

Manchester
International
Festival
2021 1-18 July
mif.co.uk

Press Release

For immediate release

MANCHESTER INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL FULL MUSIC LINE-UP

Manchester International Festival (MIF), returns with a vibrant programme of original new work from artists across the spectrum of contemporary music, art and performance taking place in venues and spaces across the city and online from 1-18 July.

Music highlights in the Festival include:

- A unique performance from **Arlo Parks** with students from the **Royal Northern College of Music**.
- Singer **Abi Sampa**, kora virtuoso **Sona Jobarteh** and poet **Muneera Williams** headline a special event launching a new festival of Islamic art and culture.
- A journey deep into Manchester's Hip Hop underground with **DJ Semtex**, **SVMI**, **Lady Ice**, **Culps**, **Rago Loco** and **Victoria Jane**, among the city's most dynamic emerging acts, plus special guests.
- Performances from Pip Millett, TYSON, Billy Nomates, curated stages from **Jamz Supernova**, **DJ Paulette**, **Mr Scruff**, *BBC Music Introducing in Manchester* and **Homoelectric** on Festival Square.
- Accompanied by a band and string quartet, **Damon Albarn** will perform new songs from his latest project *The Nearer the Fountain, More Pure the Stream Flows*.
- The UK premiere of *Laurent Garnier: Off the Record* a film about club culture and the part the techno pioneer has played in its relentless rise
- A new concerto by **Dobrinka Tabakova** performed by **Hugo Ticcianti** with **Manchester Camerata**.
- Performances from **Rema**, **Midas the Jagaban** and **Anz launch Homecoming Live** is part of a three-year collaboration between Nigeria's youth culture festival Homecoming and The Factory, the landmark cultural space that will be the future home of MIF.
- The National's **Aaron** and **Bryce Dessner** collaborate with **Jon Hopkins** to create the soundtrack for *All of This Unreal Time*, a film starring Cillian Murphy, written by Max Porter, directed by Aoife McArdle.
- **aya** scores the music to Robert Yang's queer gardening simulation.
- **Cerys Matthews** curates a stage of spoken work music, poetry, song and rap.

"This Festival's music programme uncovers the sounds of Hip Hop in the city, a film score from Grammy award winning musicians, a celebration of African culture, and unique one-off performances from acclaimed poets and singer songwriters. We were proud to support some brilliant Manchester musicians

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during the pandemic last year and they'll also be joining us at the Festival. As we embark upon a welcome return to live music, we hope the Festival will offer a space for connection and celebration.”

Jane Beese, Head of Music at Manchester International Festival

Arlo Parks

Friday 9 July, Manchester Central

A huge hit album, three Brit Award nominations, a sell-out US tour: **Arlo Parks** is going places – and coming to Manchester for this one-off Festival special (9 July). A month before her 21st birthday, we're bringing the brilliant young singer and poet together with a string section from the **Royal Northern College of Music** to perform songs from debut album *Collapsed in Sunbeams* and others at her largest headline show to date.

Rooted in Rhyme

Saturday 10 July, Manchester Central

MIF collaborates up with **Unity Radio** and **Manchester Hip Hop Archive** to bring you the present and future of Hip Hop; a journey deep into Manchester's Hip Hop underground – with a packed line-up taking in everything from urban pioneers to emerging grassroots talent.

Manchester's very own **DJ Semtex**, one of the UK's true Hip Hop legends, will be live and direct on the night. There'll be sets from **SVMI, Lady Ice, Culps, Rago Loco** and **Victoria Jane**, among the city's most dynamic emerging acts, plus special guests. Together with, DJ sets from **DJ G-A-Z** – Best DJ at the Urban Music Awards 2020 – and Unity's **DJ Basha**.

Alongside Manchester Hip Hop Archive are running an exhibition at Manchester Central Library which will spotlight the impact of the genre on the region's community with a free exhibition of hip hop memorabilia and materials from the 1980s to present day marking over 40 years of hip hop lifestyle and culture in the city and the launch of a permanent housed and preserved collection at Manchester Central Library's archives.

Laurent Garnier: Off the Record

Sunday 11 July, Manchester Central

MIF presents the UK premiere of **Gabin Rivoire's** documentary *Laurent Garnier: Off the Record*, (11 July) a film about the life and career of the famous French DJ, producer and techno pioneer, and the history of the political and judicial response to rave culture. The film mixes tour footage and interviews interspersed with archival footage that provides a flashback to the late '80s when the techno scene was emerging in Detroit and England, in clubs like Manchester's Hacienda, where **Laurent Garnier** started his DJing

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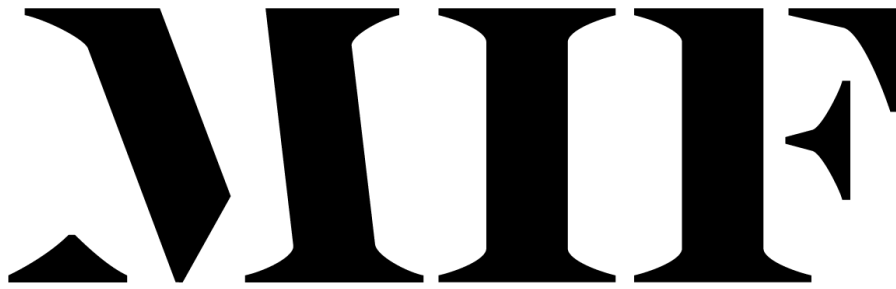
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journey. The premiere will be followed by a Q&A with Garnier and writer, broadcaster and fellow Hacienda DJ **Dave Haslam**.

Damon Albarn

Tuesday 13 July, Manchester Central

Accompanied by a band and string quartet, **Damon Albarn** (13 July) will perform tracks from across his extensive songbook, including the current project *The Nearer the Fountain, More Pure the Stream Flows*, originally inspired by the landscapes of Iceland and expanded and completed during lockdown to further explore themes of fragility, emergence and rebirth. The title is taken from a John Clare poem Love and Memory. With a history of collaboration with the Festival since its inception, this rare live appearance by Albarn is not to be missed.

MIF X Salaam Festival

Wednesday 14 July, Manchester Central

A triple-bill of brilliant live acts come together for this mini-festival presented in partnership with Manchester's new celebration of Islamic art and culture (14 July). There'll be sets from:

- **Abi Sampa with Rushil & Amrit Singh** – Sampa is an extraordinary vocalist (as seen on *The Voice*) and veena player whose singular mix of western popular music, devotional song and Indian classical music is inspiring a generation of young British Asian artists.
- **Sona Jobarteh** – A Gambian singer and master of the kora, the 21-stringed African harp – and the first female kora virtuoso in the unique centuries-old African griot tradition, which brings together music, storytelling and oral history.
- **Muneera Williams** – A poet, artist and co-founder of female Muslim spoken word duo *Poetic Pilgrimage*, who'll be both performing at and hosting the evening.

The Patience of Trees

Friday 16 July, Manchester Central

Three new commissions will premiere as part of *The Patience of Trees* (16 July), an intimate concert inspired by the healing potential and power of the natural world. A new work by composer Dobrinka Tabakova, devised by **Hugo Ticciati** and performed with **Manchester Camerata**, is at the heart of an intimate concert inspired by the healing potential and power of the natural world. *Vulpes Vulpes* by **Paul Saggars** winner of the O/Modernt Composition Award 2021 and *Todo Era Vuelo En Nuestra Tierra* by **Julieta Szewach**, who received Special Distinction will also be presented. The programme also features Tabakova's *Frozen River Flows* and Steve Reich's *New York Counterpoint*. Together, the works combine to form a timely meditation on nature and the city – and a reflection of sorts on our welcome emergence from the last year.

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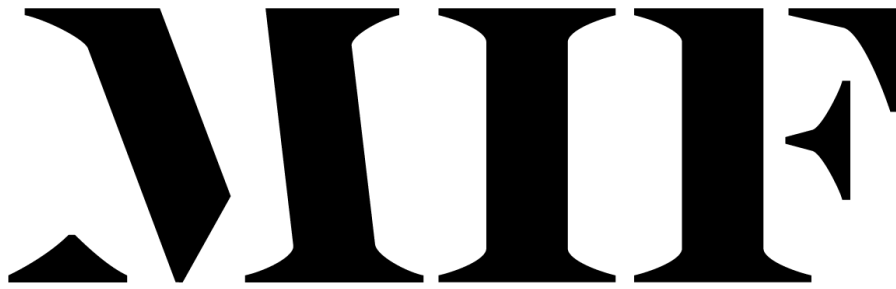
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Homecoming Live

Saturday 17 July, Manchester Central

Homecoming Live (17 July) is a night showcasing of the most exciting music from Africa, the diaspora and beyond; a celebration of African cultural exchange and youth empowerment. Nigerian Afrobeats star and musician **Rema** will headline alongside hotly tipped Afrobeats artist **Midas the Jagaban**, Manchester producer and DJ **Anz** with **Julie Adenuga** hosting. The show will take place at Manchester Central and will also be broadcast live on the night at mif.co.uk. This is the first event in a long-term relationship with Homecoming, a cultural exchange between Nigeria and Manchester with events leading up and at The Factory, the landmark cultural space that will be the future home of MIF.

Festival Square

2 – 18 July, Cathedral Gardens

Across three stages on Festival Square, the hub of MIF in the centre of the city (from 2-18 July), there will be daily free music from over 100 artists across the UK with highlights including soul singer **Pip Millett** (Mon 5 July), R&B artist **TYSON** (Tues 6 July), **Blanketman** and **Lounge Society** (Mon 12 July) who will be playing as part of a Dave Haslam curated line-up (Mon 12 July) and post-punk songwriter **Billy Nomates** (Tues 13 July). **The Untold Orchestra** will present a tribute to Nina Simone's *Four Women* (Fri 2 July) in a unique piece exploring the experiences of Black women within the creative industries and society at large, and will be joined by **DJ Paulette**, poet **Shirley May**, vocalist **Yemi Bolatiwa**, dancer Maisha Kungu and contemporary circus performer **Seren Marimba**.

Each weekday in MIF's *Records of Reflection* series on Festival Square, artists including **Afrodeutsche**, **Norman Jay** and **Lou Rhodes** of Lamb will play and discuss the music that has had an impact on their life, has inspired them or has special meaning. More Festival Square acts will be revealed in June.

All of This Unreal Time

Friday 2 – Sunday 4 July, Manchester Central

Six critically acclaimed artists have come together in a new collaborative partnership to present the world premiere of *All of This Unreal Time*, a unique cross artform collaboration which candidly explores one man's failings.

'I came out here to apologise. You know. I find myself, at the midpoint of my life, in a dark wood, and now I'm here, in the forest of my mind, and every tree is shame, every living thing is a reprimand, and I realise, I must speak freely now, before I lose you.'

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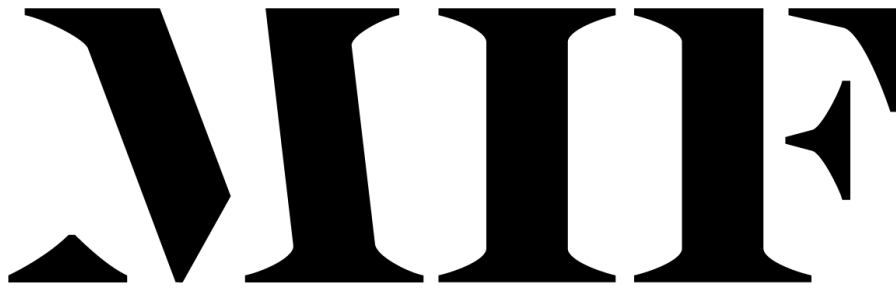
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A man – any man, everyman – walks alone through night and the city. From subway to pavement to wide open marshland, he confesses his failings: emotional, physical, political. To whom, and for what? Ashamed and alarmed, he considers both the smallness of human life and the scale of the world, and ultimately our most pressing obligation: to care for those alongside us, and for the earth that sustains us.

A film starring **Cillian Murphy**, written by **Max Porter**, directed by **Aoife McArdle** and with music by **Aaron Dessner** and **Bryce Dessner** (The National) and **Jon Hopkins**, *All of This Unreal Time* is presented as an immersive installation in surround sound – and is an MIF21 world premiere.

We Dwell in Possibility

Playable from 1 July online at virtual-factory.co.uk

As part of MIF's online offering DJ and electronic music producer **aya** will score *We Dwell in Possibility*, (from 1 July) a queer online gardening simulation created by videogame developer **Robert Yang** and illustrator **Eleanor Davis**.

Poet Slash Artist

Friday 2 July, Homeground – LINE UP TO BE ANNOUNCED

Cerys Matthews curates a stage of music, rhythm and rhyme bringing together live performances from poets, musicians, rappers and songwriters.

“We'll travel pan-world through music and words, and across time and genres, from children's books, to Afro Beat, from the ancient bards to the beat poets of the 60s: an open armed, joy filled celebration of literature and sound.”

Cerys Matthews

Cerys' stage is part of *Poet Slash Artist*, a group exhibition of work by poets that are visual artists and visual artists that are also poets taking place at HOME's gallery and in public spaces around the city centre.

Events will take place safely in indoor and outdoor locations across Greater Manchester, and a rich online offer will provide a window into the Festival wherever audiences are, including livestreams and work created especially for the digital realm.

Tickets for MIF21 events will be on sale in June and can be purchased from mif.co.uk.

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Download high resolution images [here](#)

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Manchester International Festival

Manchester International Festival (MIF) is an artist-led festival of original, new work and special events reflecting the spectrum of performing arts, visual arts and popular culture. MIF21 takes place from 1 - 18 July 2021.

Staged every two years in Manchester, MIF has commissioned, produced and presented world premieres by artists including Marina Abramović, Damon Albarn, Laurie Anderson, Björk, Boris Charmatz, Jeremy Deller, Idris Elba and Kwame Kwei-Armah, Elbow, Philip Glass and Phelim McDermott, David Lynch, Wayne McGregor, Steve McQueen, Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, Yoko Ono, Thomas Ostermeier, Maxine Peake, Punchdrunk, Skepta, The xx, Robert Wilson and Zaha Hadid Architects.

These and other world-renowned artists from different art forms and backgrounds create dynamic, innovative and forward-thinking new work, staged in venues across Greater Manchester – from theatres, galleries and concert halls to railway depots, churches and car parks. MIF works closely with venues, festivals and other cultural organisations globally, whose financial and creative input helps to make many of these projects possible and ensures that work made at MIF goes on to be seen around the world.

MIF supports a year-round Creative Engagement programme, bringing opportunities for people from all backgrounds, ages and from all corners of the city to get involved during the Festival and year-round, as volunteers, as participants in shows, through skills development and a host of creative activities, such as Festival in My House.

MIF will also run The Factory, the new landmark cultural space currently being built in the heart of Manchester and designed by the internationally-renowned architect Ellen van Loon of Rem Koolhaas' OMA. The Factory will commission, present and produce one of Europe's most ambitious and adventurous year-round creative programmes, featuring bold new work from the world's greatest artists and offering a space to create, invent and play.

Attracting up to 850,000 visitors annually, The Factory will add up to £1.1 billion to the economy over a decade and create up to 1,500 direct and indirect jobs. Its pioneering programme of skills, training and engagement will benefit local people and the next generation of creative talent from across the city, whilst apprenticeships and trainee schemes are already underway during the construction phase.

MIF's Artistic Director and Chief Executive is John McGrath.

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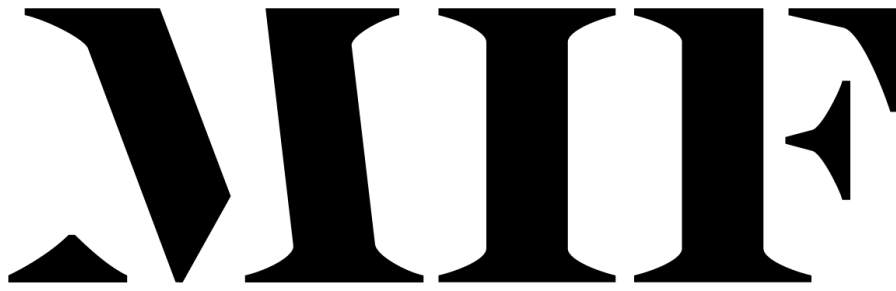
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