

For immediate release: Wednesday 15 June 2022

## The Barbican's autumn 2022 Theatre and Dance line-up announced

Tickets go on sale to Barbican Patrons today, Barbican Members Plus on Thursday 16 June, Barbican Members on Friday 17 June and on general sale on Saturday 18 June 2022.

Toni Racklin, Head of Theatre and Dance at the Barbican, said "Today we launch our new autumn season in *The Pit*, which offers unique perspectives on some of today's pressing societal issues – including the climate crisis, accessibility, and the demonisation of a subgenre of music. With the previously announced production of *My Neighbour Totoro* in the main house, our autumn programme features artists from Japan, the USA, South Africa, Australia, and the United Kingdom, and includes four world premieres and one European premiere. There are innovative multidisciplinary performances that blend theatre, movement and striking visuals, collaborations with world class musicians and a magical stage adaptation of a firm family favourite. With six shows presented across *The Pit* and the Barbican Theatre, it's a truly cross-arts season with something for everyone."

In the Theatre, Joe Hisaishi and the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) present the global premiere of *My Neighbour Totoro*, a landmark adaptation of Studio Ghibli's enchanting classic coming-of-age film in collaboration with Improbable and Nippon TV. Last month the much-anticipated production broke Barbican box office records for ticket sales in a single day. The RSC are partnering with Barbican Creative Learning on an events programme for schools, including a day-long session for teachers, and a series of RSC Insight sessions for students, in response to *My Neighbour Totoro*. In the lead up to *My Neighbour Totoro* in the Theatre, we screen Studio Ghibli film *Princess Mononoke* on the Sculpture Court as part of our [Outdoor Cinema](#) screenings this summer.

Based in Maboneng, Johannesburg and founded by multidisciplinary artist William Kentridge, **The Centre for the Less Good Idea** is an incubator that supports experimental, collaborative, and cross-disciplinary arts projects. In October, we present an intimate evening in *The Pit* of six short performances that blend dance and live music and have been developed through the trailblazing Centre. This is the first time this programme of work has been seen outside South Africa.

Playwright, theatre maker and son of a climate scientist, David Finnigan relates how 75 hours in modern Australia came to collide with an epic sweep of history in *You're Safe Til 2024: Deep History*, a performance providing a snapshot of what our future might look like, and detailing how we arrived at this critical historical moment.

We present two winners of the Oxford Samuel Beckett Theatre Trust Award this year. **HighRise Entertainment** challenge myths about UK Drill and its links to violence in the world premiere of *The UK Drill Project*, which is developed through conversations with artists on the scene. **Perfect Show for Rachel** from **Zoo Co** gives Rachel, a theatre-loving 31-year-old Learning Disabled artist, the power to lead the creation of her own perfect show. The new, experimental production asks who defines artistic taste, and who is currently excluded. This is an exciting opportunity for the Barbican to collaborate with, and learn from companies, who have inclusivity and accessibility at the heart of their work. With the full and generous support of the Trust, each company will be awarded the full prize money to realise their proposal, which they've been developing over the past couple of years. The Barbican will work with the companies on series of workshops exploring the themes of both shows.

We also present the world premiere of *An Anatomy of Melancholy*, a collaboration between director Netia Jones, countertenor Iestyn Davies, lutenist Thomas Dunford which draws on the

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work of Robert Burton, Sigmund Freud, Darian Leader and other contemporary psychoanalysts, and featuring the heart-rending music of Renaissance composer **John Dowland**.

**David Finnigan – *You're Safe Til 2024: Deep History***

Tuesday 27 September–Saturday 1 October 2022, The Pit

Press performance: Tuesday 27 September 2022, 7.45pm

Armed with a projector, family photos and a pile of sand, playwright **David Finnigan** relates how 75 hours in modern Australia came to collide with an epic sweep of history during this compelling show.

At the end of 2019, in the English countryside, Finnigan began writing a play about the seven turning points that have brought us to this moment in time – our ecosystems transformed, our planet on the brink of unthinkable climate disaster. But then his hometown of Canberra was hit by bushfires. As an area the size of England burned and one billion animals perished, he started to receive texts from loved ones racing to evacuate amid the devastation.

In a performance that interweaves 75,000 years of humanity with the incredibly personal account of his best friend's escape, Finnigan calls on scientific research, phone footage and storytelling to illuminate unprecedented global change and how we've arrived here. Shot through with humour, pop culture and a rich electronic soundtrack, *You're Safe Til 2024: Deep History* speaks of resilience and hope.

**Journalists please note:** there is an opportunity to see *You're Safe Til 2024* in Edinburgh in August before its run in The Pit. Please contact the Barbican Communications team for more information.

*You're Safe Til 2024: Deep History* is presented as part of the UK/Australia Season 2021-22, a major programme of cultural exchange taking place across the two nations.

**The Centre for the Less Good Idea – *To What End***

Thursday 6–Sunday 9 October 2022, The Pit

Press performance: Thursday 6 October 2022, 7.45pm

Six inspiring short performances blend dance and live music, developed by South African artists at **William Kentridge's** leading centre for experimental, collaborative and cross-disciplinary arts.

This curated programme features diverse performances from a range of artists including a captivating all-female chorus, rhythmic dance and physical theatre solos. These innovative performances all use text, sound, music, movement and visuals in experimental ways to explore themes of social and political change in South Africa.

In *Footnotes*, a team of dancers and musicians equipped with typewriters and percussive instruments question the nature of their being and their labour. Caught between modes of survival and instruction, this is a rampantly physical dance and sound piece. *The Weep of the Whips* is a physical two-hander seeking to find power in brokenness in which the sjambok (whip) is used as a tool for instruction and musicality. *Commission Continua* is a personal and heartfelt one-hander, in which paper becomes a shrewd and incisive metaphor. A musical performance sees the use of instruments and bodies to both replicate and pay tribute to the myriad sounds and narratives of South Africa's northernmost province in *Sounds of Limpopo*. The largest ensemble work of the programme, *Pitsana* is a performance that grapples

with the conventions of responsibility, duty, and labour. It is a story that posits the consequences of a physical and psychological repression of energy. An ensemble female chorus come together in the performance of *Umthandazo*, taking its lead from the oft-overlooked victims of the 2012 Marikana Massacre.

Founded by the visionary artist William Kentridge, **The Centre for the Less Good Idea** is an artistic incubator in Johannesburg, supporting artists to follow their impulses, connections and revelations to create groundbreaking new work. This is the first time that this new programme been seen outside of their country.

*To What End* is performed in English, Zulu, Xhosa, Sesotho and Setswana

**Royal Shakespeare Company / Joe Hisaishi – *My Neighbour Totoro***

Saturday 8 October 2022–Saturday 21 January 2023, Barbican Theatre

Press performance: Tuesday 18 October 2022, 7pm

**Joe Hisaishi** and the **Royal Shakespeare Company** bring **Studio Ghibli's** enchanting classic coming-of-age film *My Neighbour Totoro* to the stage for this global premiere, a collaboration with **Improbable** and **Nippon TV**.

Exploring the magical fantasy world of childhood and the transformative power of imagination, *My Neighbour Totoro* follows one extraordinary summer in the lives of sisters Satsuki and Mei as they are swept up in exciting adventures with their new neighbours – transported to a long-forgotten realm of spirits, sprites, and natural wonder.

The celebrated 1988 animated feature film by **Hayao Miyazaki** (*Spirited Away*) will be brought to the stage by its original composer Joe Hisaishi in this landmark new adaptation written by playwright **Tom Morton-Smith** (*Oppenheimer*).

Directed by **Phelim McDermott** with production design by **Tom Pye**, costume design by **Kimie Nakano**, and lighting design by **Jessica Hung Han Yun**, this ground-breaking production will feature puppetry created by **Basil Twist** and music from Joe Hisaishi's iconic score performed live.

*My Neighbour Totoro* is already on sale.

On Thursday 13 October, Barbican Creative Learning and the RSC host a [one-day course](#) for teachers exploring cross-artform approaches based around the RSC's new production. With practitioners from both the RSC and Improbable Theatre, the course, which is suitable for English, Drama, Art, Media, IT and Music teachers at either primary or secondary level, explores how a cross-artform approach can unlock the themes, characters, and key scenes from *My Neighbour Totoro*.

Two [Student Insight Sessions](#), on Thursday 17 and Thursday 24 November, co-facilitated by both RSC and Improbable Theatre practitioners will explore Improbable Theatre's unique approach to creating *My Neighbour Totoro*. Students are invited to join members of the company to delve into the world of puppetry and look at the process of bringing an animation to life on stage.

***An Anatomy of Melancholy***

Thursday 27–Sunday 30 October 2022, The Pit

Press performance: Thursday 27 October 2022, 9pm

*An Anatomy of Melancholy* – a new theatrical creation, which will be performed in the round in the intimate setting of The Pit – is a portrait of a man engaged in a forensic examination of his own sadness.

Drawing on the work of Robert Burton (*The Anatomy of Melancholy*), Sigmund Freud (*Mourning and Melancholia*), as well as Darian Leader (*The New Black*) and other contemporary psychoanalysts, it takes inspiration from the notion of art as a consolation. Countertenor **Iestyn Davies**, lutenist **Thomas Dunford** and director **Netia Jones** present this staged performance with live and immersive video projection, featuring some of the most exquisite and heart-rending music ever composed: the songs of melancholy by English Renaissance composer John Dowland.

This world premiere production examines humanity's relationship with melancholy – both the emotional and the scientific. Performed on stage as protagonist and commentator, the evening will reflect on ideas about mourning and melancholia, scientific and analytic responses to loss and melancholy, its botanical and pharmaceutical remedies, the emotional meeting point between intense beauty and overwhelming sadness, and the recurring idea of the powerful consolation that art can provide.

*An Anatomy of Melancholy* is already on sale.

### **The Oxford Samuel Beckett Theatre Trust Award 2022**

#### **HighRise Entertainment – *The UK Drill Project***

Thursday 3–Saturday 12 November 2022, The Pit

Press performance: Friday 4 November 2022, 7.45pm

Challenging myths about UK Drill music and its links to youth violence, this radically honest and direct show takes real-life experiences to explore the truths behind the headlines.

Drill originated from Chicago's Southside rap scene that gained popularity in the early 2010's. With its melodic and dark undertones, its coded lyrics often explore the aspirations and struggles of young people.

Developed through conversation with artists on the scene, this new show explores the perceived relationship between musicality and criminality. With the criminal justice system putting this music on trial and the ensuing moral panic in the media, can we as a society really blame an art form for a spike in violence?

As part of the show, the company have curated a short interactive exhibition on UK Drill culture and the history of oppressed musical subcultures in the UK.

**HighRise Entertainment** are an acclaimed theatre collective whose work uses original music, video projection and first-hand testimony to represent unheard voices and forgotten communities. Led by Artistic Director **Dominic Garfield**, they are winners of the Oxford Samuel Beckett Theatre Trust Award in 2022.

### **The Oxford Samuel Beckett Theatre Trust Award 2022**

#### **Zoo Co – *Perfect Show for Rachel***

Friday 18–Saturday 26 November 2022, The Pit

Press performance: Saturday 19 November 2022, 7pm

Step into Rachel's world in this experimental show as a learning disabled artist has the power to lead the creation of her 'Perfect Show'.

Rachel is a theatre-loving, enigmatic 31 year-old who loves Kylie Minogue, heckling from the front row and seeing people falling over. She is a learning disabled care-home resident, and sister to Flo, **Zoo Co's** Artistic Director.

Sitting on-stage on a throne with her custom-built tech desk, she takes charge as the director of every unique performance in real-time. A touch of a button can trigger music, lighting, theatrical scenes or choreography, brought to life instantly by a company of performers.

Zoo Co are a multi award-winning company creating theatre that loudly champions access. ***Perfect Show for Rachel*** was developed with Rachel, to create a show on her own terms. It explores who defines artistic taste, and questions who that currently excludes. Zoo Co are winners of the Oxford Samuel Beckett Theatre Trust Award in 2022.

## ENDS

### Public information

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/theatre-dance>

### Press information

For more information please contact:

Freddie Todd Fordham, Acting Communications Manager for Theatre and Dance, 020 7382 7399 or [freddie.todd-fordham@barbican.org.uk](mailto:freddie.todd-fordham@barbican.org.uk)

For *My Neighbour Totoro*, please contact Bethany Arnold, 07827 824 327 or [bethany.arnold@rsc.org.uk](mailto:bethany.arnold@rsc.org.uk)

### Listings information

#### *Princess Mononoke*

Directed by Hayao Miyazaki

Japan

Outdoor Cinema Screening

Sat 27 Aug 2022

8.30pm

2 hours 13 minutes

Sculpture Court

£18 plus booking fee

Presented by the Barbican

#### *You're Safe Til 2024: Deep History*

David Finnigan

Australia

Created and performed by David Finnigan

Music by Reuben Ingall

Tue 27 Sep–Sat 1 Oct 2022 (5 performances)

The Pit

7.45pm

1 hour/no interval

14+

£18 plus booking fee; £5 Young Barbican tickets available

Press performance: Tue 27 Sep 2022, 7.45pm

Audio-described performance: Fri 30 Sep 2022, 7.45pm

Presented by the Barbican

*You're Safe Til 2024: Deep History* is presented as part of the UK/Australia Season 2021-22, a major programme of cultural exchange taking place across the two nations

### ***To What End***

The Centre for the Less Good Idea

South Africa

Founder of The Centre for the Less Good Idea, William Kentridge

Co-founder & Director of The Centre for the Less Good Idea, Bronwyn Lace

Animateur & Programmes Curator for The Centre for the Less Good Idea, Phala Ookeditse Phala

#### *Footnotes*

Concept and Direction by Vusi Mdoyi

Performed by Vusi Mdoyi, Volley Nchabeleng, Micca Manganye, Thabo Rapoo & Muzi Shili

Choreographed by Vusi Mdoyi & Thabo Rapoo

Music by Volley Nchabeleng & Micca Manganye

Costume Design by Greta Goiris, Emmanuelle Erhart & SO Academy Costume Mentees

#### *The Weep of the Whips*

Concept and Choreography by Thulisile Binda

Performed by Thulisile Binda & Micca Manganye

Music by Micca Manganye

Costume Design by Nthabiseng Malaka & Natalie Paneng

#### *Commission Continua*

Concept by Tony Bonani Miyambo & Phala Ookeditse Phala

Directed by Phala Ookeditse Phala

Performed by Tony Bonani Miyambo

#### *Sounds of Limpopo*

Concept and Performed by Micca Manganye & Volley Nchabeleng

#### *Pitsana*

Concept and Choreography by Thulisile Binda

Direction by Phala Ookeditse Phala

Music by Thembinkosi Mavimbela, Micca Manganye & Muzi Shili.

Performed by Thabo Rapoo, Thulisile Binda, Sibahle Mangena & Muzi Shili

Costume Design by Nthabiseng Malaka & Natalie Paneng

#### *Umthandazo*

Directed by Faniswa Yisa

Performed by Asanda Hanabe, Buhle Mazibuko, Molebogeng Phiri, Sibahle Mangena, Zandi Hlatshwayo & Elma Motloenya

Costume Design by Greta Goiris, Emmanuelle Erhart & SO Academy Costume Mentees

Thu 6–Sun 9 Oct 2022 (4 performances)

The Pit

7.45pm; 3pm on Sun 9 Oct 2022

1 hour 30 mins/no interval

Age guidance: 14+ (contains some upsetting scenes referencing both recent and historical tragedies and injustices)

£20 plus booking fee; £10 Young Barbican tickets available

Press performance: Thu 6 Oct 2022, 7.45pm  
Post-show talk: Fri 7 Oct 2022, 7.45pm  
Audio-described performance: Sun 9 Oct 2022, 3pm

Presented by the Barbican

Produced by The Centre for the Less Good Idea in partnership with The Office Performing Arts + Film

Funded with the generous support of Wendy Fisher with special thanks to Goodman Gallery

***My Neighbour Totoro***

The Royal Shakespeare Company / Joe Hisaishi

UK / Japan

Adapted by Tom Morton-Smith from the feature animation by Hayao Miyazaki with music by Joe Hisaishi

Directed by Phelim McDermott

Production Design by Tom Pye

Puppetry by Basil Twist

Costume Design by Kimie Nakano

Lighting Design by Jessica Hung Han Yun

Orchestration and Arrangement by Will Stuart

Sound Design by Tony Gayle

Movement by You-Ri Yamanaka

Sat 8 Oct 2022–Sat 21 Jan 2023 (118 performances)

Barbican Theatre

7pm; also 2pm on Thursdays and Saturdays; no performances on Sundays

No performances on Sat 24, Sun 25, and Mon 26 Dec 2022

Running time TBC

£10–95 plus booking fee

Press performance: Tue 18 Oct 2022, 7pm

Audio-described and captioned performances: Sat 29 Oct 2022, 2pm and Wed 18 Jan 2023

Captioned performances: Sat 12 Nov and Thu 8 Dec 2022, 2pm

Relaxed, BSL-integrated and hand-held captioned performances: Thu 15 Dec 2022 and Sat 7 Jan 2023, 2pm

Post-show talk: Fri 2 Dec 2022 (free to same-day ticket holders)

Presented by the Barbican. The Royal Shakespeare Company is supported using public funding by Arts Council England.

Miranda Curtis CMG – Lead Production Supporter of My Neighbour Totoro

The work of the RSC Literary Department is generously supported by the Drue and H.J. Heinz II Charitable Trust

***My Neighbour Totoro: Teacher CPD Day***

Royal Shakespeare Company

Thu 14 Oct 2022

Barbican Centre

This session will run from 9:30am to 3.00pm

Age guidance: 18+ (Suitable for English, Drama, Art, Media, IT and Music teachers at either primary or secondary level)

£65 plus booking fee

***My Neighbour Totoro: Student Insight Sessions***

Royal Shakespeare Company

Thu 17 & Thu 24 Nov 2022

Barbican Theatre

11am

£4 per student + £25 person (incl. staff) to watch the matinee performance of *My Neighbour Totoro*

***An Anatomy of Melancholy***

UK

Selected songs by John Dowland

Directed by Netia Jones

Countertenor Iestyn Davies

Lute Thomas Dunford

Thu 27–Sun 30 Oct 2022 (5 performances)

The Pit

8pm on Thu 27 & Fri 28 Oct; 4pm & 9pm on Sat 29 Oct; 4pm only on Sun 30 Oct 2022

1 hour/no interval

Age guidance: 12+

£35 plus booking fee

Press performance: Thursday 27 October 2022, 9pm

BSL interpreted and Audio-described performance: Sat 29 Oct 2022, 4pm

Produced by the Barbican

These performances have been kindly supported by Wellcome

***The UK Drill Project***

HighRise Entertainment

The Oxford Samuel Beckett Theatre Trust Award 2022

UK

Written and Directed by Dominic Garfield

Thu 3–Sat 12 Nov 2022 (10 performances)

The Pit

7.45pm; no performances on Sun 6 Nov 2022

1 hour 30 mins/no interval

Age limit: 14+ (contains some upsetting themes of an adult nature)

£18 plus booking fee; £5 Young Barbican tickets available

Press performance: Fri 4 Nov 2022, 7.45pm

BSL-interpreted performance followed by BSL-interpreted post-show talk (free to same-day ticket holders): Tue 8 Nov 2022, 7.45pm

Relaxed performance: Wed 9 Nov 2022, 7.45pm

Presented and co-produced by the Barbican

***Perfect Show for Rachel***

Zoo Co

The Oxford Samuel Beckett Theatre Trust Award 2022

UK

Fri 18–Sat 26 Nov 2022 (8 performances)

The Pit

7pm; also 2pm on Sat 19 and Sat 26 Nov 2022; no performances on Mon 21, Tue 22, and Wed 23 Nov 2022

1 hour 10 mins/no interval

14+

£18 plus booking fee; £5 Young Barbican tickets available

Press performance: Sat 19 Nov 2022, 7pm

All performances are Relaxed, and will include creative captioning, live captioning, and an integrated BSL performer in the cast

Presented and co-produced by the Barbican

## About the Barbican

A world-class arts and learning organisation, the [Barbican](#) 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](#). 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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