

# ANNA ARTHUR PR

London International Mime Festival  
Wednesday 12 January – Sunday 6 February 2022

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[LIMF 2022 IMAGES](#) (password: download)

**London International Mime Festival (LIMF)**, the UK's annual festival of contemporary visual theatre, runs from Wednesday 12 January to Sunday 6 February 2022 with 15 productions including 7 co-commissioned works in 8 London venues: Barbican Theatre & The Pit, Jacksons Lane, Puppet Theatre Barge, Shoreditch Town Hall, Sadler's Wells' Lilian Baylis Studio and Peacock Theatre, and The Place.

This year's LIMF co-commissions include the festival's opening show, *LIFE*, **Gandini Juggling's** tribute to contemporary dance legend, Merce Cunningham; **Opposable Thumb's** *BIG BOYS DON'T CRY*, an emotional and comic story about manhood; *BLUEBELLE*, **Theatre Re's** wondrous and mysterious tale about life and how to protect it; **Thick & Tight's** *SHORT & SWEET*, a thoroughly modern variety show and **The PappyShow** with a multidisciplinary performance that asks us all to consider the question, when you look at someone, *WHAT DO YOU SEE?*

Other featured artists for 2022 are **Nikki Rummer** and **JD Broussé**, better known as the hugely successful acro-duo **Nikki & JD**. Between them they perform 4 shows in the programme: *UNBROKEN* is **Nikki Rummer's** solo debut, a family story told through the eyes of a daughter while **JD's** *(le) PAIN* is a journey through a universe of breadmaking, physical heroics, and growing up queer in a boulangerie in the south of France. Both solo shows are LIMF co-commissions.

Festival first timers include Scotland's foremost artist-led independent theatre company, **Vanishing Point**, with its internationally acclaimed re-imagining of Maeterlinck's 1895 drama, *Interior*, **Sadiq Ali**, a mixed heritage, neurodiverse circus artist born and raised in Edinburgh, and Australian circus strong-lady, **Charmaine Childs**.

Returning favourites include Britain's hottest young circus company, **Barely Methodical Troupe**, Olivier Award nominated **Compagnie 111**, magical visual artist/musicians Romain Bermond and Jean-Baptiste Maillet, aka **Stereoptik** and **String Theatre** with its family-friendly adaptation of Albert Lamorisse's famous short film, *THE RED BALLOON*.

The programme at Barbican Cinema features three comedy shorts films by Brussels-based duo **Fiona Gordon** and **Dominique Abel**, alongside films by two giants of the French physical-comedy tradition, **Jacques Tati** and **Pierre Étaix**.

**Online** treats running throughout the festival include LIMF's specially commissioned *FIVE SHORT FILMS*, a series created for 2021's entirely digital festival, but so well received that it's

now a permanent fixture. This time the films are made by international artists **Delgado Fuchs** (Switzerland), **Dewey Dell** (Italy), **Gabriela Muñoz** (Mexico), **Patrick Sims** (USA/France) and **Hiroaki Umeda** (Japan). From the US, **Heather Henson's** *HANDMADE PUPPET DREAMS* presents a compilation of shorts featuring new generation American puppet artists, and **Open Sky Theatre's** feature-length *COLD* is a dark fairy tale for adults addressing themes of love, grief, madness and redemption.

The festival will also offer a mix of live and online workshops in various visual theatre disciplines including clown, commedia, puppetry and animation, mime, mask and devising led by **Angela de Castro**, **Avner Eisenberg**, **David Glass**, **John Mowat**, **Chris Pirie/Green Ginger**, **Guillaume Pigé/Theatre Re**, **Nola Rae**, **The PappyShow**, **Told by an Idiot**, **Vamos Theatre** and **Steve Wasson & Corinne Soum/Théâtre de l'Ange Fou**,

## LIMF 2022 PROGRAMME

### **Lilian Baylis Studio, Sadler's Wells**

Following worldwide success with *Smashed*, its darkly humorous homage to Pina Bausch, **Gandini Juggling** turns its attention to another giant of contemporary dance, Merce Cunningham, to open LIMF 2022. After three decades of being inspired by his work and wondering what a Cunningham choreographed juggling piece might have looked like, Sean Gandini and company co-founder/director Kati Ylä-Hokkala have created *LIFE* an original work firmly rooted in the Cunningham universe. The soundscore is by Pulitzer Prize-winning American composer and vocalist, Caroline Shaw. A LIMF co-commission.

### **Shoreditch Town Hall**

**Theatre Re** presents the world premiere of *BLUEBELLE*, a journey into the wilderness of parenthood told in its signature style combining visually striking poetic theatre and lyrical live music. Weaving together plots, objects and characters from ancient folktales collected by Angela Carter, Italo Calvino, the Brothers Grimm and Charles Perrault, as well as interviews with parents and carers, *BLUEBELLE* reminds us that life is shaped by the stories we tell and leave behind. A LIMF co-commission. Supported by Shoreditch Town Hall.

After its hugely successful *BOYS* seen at LIMF'20, **The PappyShow** returns with a multidisciplinary performance, weaving words, song, movement, design, costume and audio-visual that asks us all to consider the question, when you look at someone, **WHAT DO YOU SEE?** With a 12-strong cast and team of 27 creatives representing the spectrums of race, disability, sexuality, age and body shapes, plus all the diverse intersectional identities in Britain today, it celebrates all those identities placing these communities at the centre of the story to say **WE SEE YOU**. A LIMF co-commission.

### **Jacksons Lane**

Award-winning *KNOT* is **Nikki & JD's** internationally acclaimed circus-dance work highlighting the knots we tie ourselves in. It uses superb hand to hand circus skills to tell the tale of an impossible choice and gives real insight into the performers' feelings for each other. *KNOT* is a finely crafted journey through the struggles of commitment, with a surprising sting in its tail. Choreographed by Ben Duke, Olivier Award nominee, and co-founder/director of Lost Dog.

**BIG BOYS DON'T CRY**, the new show from **Opposable Thumb**, the makers of *Coulrophobia* (LIMF 2020) is an emotional and comic story about manhood. Adam and Dik are men. But they don't feel as if they fit any macho stereotype that society seems to offer. Using potato crisps, puppets, dead bodies and action men they take us into the beating heart of the modern male and attempt to answer the burning question: what maketh a man? Nature or nurture? Mind or body? Cheese 'n' Onion or Prawn Cocktail? A LIMF co-commission.

Trying to learn how to overcome uncertainty, Australian circus strong-lady **Charmaine Childs** asked people of all walks of life the same question: Can you tell me about a time when you felt really powerful? The result is **POWER**, combining her own story with the extraordinary experiences of 'ordinary' people. Unfolding through a mix of verbal storytelling, voice-over interviews and impressive physical strength and artistry, this is an exciting piece of new circus-theatre - optimistic, uplifting, funny and moving. **POWER** is directed by Emma Bernard, acclaimed for her staging of innovative opera, theatre, music and dance across the UK.

**THE CHOSEN HARAM** is a circus theatre show that tells the story of two queer men and their chance meeting through a dating app, portraying the highs and lows of their relationship and the barriers they face, both social and cultural, in seeking happiness and personal fulfilment. Performed on two Chinese Poles this emotionally candid yet heart-warming story unfolds with gravity defying tricks and extraordinary movement. Co-creator/performer **Sadiq Ali** was born and raised in Edinburgh. Trained at the National Centre for Circus Arts, he has performed with Ockham's Razor as well as developing his own work. Actor and circus artist **Hauk Pattison** has appeared in productions at the National Theatre and RSC, and in films including 'Notes on a Scandal'.

## Puppet Theatre Barge

**String Theatre's THE RED BALLOON** tells the story of a small boy's friendship with a balloon and explores the poignancy of a child's imagination. Performed using long-string marionettes to specially commissioned music, the show has captured the imaginations of both adults and children across the world. With inspiration from Albert Lamorisse's much loved short film of the same name, **THE RED BALLOON** involves its audience in the intense emotions of childhood, conveyed through a meticulous choreography of movement and synchronicity of light and sound.

## The Place

**Jean-Daniel Broussé**, or **JD**, is well known internationally as one half of the hugely successful **Nikki & JD** acro-duo. He was born to inherit the French bakery run by four generations of his family. Instead, he studied history and literature, then 'ran away to join the circus', training at London's National Centre for Circus Arts. In *(le) PAIN*, his first solo show, **JD** travels acrobatically through a universe of bread-making, physical heroics and growing up queer in provincial France. His collaborator and director is the writer and performer Ursula Martinez. A LIMF co-commission.

**UNBROKEN** is **Nikki Rummer's** solo debut: beloved father David Bruce Rummer summons his family for one last Christmas with the whole clan. Across three bittersweet weeks, three generations celebrate the life of a man who demands to be remembered, looking wide-eyed to the past to make sense of their rapidly changing futures, told through the eyes of a daughter. Combining her talent for storytelling and her unique movement language inspired by her acrobatics, gymnastics and capoeira practice, Nikki tells a very personal story with universal resonance. A LIMF co-commission.

## Peacock Theatre

**Barely Methodical Troupe**, Britain's hottest circus company celebrates group dynamics and camaraderie in their five-star hit, *KIN*. Six sensational acrobats deploy superb physical prowess as tumbling, flying and catching become challenges and opportunities in their individual bids for recognition. **Barely Methodical Troupe** is at the forefront of a new kind of physical performance, creating highly entertaining productions that mix the show-stopping acrobatics of circus with the emotional punch of theatre. Directed by Ben Duke, Olivier Award nominee, and co-founder/director of Lost Dog.

## The Pit, Barbican

**Thick & Tight** present *SHORT & SWEET* a thoroughly modern variety show mixing dance, drag, lip-syncing and satire and brings a host of famous and infamous characters to life: Sid Vicious, Twiggy, Grace Jones, a monstrous Putin/Rasputin hybrid, 8 Edith Sitwells and everyone's favourite avant-garde duo, John Cage & Elaine Paige. The evening concludes with a preview of new work inspired by Japanese Noh theatre, commissioned by the Noh Reimagined Festival. Created by Eleanor Perry & Daniel Hay-Gordon. A LIMF co-commission.

Following *DARK CIRCUS*, their big top cowboy melodrama at LIMF 2016, **Stereoptik's** Romain Bermond and Jean-Baptiste Maillet return with this latest handmade mini-spectacle. *STELLAIRE* is a love story unfolding through space and time, set in a magic-lantern world. Using paper, chalk, charcoal, sand, silhouettes, and projection, these two virtuoso visual artists create wondrous cartoon-theatre that literally emerges before your eyes. Gentle live music accompaniment highlights the enchanting astral romance.

## Barbican Theatre

*aSH*, a piece by **Compagnie 111's Aurélien Bory** for **Shantala Shivalingappa**, is the final piece in his trilogy of large-scale solos for unique female dancers. It follows his Olivier Award nominated *WHAT'S BECOME OF YOU* (*Questcequetudeviens?*) for the flamenco artist Stéphanie Fuster (LIMF 2014/Barbican) and *PLEXUS* with Japanese star Kairo Ito (LIMF 2015/Sadler's Wells)

**Shantala Shivalingappa** leads us on a thrilling journey linking ancestral culture and innovative technology. Trained in Kuchipudi – originally a male dance form, Shantala is a New York Bessie Award-winning dancer, actor and singer who has worked with some of the greatest modern directors and choreographers including Maurice Béjart, Peter Brook and Pina Bausch. In *aSH* she pays homage to Shiva, God of creation and destruction. His vibration is the rhythm of the world, moving in spirals and patterns interpreted by one of the most original dancers of our time. The live soundscape is provided by Loïc Schild.

**Vanishing Point's INTERIORS** is an award-winning international co-production inspired by Nobel Prize winner Maurice Maeterlinck's astonishing 1895 play, *Interior*. Winter. Behind a window, in a cosy room, a group of friends gather for a meal. The lamps are on, everyone is happy. Talk begins and stories unfold around the table. There is laughing, flirting, joking, eating and dancing. But sadness soon threads its way through the occasion, secrets emerge and lies are exposed. Outside someone is watching. **Vanishing Point** is Scotland's foremost artist-led independent theatre company, acclaimed for its distinctive and visionary work.

## Barbican Cinema

Long-term friends of the London International Mime Festival, Brussels-based comedy duo **Fiona Gordon** and **Dominique Abel** will be known to film fans primarily through their recent features, including *LOST IN PARIS* (2017).

This programme brings together three of their early shorts. In *ROSITA* (1997) the pair are a fortune teller and her assistant, working out of a dilapidated caravan; in *MERCI CUPIDON'* (1994) attraction sparks between their two oddball singletons in a strange, out-of-the-way nightclub; and in *WALKING ON THE WILD SIDE* (2004), an awkward misunderstanding occurs between a man and a cleaning-lady.

Phenomenal physical performers, the duo are steeped in the grand French physical-comedy tradition of **Jacques Tati** and **Pierre Étaix**, who are also represented in the programme. In *THE SCHOOL FOR POSTMEN* (1947), Tati is a bumbling rural postman on a bike; meanwhile, in *RUPTURE* (1961), Étaix is a thwarted lover who finds inanimate objects conspire against him as he attempts to reply to a break-up letter.

## Online Films

Throughout the festival a selection of specially curated free-to-view films will be available via the LIMF website ([mimelondon.com](http://mimelondon.com))

Following last year's outstanding *FIVE SHORT FILMS* series from UK artists, LIMF 2022 has commissioned shorts from international visual theatre creatives and companies: **Delgado Fuchs** (Switzerland), **Dewey Dell** (Italy), **Gabriela Munoz** (Mexico), **Patrick Sims** (USA/France) and **Hiroaki Umeda** (Japan). The artists will respond to a brief to create a film between 3-10 minutes long that will surprise and intrigue, but that is not driven by spoken text.

From America, **Heather Henson's** *HANDMADE PUPPET DREAMS* is a traveling film series that promotes a new generation of puppeteers and puppet artists, developing their handmade craft specifically for the screen. The films all focus on real-time puppetry and allow artists to build their vision, and then breathe life into their dreams. Her company IBEX Puppetry is dedicated to promoting the art of puppetry in all its various mediums, from stage to cinema.

In partnership with Turtle Key Arts and the Courtyard, Hereford, **Open Sky Theatre's** feature-length film, *COLD* is a dark fairy tale for adults addressing themes of love, grief, madness and redemption. From an ante-natal hospital appointment a couple find themselves transported to a stark, frozen forest. Lost in the woods, savaged by cold and hunted by a terrifying beast, they must save themselves and their unborn child. So begins a struggle for survival in which they must face the hostile elements, malign magical forces and a truly terrible choice.

Visit [mimelondon.com](http://mimelondon.com) to explore the festival's history stretching back over four decades, for interviews, reviews and latest news.

Follow LIMF [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and the [YouTube](#) channel to watch video trailers of festival shows.

Booking opens on Wednesday 13 October via the LIMF website.

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

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