



## PRESS CONTACT

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### Clare Annamalai announced as the Theatre Royal Haymarket Masterclass Trust's new Programme Director

The Theatre Royal Haymarket Masterclass Trust (Masterclass) is delighted to announce the appointment of Clare Annamalai as their new Programme Director. The appointment follows the news that the charity's current Programme Director, Blayne George, will be stepping down after 10 years. Clare joins Masterclass from a diverse background in arts management, including her current position as Business Director of music charity Finding Rhythms. Clare is also Consultant Editor and reviewer at Everything Theatre and is a Trustee of Bristol-based Lightbox Theatre.

#### Clare Annamalai said:

"I am delighted to be joining Masterclass as their new Programme Director. The charity has made a huge impact on the young people to whom it has given opportunities, and has gained a reputation within the wider industry for its ground-breaking work. The charity's ethos is one that resonates strongly with me, and I look forward to taking Masterclass into its next chapter."

#### Blayne George said:

"Masterclass and the Theatre Royal Haymarket hold an incredibly special place in my heart and it has been a huge honour and privilege to have been entrusted with developing and growing the work of Masterclass over the past ten years. I am delighted to be welcoming Clare as my successor and to be handing over to someone as passionate about the industry and emerging theatre makers as I am.

I look forward to seeing what exciting directions she takes Masterclass in, and to supporting her and the Masterclass team, in a new capacity."

Blayne George will remain with the charity as a member of the Board of Trustees.

#### Arnold Crook, Chair of the Board of Trustees, said:

"On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I am delighted to welcome Clare Annamalai as Masterclass' next Programme Director. After 21 years, Masterclass plans to continue its pioneering work in the industry and I am confident that with her experience and passion, Clare will lead the charity into a successful future."



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Masterclass plays an important leadership role in the West End and across London, using theatre as a platform to build confidence, strengthen self-esteem, nurture creativity and develop business and life skills in young people. To date, over 80,000 places have been provided to young people from all walks of life, through onstage masterclasses, writing competitions, careers advice and a paid apprenticeship scheme (opportunities that have all been provided free of charge since the charity's launch in 1998). Over 400 Masters, 580 workshop leaders and countless other industry professionals have all kindly given their time, allowing young people interested in theatre the unique opportunity to meet those at the heart of British theatre today.

Clare Annamalai will join the Masterclass team later this month.

**- ENDS -**

## Notes to Editors

For more information, please contact Ellen Walpole on [ellen@masterclass.org.uk](mailto:ellen@masterclass.org.uk) or 020 7389 9660

A selection of **images** can be [found here](#)

**The Theatre Royal Haymarket Masterclass Trust (Masterclass)** is a small charity that has a big impact on young people's lives with a unique offering of free masterclasses by leading theatre professionals, careers advice sessions, apprenticeships and performance experiences. Masterclass is committed to using theatre and the beautiful Theatre Royal Haymarket to inspire and empower young people, the talent of the future. To date over 80,000 16 – 30 year olds have benefited from our programme. [www.masterclass.org.uk](http://www.masterclass.org.uk)