

For immediate release: Friday 31 January 2020

Barbican March highlights

- Barbican Art Gallery presents the first-ever UK commission by Nigerian-American artist **Toyin Ojih Odutola**, a site-specific installation for The Curve. An epic cycle of new work unfurls across the 90-metre long gallery, exploring an imagined ancient myth conceived by the artist.
- Intrigue, corruption, lust and the thirst for power collide in **Cheek by Jowl's** first Italian show in Barbican Theatre. Created by director **Declan Donnellan** and designer **Nick Ormerod** for Milan's renowned **Piccolo Teatro**, *The Revenger's Tragedy* is transformed into a macabre dance of death and performed by a charismatic ensemble of Italian actors in the Barbican Theatre.
- *The Lark Ascending: People, Music, Landscape* was conceived by author and cultural historian **Richard King** during the writing process of *The Lark Ascending*, published in summer 2019 by Faber. The concert coincides with the paperback publication of his lyrical exploration of the relationships between the people, the music and the landscape of Great Britain, which takes Vaughan Williams' most celebrated and popular composition, *The Lark Ascending*, as a starting point.
- Barbican Cinema's **Her Lens, His Story: Female Directors and Masculinities** shows how great female directors from around the world have reversed the traditional male gaze to give us complex and empathetic male characters across multiple genres, including film noirs, melodramas, comedies and war movies.
- Artist **Ling Tan's** interactive installation *Playing Democracy*, a game environment for exploring principles of fairness, freedom and equality, comes to the Barbican's Level G.

VISUAL ARTS

[Toyin Ojih Odutola: A Countervailing Theory](#)

Thu 26 Mar–Sun 26 Jul 2020, The Curve

Free admission

Barbican Art Gallery presents the first-ever UK commission by Nigerian-American artist **Toyin Ojih Odutola**, a site-specific installation for The Curve. An epic cycle of new work unfurls across the 90-metre long gallery, exploring an imagined ancient myth conceived by the artist. Renowned conceptual sound artist **Peter Adjaye** has created an immersive soundscape in response to Odutola's series, which evolves in dialogue with the narrative. The accompanying book for the installation will also include a contribution from acclaimed writer **Zadie Smith** in response to Ojih Odutola's work.

Working exclusively with drawing materials, including pencil, pastel, ballpoint pen and charcoal, Ojih Odutola's works often take the form of monumental portraits, which retain a remarkable intimacy despite their scale. Ojih Odutola proposes speculative fictions through her practice, inviting the viewer to enter her vision of an uncannily familiar, yet fantastical world. Working akin to an author or poet, she often spends months creating extensive imaginary narratives, which play out through a series of works to suggest a structure of episodes or chapters. Drawing on an eclectic range of references, from ancient history to popular culture to contemporary politics, Ojih Odutola encourages the viewer to piece together the fragments of the stories that she presents.

[Masculinities: Liberation through Photography](#)

Until Sun 17 May 2020, Barbican Art Gallery

Media View: Wed 19 Feb 2020, 10am–1pm

Part of [Inside Out](#)

Barbican Art Gallery will stage *Masculinities: Liberation through Photography*, a major group exhibition that explores the ways in which masculinity is experienced, performed, coded and socially constructed as expressed and documented through photography and film from the 1960s to the present day. The exhibition brings together over 300 works by over 50 pioneering international artists, photographers and filmmakers such as **Laurie Anderson**, **Richard Avedon**, **Rineke Dijkstra**, **Rotimi Fani-Kayode**, **Peter Hujar**, **Isaac Julien**, **Annette Messager**, and **Catherine Opie** alongside a lesser-known and younger generation of artists including **Cassils**, **Sam Contis**, **George Dureau**, **Karen Knorr**, **Elle Pérez**, **Paul Mpagi Sepuya**, **Hank Willis Thomas**, **Karlheinz Weinberger** and **Marianne Wex** among others.

With ideas around masculinity undergoing a global crisis and terms such as 'toxic' and 'fragile' masculinity filling endless column inches, the exhibition will chart the representation of masculinity in all its myriad forms, rife with contradiction and complexity. Touching on themes of patriarchy, power, queer identity, race, sexuality, class, female perceptions of men, heteronormative stereotypes, and fatherhood, the works in the exhibition present masculinity as a largely unfixed performative identity shaped by cultural, political and social forces, with photography and film central to the way in which masculinity is shaped and understood.

[Architecture on Stage](#)

Afterparti: For the Love of Power*

Tue 3 Mar 2020, Frobisher Auditorium 1, 7pm

The Architecture Foundation and the Barbican in partnership present **Architecture on Stage** – a programme of talks by the world's leading architects. In March, collective **Afterparti*** will discuss who and what holds the power to shape our buildings and cities and consider what can be done to reclaim this power and effect positive, radical change. This on-stage conversation explores the stakeholders and structures that underpin the places in which we live.

THEATRE AND DANCE

[Cheek by Jowl/Piccolo Teatro di Milano – *The Revenger's Tragedy* \(La tragedia del vendicatore\)](#)

Wed 4–Sat 7 March 2020, Barbican Theatre

Press night: Wed 4 Mar 2020, 7.45pm

Intrigue, corruption, lust and the thirst for power collide in **Cheek by Jowl's** first Italian show. Created by director **Declan Donnellan** and designer **Nick Ormerod** for Milan's renowned **Piccolo Teatro**, *The Revenger's Tragedy* is transformed into a macabre dance of death and performed by a charismatic ensemble of Italian actors.

Seeking retribution for the murder of his fiancée by the Duke, Vindice is drawn into a terrible helter-skelter of punishment that throws his very identity in crisis. Written by **Thomas Middleton** (1580-1627) at a time of growing social unease, the play confronts us with a government embroiled in shady affairs and a society obsessed with money, social status and fame.

The Revenger's Tragedy is performed in Italian with English surtitles.

Barbican Open Lab Showcase

Mon 23–Sat 28 Mar 2020, The Pit, 7.45pm

The new **Barbican Open Lab** programme nurtures creative practitioners from a range of backgrounds and contexts, supporting the development of socially engaged, inclusive performance that has the potential to reach new audiences. This March we bring the Open Lab Showcase performances to The Pit, following a period of research and development at the Barbican. From Monday 23 to Saturday 28 March this first cohort of six emerging and mid-career artists take to the stage for one evening each to present their showcase performances to audiences eager to discover the next generation of talent. Tickets are only £5 per performance and go on sale on today, Friday 31 January 2020.

Wait Till The End by The PappyShow is a joyful and tender physical work asking how we can find life in death. (Mon 23 Mar)

FORGE by Rachel Mars explores memorial tourism and considers behaviour at sites of traumatic events. (Tue 24 Mar)

CASTE-ING by Nouveau Riché depicts the current professional and emotional issues faced by Black women in theatre. (Wed 25 Mar)

CRY CRY KILL KILL by Louise Orwin looks at female rage and what it means to be a survivor in a post #MeToo world. (Thu 26 Mar)

I, MELANIA by Varjack-Lowry raises questions around how societies view and respond to 'foreigners'. (Fri 26 Mar)

Piece of Me by Claire Gaydon examines the cult of celebrity and the extent to which we cede our own privacy in the digital age. (Sat 27 Mar)

Ballet Black – Double Bill

Thu 26–Sun 29 March 2020, Barbican Theatre
Press night: Fri 27 Mar 2020, 7.45pm

The hugely popular **Ballet Black** is back with a double bill full of lyrical contrasts and beautiful movement.

For her latest programme, Artistic Director **Cassa Pancho** brings us two original works: ***Then Or Now*** by The Royal Ballet's Olivier Award-winning choreographer **Will Tuckett**, which blends classical ballet, music and the poetry of **Adrienne Rich** to ask the question where do we belong? **Mthuzeli November** contemplates the purpose of life in ***The Waiting Game***. Expect sensational solos, seductive duos and fiercely dynamic pieces performed seamlessly by the group.

Ballet Black is transforming the dance landscape by giving a platform to artists of black and Asian descent as well as to new and established choreographic voices whose unexpected stories and themes come from the heart to resonate with modern audiences.

MUSIC

Patrick Watson

Fri 6 Mar 2020, Barbican Hall, 8pm

Montreal-based singer-songwriter, film composer and pianist **Patrick Watson** presents material from his latest album *Wave* (now out on Domino/Secret City) to Barbican audiences this March. Here he will be joined by his full band, with whom he has been performing for over a decade.

Watson's music is often described as 'Chamber-folk' which doesn't quite do it justice or 'Indie-pop' which isn't entirely accurate either. He is very diverse musically and has produced lush orchestral pop, experimental junk percussion, mariachi brass and even sci-fi R&B. But whatever mode he's in, Patrick Watson strikes a balance of maximalism and subtlety, with meticulous arrangements supporting his tender songcraft.

In 2007, Patrick Watson and band were recipients of Canada's prestigious Polaris Music Prize for their album *Close To Paradise*. Outside of his band projects, Watson has composed a number of scores for film and TV, notably for *The Walking Dead* and Wim Wenders' *Everything Will Be Fine*.

Produced by the Barbican in association with Communion.

[The Lark Ascending: People, Music, Landscape](#)

Tue 24 Mar 2020, Barbican Hall, 7.30pm

This special evening at the Barbican was conceived by author and cultural historian **Richard King** during the writing process of *The Lark Ascending*, published in summer 2019 by Faber. The concert coincides with the paperback publication of his lyrical exploration of the relationships between the people, the music and the landscape of Great Britain, which takes Vaughan Williams' most celebrated and popular composition, *The Lark Ascending*, as a starting point.

The performance will feature a seamless blend of music, specially-commissioned audio-visual content, spoken word and dance and will offer Barbican audiences an opportunity to experience an alternative reimagining of the book's narrative, including appearances by many of the artists mentioned in the text. The performance features musicians **Daniel Pioro, James McVinnie, Liam Byrne, Clare O'Connell, Arthur Jeffes, Andrew Weatherall, Vashti Bunyan, Rob St. John, and Deep Throat Choir**.

[Alison Balsom plays Sketches of Spain](#)

with Guildhall Jazz Orchestra

Wed 18 Mar 2020, Milton Court Concert Hall, 7.30pm

Milton Court Artist-in-Residence, star trumpeter **Alison Balsom** and **Guildhall Jazz Orchestra** and director **Scott Stroman** give their take on Miles Davis's ground-breaking concept album *Sketches of Spain* (arr. Gil Evans) which picked up where *Kind of Blue* left off in questioning the nature of jazz. This concert also offers the opportunity to hear the **Guildhall Big Band** performing **Iain Ballamy's 21st Century Pastoral**, starring the composer himself on saxophone.

Part of [Alison Balsom Milton Court Artist-in-Residence](#).

[Richard Dawson: Delight is Right](#)

Sat 28 Mar 2020, Barbican Hall, 7pm

Following the release of *2020*, his sixth solo album (now out on Weird World/Domino), celebrated Northumbrian songsmith **Richard Dawson** presents a specially curated evening at the Barbican – a gathering of his friends, fellow travellers and favourites. The eclectic line-up (tba) will reflect the breadth of Dawson's influences and performances will stretch across two stages and culminate in a headline Richard Dawson set in the Barbican Hall. For this he will be joined by a full band, presenting new material from *2020* – a hard-hitting state-of-the-nation study on contemporary Britain which introduces the listener to grand themes through small lives and portraits of human beings struggling with recognisable concerns, conflicts and desires. Dawson's music has been described as a blend of traditional English and jazzy psych folk and North Country Blues.

Produced by the Barbican in association with Upset The Rhythm.

[Yuja Wang in Recital](#)

Tue 31 Mar 2020, Barbican Hall, 7.30pm

Yuja Wang's *Artist Spotlight* series concludes this March with a highly-anticipated solo recital, in an imaginative and eclectic programme including works from Scriabin, Bach, Berg, and Brahms.

Her series in the 2019-20 season so far has seen her playing alongside the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Gustavo Dudamel in November, followed by an intimate chamber music performance with her critically acclaimed colleague, clarinettist Andreas Ottensamer, and a chamber music concert in January with another renowned colleague, cellist Gautier Capuçon.

Part of [Yuja Wang: Artist Spotlight](#).

London Symphony Orchestra highlights

On Sunday 1 March, leading American gospel music specialist **André J Thomas** will conduct the **London Symphony Orchestra** in their first ever full evening of gospel symphonic music. The evening will bring together the full orchestra and a 400-strong choir comprising the **London Adventist Chorale**, with **LSO Community Choir**, **Victoria Park Singers**, **Hackney Empire Community Choir**, and **Milton Keynes Community Choir**.

Karina Canellakis has her LSO conducting debut on 8 March with a programme centred on Strauss and Ravel, with pianist **Cédric Tiberghien** performing Ravel's jazz-flecked Piano Concerto, and 12 March sees **Susanna Mälkki** and violinist **Gil Shaham** come together for Dvořák's Violin Concerto, followed by Debussy's *La mer*. **Sir Antonio Pappano** conducts an all-British programme on 15 March and **Vilde Frang** will perform Britten's Violin Concerto.

LSO Principal Guest Conductor **François-Xavier Roth** explores Bartók and Dukas on 18, 19 and 22 March – including a Half Six Fix – with **Isabelle Faust** joining to perform Stravinsky's Violin Concerto. Concluding the month is **Sir Mark Elder** for two 20th century masterpieces: Sibelius' Symphony No 4, and with **Nikolaj Szeps-Znaider** as the soloist for Elgar's Violin Concerto.

CINEMA

[Her Lens, His Story: Female Directors and Masculinities](#)

Until Tue 10 Mar 2020, Cinema 1&3

Part of [Inside Out](#)

Continuing into March, **Her Lens, His Story** shows how great female directors from around the world have reversed the traditional male gaze to give us complex and empathetic male characters across multiple genres, including film noirs, melodramas, comedies and war movies.

This month's screenings include **Destiny Ekaragha's** comedic take on two brother's rivalry in the Peckham based *Gone Too Far!* (UK/ Nigeria 2013); **Shahrbano Sadat's** nuanced account about male relations in an orphanage in *The Orphanage* (2019, Denmark/ Afghanistan) and Anahi Berneri's award winning *A Year Without Love* (2005 Argentina), about a gay man living with HIV who is looking for love. All screenings will have introductions.

[Chronic Youth Film Festival 2020](#)

Sat 28–Sun 29 Mar 2020

Celebrating its 5th year, the Barbican Young Programmers have curated an international roster of films for **Chronic Youth Film Festival 2020** to challenge perspectives and find experiences we all share as human beings.

Highlights include the UK premiere of *Q's barbershop* (Denmark 2019, Dir Emil Langballe), a light hearted and captivating insight into black masculinity in Denmark in a barber shop; *Una banda des chicas* (Argentina, 2019, Dir Marilina Giménez), a sonically charged exploration of all-women bands in Argentina's male dominated music industry; and *A First Farewell* (Lina Wang, China, 2018), an account of two young Uighur children navigating the effects of state enforced cultural homogenisation in north-eastern China. These films are connected by a thread, young people shaping their realities in order to reconcile what is real with what is ideal.

Human Rights Watch Film Festival

Thu 12–Fri 20 Mar 2020, Cinema 1, 2 & 3

Human Rights Watch Film Festival returns to the Barbican with a programme of documentaries and dramas that bears witness to human rights violations through direct storytelling and exposé form. The festival is a forum for courageous filmmakers and film subjects to empower audiences with the knowledge that personal commitment can make a difference. The full programme will be announced on 6 February.

LEVEL G

Work Hard, Play Hard

Until Sun 31 May 2020, Level G

In a third co-commission with **Lumen Art Projects**, an artist will respond to the provocation: work hard, play hard. Play is central to the development of children, but as we grow older, we are often conditioned to think of play as trivial and encouraged to direct our focus elsewhere. How does this personal relationship with play change with age? Does it become less significant in living a balanced life and, if so, why? What are the distinctions between work and play today? Have the boundaries of work, play and leisure become blurred? Following installations by Rachel Ara and Nye Thompson in 2018, the Barbican and Lumen Art Projects will co-commission an artist to explore these questions as part of Inside Out.

Playing Democracy

Fri 6 Mar–Sun 31 May, Level G

Artist **Ling Tan**'s interactive installation *Playing Democracy*, a game environment for exploring principles of fairness, freedom and equality, comes to the Barbican's Level G in March.

Projected onto a wall, participants can modify the rules of the game as they play, either collaborating with each other on opposite sides or even violating the rules as they go, bringing into question ideas around social structures, the implications of influencing them and our interaction with other people. As more people play over time, the default game environment resets and reflects the rules that people are seemingly most attuned to.

The piece is designed to be suitable for all age groups.

ENDS

Press Information

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All Barbican Centre press releases, news announcements and the Communications team's contact details are listed on our website at www.barbican.org.uk/news/home

About the Barbican

A world-class arts and learning organisation, the [Barbican](http://www.barbican.org.uk) pushes the boundaries of all major art forms including dance, film, music, theatre and visual arts. Its creative learning programme further underpins everything it does. Over a million people attend events annually, hundreds of artists and performers are featured, and more than 300 [staff](#) work onsite. The architecturally renowned centre opened in 1982 and comprises the Barbican Hall, the Barbican Theatre, The Pit, Cinemas 1, 2 and 3, Barbican Art Gallery, a second gallery The Curve, public spaces, a library, the Lakeside Terrace, [a glasshouse conservatory](#), conference facilities and three restaurants. The City of London Corporation is the founder and principal funder of the Barbican Centre.

The Barbican is home to Resident Orchestra, [London Symphony Orchestra](#); Associate Orchestra, [BBC Symphony Orchestra](#); Associate Ensembles the [Academy of Ancient Music](#) and [Britten Sinfonia](#), Associate Producer [Serious](#), and Artistic Partner [Create](#). Our Artistic Associates include [Boy Blue](#), [Cheek by Jowl](#), Deborah Warner, [Drum Works](#) and [Michael Clark Company](#). The [Los Angeles Philharmonic](#) are the Barbican's International Orchestral Partner, the [Australian Chamber Orchestra](#) are International Associate Ensemble at Milton Court, and [Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra](#) are International Associate Ensemble.

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