



Lockdown culture

Hottest front-room seats: the best theatre and dance to watch online



Chris Wiegand *Stage editor*

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Musicals: The Greatest Show

With dozens of stars and thousands of spotlights, [Sheridan Smith](#) hosts a celebration of

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the 1980s and includes *True Born Englishman*, about a Buckingham Palace footman, which was never aired by the BBC and now gets its world premiere. Filmed on stage at the Theatre Royal Windsor, the monologues are performed by Jon Culshaw, Matthew Kelly, Jemma Redgrave and Adrian Scarborough. [Streaming until 31 July](#). [Read the full review](#).

Crips Without Constraints: Part Two

Graeae's *Crips Without Constraints* was one of the best series of lockdown shorts in 2020 and the company is back with [a new set of five videos](#) by disabled writers and directors. All of the films are captioned and audio-described. On Thursdays, accompanying vodcasts are released to explore the themes in that week's play. The first film, *How Do You Make a Cup of Tea?* by Kellan Frankland, stars Harriet Walter and Mandy Colleran. In the vodcast, the actors Nadia Nadarajah and Sophie Stone discuss casting and authenticity in theatre. Later videos star Naomi Wirthner, Julie Graham and Sharon D Clarke. Available until 23 May. [Read the full review](#).

The Color Purple

Leicester's Curve and Birmingham Hippodrome remount their soaring 2019 musical based on Alice Walker's landmark epistolary novel. This concert version is again directed by Tinueke Craig and stars T'Shan Williams as Celie, the young woman who writes letters to God about the abuse she has experienced. [Until 7 March](#).

Hymn

In Lolita Chakrabarti's new play two men meet at a funeral and their family lives become entangled. The Almeida's production, directed by Blanche McIntyre, designed by Miriam Buether and starring Adrian Lester and Danny Sapani, was due to open for socially distanced audiences at the Almeida at the end of January. It will now be [live-streamed instead](#) for five performances only, 17-20 February. [Read the full review](#).

May Contain Food

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▲ Emily Redpath and Sam Tutty in Romeo & Juliet. Photograph: Ryan Metcalfe

Derek Jacobi is the narrator while Sam Tutty and Emily Redpath play Shakespeare's star-crossed lovers in a new production set in the aftermath of a pandemic, which brings an extra dimension to the masked ball scene. Directed by Nick Evans, it was [made at whirlwind speed](#) during lockdown with actors mostly filmed individually against a green screen. The final version uses CGI lighting and scenery including the backdrop of a stage and auditorium. [Online until 20 February](#). [Read the full review](#).

Wild Time

A Midsummer Night's Dream is one of the Shakespeares that's done to death but you'll have never encountered it quite like this. Rose Biggin and Keir Cooper have created a [theatrical novel](#) from the play, promising "humour, mythology and erotic acrobatics on an astronomical scale". If you purchase a copy of the book from Camden People's theatre you also get an invite to a live online discussion on 25 February in which the duo will talk to director and dramaturg Emma Jude Harris about their work.

Emilia

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creator Russell T Davies chats to Julie Hesmondhalgh, Pose's Ryan Jamaal Swain will be discussing his career as a dancer and writer, and local company Green Carnation share a series of monologues, Queer All About It. Plus drag star Divina De Campo is joined by special guests for two shows directed by Kirk Jameson.

Northern Ballet

Yorkshire's high-flying ballet company presents a pay-what-you-can [digital season](#) including short new premieres and the full version of Cathy Marston's acclaimed regal spectacular Victoria. Choreographer Kenneth Tindall and film-maker Dan Lowenstein collaborate on Northern Lights, which brings dancers to the streets of Leeds, and Tindall's Have Your Cake takes inspiration from the nation baking banana bread in lockdown. Ballet Black's Mthuthuzeli November presents What Used To, No Longer Is, choreographed and created entirely remotely. Films will be released fortnightly until 19 March.

National Theatre at Home

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Msamati and the Donmar's Coriolanus with Tom Hiddleston as well as new writing including Lucy Kirkwood's Mosquitoes and Shahid Hadeem's Dara. New plays are added to the collection each month. The latest are Tony Kushner's two-part epic Angels in America; Antigone starring two time lords, Christopher Eccleston and Jodie Whittaker; and Behind the Beautiful Forevers, based on the book by Katherine Boo and starring Meera Syal.

The Long Goodbye: Livestream Edition

"Do they ever ask you where you're from? Like yeah but where you really from? I mean the question seems simple but the answer's kinda long." So begins Riz Ahmed's hypnotic half-hour companion piece to the Manchester International festival stage show that was postponed by the pandemic. Directed by Kirsty Housley, and shot in often extreme closeup in a deserted venue in San Francisco, it's an exhilarating experience thanks to an immersive sound design by Gareth Fry and Ahmed's abundant storytelling skill. Backstage, Ahmed says he goes into performance like going into battle and this is both furious and fierce, but also funny and full of considered reflections on belonging. [Until 1 March.](#)

#QueertheBallet

"When I speak to queer women ballet dancers," says choreographer Adriana Pierce, "the number one dream they (we) all have is to do pas de deux work with other women. This is simply not a common practice in ballet choreography." Pierce takes steps towards changing all that with her project #QueertheBallet featuring a duet between American Ballet Theatre's Remy Young and Sierra Armstrong, developed during a residency at the Bridge Street theatre in Catskill, New York. [Available on YouTube, 25-28 February.](#)

The Whip

[Juliet Gilkes Romero](#) won the Alfred Fagon award in 2020 for The Whip, her play about ~~10th-century slavery-abolition legislation which included a bill amounting to a £20bn~~

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The Poltergeist

Joseph Potter gives a tour-de-force performance in Philip Ridley's new play, portraying every guest at a family garden party that descends into chaos. Directed by [Wiebke Green](#), the play crackles with imagination as despair and rage erupt among the lemon drizzle cakes. Filmed at Southwark Playhouse and streamed in partnership with [Stream Theatre](#), it is [available online](#) until 28 February. [Read the review](#).

Uncle Vanya

Ian Rickson's indelible production of Chekhov's masterpiece, in a new version by Conor McPherson, was a West End sensation at the start of 2020. After it closed early due to the pandemic, Rickson and producer Sonia Friedman reunited most of the cast for this innovative filmed version. Each performance rings true - from Toby Jones in the title role to Aimee Lou Wood's Sonya, Richard Armitage's Astrov and the always excellent Rosalind Eleazar as Yelena. And Bruno Poet's lighting and Rae Smith's set design combine to spellbinding effect. [On BBC iPlayer](#).

Earwig

With the stage out of bounds, theatre-makers are devising ever more creative sonic experiments to be enjoyed at home. Directed by Finn den Hertog and composed and sound-designed by Danny Krass, Earwig is billed as a series of "[audio drama podcasts](#)" from the Tron in Glasgow. There are half a dozen of them, written by playwrights based in Scotland including Stef Smith, Hannah Lavery and Jo Clifford. Designed to be listened to on headphones. [Read the full review](#).

Dancing Nation

Sadler's Wells and the BBC have assembled a staggering lineup for this dance festival, available in three episodes on iPlayer, each combining interviews and performances. Where to start? Akram Khan and Natalia Osipova perform together for the first time, Shobana Jeyasingh's timely [Contagion](#) explores the flu pandemic of 1918 and Matsena Productions' [Shades of Blue](#) takes stock of Covid and the Black Lives Matter

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▲ Richard Blackwood in Typical. Photograph: Franklyn Rodgers

In 2019, Richard Blackwood gave a compelling performance at the Edinburgh fringe and Soho theatre in a monologue retelling the story of British-Nigerian Christopher Alder, the decorated paratrooper from Hull who died while handcuffed on the floor of a Humberside police station in 1998. Now, the acclaimed play by Ryan Calais Cameron has been turned into a film directed by Anastasia Osei-Kuffour. It explores, [says the playwright](#), “the negotiations that black people need to make in order to do things that seem simple to others”. [Released on 24 February](#).

Living Record Festival

Creating digital performance has been a learning curve for theatre-makers during the pandemic and this eclectic multi-arts lineup, writes Mark Fisher, gives “a sense of

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and Tom Black (as a police archivist). It's the second creation from [Jury Games](#) whose debut, [Jury Duty](#), is still available online. [Read the full review.](#)

Myths and Adventures from Ancient Greece

▲ Myths and Adventures from Ancient Greece, designed by Sam Wilde

If home-schooling feels like opening a Pandora's box, well, here's a fun way to help your kids engage with the Greek myths on the curriculum. Hannah Khalil has created new versions of the tales of Pandora, Persephone, King Midas and Theseus and the Minotaur. They're intended for those aged three to eight but will appeal to older viewers too. Available [on YouTube from Waterman's Arts Centre](#), they are staged by the director Ian Nicholson and designer Sam Wilde, who brightened up lockdown with

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Gary McNair and Frances Poet. It kicks off with Ravenhill's autobiographical Angela on 26 March.

Shook

▲ Josh Finan and Ivan Oyik in Shook. Photograph: Tristram Kenton/The Guardian

One of 2019's most acclaimed playwriting debuts, *Shook* by Samuel Bailey, won the Papatango New Writing prize. It was staged that year at Southwark Playhouse but its West End transfer was derailed by the pandemic. Now, the production has been filmed, with Josef Davies, Josh Finan and Ivan Oyik reprising their roles as teenagers inside a young offenders' institution who are due to become fathers while serving their sentences. Andrea Hall plays the teacher who runs their parenting classes. George

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Swimming Home

Goggles and headphones at the ready! With theatres and swimming pools closed for many of us, here's a show that combines both. It's a 35-minute experience created by Silvia Mercuriali who intends to transform your home into "a poetic space where the taps are waterfalls and the bath a primordial broth from which anything can emerge". You perform it yourself in the bathroom, following audio instructions. [Until 15 June](#).

Tales from the Front Line ... and Other Stories

The experience of black frontline workers during the Covid-19 crisis is brought to harrowing life in this series of short plays from Talawa theatre company, using verbatim interviews with teachers, train workers, hospital and supermarket staff. The first two films are [available now](#). Further episodes follow later this year. [Read the full review](#).

Huddle

The Unicorn and Filskit Theatre have created a new online version of their superb production about penguin love in a cold climate. Narrated by Madeline Appiah for an audience of two- to five-year-olds, it's the tale of an Emperor penguin raising a chick and features imaginative animated surprises. Available to watch [on the Guardian website](#) until 31 March.

What the Constitution Means to Me

Heidi Schreck's phenomenal Broadway show has received [five-star reviews](#) from Guardian critics on both sides of the Atlantic. Now available to stream [from Amazon](#), it charts what the supreme law of the US has meant to generations of women, as Schreck recreates the debating competitions she took part in as a teenager. Directed by Marielle Heller, it's shatteringly funny, deeply disturbing yet imbued with optimism.

The Cost of Living

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▲ DV8's *The Cost of Living*. Photograph: Channel 4

As a tribute to the acclaimed disabled dancer [David Toole](#), who died in October, the physical theatre company DV8 have shared their multi-award-winning 2004 film *The Cost of Living* [online](#). Shot on location at a faded seaside resort in Norfolk, it follows two street performers (Toole and Eddie Kay) in a portrait of friendship and prejudice, brimming with spellbinding images. Available on DV8's Media Portal for a small membership fee. Unmissable.

Pippin

They've got magic to do, just for you: the original 1980 Broadway production of the Tony award-winning musical, with catchy songs by Stephen Schwartz and some ~~delicious moves by Bob Fosse, is available to stream on Amazon. Ben Vereen is the~~

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radio, with a cast of community and professional actors for York Theatre Royal's Collective Acts project.

An American in Paris

▲ An American In Paris at the Dominion theatre, London, in 2017. Photograph: Tristram Kenton/The Guardian

Feted at the Châtelet in Paris in 2014, Christopher Wheeldon's resplendent staging of the Gershwins' classic went on to conquer Broadway and the West End. It's available on a new streaming platform, [Stage2View.com](https://www.stage2view.com), which also offers the musicals *Kinky Boots* and *42nd Street*, as well as Michael Grandage's Mark Rothko drama *Red*, starring Alfred Molina as the artist

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When we die, what becomes of our digital identity? Do all those tweets and posts endure for eternity - and who decides? The site-specific theatre company Dante or Die asked such questions, and many more, in a thoughtful and funny 2018 show by Chris Goode that was staged in cafes. It has now been reimagined as a 50-minute video podcast, available from [the Guardian](#) until 10 March.

Flight Paths

This production by the theatre company Extant celebrates the rich history of Goze, itinerant blind performers who traditionally travelled around Japan to bring audiences a vast selection of stories - accompanied by music played on their shamisen stringed instruments. [Flight Paths](#) fuses old and new, bringing together archive material about the Goze, animation and filmed modern performance, in an accessible hourlong digital experience.

good dog

Arinzé Kene's poetic 2017 play good dog posed [unanswered questions](#) about the UK's summer riots of 2011. Revived for a tour last year, it has now been adapted as a superb [20-minute film](#), directed by Andrew Gillman and Natalie Ibu for [Tiata Fahodzi](#). Anton Cross stars as a man looking back on his youth, his neighbours and his community. The film was commissioned by The Space and supported by BBC and Arts Council England.

Charlotte Holmes: Adventure Box

Lockdown restrictions and cancelled travel plans have narrowed horizons for little adventurers. So this "seven-day theatrical experience" for families is both a delight and a relief. Created by Huddersfield's [Lawrence Batley theatre](#), [the Dukes in Lancaster](#) and theatre producers [the Big Tiny](#), it's a series of mysteries encountered by Charlotte, a young girl evacuated to Yorkshire during the second world war. You solve the puzzles by watching jaunty online videos and opening up the envelopes and parcels inside an adventure box sent to you in the post when you book. The Big Tiny's follow-up, [Balthazar Snandragon](#) is just as fun. [Read the full review](#)

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▲ Lin-Manuel Miranda and Phillipa Soo in Hamilton. Photograph: AP

Lin-Manuel Miranda's phenomenal, Pulitzer prize-winning musical about the "10-dollar founding father without a father" was filmed over three nights in New York in 2016 with the original Broadway cast. Slated for a 2021 cinema release, it was instead [fast-tracked](#) on to the [Disney+ streaming service](#). It's directed by Thomas Kail, who staged the musical, and according to Miranda gives "everyone the best seat in the house". Watch it once and, to quote Jonathan Groff's frothing King George III, You'll Be Back. [Read the full, five-star review.](#)

As Waters Rise

Ben Weatherill's play is set in the year 2025 when a flood has left Britain in a state of emergency. Originally planned for a stage production, it is now a three-part audio

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Jonathon Young's [five-star show Revisor; Where I Go \(When I Can't Be Where I Am\)](#), about living with chronic pain, conceived and directed by Rachel Bagshaw and written by Chris Thorpe; and Corey Baker's marvellous mini Swan Lake, [performed in dancers' baths](#).

First, Do No Harm

Sharon D Clarke has portrayed a long line of memorable characters but this is something else. In a [new short play by Bernardine Evaristo](#), directed by Adrian Lester, Clarke speaks for the National Health Service and those who work for it, reflecting on the NHS's past and future. As she proudly says: "I am one of the best things that has ever happened." First, Do No Harm is part of a series celebrating the NHS entitled [The Greatest Wealth](#), curated for the Old Vic by Lolita Chakrabarti. The [Old Vic](#) is also pioneering socially distanced live performances and rehearsed readings as well as archive recordings of past productions.

Nine Lives

Slam poet and playwright [Zodwa Nyoni](#) was born in Zimbabwe and grew up in Yorkshire. The locations are combined in her vivid 2016 monologue, in which Lladel Bryant plays Ishmael, a young gay Zimbabwean who flees homophobic violence in his home country and seeks asylum in the UK where he is dispersed to Leeds. Alex Chisholm's hour-long production, [available on YouTube](#), was recorded at the Arcola theatre in London.

The Lord Chamberlain's Men

The all-male theatre company, known for touring open-air Shakespeare productions around the UK, has postponed its Macbeth until next year but shared two past productions on [YouTube](#) and on their website: [The Tempest](#), staged in 2018, and [A Midsummer Night's Dream](#), presented last year to mark the company's 15th birthday. They encourage you to recreate the spirit of their productions at home - "whether it is ~~on a picnic blanket in your living room or under the stars wrapped up warm" - and~~

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WeRNotVirus

Directed by Jennifer Tang and Anthony Lau, this series of 10 short dramas by [Moongate Productions](#) and [Omnibus theatre](#) explores the pandemic of racism exacerbated by Covid-19 and enacted against Britain's east and south-east Asian communities. With pieces by writers including Oladipo Agboluaje, Nemo Martin and Lucy Chau Lai-Tuen, it amounts to two hours of theatre on film that incorporates animation, poetry, music and dance. [Some catchup videos available on YouTube.](#) [Read the full review.](#)

Scenes for Survival

The [National Theatre of Scotland](#) was among the first theatres to announce a lockdown programme of work responding to the pandemic. Its growing collection of short films is designed to offer audiences "hope and joy". There's Brian Cox as Ian Rankin's Edinburgh detective John Rebus, Two Doors Down's Jonathan Watson as a shipyard electrician suffering from exposure to asbestos and Kate Dickie as brilliant as ever in a monologue by Jenni Fagan. The lineup of Scottish talent is extraordinary - Tam Dean Burn, Rona Munro and Douglas Henshall all contribute - and don't miss Janey Godley's two-hander with her adorable sausage dog. [Read the full review.](#)

Anansi the Spider Re-Spun

The Unicorn theatre presents a digital theatre series inspired by its superb 2019 production Anansi the Spider. Three tales about the mischievous folkloric webspinner, for audiences aged three to eight, reunite the original cast of the production, Afia Abusham, Juliet Okotie and Sapphire Joy, who filmed themselves performing at home. The films will be available to watch until 31 March on the Unicorn's [YouTube channel](#), which also has theatrical readings from Philip Pullman's Grimm Tales, featuring performers including Nadia Albina and Susan Wokoma.

Matthew Bourne's The Red Shoes

One of the major dance productions cut short by the coronavirus crisis was Matthew Bourne's tour of [The Red Shoes](#). ~~his rapturously received version of the Powell and~~

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▲ Ashley Shaw (Victoria Page) in *The Red Shoes* by Matthew Bourne at Sadler's Wells. Photograph: Tristram Kenton/The Guardian

Pass Over

Antoinette Nwandu's blistering, Beckettian play about police brutality was filmed at Chicago's Steppenwolf theatre by Spike Lee for this 75-minute version, which crackles with humour, tension and tragedy. Lee skilfully weaves the audience, and the world outside the theatre, into a work that our critic Arifa Akbar gives five stars. Available on [Amazon Prime](#). [Read the full review](#).

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Puwanarajah and April De Angelis. And Ned Bennett, Blanche McIntyre, Ola Ince and Tinuke Craig are among the directors. [Headlong](#) and Century Films have assembled an extraordinarily talented gang for their 14 short films about lockdown life. On [BBC iPlayer](#). [Read the review](#).

Shakespeare's Globe

▲ Gemma Arterton in *The Duchess of Malfi* at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse in 2014. Photograph: Tristram Kenton/The Guardian

[Itching to get back into that wooden O on the South Bank? Happily, the Globe Player](#)

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years later. This version was shot in a single take in 2011. Directed by Stephens and Andrew Porter, it is available [online to buy](#). Brace yourself.

I Wish I Was a Mountain

With wonder, wit and sophisticated storytelling, performance poet Toby Thompson creates a beautiful show for over-sevens. Thompson steps in and out of his version of Hermann Hesse's fairytale Faldum, riffing with the young audience and spinning a handful of jazz LPs. [I Wish I Was a Mountain](#) embraces big questions about time and contentment. This is a short but profound show, directed by Lee Lyford, hatched by the Egg theatre's [Incubator](#) development programme and cleverly designed by Anisha Fields. [Read the full review](#).

Lyric theatre in Belfast

Belfast's Lyric had to cancel its co-production of 1984 with Bruiser Theatre Company but instead launched the initiative New Speak: Re-imagined, in which Northern Irish talents including Amadan Ensemble, Dominic Montague and Katie Richardson respond to the lockdown crisis. They are being released in episodes [on YouTube](#). The Lyric has also collaborated on a series of five-minute drama commissions for the series Splendid Isolation: Lockdown Drama, available [on BBC iPlayer](#).

Southwark Playhouse

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▲ Wasted at Southwark Playhouse. Photograph: Helen Maybanks

The London theatre has launched a [Southwark Stayhouse](#) streaming programme, available free until it reopens its doors. Offerings include the “[fantastically witty](#)” [Wasted](#), a rock musical about the Brontës, directed by Adam Lenson with music by Christopher Ash and book and lyrics by Carl Miller. There’s also a [Twelfth Night](#) relocated to a music festival, directed by Anna Girvan, and Jesse Briton’s [Bound](#), about a maritime tragedy. A new British musical, [The Sorcerer’s Apprentice](#) by Richard Hough and Ben Morales Frost, had been due to open to the public in January but will

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Artificial Things

Stopgap Dance Company's disabled and non-disabled dancers create a mood of quiet suspension in an abandoned shopping centre in this 25-minute piece, directed by Sophie Fiennes and available [from the Space](#). [Read the full review](#).

Royal Shakespeare Company

Our revels have temporarily ended in theatres but you can watch a groundbreaking effects-laden version of *The Tempest*, with Simon Russell Beale as Prospero, with a subscription (or 14-day free trial) to the online service [Marquee TV](#). *Antony and Cleopatra* with Josette Simon and *Richard II* with David Tennant are two of the other gems in the selection of Royal Shakespeare Company plays available.

Schaubühne

The celebrated Berlin theatre, run by Thomas Ostermeier, is streaming a selection of archive productions, many with English subtitles, and often for one night only. It's a rare opportunity for UK audiences to see works directed by Luc Bondy, Peter Falk and Ostermeier himself. [This month's lineup](#).

Alexander Ekman

Five works by the Swedish choreographer are [on Marquee TV](#), including a new work for the Royal Swedish Ballet, *Eskapist*, which got a five-star review from Lyndsey Winship. On a vast stage, "Ekman offers a bombardment of fantastical images, realised with the help of Danish fashion designer Henrik Vibskov, who does a Mad Hatter's couture party of eccentrically structured silhouettes." Ekman's other works to rent include *Swan Lake* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*. [Read the full review](#).

What the Butler Saw

Joe Orton's final farce, completed in the summer of 1967 just before the playwright's death, is a subversive satire about an irrational world, set in a psychiatrist's consulting room. Rufus Hound dons the white coat as the philandering Dr Prentice in [Nikolai](#)

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▲ Phantom of the Opera at the Royal Albert Hall

Obsession! Haunting ballads! A shattered chandelier! And musical theatre's most famous mask ... Enjoy one of the world's most successful shows, presented at the Royal Albert Hall in 2011, with Ramin Karimloo as the Phantom and Sierra Boggess as Christine, to celebrate its 25th anniversary. The film is available to [rent on Amazon](#). It was also streamed as part of [The Shows Must Go On](#), a series offering a different Andrew Lloyd Webber musical each week.

The Swan

Birmingham Royal Ballet's new director Carlos Acosta has reworked The Dying Swan

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stream a selection of creations from the last 20 years, [available on a pay-what-you-like basis](#).

Now I'm Fine

▲ Mesmerising ... Now I'm Fine.

What better time is there to watch a “grand-scale experimental pop opera about keeping it together”? [Ahomefule J Oluo](#)'s innovative show, staged at Seattle's Moore theatre in 2014, mixes standup-style routines with a mesmerising musical accompaniment and explores his experience of a rare autoimmune disease. It is one of many films, including [Americana Kamikaze](#), that are available to rent or buy from [On the Boards](#). [Read the full review](#).

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The outbreak of homeschooling caused by the coronavirus has found many of us playing the role of teacher while still in our dressing gowns. And here's one unexpected tutor who really commands your attention: Jude Owusu, clad in a dirty bathrobe, with a pen behind his ear and a notepad dangling around his neck. Owusu is Cinna, the poet from Julius Caesar, in this [spellbinding film](#) of Tim Crouch's monologue. [Read the full review.](#)

Alonzo King Lines Ballet

A handful of productions by San Francisco-based choreographer Alonzo King and his marvellous company [Lines Ballet](#) are available to rent on [Marquee TV](#). Dust and Light, Triangle of the Squinches and Scheherazade, all filmed in 2012, showcase the elegant nature of his work, which pushes beyond classical ballet. [Read the full review.](#)

Funny Girl

Showtunes don't get much more defiant or rousing than Don't Rain on My Parade. Sheridan Smith wards off the clouds with a gritty rendition as Fanny Bryce in this production of the classic musical at Manchester's Palace theatre in 2017. It's one of the many productions available to rent from [Digital Theatre](#), whose offerings also include The Crucible starring Richard Armitage at the Old Vic in London, and Maxine Peake's Hamlet at the Royal Exchange in Manchester.

Fragments (Beckett by Brook)

Is there a more fitting playwright for our current moment of isolation, uncertainty and endurance than Beckett? In this production, [filmed at the marvellously atmospheric Bouffes du Nord in Paris in 2015](#), Peter Brook directs five Beckett shorts with a cast of three (Jos Houben, Marcello Magni and Kathryn Hunter). The production comprises Rough for Theatre I, Rockaby, Neither, Come and Go and Act Without Words II. Feel the rising panic and despair in Rockaby as the solitary, wide-eyed Hunter recounts a descent through long, lonely days.

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▲ Sicilian trip ... Palermo Palermo. Photograph: Tristram Kenton/The Guardian

Even by Pina Bausch's standards it's an arresting opening: a huge wall collapses on stage and across the rubble comes [Julie Shanahan](#), in high heels and a floral frock. After desperately commanding hugs from two suitors, she takes a seat and is pelted with rotten tomatoes. And so begins an epic patchwork of masochistic rituals, nightmares and games, blending the quotidian with the phenomenal, all inspired by the choreographer's trip to Sicily. A rare chance to watch one of Bausch's creations [in full and for free online](#).

Oscar Wilde season

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is a gorgeous hymn to barflies, precious memories and the joys of being a ghost, told with a dash of Edgar Allan Poe and Thelonious Monk. It's a glorious get-together of a show, as warming as the whiskey handed out to the audience - but you'll have to pour your own.

Le Patin Libre

Think dance on ice and you'd imagine sequins and staggering TV celebrities, but the Canadian troupe, [Le Patin Libre](#), has taken the art form into a new dimension. In their double bill, [Vertical Influences](#), the skaters turned the rink into a mesmerising stage slowly decorated by the patterns cut by their blades. [Watch the 20-minute short film Vertical on YouTube.](#)

The School for Wives

Travel restrictions needn't prevent you from enjoying international theatre online. Paris's esteemed [Odéon has released its 2018 production](#) of Molière's satirical 1662 comedy of manners and cuckoldry. Claude Duparfait stars as the foolish Arnolphe, and Stéphane Braunschweig directs. English subtitles available, *évidemment*. [Read the full review.](#)

5 Soldiers: The Body Is the Frontline

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▲ 5 Soldiers: The Body Is the Frontline by Rosie Kay. Photograph: Tristram Kenton/The Guardian

Rosie Kay's extraordinary [5 Soldiers: The Body Is the Frontline](#) was staged in army drill halls around the UK, but, since its livestream is still available online, you can watch it from the comfort of your own sofa. Performing in close quarters to a score that mixes punk and opera, Kay's phenomenal company bring home the horror of combat and disarm audiences.

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watched it with in 2014. It's [online in full](#) and offers a raw account of adolescent anxiety, slut-shaming and self-belief. In-your-face theatre that stays in your mind.

John Leguizamo's Latin History for Morons

Self-isolation may mean that many of us will use living rooms to both teach children and watch theatre. An opportunity to combine the two can be found courtesy of the super-charismatic John Leguizamo - an inspirational tutor if ever there was - whose one-man Broadway show, Latin History for Morons, is [on Netflix](#).

Woke

▲ Apphia Campbell in Woke. Photograph: Murdo MacLeod/the Guardian

~~The subscription service LIVED enables you to catch up on theatre in PCO - done virtual~~

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My Left Nut

This is cheating as it's a TV series, but [BBC Three's superb comedy drama](#) is based on one of the most uproarious and affecting fringe theatre shows of recent years. It's inspired by Michael Patrick's own teenage experience of a medical condition that left his testicle "[so big you could play it like a bongo](#)". Wince.

Rosas Danst Rosas

Love dance? Need to exercise at home? Then [join the queen of Belgian avant-garde performance Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker](#) as she talks you through how to perform her 1983 classic, Rosas Danst Rosas. All you need is a chair, a bit of legroom and enough space to swing your hair.

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