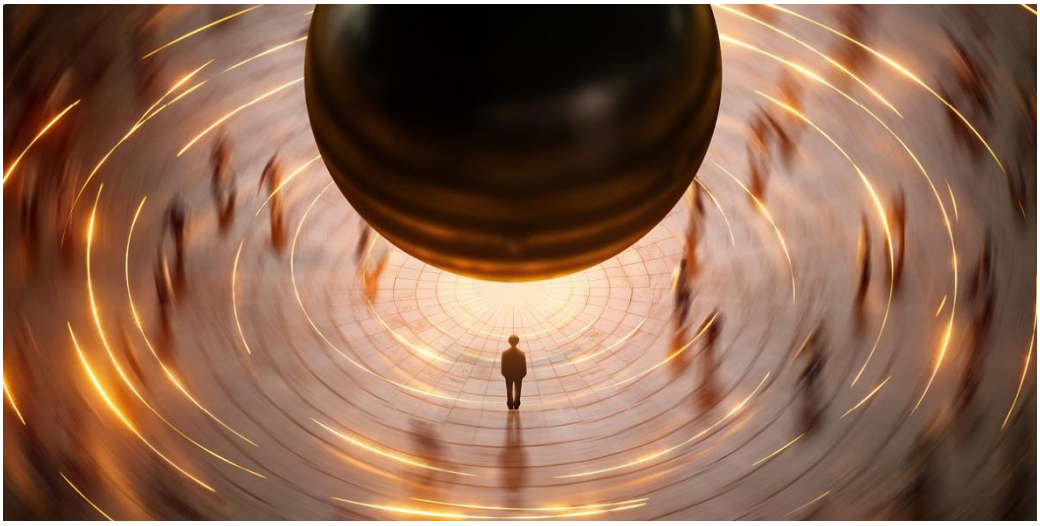
Tues 13 October: for immediate release

English National Opera announces new artist and skills development opportunities in Greater Manchester alongside Einstein on the Beach ticket details



Einstein on the Beach, 2027

English National Opera has announced the ten North West-based artists who will come together to form ENO's *The Artists' Table* and, alongside partners, reveals new details about Phelim McDermott and Philip Glass's latest collaboration of a major production of *Einstein on the Beach*, the first new adaptation of the seminal opera in over 50 years.

The announcements form part of ENO's growing programme of artist development, new work and creative skills in Greater Manchester, creating opportunities for artists and young people to develop, experiment and build careers within opera and the wider creative industries.

As an opera company with two creative centres, ENO presents dynamic work in both London and Greater Manchester as part of its pioneering partnership with the city-region. Across the country, ENO runs a wide-ranging programme of learning, participation, creative health and community engagement that supports emerging artists and opens opera up to people of all ages and backgrounds.

Since 2025, ENO has presented productions for audiences in the North West, including Benjamin Britten's *Albert Herring* with Salford's Lowry; Mozart's *Così fan tutte* with The Bridgewater Hall and the UK premiere of Du Yun and Royce Vavrek's Pulitzer Prize-wining opera *Angel's Bone* at Aviva Studios in collaboration with Factory International and BBC Philharmonic Orchestra.

- **The Artists' Table: first artist panel announced**

Today, ENO reveals the ten artists who will form **The Artists' Table** 2026-2028 are: **AFRODEUTSCHE (Henrietta Smith-Rolla), Anna Appleby, Balraj Samrai, Jennifer Jackson, Jonathan Ainscough, Josh Inyang (Space Afrika), Kerry Andrew, Laura Bowler, Michael Betteridge and Richard Kudekha-Lark.**

This new initiative brings together a group of artists living and making work in the North West of England to help identify and explore the skills needed to develop now and, in the future, and to shape how ENO responds through its approach to new work and skills development in the region. Members have been selected to reflect a range of voices, disciplines and career stages within the Greater Manchester arts ecology and will share ideas, reflect on lived experience, and consider where skills gaps, barriers, and opportunities exist across the North West's creative ecology. The Artists' Table will play a key role in helping ENO ensure its work is ambitious, inclusive, and meaningfully rooted in the realities of artists' working lives.

- ***Einstein on the Beach:*** **new details announced**

Alongside **Factory International**, **Park Avenue Armory and Improbable, ENO** present **Philip Glass**'s iconic opera ***Einstein on the Beach*** in a new spectacular experiential adaptation filling the vast warehouse space of Aviva Studios. Inspired by ideas on time, space and the birth of quantum physics, Improbable's **Phelim McDermott** joins forces with an award-winning design team and a huge cast of multi-talented singers and performers including the **BBC Philharmonic Orchestra** and vocal ensemble collaboration between the **Chorus of ENO and Kantos Chamber Choir**, to re-imagine one of the most influential operas of all time in the composer's 90th year.

A collision of artforms – music and theatre, live art and light, sculpture and movement – *Einstein on the Beach* invites audiences to enter a 360-degree world where Einstein's ideas and Glass's music are felt all around you. Vast in scale, it encompasses a huge cast of vocalists, instrumentalists, actors and movement artists, including local performers from across Greater Manchester.

Einstein on the Beach will run from **29 May – 12 June at Aviva Studios**. Priority tickets go on sale today, and general on sale on 20 October. The production is commissioned and produced by English National Opera, Factory International, Park Avenue Armory and Improbable (in association with Scene and Heni Koenigsberg Productions LLC). In partnership with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra.

ENO and Factory International are also collaborating to offer **paid training placements on *Einstein on the Beach*** with a focus on technical and backstage roles as part of **Factory Academy**. The Factory International scheme creates new pathways into opera production for people living in Greater Manchester, particularly those from backgrounds underrepresented in the arts. The *Einstein on the Beach* placements follows the success of the collaboration on the *Angel's Bone* production in May 2026 in which twelve young people from the city-region gained real-world industry experience working in Stage Management, Lighting and Sound on a world-class opera production.

Annilese Miskimmon, **Artistic Director**, **English National Opera**, said:
"Opera brings together an extraordinary range of creative disciplines and is at its strongest when it welcomes ideas that challenge, inspire and expand what the art form can be.

I am thrilled to welcome the inaugural Artists' Table and this remarkable group of artists. Their insight, experience and creativity will help shape our thinking as we deepen ENO's relationship with Greater Manchester and the wider North West.

Together with our partners, we are creating opportunities for artists to experiment, develop new skills and make bold new work, while developing the practical and vocational skills that support the wider cultural workforce. We want to create an environment where innovation can flourish and where artists and communities can play a meaningful role in shaping the future of opera."

Today's announcements form part of ENO's growing programme of initiatives and partnerships developing artists, skills and talent across the North West. Together, they create pathways from first experiences and training through to professional artistic development, experimentation and the creation of new work.

- **Creative Incubator with Royal Northern College of Music**

Last week, the ENO and RNCM announced the inaugural artists on its new Creative Incubator programme – a unique partnership jointly developed to provide space and opportunity for North West-based opera, music, theatre, film, and visual artists to create original work. Award-winning screenwriter **Stefanie Reynolds**, composer and multidisciplinary musician **Thandanani Gumeda**, and inclusive dance artist **Matthew Rawcliffe** will be the first to benefit from the year-long development programme, receiving dedicated workshop and rehearsal space, mentoring, financial support, creative and business skills training, as well as learning, shadowing, and collaborative opportunities with the support of ENO and the RNCM.

- **Artist Takeovers**

In February 2027, **ENO and Factory International** are handing over the North Warehouse at Aviva Studios for up to six days. This week, an open call was announced inviting an artist, collective or creative team to take over the space and explore new approaches to opera, musical theatre, performance and storytelling. With a focus on experimentation, testing and discovery there is no expectation to create a finished or public work. Artists will be supported to shape how the residency time is used which could include creative development, research, workshops, rehearsals, making, testing, technical experimentation or bringing collaborators into the space.

- **Opera Factory GM**

Launched earlier this year, Opera Factory GM is a new partnership between ENO and Factory International creating a shared innovation and production pipeline for new work. It supports artist-led, cross-genre experimentation through a series of cross-disciplinary R&D labs, exploring how new work can be realised at scale – on ENO's stages, within Factory's year-round programme, or through future national and international co-productions.

- **Greater Manchester Youth Opera Company**

ENO's Greater Manchester Youth Opera Company, for young people aged 11-14, launched its pilot phase in July 2026, bringing together 40 participants from across Greater Manchester. Delivered in partnership with the **Greater Manchester and Blackburn with Darwen Music Hub and the Royal Northern College of Music**, the programme offers hands-on experience of opera-making, from performance to design and composition, with a focus on engaging young people currently underrepresented in the sector. The next call out for participants will be announced in early 2027.

- **Tuning into Opera**

Tuning into Opera is a bold research and engagement initiative from ENO and **The University of Manchester**, alongside our partners in the city-region, exploring what it means to have a national opera company based in Greater Manchester. The project runs from 2025-2027 and invites local communities, artists and audiences to help shape a new chapter for opera – one that reflects the voices, stories and spirit of Greater Manchester.

ENO's schools and creative health programmes are core to its ethos and organisational mission, and are deeply embedded within Greater Manchester:

- **Finish This… schools' programme**

ENO's free national schools' programme ***Finish This…*** takes place in primary, secondary and SEND settings. This year, an enhanced version of the programme is delivered in partnership with **ONE Education (Manchester's Music Service)**, alongside **Bolton, Blackburn with Darwen, Wigan, Luton, Kent** and **South Coast Music Hubs & Services**. *Finish This…* supports high-quality music-making in classrooms across England, with more than 19,000 students taking part during the 2026-27 season.

- **ENO Breathe**

ENO continues to develop its award-winning **ENO Breathe** programme, created with **Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust** to support people experiencing breathlessness and anxiety associated with long COVID. In 2026/27, ENO will pilot an expanded version of the programme in both London and Greater Manchester, supporting people living with chronic respiratory conditions, including COPD and asthma. Developed with partners including **NHS Greater Manchester**, the **Greater Manchester Combined Authority** and the **Greater Manchester Creative Health Place Partnership**, this next phase continues ENO's commitment to creative health and evidence-based respiratory support for wider NHS integration. Since launching in 2020, the programme has worked with over 80 NHS partners and supported 5,000 participants.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors:

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ENO partners in Greater Manchester include:

- BBC Philharmonic Orchestra
- Blackburn with Darwen Music Hub
- Bolton Music Hub
- Factory International
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- Greater Manchester Creative Health Place Partnership

- Lowry
- ONE Education Music Hub in Greater Manchester
- NHS Greater Manchester
- Royal Northern College of Music
- The Bridgewater Hall
- The University of Manchester
- Wigan Music Hub

About *Einstein on the Beach*

Einstein on the Beach
29 May - 12 June, Aviva Studios
Commissioned and produced by English National Opera, Factory International, Park Avenue Armory and Improbable (in association with Scene and Heni Koenigsberg Productions LLC). In partnership with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra.

Over a century ago, Albert Einstein changed how we see the universe through the power of human imagination, with his novel ideas on space, time and quantum physics. Fifty years ago, Philip Glass and Robert Wilson revolutionised opera with *Einstein on the Beach*, blowing open the possibilities of the genre by incorporating experimental music and theatre. Now, *Einstein on the Beach* is transformed again with a once-in-a-lifetime experiential staging.

A collision of artforms – music and theatre, live art and light, sculpture and movement – *Einstein on the Beach* invites you to enter a 360-degree world where Einstein's ideas and Glass's music are felt all around you. Vast in scale, it encompasses a huge cast of vocalists, instrumentalists, actors and movement artists, including local performers from across Greater Manchester.

With this ambitious new staging, Phelim McDermott – acclaimed director and co-founder of Improbable – completes the *Glass Portrait Trilogy*. Having directed *Satyagraha* in 2007 and the Grammy and Olivier Award-winning production of *Akhnaten* in 2016 for English National Opera, he then collaborated with Philip Glass on the critically acclaimed MIF19 stage production *Tao of Glass*. Now, over 20 years since meeting Philip Glass, McDermott returns to the beginning, taking on the challenge of Glass's epic first opera.

For *Einstein on the Beach*, McDermott is joined by designer Tom Pye, his collaborator on *Akhnaten* and the West End hit *My Neighbour Totoro*. Conducted by Brad Lubman, The BBC Philharmonic Orchestra return to Aviva Studios after their collaboration with ENO and Factory International on the genre-defying opera *Angel's Bone.* With a powerhouse vocal ensemble – a collaboration between the Chorus of ENO and Kantos Chamber Choir – they bring Glass's athletic, minimalist score to life.

Rarely performed at full-scale in its entirety, *Einstein on the Beach* is an experiment in human creativity – a testament to the power of ideas that change the world. Leave any preconceptions at the door and take a quantum leap of faith.

Phelim McDermott, Director, said: *"Einstein on the Beach was of its time. Now, I wonder whether it is even more so. Half a century later, perhaps its time has truly come."*

Access ticket information:
ENO is committed to making opera accessible to all. Tickets for Under 21s are free - available in Greater Manchester through partner venues, and at the London Coliseum for every performance and at every level of the theatre.

About English National Opera
English National Opera (ENO) is one of the UK's leading opera companies, dedicated to creating extraordinary encounters with opera, on stage and beyond. Performing in English and presenting bold, imaginative productions in an inclusive environment, ENO brings together outstanding artists, musicians and creative teams to tell powerful stories to the widest possible audience.

ENO is a dual-centre opera company, presenting a season at the iconic London Coliseum every year alongside dynamic work in Greater Manchester as part of its pioneering partnership with the city-region. Across the country, ENO runs a wide-ranging programme of learning, participation, creative health and community engagement that supports emerging artists and opens up opera to people of all ages and backgrounds.

Founded in 1931 as Sadlers Wells Opera, ENO has played a central role in the cultural life of the nation for more than 90 years.

English National Opera, creating opera without limits.

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