

FIVE TRUTHS

The *Five Truths* installation, directed by Katie Mitchell, takes as its inspiration five of Europe's most influential 20th century theatre directors. It explores the difference between their work and examines how each of the five practitioners would direct the actress playing Ophelia in the famous mad scene in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Inside the multimedia installation, 10 screens of varying sizes simultaneously play films of Ophelia's mad scene, interpreted dramatically through the lens of the five theatre directors; Constantin Stanislavski, Antonin Artaud, Bertolt Brecht, Jerzy Grotowski and Peter Brook.

Hamlet was written by William Shakespeare between 1599 and 1601. The play follows the actions of a young prince as he questions whether or not to seek revenge for his father's murder. Urged on by sighting his father's ghost, but full of doubts, Prince Hamlet's erratic behaviour seems to border on madness. Ophelia is Hamlet's love interest. She is driven mad by Hamlet's unpredictable treatment of her and by the death of her father, Polonius. At the height of her derangement, Ophelia hands out herbs and flowers to the other members of the Court. She is later reported to have drowned herself. The five performances in this installation are based on Ophelia's 'mad' scenes. The text is inspired by *Hamlet* Act IV, Scenes V and VII, but also incorporates elements that do not occur onstage in the play such as Ophelia's death by drowning. Each performance draws attention to different aspects of the text. These variations reflect the individual styles of five theatre directors: Stanislavski, Artaud, Brecht, Grotowski and Brook.



Five Truths has been created for the V&A in association with the National Theatre by director Katie Mitchell, video designer Leo Warner of 59th Productions, set designer Vicki Mortimer, sound designer Gareth Fry, lighting designer Paule Constable, and composer Paul Clark.

"Create your own method. Don't depend slavishly on mine. Make something up that will work for you! But keep breaking traditions, I beg you." Stanislavski (1863-1938)

"To break through language in order to touch life is to create or recreate the theatre." Artaud (1896-1948)

"Art is not a mirror held up to reality, but a hammer with which to shape it." Brecht (1898-1956)

"One must ask oneself what is indispensable to theatre... We are left with the actor and the spectator. We can thus define the theatre as 'what takes place between the spectator and actor'." Grotowski (1933-1999)

"I can take any empty space and call it a bare stage. A man walks across this empty space whilst someone else is watching him, and this is all I need for an act of theatre to be engaged." Brook (1925-)

KATIE MITCHELL

After studying literature, British artist Katie Mitchell began her career as an assistant in theatres, including the Royal Shakespeare Company. That's where she directed, upon returning in 1996 from a cycle of residences in Eastern European (and particularly Polish) theatres, Euripides's *The Phoenician Women*, which was enthusiastically received. Her company, Classics on a shoestring, then started creating ever more successful and acclaimed shows, reimagining classics from Greece, Britain, Scandinavia, and Russia and giving them new life through her sense of rhythm and use of music, dance, and video in her directions. Working with the most prestigious British and German theatres, Katie Mitchell has also led projects for television or the opera, and experimented with innovative forms, adapting novels for the theatre and collaborating with her contemporaries such as the writer Martin Crimp or the scientist Stephen Emmott, with whom she created *Ten Billion* in 2012. She first appeared in the line-up of the Festival d'Avignon in 2011 with *Christine*, based on August Strindberg's *Miss Julie*, then in 2012 with *Ten Billion* and *Die Ringe des Saturn*, and in 2013 with *Journey through the Night*, an adaptation of Friederike Mayröcker.

AND...

SHOWS

De Meiden by Jean Genet, direction Katie Mitchell, July 16-21,
L'Autre Scène du Grand Avignon - Vedène

Ramona by Rezo Gabriadze, July 11-17, Maison Jean Vilar

ÇA VA, ÇA VA LE MONDE ! – RFI
July 16-20, Jardin de la rue de Mons

ACTORS' WRITINGS – Adami
July 26, Jardin de la rue de Mons

THE BOOKSTORE OF THE FESTIVAL D'AVIGNON
AND OF THE OFF WITH THE CHARTREUSE
Every day from 11:00 to 20:00, Maison Jean Vilar

UN JOUR, UN ÉDITEUR
Encounters about cultural publishers' news, July 7-26, calade de la Maison Jean Vilar

71st
EDITION

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