**PLANNING NOTICE**

**CAMPAIGN TO IMPROVE ACCESS FOR DEAF AUDIENCES RETURNS (15-21 NOV 2021)**

Captioning Awareness Week (#CAW2021), the annual campaign to improve access arts to the arts for deaf, deafened and hard of hearing audiences returns for a seventh year, **from** **15-21 November 2021.**

**News story**

The campaign will coincide with the release of a news story, based on a poll of 2,003 members of the UK public. The poll looks at the demand for captions and subtitles and the public’s views on what venues and other organisations should be doing to support deaf, deafened and hard of hearing people.

**Venues and filming**

Throughout the week and the rest of November, theatres, museums and galleries will hold captioned and live subtitled events in order to promote access, find new audiences, and improve people’s experiences within the arts. Venues include the **Barbican Centre** **in London** and the **Curve Theatre in Leicester**.

A free-to-attend exhibition will also be held at the Barbican to mark the campaign and the 21st anniversary of the first ever captioned theatre performance in the UK, running until Sunday 9 January 2022.

To discuss any filming requirements please email [ian.morton@campaigncollective.org](mailto:ian.morton@campaigncollective.org) or telephone 07811 183633.

**Interviews/case studies**

We have a number of deaf, deafened or hard of hearing spokespeople who rely on captioning in the arts, including [teenager Daniel](https://twitter.com/AnnJillings/status/1276906139050016769?s=20) and his Mum Ann.

We also have venues and organisations who host captioned performances available for interview, such as **The Barbican** and **The Royal Shakespeare Company**, alongside Melanie Sharpe, CEO of the **charity Stagetext** which runs the campaign.

**Why the campaign is important**

Nearly one in five (18%) of UK adults are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing, yet fewer than 1% are fluent in British Sign Language, meaning captioned performances are vital for the 11 million who want to enjoy the arts like anyone else.

Captions are similar to television subtitles, but with the actors’ words appearing on screens placed in the set (or the side of the stage) at the same time as they are spoken or sung.

The campaign is being organised by Stagetext, which saw an increase in demand for subtitled performances during the lockdown. In April 2020, it provided the subtitling for the *Phantom of the Opera*, pulling in 12.8 million people and 2.5 million who used Stagetext’s subtitles.

Despite an increase in demand for online performances, access remains patchy. According to the Royal National Institute for Deaf People, 87% of people with hearing loss have attempted to watch a programme on-demand and found it had no subtitles.

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For more information, please contact Ian Morton

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**Stagetext** is a registered charity which provides captioning and live subtitling in theatres and cultural venues to give deaf, deafened and hard of hearing people access to live arts events.

Stagetext was founded in 2000 by three deaf theatregoers. Frustrated by the lack of access to theatre performances, they discovered captioning technology being used on Broadway and set up Stagetext to introduce the service in the UK.

Technical breakthroughs have enabled Stagetext to provide live subtitles on handheld tablets for tours in museums and in non-traditional outdoor spaces, as well as establishing a Digital department to caption National Theatre Live encore broadcasts in cinemas, plus a range of Digital Theatre productions.