

Culture Online Press Release 1st December 2003

Stagework takes a look behind the scenes of theatre. It explores how theatre opens up important issues about society – to create a rich learning resource for pupils and teachers as well as those interested in a career in the creative industries.

Stagework will use some of the best current theatrical productions in England as the basis for creating a rich web resource that will appeal not only to students, teachers and those interested in theatre, but also to those who usually find theatre inaccessible. It sheds light on some of the creative and craft processes that turn a text into an unforgettable emotional experience.

The project takes an issue-based approach to key productions in theatres around the country, including selected regional theatres and the [National Theatre](#). For example, it will include the National Theatre's 2003 production of *Henry V*. This production has great potential to get people thinking about some of the important issues and decisions to be taken by society – such as whether or not to go to war. It also challenges stereotypes and reaches out to new audiences: this production has the first black actor on a main stage to play the lead role of Henry. The play also has great potential as a means of exploring Citizenship.

Stagework supports Key Stages 3 and 4 of the National Curriculum in English and Drama, Citizenship, Performing Arts, ICT and Communication skills. It will also enhance the understanding of theatre as one of the creative industries and open up new career opportunities to young people.

Rich media assets, including video interviews with key performers and members of the production team, will form the basis of Stagework's extensive learning materials. These will enable teachers to use theatre practice to stimulate and enhance the learning experiences of students. In addition there will be advice and guidance to teachers on how to achieve curriculum objectives in the form of lesson plans, schemes of work and teacher notes.

Users will be encouraged to create their own content for the site, extending the project assets as well as contributing their own interpretations and activities.

Stagework will begin with *Henry V* and a production of *His Dark Materials* based on the novels by Philip Pullman, adapted by Nicholas Wright, at the National Theatre.

The project will be led by the National Theatre and will involve a network of regional theatres. [Illumina Digital](#) will translate the theatrical content into a rich digital interactive experience.

Stagework will be available to the public in early 2004.