

'When I say sleep, you're free again': Tim Crouch's
Groundbreaking An Oak Tree Comes to Colombo!

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Posted on



Tim Crouch with Oscar-winning actress Jessie Buckley during a performance of An Oak Tree.

Sri Lankan theater audiences are set for a rare and unforgettable theatrical experience as acclaimed British playwright and performer Tim Crouch brings his

'When I say sleep, you're free again': Tim Crouch's Groundbreaking An Oak Tree
Comes to Colombo! | 1

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landmark play, An Oak Tree.

Tim Crouch is an award-winning British writer, performer, and theater-maker whose work has continuously challenged conventional ideas of what theater can be and how audiences experience it.



British playwright and performer Tim Crouch.

Crouch creates performances that place his audience’s imagination and presence at the heart of the theatrical experience. His ground-breaking play An Oak Tree is among his best-known works and has become an influential example of contemporary experimental theater.

First performed in 2005, An Oak Tree changed the rules of theater by placing an actor who has neither seen nor read the play at the very center of its action. The story follows a father who has lost his daughter in a car accident. The driver responsible is a stage hypnotist. The two men meet for the first time after the accident when the father volunteers to take part in the hypnotist’s act. What follows is a bold, funny, and deeply moving exploration of grief, loss, and the power of the mind and imagination.

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The specialty of this play is its second actor and the audience. At every performance, Crouch is joined by a different guest actor, one who has neither seen nor read a single word of the play before stepping onto the stage. Over the years, Crouch has performed An Oak Tree alongside some of the world’s most celebrated actors, including Frances McDormand, F. Murray Abraham, David Tennant, Jessie Buckley, Geoffrey Rush, and Phoebe Waller-Bridge. However, regardless of who joins him on stage, no two performances of An Oak Tree are ever the same.

In 2025-26, Kanchuka Dharmasiri, a Sri Lankan theater practitioner, translator, and academic, brought Tim Crouch’s ground-breaking play An Oak Tree to Sri Lankan audiences in a Sinhala translation titled Nuga Gahak, with Priyantha Sirikumara as the first actor, playing the stage hypnotist.

Supported by the British Council’s Connections through Cultures Grant, the collaboration between Crouch and Dharmasiri continues with Crouch’s visit to Sri Lanka, where he will perform the original English production of An Oak Tree.

Crouch will be joined by a different Sri Lankan guest actor each evening: Tehani Chitty on September 16 and Dino Corera on September 17. Described by Caryl Churchill as “a play about theater, a magic trick, a laugh and a vivid experience of grief,” An Oak Tree offers Sri Lankan audiences the chance to witness theatre being created in real time—a thrilling theatrical experience not to be missed!

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Guest performer Dino Corera.

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Guest performer Tehani Chitty

An Oak Tree

September 16 and 17, 2026;

Venue: Lionel Wendt Theater,

Colombo 7;

Time: 7pm;

Tickets: at the Lionel Wendt Theater

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Comes to Colombo! | 5

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