



[1984](#) - [The Royal Exchange Theatre](#)

WORLD PREMIERE of stage adaptation and direction by **Matthew Dunster**

Designed by Paul Wills

Reviewed by [Simon Belt](#) on 01 Mar 2010

The Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester launched their new season of 2010 with '**1984**' - a dramatic but disturbing adaptation of George Orwell's cherished novel of totalitarian state control of thought and behaviour.

The Royal Exchange Theatre is very creatively designed to offer an intimate connection with the audience that many similar spaces don't have, and this production used that intimacy to both invite the audience in and brutally repel them away with a disturbing and unnerving contrast.

George Orwell's classic text '1984', written in 1948, has been a staple read for many in their youth and became especially popular in the year of its title in response to the miners' strike of 1984-85. Written just after World War II to expose the blind allegiance to party doctrine by subordinate Stalinist political groups, 1984 has subsequently been used by generations to articulate their grievances at authoritarian state regulation and control.



Freedom and fun: how including the public leads to their exclusion