

25 YEARS OF FORCED ENTERTAINMENT

2009 marks Forced Entertainment's 25th anniversary. Since forming the company on graduation from Exeter University in 1984, the six core members of the group have sustained a unique artistic partnership for quarter of a century, confirming time and again their position as trailblazers in contemporary theatre. The company's substantial canon of work reflects an interest in the mechanics of performance, the role of the audience and the machinations of contemporary urban life. The work - framed and focused by Artistic Director Tim Etchells - is distinctive and provocative, delighting in disrupting the conventions of theatre and the expectations of audiences. Forced Entertainment's trademark collaborative process - devising work as a group through improvisation, experimentation and debate - has made them pioneers of British avant-garde theatre and earned them an unparalleled international reputation.

Projects for 2009 include:

VOID STORY

Work-in-progress showing:

17 January 2009

Tanzquartier, Vienna

World premiere:

21 - 25 April 2009

Soho Theatre, London as part of SPILL Festival

Void Story follows a beleaguered pair of protagonists on a rollercoaster ride through the decimated remains of contemporary culture. Navigating one terrible cityscape after another they come in the end to a dangerous shanty town at the centre of a night so intense that there are no stars to be seen.

Forced Entertainment perform the bleak and comical contemporary fable of *Void Story* as if it were a radio play, sitting at tables, turning the pages of the script, 'doing' the requisite voices and adding in sound effects for gunshots, rain and bad phone-lines. Simultaneously the otherwise empty stage is dominated by a series of projected images, a storyboard for an impossible movie-version of Tim Etchells' uniquely unsettling text. Somewhere between the live dialogue, the recorded sound effects and the collaged images attempting to visualise the narrative, is where *Void Story* actually takes place.

Void Story is a new Forced Entertainment project made for SPILL with support from Tanzquartier, Vienna.

SPEAK BITTERNESS

28 February 2009

PACT Zollverein, Essen

In *Speak Bitterness* a small group of performers take on the task of confessing to everything. Dressed in their best suits, lined-up as if for a show trial or a press conference, they meet the gaze of the audience, speaking softly, drawing them in and admitting to it all. For the six hour duration of the work the audience are free to come and go as they please whilst the performers are trapped - by turns cowed, breezy, anguished, reluctant, jovial and of course determined. The text they work from is a constantly updated catalogue of human wrong-doing great and small, from murder, genocide, rape and arson to bad moods, jealous rages and never washing-up properly or taking the dogs out for a walk.

The first text-based durational work by Forced Entertainment first performed in 1994, this seminal but rarely presented six hour version of *Speak Bitterness* laid the ground for later durational performances by the group such as *Quizoola!* and *And On*
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The Thousandth Night. A simple set of rules, a team of inventive and long-suffering performers, a sharp eye on the world outside the window and the piece is underway. What follows is playful, poignant and astute - a moving camera across the contemporary political and cultural landscape, and an engaging rethink on current TV and internet obsessions with reality, real time and confession.

The Essen performance of *Speak Bitterness* will be webcast live - echoing and re-entering the media space which the performance already reflects on and allowing a wider audience to access this important work as the group return to it for the first time in five years.

QUIZOOLA!

7 March 2009

BIOS, Athens

2 May 2009

Fuse Box Festival, Austin, Texas

Another of the company's renowned durational works, *Quizoola!* examines the interaction between reality and performance as three actors smeared in clown make-up ask and answer 2000 prepared questions over 6 hours. The performance changes from quiz show to interrogation to hilarious improvisation by turns. The show forms a marathon game of question and answers where the audience is free to enter and exit as they please.

SPECTACULAR

13 & 14 March 2009

Kaaitheater, Brussels

18 & 19 March 2009

Campo, Ghent

31 March and 1 April 2009

Festival Bo:m, Seoul, South Korea

29 April - 1 May 2009

Fuse Box Festival, Austin, Texas

Following a successful UK tour in 2008, *Spectacular* continues to tour in Europe and beyond:

A lone performer takes to the stage, explaining that the show we're watching is somehow different tonight. The atmosphere is different, his entrance was off, some scenery is missing, some performers are absent. The audience reaction is not quite what he expected. Perhaps the fact he is dressed as a skeleton has something to do with it. When a histrionic actress takes to the stage determined to perform her 'big death scene' the evening takes a still stranger turn.

EXQUISITE PAIN

28 & 29 January 2009

TEMPS D'IMAGES Festival, Warsaw

Exquisite Pain is an extraordinarily simple and intimate piece for two performers using text and images by French conceptual artist Sophie Calle. A man and a woman sit at identical tables and tell stories of ordinary and not-so-ordinary heart-break, each story accompanied by a single iconic image. These snapshot narratives of sorrow form a growing catalogue of suffering, break-ups, humiliations, deaths and love letters that never arrive. A show about the stories we tell ourselves when things have gone wrong.

Tour dates are constantly being added. Check www.forcedentertainment.com for the most up-to-date information, along with full details of all these projects as well as venue and booking information.

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Tim Etchells Projects

Artist, director and writer Tim Etchells is Artistic Director of Forced Entertainment. Alongside his work with the group since 1984, Tim has collaborated with a wide range of other artists, choreographers and writers and has created original works in diverse media from performance to video to installation and works on paper. He has also developed a unique voice in writing fiction and in writing for and about performance (*Certain Fragments*, Routledge 1999). His first novel - *The Broken World* - was published by Heinemann, UK in July 2008.

Tim Etchells' solo projects for 2009 include:

SIGHT IS THE SENSE THAT DYING PEOPLE TEND TO LOSE FIRST

8, 10, 11 January 2009

Under the Radar Festival, New York

UK Premiere:

31 January & 1 February 2009

Arnolfini, Bristol

3 February 2009

Leeds Met Gallery & Studio Theatre, Leeds

5 February 2009

Nuffield Theatre, Lancaster

6 February 2009

Site Gallery, Sheffield

Socks are gloves for the feet. Snow is cold. Water is the same thing as ice. In America things are bigger. America is a country. Korea is also a country. Some men have sex appeal. Blind people cannot see anything.

Sight is the Sense that Dying People Tend to Lose First is a long free-associating monologue that tumbles from topic to topic to create a vast, failing iteration and explanation of the world. Comical in its apparent naivety and preposterously encyclopaedic in scope *Sight is the Sense...* explores the absurdity and horror of consciousness as it tries and fails to seize and define everything that it encounters.

Sight is the Sense... is written and directed by Tim Etchells. The text is performed by Jim Fletcher, the extraordinary New York-based actor who many people will know from his work with renowned down-town New York performance innovators Richard Maxwell's New York City Players and Elevator Repair Service.

Sight is the Sense that Dying People Tend to Lose First was commissioned by Tanzquartier, Vienna.

For more information about the project see www.forcedentertainment.com

THAT NIGHT FOLLOWS DAY

London Premiere:

7 & 8 April 2009

Southbank Centre, London as part of SPILL Festival

In response to the request by the Flemish theatre company Victoria to create a performance 'with children, but for adults' Tim Etchells developed *That Night Follows Day* - a show with a cast of 17 children aged between 8 and 14. By turns comical and poignant, the show explores the systems that make and shape young people's experience, as a Greek chorus of children explore and interrogate the many truisms told to them by their elders. Created in 2007 *That Night Follows Day* has been presented in cities and festivals from Budapest to Melbourne and Toronto.

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COLLABORATION WITH FUMIYO IKEDA

Also in 2009, Tim Etchells will create a new work in collaboration with the extraordinary dancer Fumiyo Ikeda, who has danced with Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker's Rosas company since the very beginning in the early 1980s. The (as yet untitled) new piece - a solo for Fumiyo, directed by Etchells and produced by Rosas - will premiere in the Kaaithetheatre in Brussels in June 2009.

LEGACY: THINKER IN RESIDENCE AWARDS

We are delighted to announce that Tim Etchells has won one of only two *Legacy: Thinker in Residence Awards*. *Legacy* is a one-off initiative developed in collaboration between the Live Art Development Agency and Tate Research and financially assisted by Arts Council England and the Live Art Development Agency.

The awards have been set up to acknowledge achievers and achievements in the field of Live Art and the residency will offer Tim the time and space to address the legacy of the discipline, both in art historical and broader social contexts and in relation to his own work. Tim will undertake the residency over late 2009 and 2010 and use it to explore the archives of performance materials at Tate and LADA, as well as the traces and documentation of his own work with Forced Entertainment and as a solo maker, performer and writer. At the same time he will reflect on the possibilities of the archive itself, its relation to performance and its potential to re-tell, remix and refocus the past in dialogue with the present. It is likely that this process will result in a new work - a book in which text by Tim will be illustrated by the photography of his friend and collaborator Hugo Glendinning, who has for more than twenty years photographed Forced Entertainment and many other contemporary artists working in Live Art.

Visit www.thisisliveart.co.uk for more details.

UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD VISUAL ART COMMISSION

Tim Etchells has been selected from a group of ten artists to create a major public art commission for the University of Sheffield's Jessop site. The building, which was once the site of the Jessop hospital for women and the place where Tim's two sons were born, is currently being developed to house the Department of Music, Department of History, the School of English and the School of Modern Languages and Linguistics.

The artwork, which will be installed in 2009, will be a chasing LED text-based piece installed as part of a tall free-standing structure. Etchells' work takes as its theme the phrase 'The story starts here', suggestive of the new beginnings forged in both hospitals and universities. The continually changing display will mean that each viewer has a different experience of the work keeping it fresh as it both reflects on the past and anticipates the future.

DLA: PIPER SERIES: *THIS IS SCULPTURE*

Tate Liverpool

From 1 May 2009

Tim Etchells has been chosen to co-curate sculpture from the Tate Collection for DLA Piper Series: *This is Sculpture* showing at Tate Liverpool. Along with artist Michael Craig-Martin; designer Wayne Hemingway and his son Jack and film maker Mike Figgis, Tim's selections will transform the first and second floor galleries. Tim's section, 'Performing Sculpture', will display works by artists including Piero Manzoni, Gilbert & George and Jeppe Hein, as well as a new work by Tim himself called *In Many Ways*, in which a performer moves a chair to occupy many different positions marked by dots on the gallery floor.

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For more information about Tim's work as an artist and writer visit
www.timetchells.com

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