

## Countdown begins to European Capital of Culture Aarhus 2017

Denmark's dynamic second city of Aarhus will hold the title of European Capital of Culture in 2017 – and it already has an exciting line-up of events in store for the year, ranging from Viking performances to a modern ballet created by world-renowned artists. [Aarhus 2017](#) promises a host of experiences, linked by the theme of 'Rethink', with a focus on acting and thinking openly, differently and better.

Several thousand artists, including both Danish and international stars, such as British music producer Jamie xx and choreographer Wayne McGregor, will join forces to create unique moments that rethink art, food, music and ballet on a grand scale, providing even more reasons to visit Aarhus.

"We'll be Capital of Culture for the whole of Europe in 2017, and we want to take people on a journey through Denmark's unparalleled cultural richness," says Rebecca Matthews, CEO of European Capital of Culture Aarhus 2017.

"At the same time, Aarhus 2017 will provide a unique opportunity for us to engage with artists and creative entrepreneurs from across the globe."

The city's aim is to strengthen its image from a variety of angles: artistic, cultural, urban redevelopment, business and tourism.

### Highlights

The programme highlights for 2017 include:

1. In a unique collaboration between the Royal Danish Theatre and Moesgaard Museum, a spectacular outdoor performance of Red Serpent ("Røde Orm") will be presented on and around the museum's grass-covered roof.

"We hope the audience will be excited by this captivating tale of a Viking hero," says Morten Hesseldahl, CEO of the Royal Danish Theatre. "It promises to be a riveting performance, and will showcase the talent of our great Danish actors."

2. Aarhus 2017 will also feature the acclaimed contemporary ballet Tree of Codes, an interpretation of Jonathan Safran Foer's book of the same name.

Dancers from The Paris Opera Ballet and Company Wayne McGregor will perform the ballet, which was created by McGregor and Jamie xx with renowned Danish visual artist Olafur Eliasson.

"Despite working in different fields, the three of us quickly established a constructive dialogue. We had a common understanding of what we wanted to achieve. And it was fun, creating something together that has artistic depth, while being accessible to a wide audience," says Eliasson.

3. During summer 2017, a giant international art project will take shape, stretching more than two-and-a-half miles from Aarhus city centre to the beach. Presented by ARoS Aarhus Art Museum, THE GARDEN – End of Times, Beginning of Times, will examine the dramatic change in man and nature's relationship over the past 400 years.

4. Danish Oscar award-winning film director Susanne Bier's internationally-acclaimed movie trilogy will be transformed into three different art forms.

The National Danish Opera will rethink her film “Brothers” for the stage and choreographer Palle Granhøj will turn “Open Hearts” into a ballet. Aarhus Concert Hall and the Betty Nansen Theatre will collaborate on a musical dramatisation of “After the Wedding”, directed by Danish stage director, Peter Langdal.

“I very much look forward to experiencing how other artists are going to rethink and develop my work,” Susanne Bier comments.

### **Game-changer**

Aarhus 2017 will take art and culture to the people, with more than 350 projects in development across the city and the Central Denmark region.

Each month its European Capital of Culture programme will feature flagship events, performances and/or exhibitions, as well as dozens of smaller events and projects made by and for local communities.

“We’re developing a programme for the future,” says Aarhus 2017 CEO Rebecca Matthews. “For Aarhus and the surrounding region, next year will be a game-changer. Our year as European Capital of Culture will, we believe, be one of the most significant cultural and social events in Denmark for many years to come.”

Aarhus 2017 will present the full programme of events and activities for its year as European Capital of Culture on 12 October 2016.

### **Facts**

**The European Capital of Culture** is an international, cultural project that ranks among Europe's most ambitious. The idea is to show the richness and diversity of European culture, and to contribute to a greater mutual understanding between the citizens in Europe.

**Patronage:** Queen Margrethe II of Denmark as Royal Patron of the Capital of Culture.

**Official opening:** Aarhus, Denmark, Saturday 21 January 2017

Website: <http://www.aarhus2017.dk/en/>

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### **About [Aarhus](#):**

Diverse and modern, Aarhus is one of the happiest cities on Earth. The city lies on the Jutland peninsula where the beach, harbour and forest are all only a 15-minute bike ride away. The area around Aarhus also offers the biggest concentration of attractions in Denmark. Must-see sights, such as the Jelling Rune Stones, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, are all in easy reach and the city is the perfect size for a weekend break or family getaway.

### **Pictures**

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Rebecca Matthews picture (Photo: Michael Grøn, Billedmageren)

The Red Serpent scene at Moesgaard Museum (Photo: Montgomery Studio)

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