
THE SHED Press Release

THE **BLOOMBERG** BUILDING
545 West 30th Street
New York, NY 10001

For more information, please
contact:

Christina Riley
Communications Director
Christina.riley@theshed.org

Tiffanie Yakum
Communications Manager
tiffanie.yakum@theshed.org

**THE SHED AND LONDON THEATRE COMPANY PRESENT THE US
PREMIERE OF DAVID HARE'S NEW PLAY, *STRAIGHT LINE CRAZY*,
STARRING RALPH FIENNES AS ROBERT MOSES**

**Directed by Nicholas Hytner and Jamie Armitage
at The Shed's Griffin Theater, October 18 – December 18, 2022**

“Ralph Fiennes entralls as the man who shaped New York.” (Five stars)
– *The Guardian UK*

“A fascinating true story, and an intriguing parable about the nature of
power and democracy”
– *Time Out London*



Ralph Fiennes as Robert Moses in *Straight Line Crazy*, The Bridge Theatre, London, March 16
– June 18, 2022. Photo: Manuel Harlan. Courtesy The Bridge Theatre.

NEW YORK, NY, June 27, 2022—**Alex Poots**, Artistic Director and CEO of The Shed; **Madani Younis**, Chief Executive Producer of The Shed; and **Tim Levy**, Co-Director of the London Theatre Company, today announced the US premiere and strictly limited, nine-week New York engagement of **David Hare's** new play, *Straight Line Crazy*, starring **Ralph Fiennes** as Robert Moses and directed by **Nicholas Hytner** and **Jamie Armitage**, this fall at The Shed. Following an acclaimed run this spring at The Bridge Theatre in London, *Straight Line Crazy* delves into the questionable legacy of Robert Moses and his enduring impact on New York. The play

presents an imagined retelling of the arc of Moses’s controversial career in two decisive moments: his rise to power in the late 1920s and the public outcry against the corrosive effects of that power in the mid-1950s. Preview performances begin October 18, and the production opens on October 26 with performances through December 18, 2022, at The Shed’s intimate Griffin Theater as part of the fall 2022 season.

For 40 uninterrupted years, Robert Moses was considered the most powerful man in New York as he envisioned and built public works whose aftereffects determine how New Yorkers experience the city to this day. Hare’s play exposes Moses’s iron will, which exploited weaknesses in the state and city governments as he worked to remake public space. Though never elected to political office, he manipulated those who were through a mix of guile, charm, and intimidation. Motivated at first by a determination to improve the lives of New York City’s working class, he created new parks, new bridges, and 627 miles of expressway to connect the people to the great outdoors. However, Moses often achieved these public works at the expense of disempowered New Yorkers, particularly people of color, living in the way of and near his projects. In the 1950s, groups of citizens began to organize against his schemes and the prioritization of cars over public transportation, campaigning for a very different idea of what a city should be.

“When I first read *Straight Line Crazy* I was compelled by its provocation, humor, and of course by the portrayal of Robert Moses. It seemed its natural home was NYC and now—thanks to The Shed—the play can be seen there. I’m excited. It’s a New York play—that’s simply what it is,” said **Ralph Fiennes**.

“I am very excited to bring Robert Moses home. We had a great educational run in London at The Bridge Theatre where few of the audience had heard of him. But it will be fascinating to bring this controversial figure back to the city, and to the state, on which he left such a lasting mark,” said **David Hare**.

“Having premiered David Hare’s new play at The Bridge Theatre in London this spring, I’m so thrilled to now partner with The Shed to bring this New York story to New York with Ralph Fiennes leading the way alongside our brilliant cast and creative team,” said **Nicholas Hytner**.

“We’re honored to work with one of the world’s great playwrights, David Hare, and directors, Nicholas Hytner, alongside the brilliant Jamie Armitage, for this production. And we’re thrilled to welcome Ralph Fiennes to The Shed for his first live theater performances in New York since 2006. This play captured the imagination of London audiences, and the impact of its story will only be magnified on the New York stage, in the

city where Robert Moses lived and worked. In reminding us of the importance of who is invited to shape public space, the work of these artists reveals the positive and negative impacts that decisions around urban planning have on living communities,” said **Madani Younis**, The Shed’s Chief Executive Producer.

“This is a compelling production about Robert Moses’s controversial legacy, his rise and fall, and the lasting effects on our city. We’re so pleased to partner with London Theatre Company to present the US premiere of David Hare’s new play, *Straight Line Crazy*, at The Shed this fall,” said **Alex Poots**, Artistic Director and CEO of The Shed.

The cast of *Straight Line Crazy* includes: **Ralph Fiennes** (Robert Moses), **David Bromley** (Stamford Fergus), **Alana Maria** (Shirley Hayes), **Guy Paul** (Henry Vanderbilt), **Judith Roddy** (Finnuala Connell), **Helen Schlesinger** (Jane Jacobs), **Mary Stillwaggon Stewart** (Nicole Savage), and **Danny Webb** (Governor Al Smith) with additional casting to be announced.

The creative team includes **Bob Crowley** (Set and Costume Design), **Jessica Hung Han Yun** (Lighting Design), **George Dennis** (Sound Design), **George Fenton** (Music Composition), **Jaimie Todd** (Associate Designer), **Robert Sterne** (Casting), and **Cynthia Cahill** (Production Stage Manager).

Straight Line Crazy was originally produced by the London Theatre Company at The Bridge Theatre in March 2022.

As part of the presentation of *Straight Line Crazy*, The Shed will produce a series of conversations about the legacy of Robert Moses and his continued impact on our city. Details to be announced.

Ticketing and General Information

Tickets for *Straight Line Crazy* go on sale June 30 (Shed member presale begins June 28). For additional information, tickets, and Covid-19 safety guidelines, visit [TheShed.org](https://www.theshed.org).

Cedric’s at The Shed, a bar from Danny Meyer’s Union Square Hospitality Group, is open Wednesday to Sunday from 11 am to 8 pm. McNally Jackson at The Shed, an arts-focused bookshop, is also open during normal operating hours.

About the Artists

Ralph Fiennes has enjoyed an extensive career acting in theater, film, and television as well as producing and directing film. His last stage appearance was in T. S. Eliot's *The Four Quartets* at The Pinter Theatre, which followed a national tour of the UK. Prior to that he appeared in *Beat The Devil* by David Hare at The Bridge Theatre, directed by Nicholas Hytner. Both productions were performed under Covid social distancing rules. Fiennes was previously directed by Hytner as Edmund in *King Lear* for the Royal Shakespeare Company. His many other theater credits include *Hamlet*, *Ivanov*, *Richard II*, and *Coriolanus* for the Almeida, and *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Man And Superman*, *Richard III*, *The Master Builder*, *God of Carnage*, and *Faith Healer*. His many film credits include *Schindler's List*, *The English Patient*, *The Constant Gardener*, *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, and the roles of Lord Voldemort in the *Harry Potter* films and M in *Skyfall*, *Spectre*, and *No Time To Die*. He has also directed three feature films: *Coriolanus*, *The Invisible Woman*, and *The White Crow*. Fiennes's recent films include *The King's Man*, *The Dig*, and *The Forgiven*. Forthcoming films include *The Menu* and Wes Anderson's *The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar*.

David Hare is one of the UK's most internationally performed playwrights. Eighteen of his plays have been seen on and off Broadway, including *Plenty*, *The Secret Rapture*, *Via Dolorosa*, *Amy's View*, *Stuff Happens*, *The Vertical Hour*, and the Tony-winning *Skylight*. He has twice been nominated for Oscars for his screenplays for *The Hours* and *The Reader*. In the last decade he has written three original television series: *The Worricker Trilogy*, which starred Bill Nighy; *Collateral*, with Carey Mulligan; and *Roadkill*, with Hugh Laurie. In 1998, he was knighted for services to the British theater.

Nicholas Hytner has directed *Young Marx*, *Julius Caesar*, *Allelujah!*, *Alys*, *Always*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Two Ladies*, *Beat the Devil*, *The Shrine*, *Bed Among the Lentils*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Bach & Sons*, and *The Book of Dust – La Belle Sauvage* for The Bridge Theatre. He recently directed Ralph Fiennes in David Hare's *Straight Line Crazy* at The Bridge, and this month he will direct Alex Jennings in Stephen Beresford's *The Southbury Child* at Chichester Festival Theatre and The Bridge. In February 2023 he will direct *Guys & Dolls*, also at The Bridge. Previously he was director of the UK's National Theatre from 2003 to 2015.

Jamie Armitage is the co-director of *SIX: The Musical*, which is currently playing in London, New York, and on tour in the UK and Australia. He is a resident director at the Almeida Theatre and was an artistic associate at the King’s Head Theatre (2019 – 21). Directing credits include *Southern Belles*, a Tennessee Williams double bill at King’s Head Theatre; *Spring Awakening* and *Sweeney Todd* at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama; *Love Me Now* at Tristan Bates Theatre; *Spoonface Steinberg* at Edinburgh Fringe; *Richard II* at Emmanuel Chapel; and *Cambridge, Robin Hood*, and *Henry IV, Part 1* at ADC Theatre.

Support

“M&T Bank shares The Shed’s commitment to celebrating diverse perspectives and ideas that enrich the communities where we live, work, and play. The arts are vital to the strength and vibrancy of our city and we’re honored to be a part of advancing important programming like *Straight Line Crazy*,” said Blair Ridder, M&T Bank’s regional president for New York City.

Major support for *Straight Line Crazy* is provided by M&T Bank, Founding Bank of The Shed.

The creation of new work at The Shed is generously supported by the Lizzie and Jonathan Tisch Commissioning Fund and the Shed Commissioners.

Major support for live productions at The Shed is provided by the Charina Endowment Fund.

The Shed is connected by Altice.

About The Bridge

The Bridge is the first theater run by London Theatre Company, which was founded by Nicholas Hytner and Nick Starr in 2017. Tim Levy later joined them as co-directors in 2020. The Bridge focuses on the commissioning and production of new shows, as well as staging and re-imagining the occasional classic. The 900-seat auditorium is designed to be flexible and can be adapted for a variety of performance styles, resulting in hugely successful immersive theatre as well as more traditional end-on- and thrust- stage shows. It is the first wholly new theatre of scale to be added to London’s commercial theatre sector in 80 years.

THE SHED
THE BLOOMBERG BUILDING
545 West 30th Street
New York, NY 10001

About The Shed

The Shed is a new cultural institution of and for the 21st century. We produce and welcome innovative art and ideas, across all forms of creativity, to build a shared understanding of our rapidly changing world and a more equitable society. In our highly adaptable building on Manhattan's west side, The Shed brings together established and emerging artists to create new work in fields ranging from pop to classical music, painting to digital media, theater to literature, and sculpture to dance. We seek opportunities to collaborate with cultural peers and community organizations, work with like-minded partners, and provide unique spaces for private events. As an independent nonprofit that values invention, equity, and generosity, we are committed to advancing art forms, addressing the urgent issues of our time, and making our work impactful, sustainable, and relevant to the local community, the cultural sector, New York City, and beyond.

###