

## AVIVA STUDIOS 2023/24 OPENING SEASON PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

On sale now:

### Free Your Mind

18 October – 5 November 2023

Based on The Matrix films, *Free Your Mind* is a large-scale immersive performance, specially created for the opening of Aviva Studios. This dramatic retelling through dance, music and visual effects will bring together the visceral movement of choreographer Kenrick 'H2O' Sandy with a powerful score from renowned composer Michael 'Mikey J' Asante (co-founders and artistic directors of the Olivier award-winning Boy Blue), stage design by world-leading designer Es Devlin and the work of the acclaimed writer Sabrina Mahfouz – all directed by Danny Boyle. *Free Your Mind* will recreate some of the film's most iconic scenes through hip-hop choreography combined with immersive set design and visual effects, provoking visions of an alternate future.

### I CAN'T FOLLOW YOU ANYMORE

31 October 2023

Launching 31 October, *I CAN'T FOLLOW YOU ANYMORE* is a new free-to-play browser-based video game by artist and game designer Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley exploring the idea of a Black Trans revolution. In the glitchy style of a 90s PlayStation 1 horror game, the player must dance or fight to convert others to their ideology whilst facing positions which challenge their own.

### The Welcome

11 – 19 November 2023

Programmed over two years by a cross-section of Greater Manchester residents, *The Welcome* is an invitation from local people to celebrate the opening of Aviva Studios. Highlights include African circus from Kalabanté Productions, an installation made of waste materials by Filipino artist-designer Leeroy New, and a large-scale photography exhibition featuring over 200 local residents as part of the global Inside Out Project created by world-renowned artist JR.

### A Night with the Johnny Marr Orchestra

7 – 8 December

For the first time, Johnny Marr and his band will be joined by a 30-piece orchestra for an expansive celebration of the last decade of Johnny's solo body of work. Led by conductor Fiona Brice, the orchestra has been assembled by Johnny Marr specially for the event and is composed of musicians from across the North.

### Children of Zeus with special guest Ghetts

Saturday 9 December

Hip-hop and soul duo, Children of Zeus, known for their critically acclaimed debut album *Travel Light* and 2021 follow-up *Balance*, have curated a night of special guests including rap and grime MC icon Ghetts, and legendary R&B band Loose Ends. Manchester talent is also on show with soul artist [ K S R ], R&B singer-songwriter Akemi Fox, soul singer and rapper KinKai, and Gyalex.

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## Lost and Found

13 December - 6 January 2024

The world premiere stage adaptation of Oliver Jeffers' award-winning children's book *Lost and Found* is a heart-warming, magical story of friendship and loneliness, following the journey of a little boy who one day finds a penguin on his doorstep. Adapted and directed by BAFTA award-winning director Will Brenton, the show will feature a live, original soundtrack from musician and composer Gruff Rhys.

## Coming soon:

### Jungle Book - Robert Wilson & CocoRosie

March 2024

Visionary director Robert Wilson joins forces with folk duo CocoRosie – their fourth collaboration in theatre – for a spellbinding stage adaptation of Kipling's classic story *The Jungle Book* featuring stunning set designs, dazzling costumes and a dreamy original soundtrack. Co-produced by Factory International, *Jungle Book* has already wowed audiences in Paris, Florence and Antwerp, before arriving in Manchester for its very first shows in English.

### Robin/Red/Breast - Maxine Peake, Sarah Frankcom and Imogen Knight

May 2024

Widely regarded as a precursor to *The Wicker Man*, John Bowen's *Robin Redbreast* was first broadcast in 1970 as part of the BBC's famous *Play For Today* TV series, exploring similar themes of paganism and fertility sacrificial rites within a horror setting. 50 years on, Maxine Peake, Sarah Frankcom and Imogen Knight – co founders of Music, Art, Activism and Theatre (MAAT) – are creating an immersive theatrical reimagining. Their feminist take shifts the focus towards Norah – the woman whose body the local village claims as its own. For *Robin/Red/Breast* they join forces with acclaimed electronica artist Gazelle Twin and Booker Prize-shortlisted writer Daisy Johnson.

### The Accountants: Keith Khan

May 2024

Keith Khan's *The Accountants* takes real data from India and China and transforms it into a visual allegory for the stage. Taking mega themes – the uses (and misuses) of money, spirituality, technology, food, media, space and sports – *The Accountants* combines dance from leading choreographers from China and India with stunning visuals. Created by Keith Khan, a multi-disciplinary artist known for his work with themes of Caribbean folklore, spiritualism and mysticism as well as significant cultural work from Notting Hill Carnival to the London 2012 Olympic Games.

### City of Floating Sounds: Huang Ruo

June 2024

Huang Ruo's *City of Floating Sounds* is a new interactive symphony fusing music and technology. Audiences will experience a journey around Manchester, guided by fragments of sound which coalesce and build as those listening come together – culminating in an immersive orchestral concert at Aviva Studios, performed by the BBC Philharmonic.

### Sweet Dreams: Marshmallow Laser Feast

July to August 2024

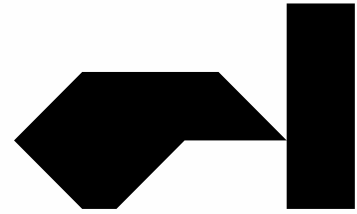
From Marshmallow Laser Feast, the award-winning creators of *Evolver and Dream*, *Sweet Dreams* invites audiences to explore their place in the food chain, wrapping big questions about appetite and desire in a surreal, immersive pop package. Known for their breathtaking immersive exhibitions

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inspired by the natural world, *Sweet Dreams* is the collective's first venture into the world of story-driven work. This multi-sensory experience takes over one of Aviva Studios' huge Warehouse spaces for Summer 2024.

## **TRAPLORD: Ivan Michael Blackstock**

September 2024

Award-winning dance artist and cultural innovator Ivan Michael Blackstock presents *TRAPLORD*, a dance performance meditating on life, death and rebirth. Wandering between dreams and reality, *TRAPLORD* takes audiences on a heroic journey to self-actualisation, using dance, theatre and spoken word to explore raw themes of mental health and masculinity. Co-produced by Factory International, *TRAPLORD* premiered at 180 Studios, London, and won the 2023 Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Dance Production.

## **ARK: Laurie Anderson**

November 2024

Six years after breaking ground on the site of Aviva Studios and four years after presenting *To the Moon* for Manchester International Festival 2019, Laurie Anderson returns with a hugely ambitious new music and multi-media theatrical experience, *ARK*, asking the question: if we are headed towards disaster, will there be an Ark? Fuelled by Anderson's fascination with humanity's current reality and weaving together threads from her decades-long career, *ARK* is an exploration of how the world might need to be reconfigured in order to be saved.

## **TOURING PROGRAMME**

### **Atmospheric Memory**

11 August – 5 November 2023: Powerhouse, Sydney, Australia

Inspired by computing pioneer Charles Babbage's proposal that the air is a 'vast library' storing every word ever spoken, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's breath-taking immersive art environment invites audiences to celebrate the turbulence and tumult of the atmosphere: invisible but precious, filled with voices and history. Premiered at MIF19. Has previously travelled to North Carolina, with presentations of artworks in Hong Kong.

### **untitled f\*ck m\*ss s\*\*gon play**

18 September – 4 November 2023: Young Vic, London, UK

With breathless hilarity, Kimber Lee's untitled f\*ck m\*ss s\*\*gon play jumps through time – wriggling inside of and then exploding lifetimes of repeating Asian stereotypes, wrestling history for the right to control your own narrative in a world that thinks it can tell you who you are. Co-produced by Royal Exchange Theatre, Factory International for Manchester International Festival, Young Vic and Headlong, the show was the winner of the UK's Bruntwood Prize for playwriting, and has been nominated for Best New Play at UK Theatre Awards. Premiered at MIF23.

### **Akram Khan's Giselle**

19 – 21 October 2023: Palace Theatre, Manchester, UK

26 – 28 October 2023: Bristol Hippodrome, Bristol, UK

One of the greatest romantic ballets of all time, *Giselle* was the first full length ballet choreographed by Akram Khan and saw Academy-Award winning designer Tim Yip (*Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*)

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create the set and costumes, while musician, composer, and producer Vincenzo Lamagna created an adaptation of the original score by Adolphe Adam, performed by English National Ballet Philharmonic. Premiered as a pre-Factory event in 2016. Has previously travelled to: France, Spain and the USA.

## **Thank You Very Much**

20 – 21 October 2023: Coda Oslo International Dance Festival, Oslo, Norway

Choreographer Claire Cunningham and her ensemble of leading disabled performers invite you to join them as they pull back the curtain on the glittering and mysterious world of the tribute artist. Thank You Very Much takes to the floor with wit, glitz and a pulsating soundtrack. A performance that navigates up, down and all-around society's ideas of normality, and shakes up the myth of how bodies should be. The dancers pull on their sparkling costumes and ask: Who have we been trying to be all our lives? Has it ever been our choice? And what really is "the wonder of you"?

Premiered at MIF19. Has previously travelled to: Germany, Latvia, Poland and Scotland

## **Tao of Glass**

26 – 29 October 2023: New Vision Arts Festival, Hong Kong

An exploration of life, loss and a single question: Where does true inspiration come from? Composer Philip Glass and performer-director Phelim McDermott (Improbable) have worked together on acclaimed opera productions in London, New York and beyond, and Tao of Glass is their most personal collaboration yet. Inspired by a dream, this world premiere marries ten meditations on life, death and Taoist wisdom with ten brand new pieces of music from Glass, presented by McDermott with an ensemble of musicians and puppeteers. Part-concert, part-performance, Tao of Glass is a storytelling tapestry, soundtracked by Glass's mesmerising music and shot through with Improbable's trademark theatricality.

Premiered at MIF19. Has previously travelled to Australia, Germany and the USA

## **Maggie the Cat**

14 – 16 December 2023: Festival d'Automne à Paris, Paris, France

Troubled but tough, unloved but unbowed, Maggie the Cat is the captivating focus of Tennessee Williams' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. Now, acclaimed American choreographer Trajal Harrell places Maggie centre stage in his magnetic new dance work, a dazzling and provocative fusion of high art and pop culture. Set to a soundtrack ranging from electro and pop to classical music, Maggie the Cat addresses power, gender, rejection and inclusion through the prism of one of modern theatre's most celebrated characters. Influenced by everything from ancient Greek theatre to the Harlem vogueing underground.

Premiered at MIF19. Has previously travelled to Austria, France, Germany, Italy and the USA

## **The Faggots & Their Friends Between Revolutions**

25 – 28 Jan 2024: Southbank Centre, London

Based on the 1977 cult book by Larry Mitchell and Ned Asta, *The Faggots and Their Friends Between Revolutions* is a music theatre piece that reimagines the history of the world through a queer lens. In this musical adaptation by composer Philip Venables and director Ted Huffman, the original text is taken on a kaleidoscopic journey by a cast of actors, singers and musicians.

Has previously travelled to: France and Austria. Premiered at MIF23

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