

## Press Release

Embargoed until 10am, Wed 17 Jan 2024

## NEW SHOWS ANNOUNCED FOR FACTORY INTERNATIONAL'S 2024 SPRING PROGRAMME AT AVIVA STUDIOS

Music from Mercury Prize-winning Sampha and a series of international shows responding to a world in crisis join previously announced programme highlights including the UK premiere of Robert Wilson's *Jungle Book*, a new stage work by Maxine Peake, and gigs from Underworld and Big Thief's Adrienne Lenker – with more to be announced.

Following the success of the official opening season of Aviva Studios, Factory International is delighted to announce more details of its 2024 spring programme at the city's landmark new venue. A trio of works respond to a world in crisis: **The Fête of Britain** (22-24 Feb) is a four-day takeover by *Hard Art* – a group of artists, musicians and creatives including **Brian Eno, Es Devlin, Cornelia Parker, and Jeremy Deller** who have come together to respond to the crisis in democracy and the climate emergency. Through a mix of play, talks and performances, the 'fete' will ask how we can face up to the challenges of the twenty-first century and how we can make the world safer, fairer and better.

In the year of a crucial US election, fix+foxy's award-winning theatre production *Dark Noon* (6-10 March) explores one of the great American myths – the Wild West. Staged for the first time since its breakthrough UK premiere at Edinburgh Fringe in 2023, this explosive production - directed by **Tue Biering** and **Nhlanhla Mahlangu**, and told by seven South African actors - takes audiences on an epic journey through the bloody history of the birth of modern America and asks: what if history wasn't written by the victors, but by the vanquished? While, later in the month, Collective Ma'Llouba's *The Long Shadow of Alois Brunner* (21-23 March) by Syrian playwright **Mudar Alhaggi** and directed by **Omar Elerian** raises searing questions about refuge, justice and hope. Weaving together Syrian and German history to interrogate the true story of one of the most wanted Nazi criminals to escape sentencing, the thought-provoking play explores exile, accountability and political memory and the complex thread that ties the past to the present.

These newly announced works join a series of original new theatre and dance works commissioned by Factory International and presented at Aviva Studios this spring. Visionary director **Robert Wilson** joins forces with CocoRosie for a spellbinding stage adaptation of the *Jungle Book*, featuring stunning set designs, dazzling costumes and a dreamy original soundtrack (28-31 March); **Maxine Peake, Sarah Frankcom**, and Imogen Knight join forces with **Gazelle Twin** and Daisy Johnson to present a feminist theatrical reimagining of John Bowen's *Robin Redbreast* - first broadcast as part of the BBC's Play for Today series in 1970, and widely regarded as a precursor to *The Wicker Man* (*Robin/Red/Breast*, 17-26 May); and Keith Khan's *The Accountants* (7-12 May) takes real data from

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India and China and transforms it into a visual allegory for the stage, combining stunning visuals and dance from Chinese leading choreographer Xie Xin and Mumbai's Terence Lewis.

In April, Factory International presents a specially commissioned programme of work from internationally acclaimed Manchester-based artist **David Hoyle**. Cabaret star, actor, and accomplished visual artist, Hoyle's infamous alter-ego 'The Divine David' transported him from radical alternative settings to the studios of Channel 4. *Please Feel Free to Ignore My Work* (10–28 April) is part retrospective, part occupation that celebrates the artist's prolific body of work across multiple mediums created over four decades.

Kicking off a series of live music at Aviva Studios, **Sampha** will perform two very special shows for Factory International (15-16 February). Presented in the round in the warehouse, fans can expect to hear songs from his second full-length album *LAHAI* – which follows his Mercury-Prize-winning debut *Process*, and follows a slew of incredible performances across the States. Other music highlights include two nights from **Underworld** (12-13 April); the once-in-a-generation songwriter **Adrianne Lenker** – best known as the lead vocalist, guitarist and songwriter of American indie folk band Big Thief (25 April); *Death Songbook*, an exquisite reimagining of iconic songs exploring love, loss and transcendence from the **Paraorchestra**, **Brett Anderson** and **Charles Hazlewood**. In June, *City of Floating Sounds*, a new work from composer **Huang Ruo**, takes audiences on a journey across the city blending technology and music culminating in a live performance by the **BBC Philharmonic**

Reflecting its commitment to ensuring access to the widest possible audiences, Aviva £10 tickets will be available to Factory International shows as part of an affordable pricing strategy that will see discounted tickets for Manchester communities across its year-round programme. Alongside, a public programme of free events will fill the inside and outside spaces throughout the season – with full details to be announced.

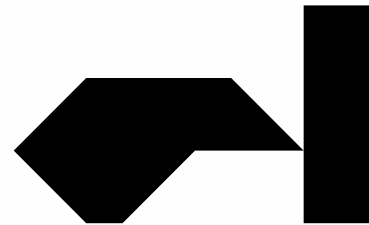
**John McGrath, Artistic Director and Chief Executive** of Factory International said: *"It's been such an honour and thrill to welcome sold out audiences to an amazing series of projects in the opening months of Aviva Studios, from Yayoi Kusama's You Me and the Balloons, to our epic opening show Free Your Mind, to local hero Johnny Marr, artists and audiences have truly embraced our new space. For the new year, we want to show our venue's potential to respond to the world's most pressing issues – with urgent new work responding to the crises we see all around us, while also providing moments of joy and celebration with some of our most exciting musicians and artists, global and local."*

Programmed and operated by Factory International, the organisation who also deliver the world-famous Manchester International Festival (MIF), Aviva Studios hosts a year-round programme by leading artists from across the world, creating a global destination for arts, music and culture in the

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heart of Manchester. The venue's development was led by Manchester City Council, with backing of £99.05m from HM Government and £7m National Lottery funding from Arts Council England.

Tickets for Dark Noon, The Long Shadow of Alois Brunner and Sampha are on sale to members today and on public sale on Friday. The rest of the programme will be on sale in February.

**ENDS.**

### Upcoming press performances\*

Dark Noon: 6 March, 7.30pm

The Long Shadow of Alois Brunner: 21 March, 7.30pm

Jungle Book: Thursday 28 March 7 May, 7.30pm

The Accountants: Tuesday 7 May, 7.30pm

Robin/Red/Breast: Friday 17 May, 7.30pm

\*Please note requests to attend press performances are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Plus ones will only be allocated where capacity allows, unless required to support an access need.

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

### About Factory International

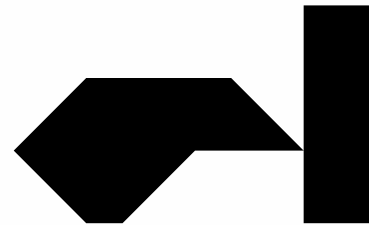
Factory International commissions, produces and presents a year-round programme of original creative work and special events at Aviva Studios, its landmark new home in Manchester, online, and internationally through its network of co-commissioners and partners. It also stages the city-wide Manchester International Festival every other year.

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# factory international



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Factory International builds on the legacy of Manchester International Festival, one of the world's leading arts festivals, and the first to be entirely focused on the commissioning and producing of ambitious new work. Staged every two years in Manchester since 2007, world-renowned artists from different art forms and backgrounds create dynamic, innovative and forward-thinking new work in venues and spaces across Greater Manchester.

The design of Aviva Studios is led by Ellen van Loon of the world-leading practice Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA). Built with flexibility in mind, the building is based around large, open, adaptable spaces that can be constantly reconfigured, enabling artists to develop and create large-scale work of invention and ambition of a kind not seen anywhere else in the world.

A unique canvas to make, explore and experiment, audiences can enjoy the broadest range of art forms from major exhibitions and concerts to intimate performances and immersive experiences. The venue's development is led by Manchester City Council, with backing of £99.05m from HM Government and £7m National Lottery funding from Arts Council England.

Factory International plays an important role in the lives of Greater Manchester residents, bringing jobs, skills, training and creative opportunities. Through the Factory Academy, Factory International is training the creative workforce of the future, while its pioneering creative engagement and artist development programmes create year-round opportunities for local people to get involved, from participating in flagship commissions to shaping the organisation through involvement in its public forums.

Factory International is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.

[factoryinternational.org](https://factoryinternational.org)

### About Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. We have set out our strategic vision in Let's Create that by 2030 we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences. From 2023 to 2026 we will invest over £467 million of public money from Government and an estimated £250 million from The National Lottery each year to help support the sector and to deliver this vision.

[www.artscouncil.org.uk](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk)

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