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CAST AND FULL CREATIVE TEAM ANNOUNCED IN A REVOLUTIONARY EXPERIENTIAL PRODUCTION OF *EINSTEIN ON THE BEACH*

- **In the composer's 90th year, Philip Glass and Robert Wilson's seminal work will be transformed in a new spectacular experiential adaptation by Improbable's Phelim McDermott.**

- **English National Opera (ENO) and Factory International present a radical new production of one of the most influential operas of the 20th century, combining experimental music and theatre, live art, light, sculpture and movement in a vast, 360-degree staging. Co-commissioned and produced with Park Avenue Armory and Improbable.**

- **World-leading countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo (*Akhnaten, The Lord of Cries*) announced as soloist and Grammy Award-winner Zachary James *(Hadestown, The Perfect American)* announced in the principal cast.**

- **Acclaimed conductor and composer Brad Lubman leads the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra and a 16-strong vocal ensemble comprising the Chorus of ENO and Kantos Chamber Choir, from London and Greater Manchester, to bring Glass's score to life.**

- ***Einstein on the Beach* opens at Aviva Studios, home of Factory International from 29 May - 12 June, ahead of a North American premiere at Park Avenue Armory, New York from 14 - 29September 2027.**

English National Opera (ENO) and **Factory International** today announce the casting and full creative team for ***Einstein on the Beach***, the iconic opera from **Philip Glass** and **Robert Wilson**, to be staged in an epic new experiential production directed by Improbable's **Phelim McDermott**. Inspired by Albert Einstein's novel theories on space, time and quantum physics which changed how we see the universe, this 50th anniversary production will run in composer Philip Glass's 90th year, opening at **Aviva Studios, Manchester**, home

of Factory International, from **29 May to 12 June 2027**, followed by its **North American premiere** at **t**he **Park Avenue Armory, New York**, from **14 to 29 September 2027**.

"The distinction between past, present and future is… a stubbornly persistent illusion." – Albert Einstein

In 1976, 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 it is transformed again with a once-in-a-lifetime experiential staging bringing together a collision of artforms – music and theatre, live art and light, sculpture and movement – inviting audiences to enter a 360-degree world in the vast Warehouse space at Aviva Studios where Einstein's ideas and Glass's music will be felt all around.

GRAMMY Award-winning countertenor **Anthony Roth Costanzo**, recognised as one of the most distinctive voices in contemporary opera, reunites with English National Opera following his acclaimed performance in the title role of Glass's *Akhnaten* and will perform a special solo number as part of the production. Leading the principal cast is Broadway and West End star and GRAMMY Award-winning bass **Zachary James**, best known for his performances as Hades in the original West End cast of *Hadestown*, in the original Broadway cast of the Tony Award-winning *South Pacific*, and in Philip Glass's *The Perfect American* and *Akhnaten*. The production will also incorporate Improbable's trademark Skills Ensemble of multidisciplinary performers, alongside a company of actors and a community movement ensemble, with further principal cast and company members to be announced.

Conducted by **Brad Lubman**, the acclaimed conductor and composer renowned for his versatility, commanding technique and insightful interpretations, with the **BBC Philharmonic Orchestra** returning to Aviva Studios following its collaboration with ENO and Factory International on the genre-defying opera *Angel's Bone*. A frequent conductor of many of the world's leading orchestras and new music ensembles, Lubman brings his extensive experience of contemporary repertoire to this landmark production. A powerhouse 16-strong vocal ensemble, a collaboration between the **Chorus of ENO** and **Kantos Chamber Choir**, will perform the remaining solo numbers and together 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. For McDermott and Improbable, the production marks the culmination of the *Glass Portrait Trilogy* for English National Opera following *Satyagraha* in 2007 and the Grammy and Olivier Award-winning *Akhnaten* in 2016, plus the critically acclaimed Factory International and Improbable co-production of *Tao of Glass* created in collaboration with Philip Glass and seen in the West End earlier this year. In 2027, over 20 years since meeting Philip Glass, McDermott returns to Glass's first opera to reimagine this monumental work for a new generation. It is also announced today that **BBC Radio 3** will record *Einstein on the Beach* at Aviva Studios for broadcast in *Opera on 3* on Saturday 10 July.

McDermott is joined by an exceptional award-winning creative team, with Designer **Tom Pye** (*Akhnaten*, *My Neighbour Totoro)*, Costume Designer **Moi Tran** *(A Moon for the Misbegotten, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof)*, Lighting Designer **Lucy Carter** *(2:22 A Ghost Story, The Hunger Games)*, Lighting Installations by **Tundra** *(ÉXÕ, Inexistence)*, Sound Designer **Ian Dearden** *(Helicopter String Quartet, The Return of Ulysses)*, Movement Director **Jennifer Jackson** *(The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui, Cowbois)* and Associate Director **Peter Relton** *(Faust, La Bohème).*

Improbable's 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."*

Annilese Miskimmon, Artistic Director of ENO, says: *"We are incredibly proud to bring Philip Glass's Einstein on the Beach to Manchester in what will be the composer's 90th year, and completing ENO's Glass Portrait Trilogy. As one of the most radical and influential works in operatic history, this new interpretation presents a unique opportunity to introduce Glass's visionary masterpiece to new audiences through the artistry of an exceptional creative team and performers. This production also represents an exciting next step in ENO's growing presence in Greater Manchester. As we continue to create opera experiences and opportunities for and with communities in the city-region, it is fitting that such a boundary-pushing work forms part of that journey.*

"We are delighted to be working alongside our co-producing partners on this landmark project and collaborating once again with Anthony Roth Costanzo and Zachary James, two extraordinary artists whose deep understanding of Glass's work has already been so powerfully demonstrated in ENO's acclaimed production of Akhnaten. Together, we look forward to reimagining a defining work of contemporary opera for a new generation, creating an experience that reflects both the international significance of Einstein on the Beach *and the creative energy of Greater Manchester today."*

John McGrath, Artistic Director & Chief Executive of Factory International said: *"We are incredibly proud to be premiering this landmark experiential production of Philip Glass's masterpiece Einstein on the Beach at our home in Aviva Studios alongside our co-producing partners. Following the unforgettable Angel's Bone with ENO and BBC Philharmonic Orchestra and Tao of Glass from Philip Glass and Phelim McDermott, this production will fill our vast Warehouse space with a huge cast of multi-talented singers and musicians for a transcendental journey through space and time"*

Erica Whyman, Chair of Improbable, said: ***"****We're so thrilled to be working alongside this extraordinary creative team to realise this new production - one that for Improbable has been 20 years in the dreaming. It's a joy to share in the ongoing creative collaboration between Philip Glass and Improbable and to see the final work of the* Portrait Trilogy *reach the stage as part of Philip's 90th birthday celebrations."*

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.

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Listings
Einstein on the Beach
29 May - 12 June 2027
Press performance: Saturday 29 May, 3pm

An opera by **Philip Glass** and **Robert Wilson**
Phelim McDermott Director
Tom Pye Designer
Moi Tran Costume Designer
Lucy Carter Lighting Designer
Tundra Lighting Installations
Ian Dearden Sound Designer
Jennifer Jackson Movement Director
Peter Relton Associate Director

Brad Lubman Conductor

Spoken text by **Christopher Knowles, Samuel M Johnson** and **Lucinda Childs**

The Warehouse, Aviva Studios, Water Street, Manchester, M3 4JQ
Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays at 3pm
Wednesdays and Fridays at 6pm, and Tuesday 8 June at 6pm

Access Performances:
Audio described: Tuesday 8 June, 6pm
Captioned: Friday 11 June, 6pm
Audio described and captioned: Saturday 12 June, 3pm

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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About Factory International

Factory International is the organisation behind Manchester International Festival and the city's landmark cultural space, Aviva Studios. Factory International commissions, produces and presents a year-round programme of original creative work and special events at Aviva Studios, online, and internationally through its network of co-commissioners and partners. It also stages the city-wide Manchester International Festival (MIF) 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.

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 from HM Government and 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 Park Avenue Armory

Part palace, part industrial shed, Park Avenue Armory supports unconventional works in the performing and visual arts that cannot be fully realized in a traditional proscenium theater, concert hall, or white wall gallery. With its soaring 55,000-square-foot Wade Thompson Drill Hall—reminiscent of 19th-century European train stations—and an array of exuberant period rooms, the Armory provides a platform for artists to push the boundaries of their practice, collaborate across disciplines, and create new work in dialogue with the historic building. Across its grand and intimate spaces, the Armory enables a diverse range of artists to create, students to explore, and audiences to experience epic, adventurous, relevant work that cannot be done elsewhere in New York. In addition, the Armory also has a year-round Artists-in-Residence program, providing space and support for artists to create new work and expand their practices.

The Armory's creativity-based arts education programs provide access to the arts to thousands of students from underserved New York City public schools, engaging them with the institution's artistic programming and outside-the-box creative processes.

The Armory is undergoing a multi-phase renovation and restoration of its historic building led by architects Herzog & de Meuron, with Platt Byard Dovell White as Executive Architects.

armoryonpark.org

About Improbable

Led by Phelim McDermott, Lee Simpson and Matilda Leyser, Improbable is an award-winning theatre company that defies categorisation. At the heart of our artistic practice is improvisation. Whether in performance, rehearsal or development, the practice and philosophy of improvisation is at the core of our creation process. The breadth of Improbable's experience over the past 30 years is unrivalled, working with a huge range of partners nationally and internationally across sectors and scales.

Other recent on-stage collaborations and projects have included: Tao of Glass, Factory International, Nica Burns; My Neighbour Totoro, Royal Shakespeare Company, Nippon TV (winner five What's On Stage Awards and six Olivier Awards including Best Director for McDermott); The Hours, Metropolitan Opera; Perfect Show for Rachel created by Zoo Co at Barbican (winner Off West End Award, Access); An Improbable Musical, Royal & Derngate, Northampton; Akhnaten (Olivier Award winner for Best Opera Production, Grammy Award for Best Opera Recording), English National Opera. We were awarded Producer of the Year at The Stage Awards in 2023.

Beyond our work on stage, Improbable use Open Space Technology to bring communities together to work on urgent issues. We do this for the theatre sector through our Devoted & Disgruntled programme and work with other sectors through Open Space for Hire and Improbable Workshops.