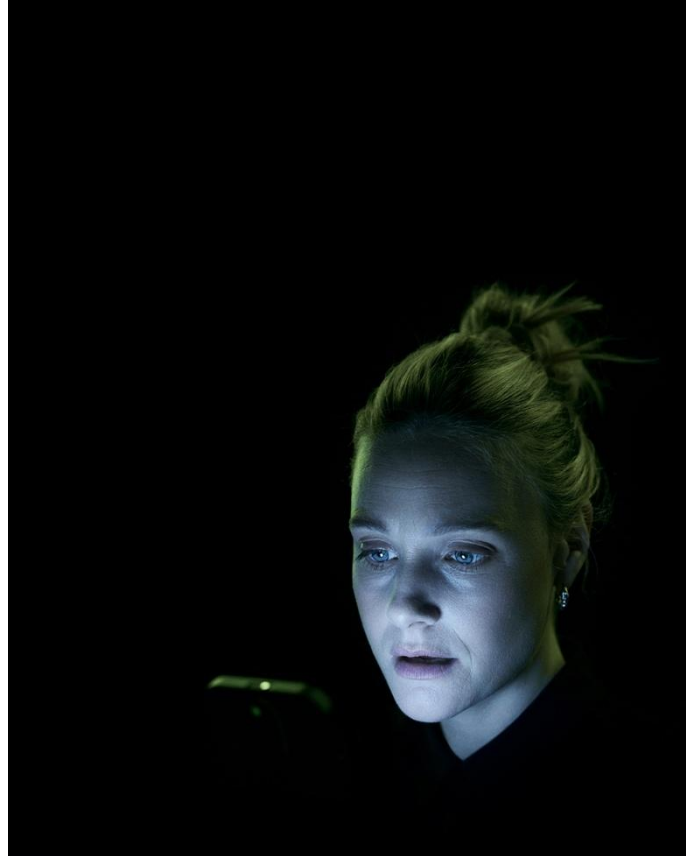


ALMEIDA THEATRE

Access Information Pack



A Doll's House

By Henrik Ibsen

In a new version by Anya Reiss

Directed by Joe Hill-Gibbins

Contents

This document is a visual guide to support your visit to the Almeida Theatre. There are three sections:

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The Production

Overview

This contemporary reimagining of *A Doll's House* follows Nora and Torvald, a couple on the brink of financial success after years of instability. As they prepare for Christmas in their new home, Nora is hiding a serious secret: she illegally secured a large sum of money to save Torvald's life during his past illness. As the truth begins to surface, Nora is forced to confront the reality of her marriage, her identity, and the cost of the choices she has made. The play explores power, control, love, and what it means to live truthfully.

Content Guidance

A Doll's House contains:



Misogynistic language



Alcohol and drug use



Loud sound effects and music



Rapid lighting changes



Kissing and sexual content



Strong language and shouting



References to suicide



Herbal cigarettes



References to fraud, financial crime, blackmail, prison, the legal system, illness and death, war and global violence, family breakdown and separation from children

The Production

Performance Conditions:

Relaxed Environment Performances

The duty manager will make an onstage announcement before the performance begins to explain what a Relaxed Environment performance is.

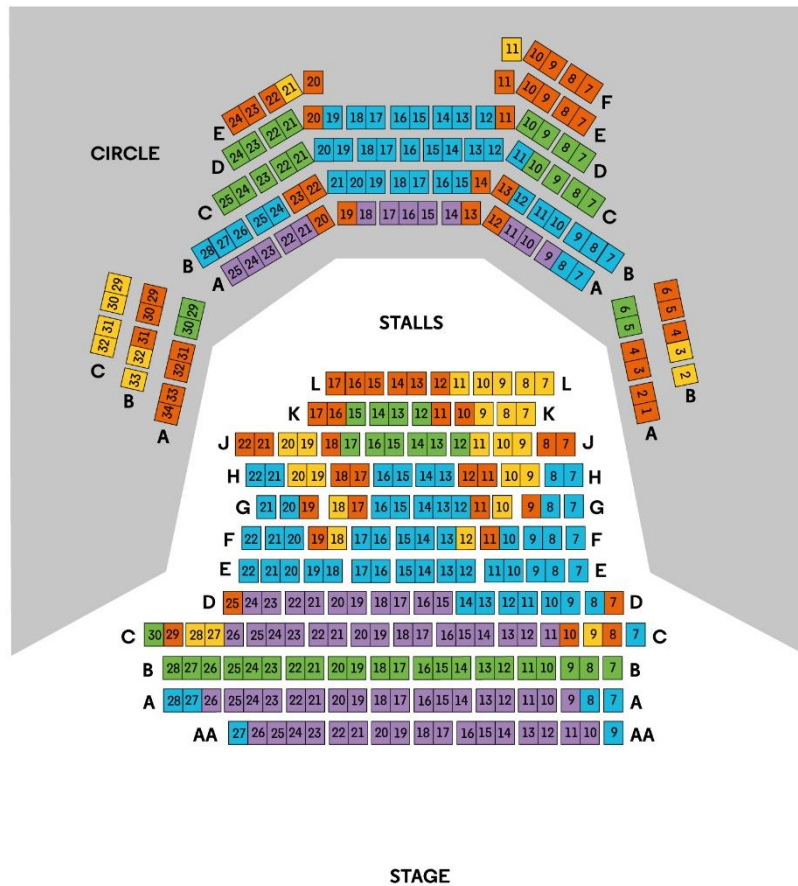
They will explain:

- The house lights will remain at a low level throughout the performance.
- Audience members are free to make noise, move about or come and go to take breaks and access the facilities as needed.
- If you need to step out of the auditorium for a break, there is also a TV monitor in the foyer to watch the performance from, so you don't miss any of the action.

Seating

In this production, the stage is straight across like in a traditional proscenium arch theatre. The seats in the stalls are arranged in rows, with aisles either side. Further seating is available in the Circle level above. There is no step free access to the Circle.

A DOLL'S HOUSE



Running time and interval

The running time of the play is 2 hours and 30 minutes. There are three acts with an interval between act two and three. The first part is 1 hour and 25 minutes and the second part is 40 minutes.

What Happens in the Play?

Setting

The play is set in a wide, open-plan basement of a modern, high-end apartment, with a clean, minimalist feel and a pale cream carpet throughout. A curved brick wall at the back contrasts with the sleek design, while large openings at the sides suggest adjoining rooms and give the space depth. The room initially appears newly occupied, with only a large pile of Christmas designer shopping bags and boxes in the centre, hinting at the lifestyles of the property's new occupants: The Helmer family.



What Happens in the Play?

Characters



Nora Helmer



Torvald Helmer



Kristine Linde



Nils Krogstad



Petter Rank

Nora Helmer is the central character. She is married to **Torvald** and is a mother to two children. The children do not appear, but one child is heard over the intercom and the baby monitor. **Torvald Helmer** is Nora's husband, a finance professional and recovering cocaine addict. **Kristine Linde** is Nora's old friend, who has been recently widowed. **Nils Krogstad** works with Torvald and has a previous criminal record. **Petter Rank** is a doctor and a close friend of Nora and Torvald, who later reveals he is terminally ill.

Sensory Overview

Sound and Lighting

If you are affected by any of these elements, you are welcome to take breaks at any time.

Sound

- Loud music and heavy bass (end of Act 2)
- Raised voices and shouting

Lighting

- Rapid lighting changes (towards the end of Act 2)
- Sudden blackouts (end of Act 2 and Act 3)
- Flickering TV light (beginning of Act 3)

Thematic Content

This production contains:

- Strong language
- Drug and alcohol use, including addiction, recovery, and relapse
- Graphic references to suicide and suicidal thoughts
- Sexual content and sexual behaviour
- Emotional and psychological distress
- Misogynistic language and controlling behaviour
- Fraud, financial crime, and blackmail
- References to prison and the legal system
- Illness and death, including terminal illness
- War and references to global violence
- Family breakdown and separation from children

Staging

- Actors use the left aisle to access the stage
- Actors pass close to audience members at the front of the stalls
- There is on-stage smoking of herbal cigarettes



Plot Synopsis

ACT ONE

Nora and Torvald

Content Warnings: Strong language; financial conflict; references to debt; sexual intimacy

Torvald returns home to Nora and finds their home filled with Christmas shopping that Nora has secretly bought. When Nora admits she used their credit card to purchase the items, he reacts with concern, insisting they cannot live beyond their means until his business deal is finalised. Nora reassures him the money is coming and argues they deserve a proper Christmas after a difficult year. Their disagreement softens into playful intimacy, and Torvald gives in. They kiss and the situation develops into pre-sexual intimacy. As their closeness builds, they are interrupted by the arrival of Kristine Linde and Petter Rank.

Nora and Kristine

Content Warnings: References to death (spouse, parent); emotional distress; financial hardship; and drug use.

Kristine arrives and Nora initially does not recognise her. As they reconnect, Kristine tells Nora that her husband has died and her circumstances have changed. She asks Nora for help finding work. In response, Nora confides a major secret: she borrowed a large sum of money to save Torvald's life during a past health crisis linked to drug use. Torvald does not know the truth. Their conversation is interrupted when Nils Krogstad arrives upstairs.

Nora, Kristine and Petter

Content Warnings: Strong language; cynical or hostile language; moral judgement; sexual references

Petter Rank joins Nora and Kristine, having been dismissed by Torvald in order that he can attend to a work matter. Petter dominates the conversation, harshly criticising Krogstad, Torvald, and the financial world, describing them as exploitative. His tone is cutting and provocative. His familiarity with Nora feels sexual, creating a subtle tension that Kristine observes.

Nora, Kristine, Petter and Torvald

Content Warnings: Mild sexual tension; power dynamics

Torvald returns. He notices the closeness between Nora and Petter and comments on it lightly, though the underlying tension is clear. Nora introduces Kristine and pushes Torvald to offer her a job. He agrees in principle but without commitment. Kristine is invited to stay the night, and the others leave the room, while Nora remains behind to take a phone call from her young son Ivar.

Nora and Nils

Content Warnings: Blackmail; financial crime; coercion; threat

Nils Krogstad arrives and confronts Nora. He reveals he's been fired by Torvald, and demands Nora intervene to save his job. He also discusses his previous conviction and time in prison. When she refuses, he threatens to expose Nora's act of fraud. He explains that the fraud could be traced back to Torvald, placing them both in danger. Nora begins to understand the full extent of the risk.

Nora and Torvald

Content Warnings: Emotional distress; manipulation; mild sexual coercion

Left alone, Nora panics as the consequences become clear. Torvald returns and questions her about Nils. Nora attempts to persuade him to reverse the decision, using flirtation and distraction, but he refuses. He remains focused on work and reputation. Elsewhere in the house their children return home, and Torvald leaves Nora alone in the room to be with them. Nora is left alone in the basement, with growing fear.

ACT TWO

Nora and Kristine - Nora and Torvald

Content Warnings: Emotional distress; references to death (terminal illness); themes of abandonment

Kristine encourages Nora to rejoin her children, but Nora expresses a desire to step away from her responsibilities. Their conversation shifts when Nora reveals that Petter is dying and in love with her. Kristine urges her to stop relying on him emotionally or practically. Torvald comes in and Nora again tries to influence him, offering to please him in exchange for helping Nils. He refuses and formally confirms Nils's dismissal, escalating the crisis, but before leaving he hands Nora his work phone, asking her to hold onto it so he can switch off for the evening.

Nora and Petter

Content Warnings: Drug use; terminal illness; emotional dependency; unreciprocated love

Petter senses Nora's distress and confesses he is dying. He also declares his love for her. Nora attempts to shift the mood by introducing drugs, and they briefly share a moment of reckless escape – they take cocaine together. She considers asking him for financial help but hesitates. His declaration of love complicates their relationship, and she pulls away, unsettled.

Nora and Nils

Content Warnings: Blackmail; suicidal ideation; coercion; threat

Nils returns with a clear ultimatum. He shows Nora a draft of a WhatsApp message he has typed to Torvald but not yet sent. The message reveals the truth about Nora's fraud and demands a higher position in the company in exchange for Nils's silence. Nora, overwhelmed, considers ending her life as a way out. Nils sends the message to Torvald, removing her control of the situation. Nearby, Torvald's work phone pings as it receives the message.

Nora and Kristine

Content Warnings: Emotional distress; financial crime disclosure

Kristine returns and Nora confesses everything. Kristine decides to intervene directly with Nils, believing she can influence him. She urges Nora to keep Torvald away from his work devices while she attempts to resolve the situation.

Nora, Kristine, Torvald and Petter

Content Warnings: Sexualised behaviour; emotional tension; loud dance music; drug-taking

Torvald returns, preparing to attend a fancy dress party at a neighbour's house. Nora demands his full attention and performs a sexually provocative dance for him and Petter, using charm and physical closeness to delay Torvald from checking his messages. The atmosphere is heightened, performative, and tense as she tries to hold off the inevitable discovery of the truth. The Act finishes as the dance reaches its peak and Nora kisses both men.

INTERVAL

ACT THREE

Kristine and Nils

Content Warnings: Emotional confrontation; past trauma; moral conflict

Nils returns to the Helmers' house whilst they and Petter are out at the party. Kristine has remained behind to look after the children, and she and Nils reconnect with one another. It is revealed that they were in a relationship with one another many years previously. Kristine encourages Nils to be honest and accountable about the fraud, and his past crimes. Together, they decide that the truth should be revealed rather than hidden, even if it causes pain. They agree to meet up again once Kristine has spoken to Nora.

Kristine, Nora and Torvald

Content Warnings: Emotional conflict; withdrawal of support

Nora and Torvald return home from the party. Torvald exits and when the women are left alone, Kristine refuses to help Nora continue the deception. She makes it clear that Nora must face the consequences of her actions. Nora is left to confront the situation alone.

Nora, Torvald and Petter

Content Warnings: Terminal illness; smoking; emotional tension, Sudden banging.

Petter makes a final appearance banging on the back door, he indicates his impending death. His presence underscores the emotional stakes. The relationships between all three are strained and unresolved and Petter leaves, smoking a cigarette.

Nora and Torvald

Content Warnings: Emotional abuse; suicidal ideation; drug relapse risk; war references; family separation. Shouting and raised voices.

Torvald reads the message exposing Nora's actions. He reacts with anger and fear for his reputation, blaming her and calling her names rather than offering support. Nora suggests sacrificing herself to resolve the situation, but he rejects this, focusing on how it would affect him.

A news report on the television reveals that the American military have bombed an oil refinery in Syria. Torvald thinks that this is excellent news, as it will massively financially benefit the client whose money Nora stole, meaning that he'll never notice the theft. Torvald immediately shifts tone, attempting to restore normality. Nora now sees clearly that his love is conditional.

She confronts him, stating that he does not truly love or understand her. She decides to leave him and their children in order to live independently. They argue over who will go, and Nora ultimately chooses to leave – but she is interrupted by the baby monitor.

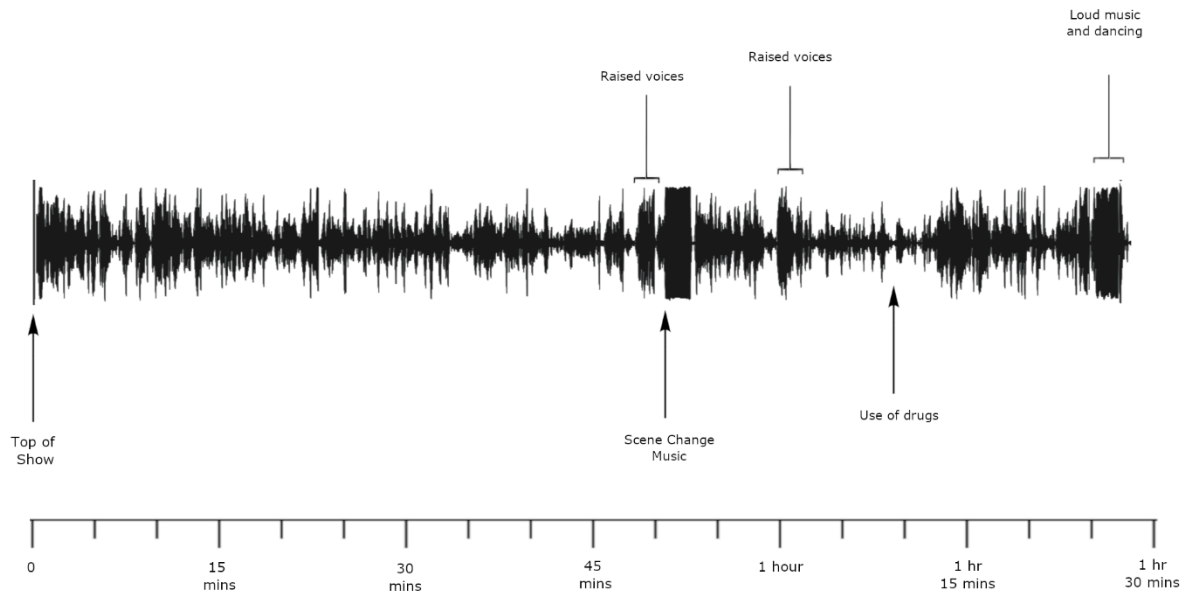
The play ends as Ivar calls out for her over the baby intercom, highlighting the emotional weight of her decision.

The play ends.

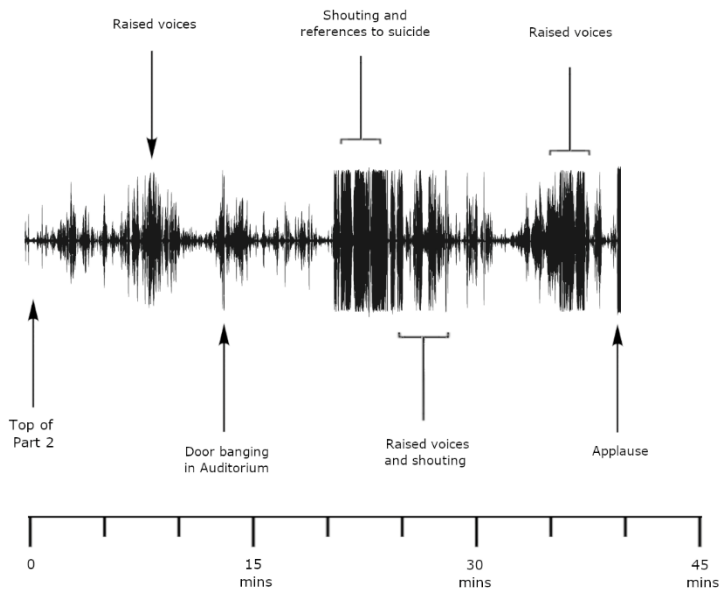
The lights fade to darkness then brighten as the full company return to take a bow.

Sonic Story

Act One and Two



Act Three



About the Almeida Theatre

How to get here

The Almeida Theatre is on Almeida Street in Islington. The postcode is N1 1TA. It is a large, white concrete building and it is situated halfway up the road.

The outside of the theatre looks like this:



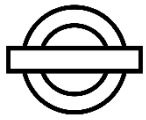
Journey to the theatre

The nearest underground stations are **Angel** on the Northern line or **Highbury & Islington** on the Victoria line, and London Overground.



You can find more information on our website here:

almeida.co.uk/your-visit/getting-here/



Highbury & Islington Station to Almeida Theatre

This is what Highbury & Islington station looks like outside.



Follow the path out of the station to the right onto Upper Street.
The theatre is about 1 kilometre down the road on Almeida Street.

On your journey down from Highbury, you will pass these landmarks:

This is Union Chapel.
It is near bus stop G.



If you don't want to walk, you can get buses 4, 19, 30 or 43 and get off at St Mary's church - bus stop N – for the theatre.

This is where Upper Street crosses Islington Park Street and Canonbury Lane.

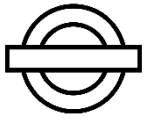


This is Islington Town Hall.



This is what Almeida Street looks like as you arrive at the theatre.





Angel Station to Almeida Theatre

This is what **Angel** station looks like outside.



From Angel station, turn right onto Upper Street and cross the busy road at the pedestrian crossing.

Continue along Upper Street for about 1 kilometre.
The theatre is on the left on Almeida Street.

On your journey down from Angel, you will pass these **landmarks**:

This is the main bus stop across the road from Angel station – bus stop Y.





If you don't want to walk you can get buses 4, 19, 30 or 43 and get off at bus stop P, opposite St Mary's church.

This is Islington Green.



This is St. Mary's Church.



This is what Almeida Street looks like as you arrive at the theatre.



About the Almeida Theatre

Information about the theatre

You can watch a video tour of the building on our website here:

<https://almeida.co.uk/your-visit/access/>

Inside the main entrance of the theatre, there is a foyer where people can wait. This is what the foyer looks like.



It can get quite busy here before the start of the play.



When you arrive, the front of house team will greet you.



There are lots of staff available in the building if you have questions or if you would like directions to your seats. They are very happy to help you.

Almeida Theatre staff wear black t-shirts with white writing.




If you need help with your ticket, you can speak to the box office team. It can be quite noisy at the box office, and you may have to wait in a queue. Their desk looks like this.



If you have a digital ticket, you can find it in your email inbox, and it will look like this.

**ALMEIDA
THEATRE**

Romans, a novel
Relaxed Environment



Performance date
Wed 1 Oct

Start time
7:30 PM

Section	Row	Seat
CIRCLE	F	12

Please use on street entrance


Mr Al Meida

Order No: 1137734

£ 0.00 **Ticket type:** Complimentary

Latecomers may not be admitted
[Click here to read our full terms and conditions](#)

Box Office **020 7359 4404**
Almeida Theatre, London N1 1TA
almeida.co.uk



Supported in public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

The Front of House assistants will scan your ticket as you enter the auditorium.



The entrance to the stalls is via the ramp to the right of the foyer.



The entrance to the circle is on the outside of the building located to the right of the main entrance.



There is step-free access to the foyer and stalls. There is one accessible toilet at the back of the foyer.

This is the café and bar, where you can buy hot and cold drinks and food.





If you have any questions or feel worried about your visit, please do contact us at access@almeida.co.uk or call our box office on 020 7359 4404.

Opening Hours

You can find our Box Office opening hours on our website here:

<https://almeida.co.uk/your-visit/booking-information/>

The Almeida Café & Bar opens two hours before every performance and remains open until 11 pm, with the kitchen closing 30 minutes before the show starts.

The auditorium opens 30 minutes before the performance begins – you are welcome to take your seats from then.