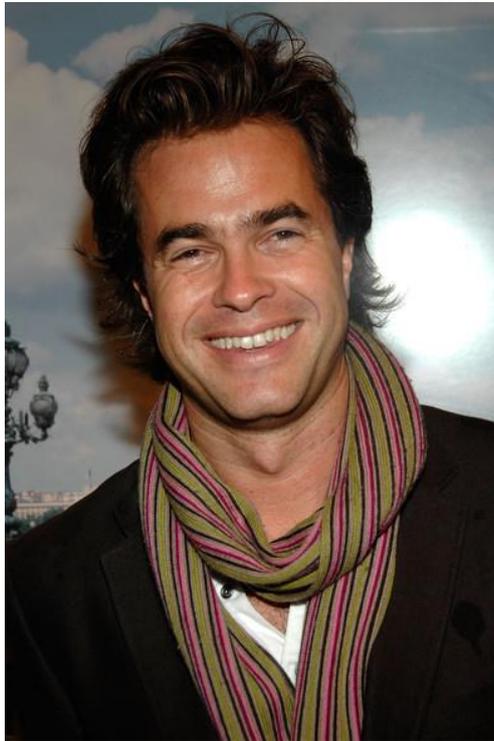


CA Prize-winner 2016: Rupert Goold



Rupert Goold © Getty Images

In 2015 the Almeida theatre's Greek season dominated the headlines. With modern-day productions of the *Oresteia*, *Medea* and the *Bacchae*, the ancient Greek tragedies were spectacularly brought into the world of their twenty-first century audiences. From May to November, the shows were a sell-out. Written by the Almeida's own award-winning associate director, Robert Icke, the *Oresteia* was labelled 'extraordinary' by *Time Out*; for *The Guardian*, it was 'the best show of the year'. Subsequently, it went on to tour the West End. Meanwhile, Ruth Cusk's adaptation of *Medea* was as provocative and challenging as its Euripidean model. Both the *Oresteia* and the *Medea* had been re-written as modern interpretations. The *Bacchae* was based on Anne Carson's new translation and provided 'two hours of raw and exciting theatre', according to the *Evening Standard*.

For these productions alone, Rupert Goold – as artistic director of the Almeida – was richly-deserving of the Classical Association Prize. But, not content to stop there, he and his artistic team decided to take the Greeks themselves on tour, to reach audiences far beyond the scope of the traditional theatre goer. The first experiment was the *Iliad*: a marathon reading of Robert Fagles' translation delivered by a stunning cast of actors over the course of sixteen hours in the British Museum and Almeida theatres. And then, naturally, there followed the *Odyssey*: taking its subject matter seriously, it was a literal odyssey around the streets and river of London, from where the text was read out at some of the city's most iconic locations. The events met with staggering audiences, both in London and further afield: the performances were streamed live and reached more than 50,000 people across the world. In case you missed them on the day, recordings of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* can be watched in full at almeida.co.uk – at least until November 2016.

It was all a huge team effort, reflected in the fact that Rupert Goold generously shared his prize with the Almeida to help them continue their excellent work. We were delighted to host the Director of Development, Sally Noonan, at the Classical Association gala dinner in Edinburgh. In her acceptance

speech, she paid a fitting tribute to the enduring fascination of the classical world and the excitement the season had generated among the Almeida cast and crew.

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