

PRESS RELEASE: 10am, Wed 10 July 2024

WORK BY LAURIE ANDERSON, DAVID HOCKNEY, JENN NKIRU AND IVAN BLACKSTOCK ANNOUNCED FOR FACTORY INTERNATIONAL'S AUTUMN/WINTER SEASON

- In a critical year for US politics, the world premiere of Laurie's Anderson's *ARK: United States Part 5* sees the pioneering artist bring together new music and her uniquely visual storytelling to create a poetic and darkly comic ode to the end of the world (12-24 November 2024).
- Lightroom's David Hockney's blockbuster immersive retrospective *Bigger and Closer (Not Smaller and Further Away)* takes over the north warehouse at Aviva Studios (10 December 2024 – 25 January 2025).
- Ivan Blackstock's Olivier award-winning *Traplord* has its Manchester debut, following its critically-acclaimed premiere at 180 Strand (26-29 September 2024).
- Jenn Nkiru's new film reflecting on Manchester's industrial history premieres as part of Black History Month, with a special introduction by the artist (from 4 October 2024)
- Ai Wei Wei and Adania Shibli join the line-up of talks series 'Artists in a time of Upheaval' (September to December 2024).

Factory International is delighted to announce highlights of its autumn/winter season at Manchester's landmark cultural venue, Aviva Studios.

Fuelled by Anderson's fascination with humanity's current reality, *ARK: United States Part V* (14-24 November 2024) brings together new music, cinematic imagery, stories and songs. Weaving together multiple threads from her five-decade-long career, *ARK* is an imaginative and personal interrogation of where we are now, asking: what has brought us here and how much time do we have left?

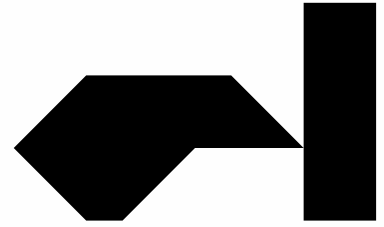
Anderson was born in Chicago in June 1947, the same time and place that atomic scientists began the Doomsday clock's countdown to the midnight of nuclear destruction. Fast forward to the present day and the multiple countdowns that now engulf us: Climate collapse, environmental disaster, and the proliferation of artificial intelligence have all added to a sense of isolation and powerlessness as we retreat further online. *ARK* fuses these themes in an ambitious new stage show about fear, disaster, preservation, invention, love and escape - from the Biblical Flood to current natural disasters and beyond.

Laurie Anderson says: "For a long time I've wanted to make a new large-scale work about the United States - a collection of songs and stories about what has shaped this country in the 21st century. I plan to tell these stories moving through myth, journalism, fable, and Tik Tok, conjuring alternate realities and stories from my own life. Part ruminations, part long-form poems, *ARK* will also be a kind of 3D movie."

David Hockney: Bigger & Closer (not smaller & further away) comes to Manchester in December following its immensely popular run at London's Lightroom. David Hockney will use the extraordinary capabilities of the

PUBLIC SECTOR FUNDERS

factory international



warehouse space of Aviva Studios to take audiences on a personal journey through 60 years of his art. This new run of *Bigger & Closer* strengthens David Hockney's connection to UK audiences, following his relocation back to the UK in July 2023. The artist's process is revealed in a cycle of six themed chapters, featuring his most iconic images alongside lesser-seen pieces and newly-created work. A unique and deeply personal running commentary by the artist is paired with an original score by Nico Muhly, and the show is directed by Mark Grimmer of 59 Productions. For lifelong fans and those new to Hockney alike, *Bigger & Closer (not smaller & further away)* affords unparalleled access to the mind of one of Britain's most loved artists.

David Hockney says: *"I'm very happy that my exhibition is going to Factory International in Manchester and that more people in the UK will be able to see my pictures bigger & closer than before. LOVE LIFE DH"*

TRAPLORD (26-29 Sept 2024) is an Olivier Award-winning show from world-renowned artist and cultural innovator **Ivan Michael Blackstock** which fuses dance, live music and spoken word to explore life, death and rebirth. Weaving between dream and reality, *TRAPLORD* charts a heroic journey to self-actualisation, exploring raw themes of mental health and masculinity through an electrifying blend of dance, live music and spoken word. A co-production between ALTRUVIOLET, Factory International and Sadler's Wells, *TRAPLORD* premiered at 180 Studios in 2022 to rave reviews and won the 2023 Olivier Award for Best New Dance Production. *TRAPLORD* is an invitation to question the stereotyping of Black men in contemporary western society – portraying an attempt to escape from a mental state of being condemned before having lived.

Ivan Michael Blackstock said: *"I am incredibly excited to bring TRAPLORD to Manchester at Aviva Studios this September. Sharing this personal and powerful journey of self-actualisation, mental health, and masculinity with the vibrant community here means a lot to me. I hope the show resonates and makes a meaningful impact, as we collectively explore and celebrate this shared story."*

Manchester's industrial history and modern-day architecture intertwine in a meditative new film by British artist and filmmaker **Jenn Nkiru** which has its world premiere at Aviva Studios as part of Black History Month (4 October). Grounded in the history of Black music, Afro-surrealism, experimental film and the Black arts movement, Nkiru has developed her own style of filmmaking, switching between eras and locations in a process she describes as "cosmic archaeology" – evident in the music videos she's directed such as Neneh Cherry's Kong, Beyonce's Brown Skin Girl and Kamasi Washington's Hub-Tones.

In this new work she weaves together new footage and archive material to explore parallels between architecture and the human body – and how they both shapeshift through time and space. Taking Manchester's industrial history as a starting point, Nkiru's film pays homage to the people and culture that make up a city. This is the final commission in the Virtual Factory series, which invited artists to create online works inspired by the architecture and site of Factory International's new home.

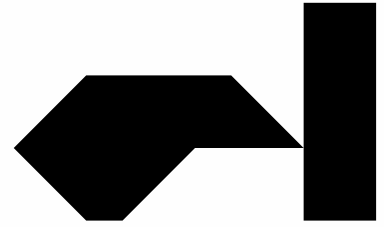
Lola Arias, Yael Bartana, Adania Shibli, Samson Young and Ai Wei Wei are the latest artists to be announced for Factory International's ongoing series of artist talks focusing on artists in and from some of the areas most exposed to current global forces. *Artists in Times of Upheaval* asks what space there is for artists when life 'as normal' no longer seems possible. Why do they continue to create art, and how? The series began earlier this year with conversations with Amir Nizar Zuabi, director of *The Walk: Little Amal*, and Oleksiy

PUBLIC SECTOR FUNDERS



Aviva Studios
Water Street, Manchester M3 4JQ
factoryinternational.org

factory international



Radynski, co-creator of Intervention – two Factory International co-produced projects which have responded to key world events.

Programmed and operated by Factory International, the organisation who also deliver the biennial 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 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.

Through the award-winning Factory Academy programme, Factory International is training the creative workforce of the future, providing opportunities for hundreds of Greater Manchester residents to develop careers in the creative industries, Manchester's fastest-growing sector. Factory International's talent development initiatives are also creating opportunities for artists from the North of England, particularly those most underrepresented in the sector. New opportunities for autumn include **Artist Takeover**, a new Factory International programme which offers artists from any discipline the chance to experiment in Aviva Studios' flexible spaces, alongside guidance from industry experts and the annual **Factory Fellowship** which gives emerging artists the chance to work and learn alongside international creatives.

Reflecting Factory International's commitment to ensuring access to the widest possible audiences, Aviva £10 tickets are available for all shows for Manchester communities across its year-round programme.

John McGrath, Artistic Director and Chief Executive, Factory International says: *"I am delighted to be announcing this new programme of work for autumn as we look towards the end of the first year in our new building. The upcoming season includes the brilliant Laurie Anderson who has been part of our journey since 2017 when she hosted the groundbreaking ceremony for Aviva Studios, Ivan Blackstock's extraordinary award-winning Traplord, and the acclaimed blockbuster immersive exhibition from one of the UK's most loved artists. We hope there will be a multitude of ways that people will join us as we continue to support artists to explore their most exciting ambitions."*

Pete Massey, Northern Economy and Partnerships Director, Arts Council England: *"The announcement of Factory International's autumn programme, with a diverse and ambitious range of events across music, dance, theatre, visual arts and film, marks an exciting milestone at the end of Aviva Studios' first year. This is reinforced by Factory International's commitment to skills development and support for the next generation of artists through its Factory Academy initiatives. We're eager to see how Factory International continues to push boundaries and support the creative community, as Aviva Studios further establishes itself as a go-to cultural destination in the North."*

QUOTE FROM MCC

Tickets for autumn shows will go on sale on Fri 12 July 10am.

David Hockney: Bigger & Closer (not smaller & further away) will go on-sale on Mon 15 July, 10am.

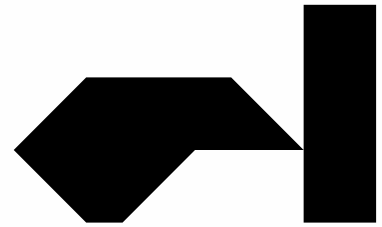
ENDS.

PUBLIC SECTOR FUNDERS



Aviva Studios
Water Street, Manchester M3 4JQ
factoryinternational.org

factory international



For more information please contact:

Emma Robertson, Head of Press & PR, 07813 521104
emma.robertson@factoryinternational.org

Oscar Lister, Senior Press & PR Manager
Oscar.lister@factoryinternational.org

NOTES TO EDITORS:

About Factory International

Factory International is the organisation behind Manchester International Festival (MIF) and the city's landmark new cultural space, Aviva Studios.

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.

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.

A space for invention and discovery, Aviva Studios was designed by the world-leading practice Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA), with Ellen van Loon as lead architect – their first major public building in the UK. Its development was led by Manchester City Council, with backing of £99.05m from HM Government and £7m National Lottery funding from Arts Council England.

Ultra-flexible in design, 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.

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

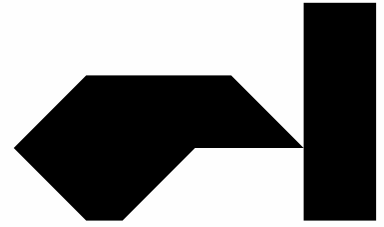
About Arts Council England

PUBLIC SECTOR FUNDERS



Aviva Studios
Water Street, Manchester M3 4JQ
factoryinternational.org

factory international



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

PUBLIC SECTOR FUNDERS



Aviva Studios
Water Street, Manchester M3 4JQ
factoryinternational.org