

**AUDIENCES TO GET FIRST PREVIEW OF MANCHESTER’S**

**WORLD-CLASS FACTORY BUILDING WITH**

**DEBORAH WARNER’S NEW SOUND AND LIGHT INSTALLATION**

Theatre and opera director Deborah Warner will unveil a major new sound and light installation *Arcadia,* commissioned and created specifically for the site of The Factory, the new world-class cultural space currently being built in the heart of Manchester, designed by internationally renowned architects Rem Koolhaas’ Office for Metropolitan Architecture. For one weekend only, from 10 to 11 July during the Manchester International Festival, the immense open spaces of the site will be transformed, allowing audiences the first preview of the building.

Inspired in-part by a painting of Manchester by William Wyld, *Arcadia* will see a field of luminous tents, emitting an original sound composition that weaves together some of the greatest nature poetry ever written, by poets including Sappho, John Clare, WB Yeats, G. E. Patterson, Seamus Heaney, Jackie Kay, Simon Armitage, Alice Oswald and Sabrina Mahfouz, among many others. There will also be recorded contributions from leading actors and musicians including Jonathan Pryce, Jane Horrocks, RoxXxan, Brian Cox, Simon Russell Beale, Lioness and David Thewlis.

Bringing the natural world into the heart of the city, Arcadia is designed as a space for thought and reflection. Audiences will be invited to wander freely through the space between dusk and dawn to connect with nature and consider the relationship between the urban and the rural.

Due to be completed later next year, The Factory will stand as a new landmark for the arts and for the city of Manchester. Its development is being led by Manchester City Council in partnership with Manchester International Festival (MIF), who will commission and present a year-round programme for the landmark building, featuring new work from the world’s greatest artists and offering a space to make, explore and experiment.

Deborah Warner said:

*“It is enormously exciting to be creating a project for MIF that will invite the public into The Factory for the very first time. It’s been thrilling to watch this extraordinary landmark building take concrete form from the core of one lift shaft, to its present stage of well-defined auditoria, rehearsal spaces, loading docks and offices.*

*The Factory will not only change the cultural face of Manchester, but that of the UK, Europe and the world.”*

Manchester International Festival Artistic Director & Chief Executive, **John McGrath** said:

*“We are delighted to welcome such a visionary director to this year’s Festival to transform a space that will ultimately play a crucial role in the future of Manchester and the arts internationally. This work will create an opportunity for audiences to encounter The Factory as it is being shaped and invite them to reflect on the juxtaposition of urban and rural.”*

**Creative Team:**

Conceived & Created by **Deborah Warner**

Composer & Sound Designer **Mel Mercier**

Designer **Justin Nardella**

Lighting Designer **Mike Gunning**

Commissioned by Manchester International Festival and Stanford Live at Stanford University and produced by Manchester International Festival.

MIF21 runs from 1–18 July 2021.

For more details about this year’s programme, please visit [mif.co.uk](https://mif.co.uk)

**Listing’s information:**

Date: 10 - 11 July 2021

£8, £5 Young MIF

The Factory

**ENDS**

**For more information, images and interview requests please contact:**

**Manchester International Festival:**

**Emma Robertson, Head of Press and PR,** +44 (0)7813 521104, emma.robertson@mif.co.uk

**Jamie-leigh Hargreaves, Senior Press Ofﬁcer,** +44 (0)7534 492118, jamieleigh.hargreaves@mif.co.uk

**Oscar Lister, Press Ofﬁcer,** +44 (0)7494 688523, oscar.lister@mif.co.uk

**Bolton & Quinn:**

**Erica Bolton,** +44 (0)7711 698186, erica@boltonquinn.com

**Lara Delaney,** +44 (0)7737 142302, lara@boltonquinn.com

**Lauren Butcher,** +44 (0)7859 217943, lauren@boltonquinn.com

Download high resolution images [here](https://press.mif.co.uk/)

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**About Deborah Warner**

Deborah Warner has just returned from Madrid where she premiered her production of *Peter Grimes*for the Teatro Real, a co-production with the Royal Opera House, Opera de Paris and Opera di Roma. Her recent opera engagements include *Phaedra* for the Royal Opera House staged during the 2020/21 season lockdown; her Olivier Award winning production of *Billy Budd*at Teatro Real Madrid, Opera di Roma and Royal Opera House; a production of*La Traviata* at the Theatre des Champs Elysees; a new production of *Fidelio* for Teatro all Scala in the 2014/15 season and the world premiere of Tansy Davies’s opera *Between Worlds*for English National Opera. In December Deborah revives her ENO production of *Messiah* for Opera de Lyon and Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris.

Theatre credits include: *The Good Person of Szechuan*; *Woyzeck; The Tempest; Measure for Measure; King Lear and Coriolanus* (Kick Theatre Company); *Titus Andronicus* (Laurence Olivier and Evening Standard Awards for Direction), *The Good Person of Sichuan, King Lear, Richard II* (French Critic’s Best Foreign Production), *Hedda Gabler* (Laurence Olivier Awards for Direction and Production) (Abbey Theatre, Dublin/Playhouse Theatre, London); *Medea* (Evening Standard Award for Direction, three Tony nominations and two Obies) (Abbey Theatre, Dublin/Queens Theatre, London/US tour and Broadway) and three devised installation pieces *The St Pancras Project*; *The Tower Project* (LIFT), *The Angel Project* (Perth International Arts Festival and Lincoln Center Festival, NYC.), *The Testament of Mary* (Broadway and The Barbican), *The Tempest* (Osterfestspiele Salzburg), *King Lear* (Old Vic, London), *The Waste Land (* Wilton’s Music Hall, London and the Liberty Theatre, NYC), *Julius Caesar (*Barbican Theatre), *Happy Days* (National Theatre).

Opera credits include: *Jeanne d’Arc au Bûcher* (BBC Proms); *The Turn of the Screw* (Royal Opera House) (Evening Standard and South Bank Show Awards); *The Diary of One Who Vanished* (English National Opera and at the Dublin Festival, Maison de la Culture de Seine- Saint-Denis, Bobigny, Holland Festival, Lincoln Center and Royal National Theatre) and *St John Passion and Messiah* (ENO, Opera de Lyon).

Film credits include: *The Waste Land* (Un Certain Regard, Festival de Cannes) and *The Last September* (Official Selection Director’s Fortnight, Cannes, Toronto and Edinburgh Film Festivals).

Deborah was awarded the Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French Government in 1992, L’Officier des Arts et des Lettres in 2000, and Commandeaur des Arts et des Lettres in 2013. In 2019 Deborah was announced as the 27th Cameron Mackintosh Visiting Professor of Contemporary Theatre at Oxford University, and in 2020 Deborah took up the position as the new artistic director of the Ustinov Studio, Bath. She was created a CBE in the 2006 Queen’s 80th Birthday Honours for services to drama.

**About The Factory**

The Factory is a new world-class cultural space currently being built in the heart of Manchester and designed by internationally-renowned architects Rem Koolhaas’ Office for Metropolitan Architecture. Its development is being led by Manchester City Council in partnership with Manchester International Festival (MIF), who will commission and present a year-round programme for the landmark building, featuring new work from the world’s greatest artists and offering a space to make, explore and experiment. Attracting up to 850,000 visitors annually, The Factory will add £1.1 billion to the economy and create 1,500 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.

When open, The Factory will present everything from major exhibitions and epic concerts, to intimate performances and immersive experiences, including dance, theatre, music, opera, visual arts, popular culture and innovative contemporary work incorporating the latest digital technologies. Working with local, national and international co-producers, it will premiere major new work, before it travels globally.

Located in the St John’s neighbourhood next to the River Irwell, The Factory will be at the heart of a burgeoning city centre hub for culture, creativity and digital innovation.

<https://mif.co.uk/factory>

**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.

[mif.co.uk](https://mif.co.uk/)