

UK / DANCE AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE



TREE OF CODES

Melbourne Festival presents an extraordinary dance event **Tree of Codes**: a collaboration between choreographer **Wayne McGregor**, visual artist **Olafur Eliasson**, musician **Jamie xx** and the **Paris Opera Ballet**.

For six performances only in the State Theatre, **Tree of Codes** is a collision of contemporary ballet, visual art and electronic music, launching itself from the springboard of novelist Jonathan Safran Foer's enigmatic book-sculpture of the same name.

A stunning collaboration between three world-class artists, **Tree of Codes** is a breathtakingly rhapsodic encounter between music, dance, light and structure. Brought to life by Jamie xx's scintillating score, Olafur Eliasson's dazzling visual designs and Wayne McGregor's visceral choreography, it is performed by 14 dancers from the Paris Opera Ballet and Company Wayne McGregor.

Melbourne Festival Artistic Director, Jonathan Holloway said: "All festival directors have their top

50, the list of artists they dream of presenting during their festival tenure. **Tree of Codes** was created by three contemporary artists from the very top of my list, so bringing it to Melbourne in its original form, with soloists from the Paris Opera Ballet, is three dreams come true. Whilst the core collaborators on this project—Wayne McGregor, Olafur Eliasson and Jamie xx—are each at the very top of their game, working together has lifted them all to new heights. **Tree of Codes** is the perfect festival event: massively more than the sum of its parts, beautiful and uplifting, appealing to all audiences, and delivered with the energy that can only be released by the creative collision of incredible forces."

To create his book, Foer took to the text of a book by Polish author Bruno Schulz—*The Street of Crocodiles*—with a blade, creating a new narrative. In **Tree of Codes**, these collaborators have responded to Foer's creation to craft a fluid, immersive and visual feast of light, colour and motion.

Jamie xx used an algorithm to turn spaces and shapes from the book into melodies, while McGregor created a dance for each of its 134 pages. It was the "physical nature" and "vibrancy" of the book that inspired Eliasson's set and lighting designs, which included reflective, transparent, and refractive surfaces and coloured light to create a dynamic, ever-evolving, and complexly layered space in which the dancers are multiplied and overlap.

Wayne McGregor is a multi-award winning British choreographer and director, internationally renowned for trailblazing innovations in performance that have radically redefined dance in the modern era. He founded Random Dance, which has grown into Studio Wayne McGregor, and he is regularly commissioned to make and present work for the most important ballet companies in the world, including staging *Infra* at the Australian Ballet in 2017. His work has earned him a multitude of awards including three Critics' Circle Awards, two Time Out Awards, two South Bank Show Awards, two Olivier Awards, a prix Benois de la Danse and a Critics' Prize at the Golden Mask Awards. In 2011, McGregor was awarded a CBE for Services to Dance.

MEDIA CONTACT

TATIA SLOLEY M 0403 305 395
tattia@tspublicity.com.au

MARY THOMPSON M 0415 745 910
mary@tspublicity.com.au

MEDIA RELEASE

4—22
MELBOURNE
FESTIVAL
OCTOBER
2017

Artist **Olafur Eliasson** works in a wide range of media, including installation, painting, sculpture, photography, and film. He is renowned for *The weather project* (2003) in the Turbine Hall of Tate Modern, London, that immersed spectators in an artificial mirrored environment with its own looming sun and attracted 2 million visitors. Eliasson's projects in public space include *The New York City Waterfalls* (2008), *Your rainbow panorama* (2011), a 150-metre circular, coloured-glass walkway situated on top of ARoS Museum in Aarhus, Denmark, and *Ice Watch*, shown in Copenhagen in 2014 and Paris in 2015. In 2014, Eliasson and architect Sebastian Behmann founded Studio Other Spaces, an office for art and architecture focusing on interdisciplinary and experimental building projects.

Jamie xx is one third of Mercury Prize-winning UK band, The xx and an acclaimed remixer and a producer by appointment to pop royalty like Drake and Alicia Keys. He is at the forefront of a wave of producers paving the way for dance music in the 21st century, taking influence from early 80's and 90's British rave culture and blurring the boundaries between artist and audience in sonic environments.

The **Paris Opera Ballet** is the oldest national ballet company and, together with the Moscow Bolshoi Ballet and the London Royal Ballet, it is regarded as one of the three most preeminent ballet companies in the world. Rich in historical tradition, it stages some 180 performances per season in Paris, the French regions and abroad, and has played host to many of the world's greatest choreographers: George Balanchine, Serge Lifar, Rudolf Nureyev, Roland Petit, Maurice Béjart, and Pina Bausch.

Tree of Codes possesses all the energy and vitality of a performance born of a collaboration between artists at the peak of their creativity. A groundbreaking and audacious theatrical presentation, it has received standing ovations and enjoyed sold-out crowds since its premiere at the Manchester International Festival in 2015, and tour to the Armory in New York, l'Opéra de Paris, Sadler's Wells in London and the Aarhus 2017-European Capital of Culture festival in Denmark.

Melbourne Festival is proud to present this remarkable work as an exclusive to audiences this October in its original form: with dancers from the Paris Opera Ballet and Company Wayne McGregor.

"Extraordinary ballet with stark score from Jamie xx is fecund with human creativity... Sometimes five stars are not enough." The Independent (UK)

"Jaw-dropping... with breathtaking physical feats and visual dazzle." The New York Times

"A truly collaborative process lies behind the extraordinary artistic triumph of this new contemporary ballet." The Stage (UK)

Wayne McGregor, Director and Choreographer	Nick Sagar, Sound Designer
Olafur Eliasson, Visual Concept	Rob Halliday, Lighting Realisation
Jamie xx, Composer	Odette Hughes, Rehearsal Director
Inspired by Tree of Codes by Jonathan Safran Foer	Set realisation in association with Studio Olafur Eliasson
With dancers from Paris Opera Ballet & Company Wayne McGregor	Costume realisation with generous support from Acne Studios

Commissioned by Manchester International Festival, Park Avenue Armory, FAENA ART, Paris Opera Ballet, Sadler's Wells and European Capital of Culture Aarhus 2017. Produced by Manchester International Festival, Paris Opera Ballet and Studio Wayne McGregor.

Arts Centre Melbourne, State Theatre

Tue 17—Sat 21 Oct

Tue – Sat 8pm, Wed & Sat also 2pm

1 hr 15 mins, no interval

Premium \$189 | A Reserve \$159 / \$149

B Reserve \$109 / \$99 | C Reserve \$69 / \$59

Under 30s \$30

www.melbourne.festival

#melbfest

MEDIA CONTACT

TATIA SLOLEY M 0403 305 395
tattia@tspublicity.com.au

MARY THOMPSON M 0415 745 910
mary@tspublicity.com.au



Presenting Partners



Funded by donations from the

