



Press Release

McMcArts and Canterbury Festival present

BLINK: MARGATE

- **MAJOR ARTISTS COLLABORATE TO BRING SPECTACULAR FREE EVENT TO MARGATE'S SEAFRONT**

On Saturday 27 August, for one night only, the seaside town of Margate in Kent will undergo a miraculous transformation. Multi-award-winning choreographer Wayne McGregor, extraordinary theatre ensemble Pan Optikum and innovative soundscape artist Scanner will collaborate to create a one-off, spectacular night-time event, BLINK.

Thousands are expected to gather along the seafront as buildings come alive, people take to the streets, stunning fire structures appear on the beach and the spectacle unfolds. BLINK is a celebratory event that will re-imagine not only the seafront, but also the sea and sky beyond.

Wayne McGregor | Random Dance will work closely with Pan Optikum in the months ahead to create a cohesive artistic vision for the event which features the 100-strong BLINK Dance company - a troupe of local people who will perform alongside professional dancers for a once-in-a-lifetime experience. German performance company Pan Optikum - who specialise in epic, outdoor, spectacular events - will 'animate' buildings, create stunning, large-scale fire objects, and interweave the theatrical and pyrotechnical elements of the show. Electronic wizard and super-talented musician/composer Scanner will provide the soaring sounds to complement the sights.

BLINK is coming....You won't believe your eyes.

One of the busiest and most in demand choreographers in the world, Wayne McGregor has carved out time in his 2011 schedule to be part of the project saying *'Margate has an intriguing and enduring appeal and I was captivated by the opportunity to create something so site specific and outdoors. The parallel horizons of sky and sea, sea and beach and beach and town provide a rich canvas for dance,*

performance and sound. Made by, with and for local people BLINK should challenge the senses.'

Jane McMorrow and Verity McArthur of McMcArts who are producing the event, will be responsible for delivering its large scale ambition: *'This is a massive project for Margate and making it happen is not without its challenges but with the artistic team on board and our own experience in international large scale outdoor events of the highest quality, we know that it will be quite simply unforgettable.'*

Leader of Thanet District Council, Councillor Bob Bayford says that the impact of an event like this on the town cannot be underestimated: *'We welcome the spotlight on Margate that BLINK provides. With the forthcoming opening of the Turner Contemporary gallery it's our time and certainly our turn to give something celebratory and lasting to the community and to visitors.'*

Jane McMorrow and Verity McArthur of McMcArts say: *'Although we are sure the memory of this event will live for some time in people's minds, the real legacy of the project will be the skills that people learn during its development, the people they meet, partnerships that are cemented and a real spirit of positivity going forward. BLINK is as much about this as anything else.'*

BLINK has been developed in partnership with Turner Contemporary, Theatre Royal, Margate, Kent County Council, Thanet District Council, University of Kent, The Dreamland Trust, South East Dance and Thanet College.

Commissioned by: Arts Council England
Produced by: McMcArts and Canterbury Festival

For free updates on the development of the projects and details of how you can get involved, sign up at www.blinkmargate.org (full website coming soon.)

For further information please contact Chloe Pritchard-Gordon or Ben Chamberlain at The Corner Shop PR on 020 7494 3665 or email Chloe@thecornershoppr.com; ben@thecornershoppr.com

EVENT INFORMATION:

BLINK MARGATE
Saturday 27th August at 9:15pm

THIS IS A FREE EVENT
For more details visit www.blinkmargate.org

NOTES TO EDITORS:

BLINK artistic team biographies

WAYNE MCGREGOR

Wayne McGregor is a multi award-winning British choreographer, renowned for his physically testing choreography and groundbreaking collaborations across dance, film, music, visual art, technology and science. He is Artistic Director of Wayne McGregor | Random Dance, Resident Company at Sadler's Wells Theatre in London and Resident Choreographer of The Royal Ballet (appointed 2006). In January 2011, McGregor was awarded a CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire). From 2008-2010 McGregor was appointed the government's first Youth Dance Champion. In 2004 McGregor was a Research Fellow at the Experimental Psychology department of Cambridge University.

McGregor is a frequent creator of new work for La Scala, Milan, Paris Opera Ballet, Nederlands Dans Theatre, San Francisco Ballet, Stuttgart Ballet, New York City Ballet, Australian Ballet and English National Ballet; as well as movement director for theatre and film (including Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire). In 2010, McGregor had two Royal Ballet revivals - *Infra* and *Chroma* - as well as premieres for New York City Ballet (*Outlier*, May 2010) and Stuttgart Ballet (*Yantra*, July 2010). In 2011, Wayne will premiere new work for The Royal Ballet and The Paris Opera Ballet, as well as an opera/dance collaboration with Mark-Antony Turnage, for Wayne McGregor | Random Dance at Sadler's Wells. In 2012, McGregor will create a major public dance work in Trafalgar Square for the Olympics, and in 2013 he will create a new *Rite Of Spring* for Bolshoi Ballet.

WAYNE MCGREGOR | RANDOM DANCE

Wayne McGregor | Random Dance was founded in 1992 and became the instrument for McGregor to evolve his fast and articulate choreographic style. The company became a byword for its radical approach to new technology and incorporating animation, digital film, 3D architecture, electronic sound and virtual dancers into the live choreography. In *Nemesis* (2002), dancers duelled with prosthetic steel arm extensions to a soundtrack incorporating mobile phone conversations; in *Ataxia* (2004), McGregor's fellowship with the Experimental Psychology department of Cambridge University fuelled the choreography; in *Entity* (2008), choreographic agents are imagined to a soundscape created by Coldplay collaborator Jon Hopkins and Joby Talbot; and in *FAR* (17-20 November, 2010), cutting edge design is fused with choreography made from a radical cognitive research process.

Wayne McGregor | Random Dance is Resident Company of Sadler's Wells, London.

<http://www.randomdance.org/home>

PAN OPTIKUM

The PAN OPTIKUM action theatre ensemble, under the artistic direction of Sigrun Fritsch, has specialised in site-specific open-air theatre and music productions as well as multi-disciplinary performances with theatres and cultural institutions. Invitations to major theatre festivals all over the world are indicative of the esteem in which the ensemble is held internationally.

Artistically, PAN OPTIKUM seeks to bridge the gap between the genre of action theatre and themes taken from literature, classical theatre and opera. Past work includes Bach's *Weihnachtsoratorium* (1998), Schubert's *Winterreise* with the Freiburger Barockorchester (2000), *ORPHEUS* at the Ruhr Triennale (2004), *The CIVIL warS* by Philip Glass with the Freiburg Opera (2004) and the Duisburg Philharmonik Orchestra (2007), *MEDEA.Stimmen* with the Freiburg Theater (2007) and *CARMINA BURANA* with the Basel Opera in the antique Theatre of Kaiseraugst/CH (2008).

<http://www.theater-panoptikum.de/3.0.html>

SCANNER

British artist Robin Rimbaud traverses the experimental terrain between sound, space, image and form, creating absorbing, multi-layered sound pieces that twist technology in unconventional ways.

Scanner is committed to working with cutting edge practitioners and has collaborated with artists including Bryan Ferry, Radiohead, Laurie Anderson, The Royal Ballet, Merce Cunningham and Random Dance companies, Michael Nyman, Steve McQueen, Derek Jarman and Philips Design.

Since 1991 he has been intensely active in sound art, producing concerts, compositions, installations and recordings including the albums *Mass Observation* (1994), *Delivery* (1997), and *The Garden is Full of Metal* (1998).

His work has been presented throughout the globe and he has produced work for the Tate Modern, Artangel, The Science Museum, The Royal Opera House, the Hayward Gallery, The Pompidou Centre, Hanoi Opera House, Kunsthalle in Vienna and the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow.

<http://www.scannerdot.com>