

ANNA ARTHUR PR

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2018 London International Mime Festival 10 January – 3 February

www.mimelondon.com

This epic festival showcases some of the most gaspworthy theatre you will see all year
(The Guardian)

Winner of the 2017 Peter Brook Special Achievement Award

The London International Mime Festival, directed by Helen Lannaghan and Joseph Seelig, is a unique event in the theatre calendar, a once a year chance to see very best and newest contemporary visual theatre that embraces cutting edge circus, dance, physical theatre, juggling, object manipulation, physical comedy and productions that interweave theatre and film.

The 2018 festival features 11 UK and 4 London premieres in 16 productions from Belgium, Finland, France, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK, performing at Barbican Theatre; The Pit, Barbican; Jacksons Lane; Platform Theatre; Sadler's Wells' The Peacock and Lilian Baylis Studio; Shoreditch Town Hall and Soho Theatre.

PLATFORM THEATRE, CENTRAL SAINT MARTINS

The festival opens at **Platform Theatre** with the UK premiere of *Lähtö (Departure)* performed by Finland's **Kalle Nio / WHS** presented in collaboration with Jacksons Lane. Combining cutting edge video technology with 19th century stage-magic techniques, **Kalle Nio** creates mystery, unease and dark humour, with teasing ambiguity reminiscent of 1960s cult movie *Blow Up*. The twisted, dreamlike soundscape is the work of composer, **Samuli Kosminen**, well known for his collaborations with Kronos Quartet. Co-founded by Finnish magician/visual artist, **Kalle Nio / WHS** productions have toured worldwide and been important factors in the recent rise to prominence of Finnish new circus.

BARBICAN THEATRE

Barbican Theatre is the venue for two large-scale productions by young Belgian theatre makers. Theatre collective **FC Bergman** is experimental and daring in its approach, devising visual and poetic work with an anarchic edge. The UK premiere of *300 el x 50 el x 30 el*, first performed at Antwerp's Toneelhuis, takes as its starting point the story of Noah's Ark – the title alludes to the vessel's dimensions – and touches upon hidden desires, the search for life's meaning, the beauty of human failure and, finally, hope.

Theatre and film are ingeniously interwoven in a wordless production that follows the inhabitants of a small village community gripped by the fear of an impending disaster – a flood. With a cast of thirteen actors and

some sixty local extras, *300 el x 50 el x 30 el* unfolds to a soundtrack that includes Vivaldi, The Persuasions and Nina Simone.

Presented in association with the Barbican.

In *Mother (Moeder)*, *Peeping Tom* evoke a dreamlike universe, at once disturbing and oddly humorous, to explore the archetypal figure of the mother, in a production of astonishing physicality that defies characterisation.

Taking audiences into a series of recognisable spaces, including a museum, studio and maternity ward, this non-narrative work draws on the memories of the show's director **Gabriela Carrizo** and those of her performers to trigger disquieting reflections about motherhood.

Reflecting the unstable atmosphere of a David Lynch film, the soundscape has a cinematic quality, sometimes amplified to disconcerting effect. It is matched by surreal visual imagery and choreography of rare imagination where bodies bend, flip, contort and isolate.

Peeping Tom's 32 rue Vandenbranden, seen at the Barbican in 2015 as part of the London International Mime Festival, won the Olivier Award for Best New Dance Production.

Presented in association with the Barbican.

THE PIT, BARBICAN

From France **L'Insolite Mécanique** presents Magali Rousseau's compelling installation-performance *Lift Off (Je Brasse de l'Air)*. Rousseau transports the audience into a mysterious world of shadow and light, where mechanical installations come alive, illuminating her childhood dream of achieving flight. In this promenade performance exquisite metal creatures emerge from the dark; some small, some very large, each is an actor, a work of art in its own right, set into action through steam power, flame, time or weight, all playing their part in this ingenious theatrical tale.

Rousseau's astonishingly engineered machines are born out of a career working in set and prop design. Here she collaborates with musician Stéphane Diskus, whose live clarinet playing heightens the unusual ambience, to relate a most personal memory: how trying to fly became an act of resistance.

Presented in association with the Barbican. Supported by Institut français.

Also from France **Bêtes de Foire's** Elsa de Witte and Laurent Cabrol performed with many French street theatre and travelling companies before creating their own miniature circus universe.

Surrounded in her workshop by old clothes, mannequins and bric à brac, a seamstress tinkers with assorted fabrics, reassembling materials of all kinds while her antiquated sewing machine provides musical cues for her stage partner's routines. He, a little down at heel but clearly talented, launches into eccentric dance, juggling precariously with hats, and props that disappear before your eyes. A supporting cast of mechanical characters including tightrope walker, acrobats and one-man band, add to the magic and mystique of an itinerant fairground show.

With echoes of Tadeusz Kantor and Alexander Calder, and the sensibility of silent film, this is a feelgood performance of surprise, wonder, offbeat humour and exceptional skill.

Presented in association with the Barbican. Supported by Institut français.

BARBICAN CINEMA

In *Variety* (Germany 1925, Dir EA Dupont) renowned German actor **Emil Jannings** stars as a seedy circus owner who leaves his wife for a young dancer, but explodes when he discovers that the dancer is having an affair with an acrobat in his troupe. With stunning trapeze sequences shot by legendary cinematographer **Karl Freund** in the Berlin Wintergarten theatre, the enduring power of the movie, in Pauline Kael's words, "is the restless, subjective camera and the fast editing, which make it an almost voluptuous experience". With live piano accompaniment by Stephen Horne.

Presented in association with the Barbican.

JACKSONS LANE

Winner of the 2017 Edinburgh Fringe Total Theatre and Jacksons Lane Award for Best Circus, *Fauna* is entertaining physical theatre that highlights similarities between human movement and animal behaviour.

Spiders, lemurs, tree frogs and birds of paradise are just some of a wondrous menagerie brought to life through the awesome skills of this new company, made up of five international performers drawn from leading circus groups: NoFit State, Seven Fingers, Poivre Rose and Gravity & Other Myths, with original music by guitarist Geordie Little.

Perhaps you've felt lonely. Perhaps you've sat at home wondering just when 'the one' is going to come along and into your life. Perhaps you've even felt lonely enough to don a white dress, hum Mendelssohn's Wedding March and rehearse the ceremony.

That's the set-up for Mexico's **Gabriela Muñoz's** show, *Perhaps, Perhaps, Quizas*; a heart-wrenching yet hilarious piece that plays with ideas of loneliness, hope, jealousy, and the longing for true romance. In today's digital age, when everyone is too busy to notice anyone, the chance of real connection seems more than ever elusive. Moving from pathos to sophisticated humour, our protagonist goes through the wedding ritual weekly. Emotionally overwrought in her world of chintz and lace, the act of marriage and lawful companionship excite her. Will she get lucky tonight? In the words of the song... Perhaps, Perhaps, Quizas...

From France **Nacho Flores' Tesseract** brilliantly does what circus arts are meant to do – transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary. After ten years as a highwire specialist, **Nacho Flores** puts incredible balancing skills to the test in climbing fearsome stacks of teetering wooden cubes that rise like mountains and topple like dominoes. The result of three years research, Tesseract (in geometry a complex cubic form) is unlike anything you've seen before. Combining circus, architecture, puppetry, video and live music, it's a surreal, witty and gravity-defying adventure in a shape-shifting landscape.

Born in Madrid, **Nacho Flores** trained in theatre and circus in Amsterdam, honing his skills at the Moscow Circus School and at Le Lido in Toulouse. *Tesseract* was a CircusNext winner in 2014. This UK premiere is supported by Institut français.

Vamos Theatre is Britain's leading mask theatre company, admired for its physical storytelling skills, and for tackling challenging subjects with compassion, humour and deep emotional insight.

Afghanistan: 2009. Under bright blue skies, a small girl stands and watches the soldier. She smiles, just like his sister... Ryan is there to see the world, learn a trade, get a life. Training is complete, combat is a buzz; he's part of a team, and knows his job. But on one particular tour of duty Ryan sees things he can't talk about, to anyone. And when he returns home, the trouble really begins.

Created from two years of research with former and serving soldiers, families and health professionals, *A Brave Face* explores Post-Traumatic Stress in the military, an unseen and often unrecognised injury of war. Vamos brings its trademark, wordless, full mask style to a story that needs to be told. Co-commissioned by London International Mime Festival.

SADLER'S WELLS (THE PEACOCK)

After 5-star hit *Horror* at LIMF 2016, reprised in a sold-out three week run at The Peacock last summer, Dutch visual theatre masters **Jakob Ahlbom Company** returns with *Lebensraum*; brilliant, silent movie magic based on Buster Keaton's *The Scarecrow*, with music from Dutch rock band **Alamo Race Track**.

In *Lebensraum*, two inventors live together in one small room. Lack of space is no problem: a system of ropes and pulleys brings everything to hand and furniture has multiple functions - the bed is a piano and the bookcase serves as a fridge. But when they create a female robot to take care of domestic chores their routine lifestyle quickly spirals out of control. The results are both unexpected and hilarious.

SADLER'S WELLS (LILIAN BAYLIS STUDIO)

Gandini Juggling's beautiful new show *Sigma* explores the creative interface between juggling, geometry and classical Indian dance. With its dazzling quartet of female artists, including award-winning choreographer Seeta Patel, a seductive percussion score and sumptuous backdrop of multimedia projections, *Sigma* is a finely crafted work designed to engage in a dialogue with the viewer, transcending cultural barriers and stimulating imaginations.

Following its success at recent editions of the Mime Festival and extensive international touring with *4x4: Ephemeral Architectures* and *Smashed*; Gandini Juggling continues to excite and entertain in this latest cross-artform collaboration, winner of an Asian Arts Award and Total Theatre Award at the 2017 Edinburgh Fringe. Co-produced by London International Mime Festival.

Le Récital des Postures is a silent concert for one instrument - the human body. As if following a musical score, choreographer/performer **Yasmine Hugonnet** from Switzerland executes a series of postures and movements referenced in historic paintings, ancient sculptures, marionettes and everyday life demanding both intense engagement and complete abandonment.

Her agility and astonishing strength make her seem to float, suspended in a beautiful white space. Awesome and mysterious, her slow-burn performance evokes unspoken sensations and images. It speaks to us through her naked skin with a wayward wit that subverts all expectations.

SHOREDITCH TOWN HALL

Santa Madera (in Spanish – *sacred wood*) performed by and with **Juan Ignacio Tula & Stefan Kinsman** is inspired by indigenous South American rituals, with choreography that seems to hurl the artists through time and space, evoking the violence of combatants in a pagan power game. *Santa Madera* is the duo's second production, created in 2017 under the guidance of acrobat/trampoline genius Mathurin Bolze, whose Mpta company has produced some of the festival's most breath-taking shows of recent years including last year's hit, *Barons Perchés*.

Between the Dog and the Wolf is a dynamic site-responsive performance by UK company **Arbonauts**. Co-commissioned by London International Mime Festival and Shoreditch Town Hall, the production has been specially created for the venue's iconic Council Chamber.

Darkness is falling across Europe. In the embers of the dusk, shadows form and silhouettes distort. Fear begins to take hold in the confines of the familiar and comfortable, the unknown and dangerous, the domestic and the wild. In the twilight hours, when the shadow of a dog becomes the silhouette of a wolf, it is hard to distinguish friend from foe.

Arbonauts was founded in 2012 by Helen Galliano and Dimitri Launder. They devise and direct bold, site-specific performance that starts where theatre, installation and dance collide. A UK premiere.

Sacekripa (France), whose *Marée Basse* at the Barbican Pit was a hit at LIMF 2017, return with the UK premiere of *Vu*. A man attempts to make the perfect cup of tea. It's a delicate and obsessively ordered process. You may yourself become addicted, or never want to see another cup of tea again.

Vu concerns a sensitive and meticulous man and his relationship with objects - how he transforms them and how in turn they affect him. A delightful and suspense-filled miniature circus spectacle exploring happiness, obsession and humanity, it puts our daily routines under a magnifying glass, reveals our manias and shows us what we take for granted in a totally new light. Performed by Etienne Manceau.

Supported by Institut français.

SOHO THEATRE

Following the success of *Kraken* and *Nautilus*, his two solo shows at the Mime Festival, **Trygve Wakenshaw** joins forces with fellow New Zealander, **Barnie Duncan** (*Calypso Nights*) in this extraordinary celebration of the banal. A sold out hit at the 2017 Edinburgh Festival Fringe, *Different Party* is physical comedy at its best.

Picture the most mundane place imaginable descending into a world of absurdist fantasy. Business drones Grareth Krubb and Dennis Chang whittle away the minutes in the barren office of Ruck's Leather Interiors, patiently waiting for the phone call that may or may not give them something to actually do. In between the drudgery of the 9-5, the minutiae of office existence opens up a fantastical world of fancy, where a sticky piece of paper turns men into pigeons, where briefcases are dogs, and where that elusive client is always a missed call away.

[CLICK HERE FOR IMAGES](#)

The Festival line-up will be complemented by workshops and artists' talks.

Full programme details, including workshops and after-show discussion dates are available online at www.mimelondon.com. Booking from Monday 16 October.

BOOKING OPENING DATES

The Barbican will announce its season on Wednesday 1 November. Priority booking starts on Thursday 2 November with public booking open on Friday 10 November.

Jacksons Lane and Soho Theatre will go on sale on Monday 16 October

Shoreditch Town Hall will go on sale on Tuesday 17 October

Priority booking for Sadler's Wells starts on Monday 30 October with public booking open on Monday 6 November.

Platform Theatre booking opens on Monday 30 October.

London International Mime Festival is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.

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