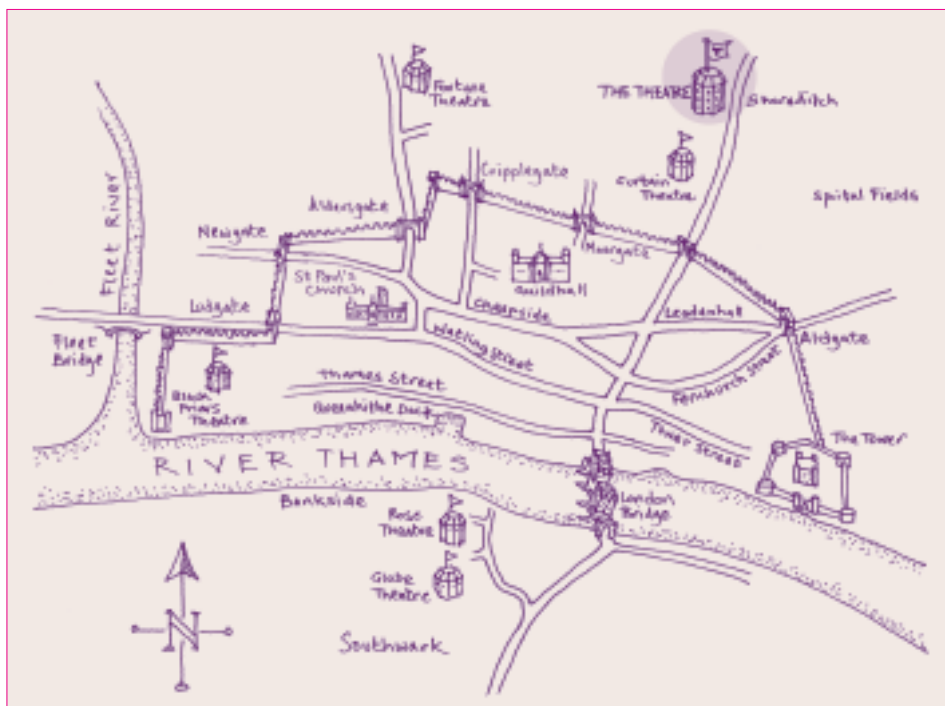


Building for the future on the foundations of the past



■ London's early theatres

“The Theatre”, where Shakespeare launched his London career, was the first purpose-built playhouse in the capital. There is now a unique opportunity to preserve the rediscovered remains of this 16th century building within a new theatre development, recreating the spirit of the original and benefiting the whole community.

“The remains of the 16th century playhouse recorded on the south-western area of the site are of national importance.”

Heather Knight, Senior Archaeologist, Museum of London Archaeology

In 1576 the theatrical entrepreneur James Burbage constructed “The Theatre” in Shoreditch, Hackney triggering an explosion of public playhouses that enlivened Elizabethan London. In 1594 it became the home of the Lord Chamberlain’s Men, the company with which Shakespeare worked. Leading scholars agree that this was when he wrote “The Merchant of Venice”, “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”, “Two Gentlemen of Verona”

and “Love’s Labours Lost”. “Romeo and Juliet” was almost certainly premiered at “The Theatre”.

In 1598 the Burbages fell out with their landlord, dismantled the wooden structure, and took it across the Thames to re-emerge as the first “Globe”. Over the next 500 years as London’s landscape changed the exact location of “The Theatre” was lost.

“I can’t emphasise enough how profound it is to us – this is the beginning of it all – this is where our peculiarly British art form had its first permanent home.”

Barry Bliss, Writer & Film Director

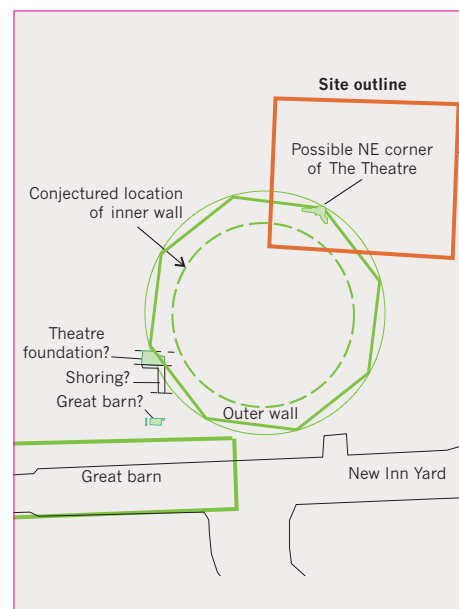
“The thrill is that the site has been found and been looked after so well because the people building on the site are a theatre.”

Sir Ian McKellen, Actor

In July 2008 Tavistock Repertory Guarantors Ltd (TRGL) had the chance to acquire a disused warehouse in New Inn Broadway as the site of a new theatre. As part of the feasibility study they commissioned Museum of London Archaeology (MoLA) to carry out two excavations. In February 2009 MoLA discovered the only verifiable remains of “The Theatre”; part of the inner wall and a section of the gravel yard where the “groundlings” would have stood to watch the performance.

TRGL is a charity committed to fostering the arts and education. It works in close association with The Tower Theatre Company, one of Britain’s longest established non-professional companies.

■ Diagram showing site of “The Theatre” in relation to current site plan



“The Theatre” in the 21st Century

Plans for the new building

In April 2009 TRGL acquired the freehold of “The Theatre” site and in October 2009 Hackney Council granted planning permission for a four storey building incorporating a 135 seat auditorium, rehearsal rooms, wardrobe, administrative and social space.

The architect is Barry Brown of Bland, Brown and Cole, who were responsible for the redevelopment of The Arts Theatre, Cambridge.

Brown has worked closely with MoLA and English Heritage to devise a scheme that preserves the archaeological remains in situ. The new building will celebrate its illustrious predecessor with displays and interpretative material that will enable everyone to share this unique part of our cultural heritage.

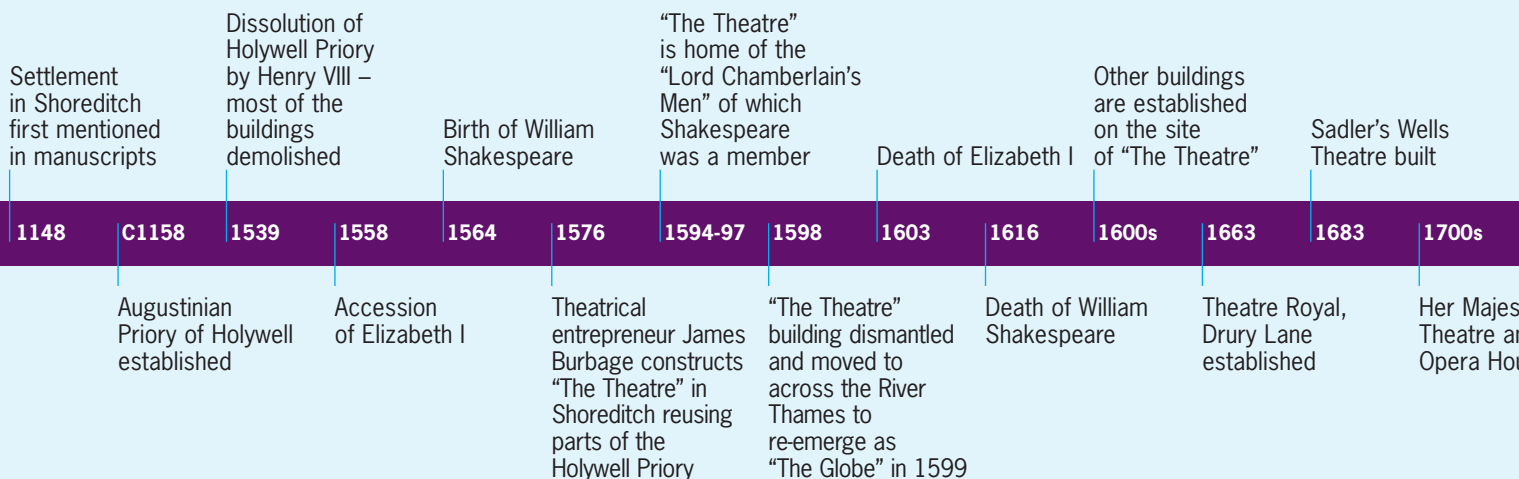


“This extraordinary find offers a tantalising glimpse into Shakespeare’s city, and the proposed theatre development on this special site seems a fitting way to harness the energy and spirit of a place that is so central to the story of London and Londoners.”

Jack Lohman, Director, Museum of London



Images are © Bland, Brown and Cole Architects



“The Theatre” in Action

A cultural hub in a vibrant and diverse area

The Tower Theatre Company will be at the heart of “The Theatre” project. It is one of London’s oldest and most respected non-professional companies.

Founded in 1932 to provide a broad range of high quality, affordable drama, it offers everyone the opportunity to experience all aspects of theatre. The company presents up to 18 productions a year, making it one of the busiest theatres of its kind in Britain.

“This lively, successful company gave me a great start as a designer.”

William Dudley, award-winning Theatrical Designer

...“The Theatre” will be an invaluable asset and bring enormous benefits to Shoreditch. So many will want to visit the site where Shakespeare began his London career as an actor and playwright. The creation of a new theatre here will be significant, both for Hackney and for London as a whole, now and for so many years to come...”

Jennette Arnold, Deputy Chair GLA representing Hackney

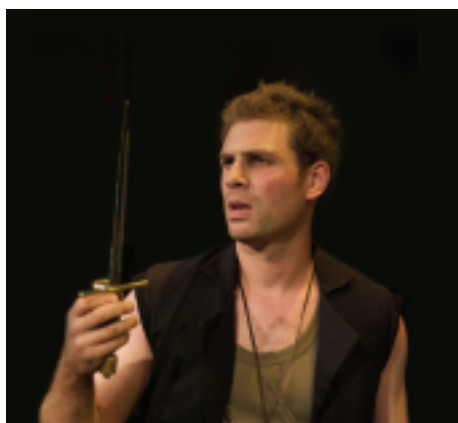
The Tower Theatre Company’s productions will form the spine of a year round programme of varied entertainment which will also showcase the best of the work that is being produced by other arts groups in Hackney and beyond. “The Theatre” will host music, poetry, comedy and exhibitions – as well as drama.

“One of the best theatre companies in the country ...innovative ...accessible, valuable”

John Nettles, Actor

The award-winning Anna Fiorentini Theatre & Film School has already become a partner to develop classes for children and youth theatre. Partnership opportunities with other local schools, colleges and arts organisations are also being explored.

“The Theatre” will be an exciting part of the regeneration of one of London’s most deprived boroughs. Like its predecessor, it will bring welcome economic activity to Shoreditch and the new building will help to meet demand for modern, fully accessible space at reasonable rates for local arts and community groups.



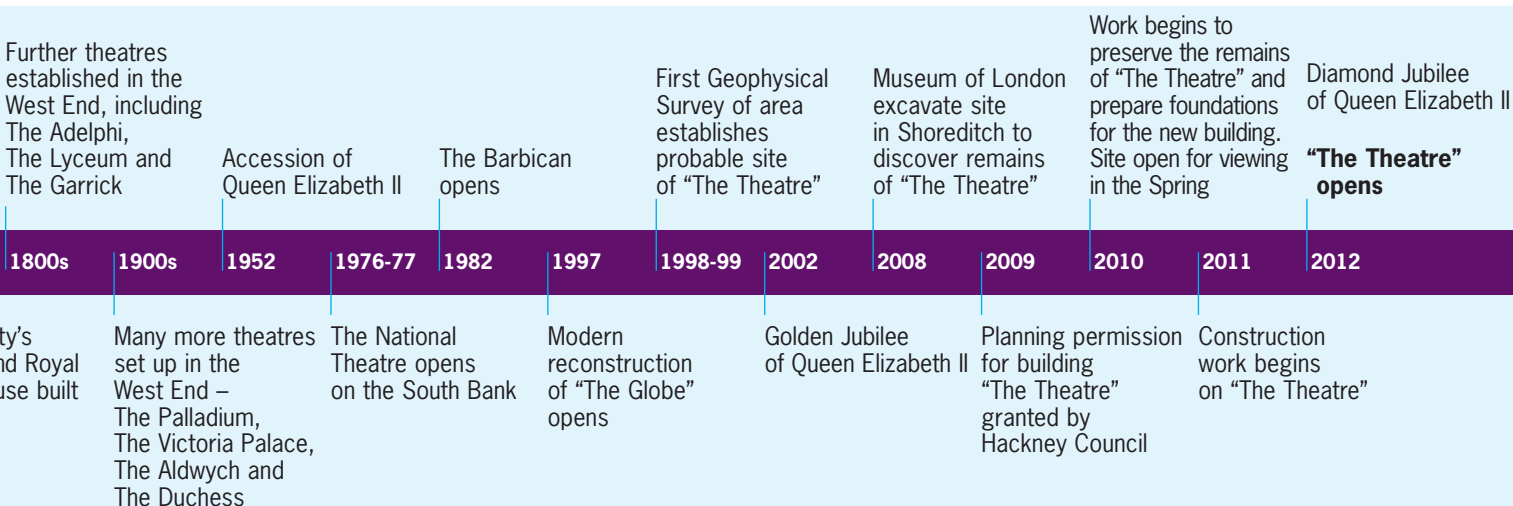
■ “Hamlet” 2009



■ “Curiouser and Curiouser” 2007

“(The Theatre) ...will contribute significantly to the cultural profile of the borough. I am particularly pleased to know that TRGL are keen to work with partners in the local arts community.”

Tom Chivers, Co-director, London Word Festival



“The Theatre” Appeal

Funding the project



TRGL have raised more than half of the funding needed. An appeal has now been launched to raise a further £3.1 million to complete the project.

This is a purely capital appeal. When the building is complete “The Theatre” will be self-sustaining. TRGL and the Tower Theatre Company ran a similar operation in Islington from 1952 – 2003 and plans for “The Theatre” are based on the experience of managing this viable model, with its strong tradition of local partnerships.

Registered Charity Number 219947

Be part of bringing London theatre back to its roots:

- **Contact** dinah.irvine@thetheatre.org.uk for information about corporate support
- **Fill in a pledge form**
Complete the form below and return it to us, or download a copy from our website www.thetheatre.org.uk
The form can be used for either one off or regular donations.
- **Donate** through our JustGiving site www.justgiving.com/thetheatreappeal – a quick and easy way to lend your support.
- **You can also write to us at:**
The Tower Theatre Company
St Bride Foundation
Bride Lane, London EC4Y 8EQ
- **Telephone** +44 (0)207 353 5700

“Hackney is the lead Olympic host borough for culture and we are keen to celebrate this by encouraging well thought out, sustainable cultural development, which will continue the cultural legacy well in to the middle of 21st century.”

Head of Museums and Culture,
Hackney Council

**Thank you for supporting
“The Theatre”**



Pledge form

Full name
E-mail address
Address
Postcode
Telephone (preferred number)

I would like to pledge the following amounts to “The Theatre” Appeal:

Please put the amount of each payment in the appropriate box

One payment now	£
36 x monthly payments	£
12 x quarterly payments	£
3 x annual payments	£

I wish to make this contribution by (please tick):

Standing Order

Debit Card

Credit Card

By Cheque (enclosed)

Total sum pledged £

If you are not already on our mailing list, tick this box if you would like to receive updates about the project by e-mail

Please cut out and return this form to:

“The Theatre” Appeal
The Tower Theatre Company
St Bride Foundation
Bride Lane
London EC4Y 8EQ

We will contact you shortly for the necessary details to activate your Pledge. We will not disclose your personal information to any other organisations.