

# Lincoln Center Festival 09

June 2, 2009

ATTN: THEATER EDITORS/ WRITERS/ CRITICS

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## Lincoln Center Festival 09 Theater Advisory

*Lincoln Center Festival 09* proudly presents top theater companies from France, Hungary, Italy, Poland, and Russia, whose productions will be a special focus of this year's Festival. There will be four US and three New York production premieres. High resolution images are available. Tickets are available at [LincolnCenterFestival.org](http://LincolnCenterFestival.org), CenterCharge, 212-721-6500 and at the Avery Fisher and Alice Tully Hall Box Offices, 65<sup>th</sup> Street and Broadway. Details on the productions are below, in chronological order. For information about *Festival* dance and music presentations, please visit, [www.LincolnCenterFestival.org](http://www.LincolnCenterFestival.org)

### Le Théâtre Du Soleil *Les Éphémères* (U.S. Premiere)

Directed by Ariane Mnouchkine  
Created collectively by Le Théâtre du Soleil  
Music by Jean-Jacques Lemêtre  
Performed in French with English supertitles

#### Fourteen performances:

July 7 at 7:30 p.m. (Part 1)  
July 8 at 7:30 p.m. (Part 2)  
July 10 at 7:30 p.m. (Part 1)  
July 11 at 2:30 & 7:30 p.m. (Full Cycle—dinner break between Parts 1 and 2)  
July 12 at 2:30 & 7:30 p.m. (Full Cycle—dinner break between Parts 1 and 2)  
July 15 at 7:30 p.m. (Part 1)  
July 16 at 7:30 p.m. (Part 2)  
July 17 at 7:30 p.m. (Part 2)  
July 18 at 2:30 & 7:30 p.m. (Full Cycle—dinner break between Parts 1 and 2)  
July 19 at 2:30 & 7:30 p.m. (Full Cycle—dinner break between Parts 1 and 2)

Running time: 3 hours, 20 minutes, one intermission (each part)

Tickets: \$75, 100 (for each part); \$150, 200 (Full Cycle)

Park Avenue Armory, 643 Park Avenue, between 66<sup>th</sup> and 67<sup>th</sup> Streets

*Lincoln Center Festival 09* welcomes the return of Ariane Mnouchkine, an icon of European experimental theater, and her celebrated theatre collective, Le Théâtre du Soleil, with their newest production, *Les Éphémères*. The production, which will have its U.S. premiere opening the Festival on July 7, is presented by Lincoln Center Festival in association with Park Avenue Armory, where it will be staged.

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Lincoln Center Festival 09 is sponsored by American Express.

Over six hours long, in two parts which may be seen separately or on the same day, *Les Éphémères* is a departure from the company's traditional focus on socio-political or historical themes. In the words of the director, it is an "an examination of everyday life through the prism of the family, especially, the mother. Out of the ordinariness emerges an abyss of complexity, suffering, the questions we never asked our parents...the ephemeral character of what we are."

Ms. Mnouchkine and Le Théâtre du Soleil were last seen at *Lincoln Center Festival 05* with the unforgettable *Le Dernier Caravansérail*, a brutal, epic depiction of several contemporary refugee odysseys. *Les Éphémères* is a more intimate but equally revelatory work, devised through a series of improvisations. The director chose 29 out of 450 improvisations the actors had created. This mosaic of ordinary lives is shown as a series of snapshots of commonplace events that create a powerful impression of the unstoppable passage of time, from birth to death, and how the accumulation of these seemingly random vignettes creates full lives. One storyline involves a woman tracing her grandparents after her mother's death and discovering they were deported as Jews. It is partly inspired by Mnouchkine's own family story. The director herself describes *Les Éphémères* as "a hymn to the beauty of the world and humanity."

Founded in 1964 by director Ariane Mnouchkine and a group of actors and technicians coming from university theater, Le Théâtre du Soleil is now an international company of 75 people—including actors, technicians, and designers—who operate in a democratic, community-oriented environment in which company meals are cooperatively prepared and shared at its Paris home base, often with the evening's audience included. Mnouchkine has staged some 30 productions with Le Théâtre du Soleil, a number of which have been filmed, and many of which have toured to theater festivals around the world. The company had not performed in New York in a dozen years prior to its appearance at *Lincoln Center Festival 05* with the highly acclaimed *Le Dernier Caravansérail*, about which *The New York Times* said, "Ms. Mnouchkine and her remarkable assembly of artists evoke the struggles and suffering of their subjects with a simplicity and compassion...despite its broad scope, *Caravansérail* is a profoundly intimate theatrical work."

Presented in association with the Park Avenue Armory.

*Major support provided by Susan and Elihu Rose. Made possible in part by The Florence Gould Foundation, the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the United States, and FACE (French American Cultural Exchange). Additional generous support provided by The Grand Marnier Foundation and Georges Lurcy Charitable and Educational Trust.*

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## **Katona József Theatre**

### ***Ivanov* (New York premiere of this production)**

Written by Anton Chekhov

Directed by Tamás Ascher

Performed in Hungarian with English supertitles

#### **Five performances:**

July 7 at 8 p.m.

July 8 at 8 p.m.

July 9 at 8 p.m.

July 10 at 8 p.m.

July 11 at 8 p.m.

Running time: 3 hours, 5 minutes, one intermission

Tickets: \$35, 50, 75 (limited availability)

Gerald W. Lynch Theater, John Jay College, Amsterdam Avenue between West 58<sup>th</sup> and 59<sup>th</sup> Streets

Budapest's acclaimed Katona József Theatre company shares opening night honors with Le Théâtre du Soleil – and makes its New York debut - at the *Lincoln Center Festival* on July 7 with *Ivanov* by Anton Chekhov. Award-winning director Tamás Ascher, whose previous productions of Chekhov have toured widely to stellar reviews, has staged this production of *Ivanov*, a study of a once-idealistic man turned apathetic, in Hungary during the 1960s and 1970s, a choking, depressing world that mirrors the soul of the title character.

The director has said, “I was trying to create a performance which has nothing to do with the traditional nostalgic Chekhovian atmosphere we are used to...Chekhov saw the world and all situations with a certain black humor, even if the most important characteristic of the protagonist is self-pity. I think the performance cannot aim at the enlargement of this self-pity, on the contrary; it should show this self-pity in a sarcastic way.”

The Katona József Theatre, one of the best-known Hungarian theater company, was formed in 1982, succeeding the National Theatre of Budapest. Since 1989, Gábor Zsámbéki has been general director, with Gábor Máté as general stage director and Tamás Ascher and Péter Gothár as stage directors. The Katona József Theatre regularly embarks on international tours and to date has performed in more than 80 cities, from Paris to Chicago, from London to Bogota, and from Milan to Adelaide. The productions and artists of the Katona have received numerous important national and international awards.

This production is presented in conjunction with Extremely Hungary, a year-long festival showcasing contemporary Hungarian arts, organized by the Hungarian Cultural Center in New York and made possible in part by funding from the Hungarian Ministry of Education and Culture.

*Made possible in part by a generous grant from The Trust for Mutual Understanding.*

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## **Narodowy Stary Teatr**

### ***Kalkwerk* (U.S. Premiere)**

Adaptation, scenic design, and direction by Krystian Lupa

From the novel *Kalkwerk* (“The Limeworks”) by Thomas Bernhard

Music by Jacek Ostaszewski

Performed in Polish with English supertitles

#### **Five performances:**

July 14 at 7 p.m.

July 15 at 7 p.m.

July 16 at 7 p.m.

July 17 at 7 p.m.

July 18 at 7 p.m.

Running time: 4 hours, two intermissions

Tickets: \$35, 50, 75 (limited availability)

Gerald W. Lynch Theater, John Jay College, Amsterdam Avenue between West 58<sup>th</sup> and 59<sup>th</sup> Streets

Krystian Lupa, Poland's most renowned and influential director, makes his *Lincoln Center Festival* debut with the Stary Teatr production of *Kalkwerk*, based the chilling 1970 novel of the same name by Austrian author Thomas Bernhard. Known here at *The Limeworks*, *Kalkwerk* is a study of an obsessive scientist mentally imprisoned by his work and his captive wife. The U.S. premiere performances will be in the Festival's second week, July 14-18. Lupa, who has been directing plays since 1979, was first attracted to

the work of Thomas Bernhard in 1992 when he did his own stage adaptation of *Kalkwerk*. He has staged two other works by the author. Lupa's staging of *The Three Sisters* by Chekhov at American Repertory Theater in Boston in 2006 first brought his work to the attention of American audiences.

Stary Teatr, one of the oldest Polish professional theater companies, was formed in Krakow in 1781. Its high artistic level for over two centuries is the result of the theater's directors, who have skillfully refined the troupe and built a repertoire of Polish and European classics and new works. Under Mikołaj Grabowski, artistic director since 2002 and managing director since 2004, the Stary Teatr emphasizes both contemporary drama and reinterpretation of classics. Since 1994, the Stary Teatr has been a member of the Union of European Theatres, an organization of leading companies in Europe.

Krystian Lupa has enjoyed a relationship with the Stary Teatr since 1980. A number of his productions have been based on books and stories by European authors. His recent productions at the Stary and elsewhere include Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, Gorky's *The Lower Depths*, and *Unfinished Piece for an Actor*, which combines Chekhov's *The Seagull* with Yazmina Reza's *The Spanish Play*. A resident director at the Stary Teatr, he also teaches directing at the Ludwik Solski State Drama School in Krakow. Lupa's productions are noted for their psychological complexity, stylistic innovation, and humanity. He has received every major Polish theatre award, the Austrian Cross of Merit, and the French Order of the Fine Arts and Humanities. In 2008, he received the European Theatre Award for career achievement.

*Made possible in part by a generous grant from The Trust for Mutual Understanding.*

*Very special thanks to the Polish Cultural Institute for their support.*

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## **Béla Pintér and Company (U.S. Debut)**

### ***Peasant Opera* (U.S. Premiere)**

Written and directed by Béla Pintér

Music by Benedek Darvas

Performed in Hungarian with English supertitles

#### Seven performances:

July 21 at 8:30 p.m.

July 22 at 8:30 p.m.

July 23 at 8:30 p.m.

July 24 at 8:30 p.m.

July 25 at 2 & 8:30 p.m.

July 26 at 3 p.m.

Running time: 1 hour, 30 minutes, no intermission

Tickets: \$50, 75

Clark Studio Theater, Rose Building, 165 West 65<sup>th</sup> Street, 7<sup>th</sup> floor

Hungary's most innovative and significant independent theater company, Béla Pintér and Company makes its first American appearance in the U.S. premiere of *Peasant Opera* at the *Lincoln Center Festival*. *The Village Voice* describes Pintér as "a director-playwright with a knockout ensemble (who) stages hallucinatory, comic fables about nationalism, ethnicity, and country life, with exquisite original music."

Devised by the director (who is also one of the actors), *Peasant Opera* was created with a nod to Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*. Almost every word is sung by the actors. Speech is reserved for certain key

moments. The story, concerning the affairs of common people in a depressed farming village, is full of lurid events (including love between step-siblings, extramarital affairs, accidental inbreeding and murder), not to mention credibility-defying coincidences. The combination of different musical styles, courtesy of composer Benedek Darvas (who is one of five musicians accompanying the performance) includes recitatives and arias accompanied by cembalo, authentic Hungarian folk songs, and baroque recitatives full of musical and linguistic puns.

Established in 1988, Béla Pintér and Company has won the Hungarian Critics' Award four times, including three years in a row. The company—equally at ease with authentic Hungarian folk and postmodern forms of theatrical expression—has created most of its productions at the Szkéné, an independent repertory theater at Budapest Technical University, where it is in residence. During the 1980s, Szkéné was the only theater in Budapest showing significant experimental theater and dance from Western and Central Europe, and it was here that Mr. Pintér trained as a dancer and performer, working with the era's leading experimental groups. In 1998, he gathered together a group of actors to create his first production, *Common Bondage (Népi Rablét)*. A new production has followed each year, with each show remaining in repertory at the Szkéné; one production, *Dievouchka*, a monochromatic musical theater piece concerning Hungary's participation in World War II, was produced at the Katona József Theatre in Budapest.

This production is presented in conjunction with Extremely Hungary, a year-long festival showcasing contemporary Hungarian arts, organized by the Hungarian Cultural Center in New York and made possible in part by funding from the Hungarian Ministry of Education and Culture.

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## Maly Drama Theatre

### *Life and Fate* (North American Premiere)

Adapted and directed by Lev Dodin

From the novel by Vasily Grossman

Performed in Russian with English supertitles

#### Five performances:

July 21 at 7 p.m.

July 23 at 7 p.m.

July 24 at 7 p.m.

July 25 at 7 p.m.

July 26 at 3 p.m.

Running time: 3 hour, 34 minutes, one intermission

Tickets: \$35, 50, 75 (limited availability)

Gerald W. Lynch Theater, John Jay College, Amsterdam Avenue between West 58<sup>th</sup> and 59<sup>th</sup> Streets

The St. Petersburg-based Maly Drama Theatre returns to *Lincoln Center Festival 09* with the New York premiere of its production of *Life and Fate*, adapted and directed by Lev Dodin from Vasily Grossman's sprawling novel of life on the Eastern Front during the 1940s. The *Financial Times* described Dodin's staging as "beautiful, terrifying, draining—and resoundingly contemporary."

Grossman's 1960 novel gripped Western Europe when it was smuggled out of the Soviet Union (where it was banned until the 1980s, after the author's death) and published in Switzerland. The plot focuses on a mother facing death in a Ukrainian Jewish ghetto and her physicist son who is confronted with an

impossible moral dilemma while developing a nuclear weapon. This profound and disturbing epic has been adapted by Dodin with a bluntness that perfectly fits the horrors of the Holocaust, the gulags, and the concentration camps, all frenzied backdrops for its characters' struggles to maintain their humanity and essential goodness amid repression.

Grossman wrote *Life and Fate* between 1954 and 1961, but the KGB soon confiscated his work, deeming his expose of the Soviet regime ideologically objectionable. His observations of Nazi nationalism and the Holocaust, especially in an earlier "black book" he co-wrote that included documentary evidence of Nazi crimes committed in Soviet territory, went against the era's Soviet anti-Semite campaigns. Three years later, he died in poverty.

In 1980, the manuscript of *Life and Fate* was anonymously smuggled out of the country on microfilm, and published in Switzerland. Other editions soon followed in France, Germany, England and the United States, with numerous re-printings. The book received both critical and commercial success and Grossman was acclaimed as a major Russian writer, two decades after his death.

In 1983 Lev Dodin was a guest director in Finland when he spied a copy of *Life and Fate* (still banned in the Soviet Union) in a book store. Knowing that he could not purchase it and bring it back to Russia, he spent the next five evenings reading it in the bookstore. He decided he would one day stage it.

All of the actors in the Maly company are too young to have any first-hand knowledge of the devastating chapter in Russian history that occurred during WWII. Their parents did not want to discuss details of the war. During the rehearsal process the company made a trip in the spring of 2006 to the camps in Auschwitz and Birkenau in Poland where they rehearsed scenes from the play in the prison barracks. They also met Auschwitz survivors.

The Maly Drama Theatre (or "Little Theatre") was founded in St. Petersburg (then Leningrad) in 1944. Lev Dodin became the company's director in 1983, bringing students from the Theatre Institute of Leningrad, with whom he began work in 1976 on a collective work centered on several modern authors. The Maly has been seen in Japan, the United States, and all over Europe, performing many of their groundbreaking works, including *Brothers and Sisters* at *Lincoln Center Festival 2000*.

Director Lev Dodin's interest in theatre began early, as he was admitted to the Saint Petersburg Theater Institute where he studied under Boris Zon, who had been a pupil of Stanislavski. He was guest director with the Moscow Art Theatre and the Bolshoi of Saint Petersburg, where he directed works by Valentin Rasputin, Karel Capek, Tennessee Williams, and Fyodor Dostoyevsky. Dodin took over as Artistic Director of the Maly Drama Theatre in 1983.

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## Chekhov International Theatre Festival

### *Boris Godunov* (New York Premiere)

Written by Alexander Pushkin

Directed by Declan Donnellan

Scenic design by Nick Ormerod

Performed in Russian with English supertitles

#### Five performances:

July 22 at 8 p.m.

July 23 at 8 p.m.

July 24 at 8 p.m.

July 25 at 8 p.m.

July 26 at 8 p.m.

Running time: 2 hours, 10 minutes, no intermission

Tickets: \$50, 75 (limited availability)

Park Avenue Armory, 643 Park Avenue, between 66<sup>th</sup> and 67<sup>th</sup> Streets

Russia's leading actors—Evgeny Mironov, Alexander Feklistov, Alexander Lenkov, Igor Yasulovich, and Mikhail Zhigalov—will make a rare stage appearance this July in the New York premiere of the Chekhov International Theatre Festival production of Alexander Pushkin's 1825 play, *Boris Godunov*, directed by Declan Donnellan. The production, a presentation of *Lincoln Center Festival* in association with Park Avenue Armory, will have five performances at the Armory.

Irreverently mirroring the opaque maneuverings of today's Russian power brokers, Donnellan's interpretation offers an edgy, modern-day staging of Pushkin's drama about the bitter power struggle that ensued in Tsarist Russia after Ivan the Terrible's death in 1584. The *Sunday Times* of London says, "Donnellan draws fiercely but firmly disciplined performances from his actors: the combination of high-octane energy and stylized realism suggests the imaginative influence of Meyerhold...the show has a universal political topicality."

The Chekhov International Theatre Festival was first held in 1992, focusing on masters like Peter Brook, Giorgio Strehler, Peter Stein, and Otomar Krejca. Directors unknown to Russian audiences came next, among them Ariane Mnouchkine, Robert Wilson, Christoph Marthaler, Krystian Lupa, and Tadashi Suzuki. The festival has since expanded to include Asia and Latin America, along with Japanese and Brazilian theater seasons in Russia. The VIII Chekhov International Theatre Festival takes place in Moscow from May 26 to August 2, 2009.

Declan Donnellan is co-artistic director of London's renowned Cheek by Jowl. His work in New York includes Tony Kushner's *Homebody/Kabul* at New York Theater Workshop; at BAM, he directed *As You Like It*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and *The Duchess of Malfi*, all in English; *Le Cid* by Corneille in French; and *Twelfth Night* in Russian. As Associate Director at the Royal National Theatre in London, his performances include *Fuente Ovejuna*, *Sweeney Todd*, and both parts of *Angels in America*. In 1997, at the invitation of Lev Dodin, he directed *The Winter's Tale*, which is still being performed at the Maly Drama Theatre in St. Petersburg. He also directed Verdi's *Falstaff* for Claudio Abbado in Salzburg (in 2001); the ballet *Romeo and Juliet* for the Bolshoi Theatre, in Moscow (in 2003); and *Andromaque* for Peter Brook at the Bouffes du Nord in Paris (in 2007). In 2000, under the auspices of the Chekhov International Theatre Festival, he formed a company of actors which has performed and toured with *Boris Godunov*, *Twelfth Night*, and *The Three Sisters* around the world. His book *The Actor and the Target*, first published in Russian in 2000, has become a best-seller and has been published in English, French, Spanish, Romanian, Bulgarian, Czech, Polish, Italian, and German. He is a Chevalier de l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres for his work in France, and has received awards in New York, Paris, Moscow and London, including the Laurence Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement.

Presented in association with Park Avenue Armory.

*Made possible in part by a generous grant from The Trust for Mutual Understanding.*

Piccolo Teatro di Milano /Teatri Uniti  
*Trilogia della villeggiatura* (New York Premiere)

Written by Carlo Goldoni

Adapted and Directed by Toni Servillo

Performed in Italian with English supertitles

Five performances:

July 22 at 8 p.m.

July 23 at 8 p.m.

July 24 at 8 p.m.

July 25 at 8 p.m.

July 26 at 3 p.m.

Running time: 2 hours, 48 minutes, one intermission

Tickets: \$30, 45, 50, 65, 80

Rose Theater, Broadway and 60<sup>th</sup> Street

*Trilogia della villeggiatura* (“Holiday Trilogy”), the 1743 comedy of manners by Carlo Goldoni, will grace the stage of the Rose Theater in the last week of the Lincoln Center Festival. This co-production of Piccolo Teatro di Milano and Teatri Uniti di Napoli is directed by and stars Toni Servillo, acclaimed for his performance as former Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti in the current film, *Il Divo*. *Trilogia* has been a smash hit in Milan and on subsequent tours of Italy and Europe. Another Goldoni comic masterpiece, *Arllecchino: The Servant of Two Masters*, was presented by Piccolo Teatro di Milano at *Lincoln Center Festival05*.

*Trilogia della villeggiatura* follows two Italian families before, during, and after a country vacation. Comic misadventures ensue, but the focus remains on Goldoni’s affectionately drawn characters. The play is further enriched by the playwright’s sharply caustic observations about Italian society and life’s ironies and injustices. *Corriere della Sera* says, “Servillo’s *Trilogia*, using a term from the text, is ‘super sensational.’”

One of Europe’s most acclaimed actors and directors, Toni Servillo founded the Teatro Studio of Caserta in 1977 and Teatri Uniti in 1987. He has staged masterpieces by Moscati, Pirandello, De Filippo, Viviani, Molière, and Marivaux throughout Europe, and has directed operas by Mozart, Cimarosa, Mussorgsky, Strauss, Rossini, and Beethoven in Venice, Naples, Lisbon, Dresden, and Aix-en-Provence. His staging of Goldoni’s *Trilogia della villeggiatura* went on tour in several European cities. Servillo has also acted in films by Italian directors including Mario Martone, Antonio Capuano, Paolo Sorrentino and Matteo Garrone. For his performance in Garrone’s crime drama *Gomorra*—featured at the 2008 New York Film Festival and recently released in the U.S.—Servillo received the European Film Award for Best Actor.

Piccolo Teatro di Milano, founded in 1947 by Giorgio Strehler, Paolo Grassi, and Nina Vinchi, became a “Theater of Art for Everyone,” producing distinguished works at a price that all could afford. Strehler directed classics from Shakespeare to Goldoni, and many of the greatest 20<sup>th</sup> century plays by Brecht, Beckett, and Pirandello. After his death in 1997, taking over the Piccolo Teatro were Sergio Escobar, director of opera houses in Bologna, Genoa, and Rome, and Luca Ronconi, the celebrated stage director. The Piccolo Teatro is one of Italy’s most important cultural centers, producing over 600 performances yearly; since 1999, it has hosted an annual international theater festival showcasing productions from around the world.

*The Lincoln Center Festival 09 presentation of Trilogia della villeggiatura is made possible in part by the Italian Cultural Institute.*

*The U.S. tour of Trilogia della villeggiatura is supported by MIBAC - Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali, MAE - Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Comune di Milano - Expo 2015, Camera di Commercio di Milano, Eni and Lufthansa.*

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*Programs and artists subject to change.*

#### **PHONE NUMBERS/CONTACT INFORMATION**

Festival web link: [www.LincolnCenterFestival.org](http://www.LincolnCenterFestival.org)

Lincoln Center website: [www.LincolnCenter.org](http://www.LincolnCenter.org)

Lincoln Center Customer Service: 212-875-5456

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