



MANCHESTER
INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL

2-19 July 2009
www.mif.co.uk

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interview requests please
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Press release

9 October 2008

**Manchester International Festival
announces first commissions for 2009**

Manchester International Festival, the world's first festival of original, new work, today announces the first three shows for its 2009 event.

- **J S BACH/ZAHA HADID ARCHITECTS** – Zaha Hadid Architects create a unique environment within Manchester Art Gallery for Bach's solo works for piano, violin and cello; sublime music in a sublime space. Soloists are Piotr Anderszewski (piano), Jean-Guihem Queyras (cello) and Alina Ibragimova (violin).
- **EVERYBODY LOVES A WINNER** – A new theatrical experience created by acclaimed director Neil Bartlett with Simon Deacon and Struan Leslie. The Royal Exchange theatre becomes a Bingo hall, immediately familiar and strange. With added music, dancing and quite possibly a chance to win some cash...
- **PRIMA DONNA** – Rufus Wainwright's debut opera. A portrait of a fading opera singer; set in Paris and sung in French. Directed by Daniel Kramer, conducted by Pierre-André Valade and designed by Antony McDonald. Soprano Janis Kelly takes the lead role, Madame.

"These are the first of twenty-plus commissions from leading artists that will premiere at next year's Festival," said Festival Director Alex Poots. "A commissioning festival is inherently a risky endeavour – the warm reception the first Festival received across the UK and internationally was remarkable. I hope we can build on that in 2009."

Manchester International Festival, the world's first festival of original, new work and special events, takes place biennially in Manchester, UK. The Festival launched in 2007 as an artist-led, commissioning festival presenting new works from across the spectrum of performing arts, visual arts and popular culture. Among the 25 world premieres in the 2007 Festival were **Monkey: Journey to the West**, a new opera directed by Chen Shi Zheng, composed by Damon Albarn and designed by Jamie Hewlett, and **Il Tempo del Postino**, a group show by 15 of the world's leading contemporary artists such as Matthew Barney, Tacita Dean, Douglas Gordon, Philippe Parreno and Olafur Eliasson; plus new theatre productions including site-specific work **Interiors** by Stewart Lee and Johnny Vegas, debates, food inventions by **Heston Blumenthal** and an international music series featuring **Lou Reed, Kanye West, Happy Mondays, PJ Harvey, and Gossip**.

The Festival is launching a major new creative learning programme for 09. **MIF Creative** will provide opportunities for local people to engage with the Festival, work alongside high profile artists and develop their creative skills. MIF Creative begins with a new Trainee Producers Scheme; find out more at www.mif.co.uk

MIF has appointed Quaytickets, The Lowry's ticket agency, as the ticketing partner for the 09 Festival. Tickets for Prima Donna and J S Bach/Zaha Hadid Architects go on sale at noon, Friday 10 October online via www.mif.co.uk and by phone 0844 815 4960. Tickets for Everybody Loves A Winner will go on public sale on 4 November from www.mif.co.uk and the Royal Exchange box office www.royalexchange.co.uk

Manchester International Festival 09 will run from **Thursday 2 – Sunday 19 July 2009**. The entire Festival programme will be announced in March 2009.



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NOTES TO EDITORS

J S BACH/ZAHA HADID ARCHITECTS

VENUE: Manchester Art Gallery

Nine live performances in a specially created space

- Zaha Hadid Architects have been commissioned to design a unique, intimate environment within Manchester Art Gallery for performances of Bach's solo piano, violin and cello works
- Each soloist will perform three evening recitals;
 - o Piotr Anderszewski (piano): 3, 4, 5 July
 - o Jean-Guihem Queyras (cello): 10, 11, 12 July
 - o Alina Ibragimova (violin): 15, 17, 18 July
- Tickets priced £12.50 - £28.00; capacity c.250. No additional per ticket booking fees. A one-off transaction charge per booking is applicable to all online and phone bookings.
- The space will be open to the public during MAG's opening hours
- Students from Chethams School of Music will perform in the space during the first week of the Festival, times tbc
- Commissioned by MIF. Co-produced by MIF with Manchester City Galleries

EVERYBODY LOVES A WINNER

VENUE: Royal Exchange

Performances throughout the Festival

- A new theatrical experience created by Neil Bartlett (director, *The Pianist*, MIF 2007), Simon Deacon and Struan Leslie
- *Everybody Loves a Winner* appropriates and excavates a very British institution, Bingo. The Royal Exchange becomes a bingo hall, with added music and dancing.
- Full creative team:
 - o Director: Neil Bartlett
 - o Music: Simon Deacon
 - o Movement: Struan Leslie
 - o Designer: Miriam Buether
 - o Lighting Designer: Chris Davey
- Tickets on public sale 4 November, priced £8.00 - £29.00. No additional per ticket booking fees. A one-off transaction charge per booking is applicable to all online and phone bookings.
- Co-commissioned by MIF and the Royal Exchange

NB *Everybody Loves a Winner* will continue its run after the Festival ends

PRIMA DONNA

VENUE: Palace Theatre

Five performances, 10 – 19 July

- Rufus Wainwright's debut opera
- Portrait of a fading opera singer; set in Paris, sung in French
- Creative team and cast:
 - o Composer: Rufus Wainwright
 - o Director: Daniel Kramer
 - o Designer: Anthony McDonald
 - o Conductor: Pierre-André Valade
 - o Soprano: Janis Kelly
 - o Soprano: Rebecca Bottone
 - o Tenor: William Joyner
 - o Baritone: Jonathan Summers
- Performances: 10, 14, 17 July (evening); 12, 19 July (matinee). Tickets £12.50 – £47.50
- *Prima Donna* is produced in partnership with Opera North whose orchestra will be performing and who will be providing their rehearsal space at their studios in Leeds
- Commissioned by MIF. With thanks to Alistair Spalding for his collaboration and support

NB Rufus Wainwright will not be performing in *Prima Donna*

MIF CREATIVE

MIF Creative is a £750,000 programme which combines a series of major community-based commissions from leading artists with skills development opportunities for local people. MIF Creative has been launched with the support of Manchester City Council, North West Development Agency and the National Endowment for Science, Technology & the Arts