

Press Release
Date of issue:

THEATRE AND DANCE TAKES CENTRE STAGE FOR AARHUS CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2017

LUCINDA CHILDS, WAYNE MCGREGOR, SUSANNE BIER & ROBERT WILSON AMONG FEATURED ARTISTS



Tree of Codes Photo credit: Joel Chester

A series of state-of-the-art dance and theatre commissions are one of the special highlights of the programme for **Aarhus 2017 European Capital of Culture**.

Internationally acclaimed choreographer Wayne McGregor and the Paris Opera Ballet transform novelist Jonathan Safran Foer's *Tree of Codes* with music composed by Jamie xx and designs by Olafur Eliasson. Based on Jonathan Safran Foer's novel, this groundbreaking theatrical presentation received standing ovations at its Manchester International Festival premiere and is a not-to-be-missed event of the cultural year. A major collaboration between three world-class artists, *Tree of Codes* is a breathtakingly rhapsodic encounter between music, dance and light (27 April – 1 May).

In summer 2017, Wayne McGregor will be in residence in Aarhus with his company of world-class dancers to create a spectacular new site specific participatory dance work. McGregor and his dancers will work with more than two hundred local people of different ages, interests and cultures to create a commissioned work that celebrates the people and the city of Aarhus through dance, sound and costume.

Lucinda Childs' 1979 signature evening-length work is recognised as a modern masterpiece. It features a commissioned score by Philip Glass and decor by Sol LeWitt in which the Company's dancers are projected in perfect synchronization with the live dancers on stage. Created in 1979, *Dance* constitutes a synthesis between the silence and sparseness of Lucinda Childs' previous works, such as *Radial Courses*, and the stage work developed in conjunction with Philip Glass and Robert Wilson in *Einstein on the Beach*.

In November, Musikhuset will be the centre of the performing art programme with an iconic work from internationally celebrated composer Philip Glass featuring the virtuoso pianist Anton Batagov and Glass himself in concert. The legendary choreographer Lucinda Childs presents *DANCE* with staging by Sol LeWitt, and an evening of new songs and arrangements by Anohni supported by the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra. In addition to these outstanding presentations, Philip Glass and Lucinda Childs will be 'in conversation' and will present a film programme expanding upon their remarkable careers.

Oscar-winning Danish film-maker, Susanne Bier (of *The Night Manager* fame) has built a reputation as one of the world's outstanding directors. For Aarhus 2017, Bier's celebrated film trilogy *Brothers* (16–22 August), *Open Hearts* (8–11 Nov) and *After the Wedding* (23–30 Sept) is transformed from screen to stage in three

ground breaking theatrical commissions. Bier's most acclaimed and successful films will be staged in three different genres – as an opera, a dance performance and a musical.

Spring Forward launches 20 of Europe's best next generation dance artists over a single weekend this April. Aarhus welcomes the seventh annual itinerant festival as a part of its programme as European Capital of Culture. Dance producers from most European countries and beyond will gather to sit alongside the Aarhus audience and decide which artists they will offer further performances, residencies, commissions and co-productions. Spring Forward is the brain-child of John Ashford, and is firmly rooted in the network Aerowaves that he founded 21 years ago whilst Theatre Director at London dance venue The Place.

Combining dance, opera, music, and theatre, *Depth of Field: Aarhus Variation* (15 & 16 Sept) by acclaimed Dutch choreographer, Anouk van Dijk, is an Aarhus 2017 exclusive which showcases the Chunky Move ensemble and some of Aarhus' best creative groups, choirs, musicians, singers, dancers, also involving members of the public.

Complexity of Being (1 & 2 Sept) is a darkly humorous exploration of identity in the age of social media by two of dance and theatre's most unflinching creative talents. This collaboration between Anouk van Dijk and director and writer Falk Richter, is a politically charged work of contemporary theatre which seamlessly integrates text, movement, and music.

The spectacular Viking saga, *Røde Orm* (24 May – 1 July) will be performed on and around the amazing, grass-covered roof of Moesgaard Museum by a large ensemble from The Royal Danish Theatre under the direction of Frede Gulbrandsen. *Røde Orm* will be one of the biggest outdoor performances ever staged in Denmark, and thousands of families and visitors will be able to experience this spectacular event in this unusual setting.

The Ballad of Agnete and the Merman (14–18 June), a new performance piece created by electronic music composer, Cristian Vogel with a team of international collaborators will receive its world premiere. The piece borrows from the symbolism and narrative of a well-known Danish folk ballad, a story of love, loss and impossible migrations. The production unites performance, sound art, natural acoustics, experimental architecture and cutting edge audio technology to reframe the tale from modern perspective.

Rebecca Matthews, Aarhus 2017 CEO, said: "Aarhus 2017 is going to be a creative tour de force, with new works, special commissions, premieres, major events and festivals. And it will encompass plenty of free as well as ticketed events - experiences that are huge and human scale all at once. We hope that the different perspectives and creative energy expressed by the outstanding artists assembling in Aarhus over the year will inspire people all over the world."

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