EVENTS (2)** Concert TBA
Private Tour of Southside House
- COACHING** To and from London airport for one recommended group flight only, all sight-seeing excursions, and all events not within easy walking distance of the hotels. Please note we do not provide coaching to optional events, or to or from the airport for flights other than the recommended flight.

ABOUT OUR TOUR GUIDE

*Our professional tour guide will again be **Giles Ramsay**. A former director of London Arts Discovery Tours, Giles runs independent cultural tours for North American non-profit theatres and for the U.S.-based Elderhostel/Road Scholar. He is the Founding Director of Developing Artists which specializes in creating new work with artists in developing countries. A Fellow of St. Chad's College, Durham University, Giles is Course Leader in Theatre at The Victoria and Albert Museum in London.*

www.gilesramsay.co.uk