

MEDIA KIT

TAO OF GLASS

PHILIP GLASS & PHELIM MCDERMOTT
PERTH FESTIVAL COMMISSION
AUSTRALIAN EXCLUSIVE
HEATH LEDGER THEATRE, WED 19 FEB – SUN 23 FEB
TICKETS: \$39 - \$89

[Click here for images.](#)

TAO OF GLASS

An exploration of life, loss and a single question: Where does true inspiration come from?

Composer Philip Glass and performer-director Phelim McDermott (Improbable) have worked together on acclaimed opera productions in London, New York and beyond, and Tao of Glass is their most personal collaboration yet. Inspired by a dream, this world premiere marries ten meditations on life, death and Taoist wisdom with ten brand new pieces of music from Glass, presented by McDermott with an ensemble of musicians and puppeteers.

Part-concert, part-performance, Tao of Glass is a storytelling tapestry, soundtracked by Glass's mesmerising music and shot through with Improbable's trademark theatricality.

CREATIVE CREDITS:

Composer Philip Glass
Writer & Co-Director Phelim McDermott
Co-Director Kirsty Housley
Designer Fly Davis
Lighting Designer Colin Grenfell
Sound Designer Giles Thomas
Collaborator Ragnar Freidank
Musical Director Chris Vatalaro
Assistant Director Jen Tan
Puppet Designer & Puppet Maker Lyndie Wright
Design Associate Camille Etchart
Sound Associate Sorcha Steele

PERFORMERS

Puppeteer David Emmings
Puppeteer Janet Etuk
Performer Phelim McDermott
Ensemble (Clarinet) Jack McNeill
Ensemble (Violin) Rakki Singh
Ensemble (Piano) Katherine Tinker
Ensemble (Percussion) Chris Vatalaro

Puppeteer & Puppet Co-ordinator Sarah Wright

Running time 2 hours 20 mins, including interval.

PHILIP GLASS | COMPOSER

Through his operas, his symphonies, his compositions for his own ensemble and his wide-ranging collaborations with artists ranging from Twyla Tharp to Allen Ginsberg, Woody Allen to David Bowie, Philip Glass has had an extraordinary and unprecedented impact upon the musical and intellectual life of his times.

His operas *Einstein on the Beach*, *Satyagraha*, *Akhmaten* and *The Voyage* among many others play throughout the world's leading houses, and rarely to an empty seat. Glass has written music for experimental theatre and for Academy Award-winning motion pictures such as *The Hours* and Martin Scorsese's *Kundun*, while *Koyaanisqatsi*, his initial filmic landscape with Godfrey Reggio and the Philip Glass Ensemble, may be the most radical and influential mating of sound and vision since *Fantasia*.

His associations, personal and professional, with leading rock, pop and world music artists date back to the 1960s, including the beginning of his collaborative relationship with artist Robert Wilson. Glass is the first composer to win a wide, multi-generational audience in the opera house, the concert hall, the dance world, in film and in popular music simultaneously.

PHELIM MCDERMOTT | WRITER AND CO-DIRECTOR

Phelim McDermott is a founder member and co-artistic director of Improbable. He has won Olivier Awards for both Best Entertainment and Best New Opera, TMA Awards for Best Touring Production and Best Director, and a Critics Circle Best Design Award. He was awarded a National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts fellowship and an honorary doctorate from Middlesex University.

IMPROBABLE | PRODUCTION

Improbable occupies a vital space in the landscape of UK theatre. At the heart of the company's artistic practice is improvisation. Whether in performance, rehearsal or development they use the practice and philosophy of improvisation in the process of creation (even when working on classic plays or operas).

Improbable uses improvisation to create remarkable shows, support and nurture artists and the arts sector as a whole, and to facilitate social change. They see improvisation in all its forms as a tool for social change. It is a deeply democratic art form that fosters a sense of community and empowerment amongst its participants and audiences alike and, in an age of increasing digital complexity, is determinedly live. They believe that society needs a cultural shift that puts creativity at the heart of everyday life.

Improbable has staged epic spectacles like *Sticky*, which was seen by over 250,000 people; theatrical classics like *The Tempest* at Northern Stage and *Theatre of Blood* at the National Theatre; pure impro shows like *Lost Without Words* at the National Theatre and improvised puppetry like *Animo* in studios across the country; operatic triumphs like *Satyagraha* and *Akhmaten* at the English National Opera, London and the Metropolitan Opera, New York; devised pieces like *Still No Idea* at the Royal Court and *Opening Skinner's Box* in the UK and US; and *Through The Door* and *Permission* Improbable which nurture improvisation cultures grown by female and non-binary performers. Their shows are live events encouraging conversation between them and their audience.

Improbable also runs Devoted & Disgruntled, an ongoing conversation about the future of the performing arts; and the International Institute of Improvisation, connecting improvisational practices in the arts, sciences, economics, mathematics and design from across the world. Improbable is a National Portfolio Organisation of Arts Council England.

[Website](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)