

**LINCOLN CENTER FESTIVAL AND PARK AVENUE ARMORY
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
TO PRESENT THE ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY IN UNPRECEDENTED
SIX-WEEK, FIVE-PLAY RESIDENCY IN NEW YORK IN JULY AND AUGUST 2011**

RSC's 44-member ensemble to perform in repertory in a full scale replica of its transformed Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon, specially created in the Armory's soaring Wade Thompson Drill Hall as part of *Lincoln Center Festival 2011*

February 8, 2010, For Immediate Release — Lincoln Center Festival and Park Avenue Armory, in association with The Ohio State University will bring the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) to New York in July and August 2011 for an unprecedented six-week residency. The joint announcement was made today by Nigel Redden, Director, Lincoln Center Festival; Rebecca Robertson, President and CEO, Park Avenue Armory; and Michael Boyd, Artistic Director of the RSC.

For the first time in its history of visiting the United States, the RSC will perform five of Shakespeare's plays in repertory, for 45 performances from July 6 through August 14, 2011, in a thrust-stage auditorium bringing actors and audiences closer together. The RSC's theater technicians are building a full-scale replica of the award-winning Courtyard Theatre where the Company currently performs. The Courtyard Theatre is acting as a prototype for the transformation of the historic Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon, due to reopen in late 2010.

This will be the only opportunity for American audiences to see this ensemble, whose members will have worked together for three intense years by the time they arrive in New York. The ensemble has been assembled by Michael Boyd, who makes his debut in New York City as RSC Artistic Director. Five plays will be selected from the company's U.K. repertoire from 2009 and 2010: *Antony and Cleopatra*, *As You Like It*, *Julius Caesar*, *King Lear*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *The Winter's Tale*. The residency will also be supported by an extensive education program, developed by the RSC, using Shakespeare to inspire the imagination and creativity of young people.

Nigel Redden said, "We are proud to be bringing to the festival one of the world's most important theater companies, so wonderfully revitalized in recent years by Michael Boyd. This is only possible because of the close collaboration with Park Avenue Armory and the participation of The Ohio State University. *Lincoln Center Festival* is happy to join with these exceptional organizations to bring Americans, and New Yorkers in particular, this unique opportunity to experience Shakespeare's plays performed by an ensemble of actors whom they will get to know over the course of watching five different productions."

in association with

"The Armory enables artists and performers to realize great works of art and epic productions that otherwise could not be seen in New York. We are thrilled to partner with *Lincoln Center Festival* and the Royal Shakespeare Company in bringing The Courtyard Theatre to the Armory, allowing the public to experience these incredible productions in an equally dramatic setting," stated Park Avenue Armory President & CEO Rebecca Robertson.

Michael Boyd said: "Collaboration lies at the heart of everything we do at the Royal Shakespeare Company, which is why I am so pleased that we are able to work with such great partners to bring the culmination of three years' work in the U.K. to New York in 2011 as part of the *Lincoln Center Festival*. We have returned to our founding principles as an ensemble company, investing for the long term in our theater artists, plunging into the work and drawing in our audiences. Our thrust stage, wrapping the audience around the action, allows people to reach out to our actors and to each other in a space which is both intimate and powerful. I am delighted that we can recreate that intimacy right here in New York City in the extraordinary space of Park Avenue Armory. I would like to thank both U.S. and U.K. Equity for their support. And finally, I am also excited by our continuing partnership with The Ohio State University and their commitment to this residency, as well as the opportunity to work with U.S. teachers and teaching artists to ignite the imagination of young Americans through theater, which speaks to the human dilemmas of today."

"The Ohio State University community is truly honored to be associated with *Lincoln Center Festival* and Park Avenue Armory in the planning and presentation of the Royal Shakespeare Company in America in 2011," said E. Gordon Gee, President of The Ohio State University. "Ohio State is now the only American university preparing teachers in the RSC's internationally acclaimed method of engaging primary and secondary students with the works of William Shakespeare. Ohio State's participation will provide additional opportunities for our students, faculty and alumni to connect with the RSC. It will also advance the strength and excellence of our institution. We are grateful to Les and Abigail Wexner for their innovative philanthropy, which made possible our participation in this important collaboration."

About the Royal Shakespeare Company

The Royal Shakespeare Company is one of the world's best known theater companies. It connects people with Shakespeare and engages with the world, producing bold, progressive work. It is an ensemble company and everyone, from directors, writers and actors, to production, technical and administrative staff collaborates in its distinctive approach to making theater.

The company's home is in Stratford-upon-Avon, where it is transforming its main stage to bring actors and audiences closer together, whilst continuing to perform in the temporary Courtyard Theatre. The RSC also plays regularly in London, Newcastle-upon-Tyne and on tour across the U.K. and the world.

The RSC's repertoire includes the work of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, as well as new plays by living writers. The company is dedicated to transforming the experience of Shakespeare in performance, promoting international collaboration, supporting new work, and working with schools and teachers to inspire a life-long love of Shakespeare and learning in young people.

In 2008/9, the RSC received 20 major awards for its work (including four Olivier awards), sold over 500,000 tickets for 20 productions, had over 40 writers under commission, and reached over 30,000 children and 2000 teachers through its Learning and Performance Network.

"The brilliance of Michael Boyd's production lies in the same sleek ensemble acting that characterized Shakespeare's company. Boyd's versatile actors play multiple roles, as did those for whom they were first written. In the process, they bond like some vast extended family, raising one another's games." – *The Observer* (London)

"Best production of the Noughties – Michael Boyd's RSC eight-play Shakespeare history cycle at Stratford's Courtyard and London's Roundhouse. An epic project performed by a world-class ensemble, making spectacular use of theatre's vertical possibilities." – *The Guardian* (London).

"The Shakespeare total immersion experience" – *Daily Telegraph* (London)

About Michael Boyd

Michael was appointed as the RSC's Artistic Director in July 2002 and took up the position in April 2003. His mission for the company was to work as an ensemble in a spirit of deep enquiry, to connect people with Shakespeare, and to reengage with the contemporary world and contemporary theater works. Since then, the company has gone from strength to strength.

Under his leadership, the RSC staged the Complete Works Festival in 2006, performing all of Shakespeare's 37 plays, long poems and sonnets, with 30 visiting companies from across the world.

As a director, he has worked with an RSC ensemble of 34 actors over two and a half years to stage all eight of The Histories. The productions opened in Stratford-upon-Avon at The Courtyard Theatre in 2007 and transferred to the Roundhouse in London in Spring 2008, playing to enormous critical acclaim, including Olivier awards for Best Company Performance, Best Revival and Best Costume Design.

From 1996, Michael was an Associate Director of the RSC, working alongside Michael Attenborough, Katie Mitchell, Gregory Doran and Steven Pimlott. In 2001 he won the Olivier Award for Best Director for his productions of *Henry VI, Parts I,II,III* and *Richard III*, part of the RSC's This England: The Histories season. Other Shakespeare plays he has directed for the RSC include *As You Like It* (2009), *Twelfth Night* (2005), *Hamlet* (2004), *The Tempest* (2002), *Romeo and Juliet* (2000/1), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1999), *Troilus and Cressida* (1999/2000), *Measure for Measure* (1998/9), and *Much Ado About Nothing* (1995/6).

Before that, Michael was founding Artistic Director of the Tron Theatre in Glasgow from 1985, Associate Director at the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield from 1982-1984, and Assistant Director at the Belgrade Theatre in Coventry from 1980-82. He began his training as a director in 1979 at the Malaya Bronnaya Theatre, Moscow.

About Park Avenue Armory

Part palace, part grand industrial shed, Park Avenue Armory is being given new life as a center for performing and visual art that cannot be mounted in traditional performance halls and museums. With its soaring 55,000 square foot drill hall and its array of exuberant period rooms, the Armory fills a critical void in the cultural ecology of the city by enabling artists to create—and the public to experience—unconventional work that could not otherwise be experienced in New York.

In May 2009, the Armory launched its first commission, *anthropodino*, a site specific installation by artist Ernesto Neto described as "spectacular ...a magical destination" by *The New York Times*. The Armory's second commission, *No Man's Land* by Christian Boltanski, will debut in May 2010. Since the first

production in September 2007 – Aaron Young's *Greeting Card* with Art Production Fund, a 9,216-square-foot "action" painting created by twelve motorcycles – the Armory has partnered with New York cultural institutions to present extraordinary works, among them, the 2008 Whitney Biennial with site-specific installations and performances by 37 artists; and, an evening of Stravinsky's *Sacred Masterpieces* presented in association with Columbia University's Miller Theatre that drew rave critical reviews for the Armory's unique sound. Park Avenue Armory has collaborated three times with *Lincoln Center Festival*: in 2008 with Bernd Zimmerman's epic opera *Die Soldaten*, and in 2009 with Ariane Mnouchkine's *Les Éphémères* and Declan Donnellan's *Boris Godunov*. This past December, Lincoln Center's *Great Performers* series presented the U.S. premiere of Heiner Goebbels' *Stifters Dinge*, a sonic performance landscape inspired by the writings of 19th-century Austrian romantic novelist Adalbert Stifter.

Built between 1877 and 1881, the landmarked Park Avenue Armory is one of New York City's most important historic structures, occupying a full city block on the Upper East Side. The Armory's Wade Thompson Drill Hall, reminiscent of a 19th-century European train shed, measures approximately 200 by 300 feet, with an 80-foot-high barrel vaulted roof, and is one of the largest unobstructed spaces in the City. The adjacent Administrative Building includes interiors by Louis Comfort Tiffany, Stanford White, the Herter Brothers, and other prominent designers of the period, constituting what the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission described as "the single most important collection of 19th-century interiors to survive intact in one building."

About The Ohio State University

Founded in 1870 as a land-grant college, The Ohio State University has grown into one of America's preeminent public research universities. With more than 55,000 students on its Columbus campus, the university offers some 12,000 academic courses with 175 undergraduate majors, 133 master's degree programs, 99 doctoral programs and seven professional degree programs. Ohio State and the Royal Shakespeare Company joined in an international partnership in late 2008 to create a three-year collaborative teacher education program with the RSC's "Stand Up for Shakespeare" at its core. Spearheaded by the Arts Initiative at Ohio State, the endeavor promotes literacy focused on complex texts, dramatic inquiry-based education and teacher leadership in Ohio public schools. The only partnership of its kind in the US, it initially involves 20 schoolteachers from multiple disciplines in Ohio STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) schools, who teach 1,700 children. The program will continue to be expanded to additional schools in the state.

About Lincoln Center and *Lincoln Center Festival*

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (LCPA) serves three primary roles: presenter of superb artistic programming, national leader in arts and education, and manager of the Lincoln Center campus. As a presenter of more than 400 events annually, LCPA's programs include *American Songbook*, *Great Performers*, *Lincoln Center Festival*, *Lincoln Center Out of Doors*, *Midsummer Night Swing*, the *Mostly Mozart Festival*, and *Live From Lincoln Center*. In addition, LCPA is leading a series of major capital projects on behalf of the resident organizations across the campus.

Since its inaugural season in 1996, *Lincoln Center Festival* has received worldwide attention for presenting some of the broadest and most original performing arts programs in Lincoln Center's history. In thirteen seasons, the Festival has presented more than 1,050 performances by artists from more than 50 countries, commissioning 30 new works and offering some 112 world, U.S., and New York premieres. It places particular emphasis on showcasing contemporary artistic viewpoints and multidisciplinary works that push the boundaries of traditional performance.

Lincoln Center Festival and Park Avenue Armory have collaborated previously on three critically-acclaimed projects: the Ruhr Triennale production of *Die Soldaten*, Bernd Alois Zimmermann's monumental 20th-century opera (2008); Theatre du Soleil's *Les Éphémères* directed by Ariane Mnouchkine (2009) and the Chekov International Theatre Festival's *Boris Godunov* directed by Declan Donnellan (2009). In addition, in December 2009 Lincoln Center's *Great Performers* series presented the U.S. premiere of Heiner Goebbels' *Stifters Dinge*.

Some Facts about the Productions

The auditorium:

- 930-seat steel-framed auditorium on three levels – stalls, circle and gallery – complete with technical galleries, overhead motorized scenery flying, lighting and sound rigs
- thrust stage brings actors and audience closer together with audience on three sides
- furthest seat from the edge of the stage is an incredibly intimate 49 feet
- designed and constructed by the RSC in the company's own workshops in Stratford-upon-Avon in the U.K.
- installed in Park Avenue Armory as a self-supporting structure
- two weeks to build the auditorium – which includes thrust stage, backstage, proscenium, seating
- one week to install scenery for five productions
- estimated to take a well-organized and finely orchestrated 916-person days to complete the three-week job – involving, at its peak, 76 people on site at one time

The company:

- 44 actors
- 23 musicians
- 10 stage management
- four assistant directors plus creative teams
- approximately 425 costumes and 350 pairs of boots and shoes for five productions; four-hour laundry call and three hours of general costume maintenance before each performance
- 20 wigs, 15 pieces, 15 beards, 15 moustaches, five sideburns, two joke beards and one set eyebrows
- 20 liters of blood
- two liters of clay
- five tins of lychees for eye balls
- four prosthetic wounds
- Lots of make up mud

Tickets: Information on advance guaranteed access to tickets (available by joining the Executive Producers, Producers, or Supporters Circle) will be available later in February. For more information on these programs email Shakespeare2011@lincolncenter.org or call Alison Koczanski, 212.875.5739. All other tickets will go on sale in the spring of 2011.

Visit Lincoln Center's website, www.LincolnCenterFestival.org for ticket details.

Photographs: High resolution (300 dpi) images are available NOW on Lincoln Center's website. Please go to www.LincolnCenter.org/aboutLC/media_home.asp to register for access to the Photo Gallery and to download images. Additional images will be posted as they become available. If you have any questions, or need additional assistance, please contact Sarah Needham, 212-875-5999, or sneedham@lincolncenter.org.

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