

THE OLD VIC

What's Inside

(RUMBLE OF TRAFFIC)

Whenever I leave home and I know that I'm going to the Old Vic specifically, just excitement, and also really safe in the knowledge that I know that I'm totally welcome there.

There's so many different elements to accessibility, it can be a bit daunting at times but it can be so easy to make mistakes. You know, it's inclusive to everyone – the theatre is for everyone, so we really need to make sure that we're reflecting that.

To turn round the corner and see this incredible new entrance and to see that they've not tried to hide it away, you know, it had been made as grand as the main entrance was incredible and it really made me feel like I was as equal as everyone else.

Welcome to the new entrance to the Old Vic on Waterloo Road. From here, you can take the stairs or the wheelchair accessible lift down to the Penny bar and café, where you will also find lots of new loos.

If you take the stairs or the lift up, you'll arrive at the new inner foyer where, if you don't have an e-ticket, you can collect your paper tickets from the box office and gain step-free access to both sides of the auditorium stalls.

(HUM OF CONVERSATIONS)

As a young black man living in London, I feel like it's important for people of different diversities, culture, ethnicities to be represented in the arts or to do the arts. It shows that there is a pathway for them to get there.

There's a quote inside the foyer, which I always look at. It says, "Dare, always dare." Seeing that really ignited a fire in me, I'd say. To me, it was a message saying, "Never be afraid to fail, don't let fear take over and always believe in yourself."

The Old Vic has been such a positive influence on my life and it's somewhere where I've really grown. The way they accommodate you as a person, they really go out of their way to listen to you.

This is the new inner foyer. From here, there is step-free access to both sides of the auditorium. To my right, you'll see the box office, and beyond that you'll find additional seating. Opposite me, you'll see the wheelchair accessible lift and three steps down to the foyer, where you'll find the cloakroom and the foyer bar.

(HUM OF CONVERSATIONS)

When Richard was younger, accessibility was unheard of, so it was a really difficult time because it curtailed our whole enjoyment of life. How could we go to the theatre as a family if Richard was denied access?

When we go to the Old Vic, it's like a home-from-home. I think that they have pulled out all the stops.

When you have a life beset by challenges, you do need somewhere to go and escape and to have a feeling of lightness, and the theatre takes Richard out of himself. It takes me out of myself, and for that short period of time, it doesn't matter what the world has to throw at you because you're in the theatre and you're in your safe place.

Welcome to the new Penny bar and café. Just in front of Richard is the new accessible bar, and beyond that, seating options to cater for everyone.

There are lots of loos on this level, including a wheelchair accessible loo, two accessible roomier loos, baby-changing facilities and a gender-neutral cubicle.

(HUM OF CONVERSATIONS)

They say that first impressions are everything and it's the whole experience of going to the theatre that means something.

For some people, it's their first time, and as you walk through those doors, you want to feel like you're walking in to a piece of history. To have a space where you can come in and be like, "Ah! This is for me, too!" will have a lasting impact.

I don't really feel like I fit into many of the social boxes in any way, and to feel in a space where I'm included is, just on a personal note, it's just really enriching. It means everything to me.

This is the Old Vic auditorium. The Old Vic can offer up to ten wheelchair spaces with step-free access available on both sides of the stalls. The nearest accessible loo is situated to the left of the stalls. In addition, there are headsets available for visually impaired patrons and special closed-captioned performances can be booked in each production run.

Find out more about touch tours and relaxed performances on the Old Vic website.

There's always a sense of anticipation before the curtains go up. Everyone's just chatting, speaking about what they think the show might be. You hear sweets rustling, everyone trying to get in their last drink... (LAUGHING) ..before the curtain goes up. Then everything goes quiet, cos you know that it's about to start.

(APPLAUSE)

And then the show begins.