



LIFT 2016

1 June – 2 July 2016

Across London

#LIFT2016

LIFT has travelled the world to curate a very special playlist of performances, politics and pop-culture for London, so go on – press play.

Meet wild Japanese pop fans, an outré performance star, a body builder, and teenagers with attitude. Waltz, keep secrets, see a brass band, take revenge and sleep with a stranger. Visit Roma musicians, refugees, ancient Greeks via Sarah Kane, Falklands War veterans, a Victorian music hall and a circus in a cemetery where the undead welcome you in.

Rejoice, dance, mourn, laugh and cry in this most exhilarating of cities. Walk into the lives of some of the remarkable people who make up London in 4 weeks of stylish, bizarre, moving, flirtatious, sensory performance, as **LIFT 2016** celebrates the world in London and London in the world.

LIFT Artistic Director Mark Ball – *“Does art help us belong? I have met pioneering artists and performers from around the world who connect to the astonishing range of international communities that make up London, and, asking that very question, have made a Festival that investigates how this amazing mix of people adds up to the London I love. The cultural influences and radical imaginations of our festival artists result in enthralling and joyful work that will be seen in spaces and venues that take us into the guts of the city – so make your own playlist and join us at LIFT 2016.”*

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photos are
available at

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password:
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Compelling, playful and provocative work comes from 14 countries, including Argentina, Belgium, Greece, Poland, Canada, Japan, Australia, the USA, Lebanon and Syria. Over 30 events will be seen across the capital from an East End Cemetery to the Barbican and Hoxton Hall, from The Place to the Thames, and from the Royal Court and Sadler’s Wells to a Stratford car park.

New work is the engine of LIFT, and this year sees more commissions than ever before, including an exciting new partnership with the Royal Court Theatre. The programme of World and UK premieres includes: a voyage through the American song book with **Taylor Mac**, New York’s politically-knowing, enormous of spirit, and outrageously entertaining performance artist; haunting encounters with the dead in a Mile End cemetery in gothic circus from acclaimed Australian company **Circa** and British electronic musician **Lapalux**; the UK debut of Poland’s great iconoclastic director Krzysztof Warlikowski in an epic multimedia production of *Phaedra(s)*, a revolutionary interpretation of the Greek masterpiece by **Sarah Kane**, **Wajdi Mouawad** and **J M Coetzee** starring Isabelle Huppert.

In *STELLA*, writer and director **Neil Bartlett** looks into the soul of Victorian cross dressing artist Ernest Boulton on the day of his death. Argentinian artist **Lola Arias** brings together both Argentinian and British Falklands War veterans to share their revelatory experiences with us and each other. Musicians, performers and dancers explode in a rollercoaster ride through the lives and experiences of Europe’s Roma people, led by choreographer and theatre maker **Constanza Macras**; and Tokyo based artist and pop-idol **Toco Nikaido** and 25 performers swarm the stage in a frenetic, multi-coloured, cacophonous paean to Japanese youth subculture. **Frank Van Laecke** and **Alain Platel** march to the sound of a brass band; the UK’s first transgender choir sing for us, and *On The Move*, a series of new works co-commissioned by **LIFT** responding to the world’s greatest migration crisis, inhabits unexpected spaces at the Royal Court Theatre.

Throughout the festival, LIFT 2016 invites you to a series of conversations, talks and events built around the shows and the people LIFT works with and is inspired by. These include: **3 June at the British Library: The Wooster Group In Conversation.** A screening of the Wooster Group's *Hamlet* is followed by Scott Shepherd, Kate Valk and Wooster Group founding member Elizabeth LeCompte in conversation.

15 June at the British Library: Peter Brook and Associates on A Midsummer Night's Dream – Peter Brook, original 1970 *Dream* company members Frances de la Tour and Ben Kingsley, and Shakespeare scholar Peter Holland discuss this and other productions. Keep watching the website for further announcements.

There is much, much more – please see the show by show list below for further information. **Full Festival line up in brief below - and please go to liftfestival.com for further details.**

LIFT receives financial support from Arts Council England

For further information please contact Sharon Kean
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Photos and a short video can be downloaded from
keanlanyon.smugmug.com/LIFT/LIFT2016 Password: download

The LIFT 2016 launch video is also on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/sdAq0wGdQm4>

[LIFT 2016 SHOW BY SHOW](#) #LIFT2016 **liftfestival.com**

TAYLOR MAC USA UK Premiere
1 June at Hackney Empire
[Press Night Wed 1 June at 8pm](#)

"Fabulousness can come in many forms, and TAYLOR MAC seems intent on assuming each and every one of them." New York Times

Bedazzled shaman, singer-songwriter, searing social critic and performance artist extraordinaire Taylor Mac kicks off LIFT 2016 in spectacular style with a politically-knowing, enormous of spirit, and outrageously entertaining romp through the great American songbook. Mac's shows are like nothing you've ever witnessed: prepare for feathers and frivolity, a razor-sharp wit, a gorgeous voice, and serious glitter.

Presented by LIFT and Sharon Karmazin.
Produced by Pomegranate Arts.

STELLA UK London Premiere LIFT Co-commission
Written and directed by Neil Bartlett
1 – 18 June at Hoxton Hall
[Press Night Wed 1 & Thur 2 June at 7.30pm](#)

"What's the odds so long as you're happy?" Ernest Boulton 1869

Inspired by the true story of the strange life and lonely death of Mr Ernest Boulton – one half of the infamous Victorian cross-dressing duo Fanny and Stella - *STELLA* is an intimate meditation on the fine art of keeping one's nerve as the lights go out. Performed amidst the newly restored splendours of one of London's oldest surviving music-hall interiors, this is a theatrical love-letter to a truly remarkable person.

A LIFT co-commission with Brighton Festival and Holland Festival.

EVERYTHING BY MY SIDE Argentina UK Premiere

By Fernando Rubio

1 – 6 June at Canary Wharf and Southbank Centre

[Please contact us to review](#)

7 pristine double beds line the riverside – beautiful and enticing.

Slip between the crisp white sheets of a stranger's bed and, for 15 intimate minutes, listen to the long-lost memory of a childhood tale. This story is all for you.

Reawakening tales that have lain dormant somewhere in the recesses of your soul, these playful encounters become a place for daydreams, escaped memories, and silent connections.

Presented by LIFT, Canary Wharf Arts+Events and Southbank Centre.

MINEFIELD Argentina London Premiere LIFT Co-commission

By Lola Arias

2 – 11 June at the Royal Court Theatre

[Please contact us to review](#)

'When I got back from the war I was a stone. I couldn't feel anything.' Argentinian veteran

'The islands looked very beautiful, much like Scotland with barren land and mountains.

But that was just a blurred image through my binoculars' British veteran

On a stage 8,000 miles away from the battlefield on which they first met, Argentinian artist Lola Arias brings together soldiers who fought on opposite sides for 3 terrible months in 1982 in the Falklands/Islas Malvinas war. This is truth and reconciliation laid bare - a unique opportunity to share with us, and each other, the veterans' first hand experiences of those fateful events and their life since. **MINEFIELD** merges documentary theatre, film and re-enactment to dig deep into the personal impact and real story of the war.

A LIFT co-commission with Royal Court Theatre, Brighton Festival, Le Quai Angers and Künstlerhaus Mousonturm. Produced by LIFT. A House on Fire project, supported by the Culture Programme of the European Union.

ADAM'S APPLE UK World Premiere LIFT Commission

3 – 4 June at Hoxton Hall

[Please contact us to review](#)

Does the sound of our voice communicate who we are?

A brand new choir, specially created for this event, of transgender and LGBT singers led by Canadian performer Tristan Whiston, will sing *Adam's Apple*, an original song cycle, which explores and celebrates the voice and gender identity. Inspired by in-depth conversations with transgender people and those who are closest to and support them, this joyful and mesmerizing music gives voice to a new community.

Presented by Thomas Carter Projects, with support from Wellcome Trust Small Arts Awards, Arts Council England, PRS and LIFT.

WITHOUT BLOOD Belgium UK Premiere LIFT Commission

By Inne Goris and Dominique Pauwels

6 – 8 June at The Place

[Press Night Mon 6 June at 8pm](#)

A brief moment, almost like love at first sight.

In the course of a pitiless act of revenge, a young man and a girl exchange a single glance. Unwittingly, and without a word being spoken, they are forever bound to each other. 52 years later, in a twist of fate, they meet again. Inne Goris, one of Europe's most inventive theatre

artists, has adapted Alessandro Baricco's powerful, poetic novella *Without Blood* for the stage. An evocative and exquisite exploration of human relationships using sound, music and an eloquent movement vocabulary, this is a theatrical alchemy of extraordinary experiences.

A LOD *muziektheater* production, commissioned by LIFT and presented with Crying Out Loud in association with The Place. A House on Fire project, supported by the Culture Programme of the European Union.

ON THE MOVE Middle East/Europe World Premieres LIFT Co-commission

9 – 11 June at the Royal Court Theatre

[Please contact us to review](#)

Responding to one of the greatest humanitarian issues of our time, this collection of new works features artists from Germany, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Syria and the UK as they uncover the stories of people forced to leave their homes.

The work includes a durational piece by Chris Thorpe delving into the great British public's attitude towards migrants and refugees; short plays exploring the impact of the migration crisis in Greece and Italy; a one-on-one experience in conversation with a refugee through a wall; a continually growing installation outside the building; a miniature museum of migrations; a Syrian filmmaker exploring loss; an installation and a promenade audio-tour created between London, Berlin, Beirut and Damascus mapping ideas of exile and belonging in the city.

A LIFT co-commission with Royal Court Theatre. A House on Fire project, supported by the Culture Programme of the European Union.

PHAEDRA(S) Poland UK Premiere LIFT Co-commission

After Sarah Kane, Wajdi Mouawad and J M Coetzee

9 – 18 June at the Barbican (Theatre)

[Press Night Fri 10 June at 7.45pm](#)

French screen star Isabelle Huppert's Phaedra burns with illicit desire for her stepson, who remains forever out of reach. But who is Phaedra?

Poland's great iconoclastic director Krzysztof Warlikowski draws from his lifelong passion for the Greeks to scrutinise and evoke the mysterious queen and her many incarnations. His new production is based on the complete text of Sarah Kane's provocative *Phaedra's Love*. Other content includes original material developed in collaboration with Lebanese-Canadian playwright Wajdi Mouawad and extracts from J M Coetzee's novel *Elizabeth Costello*. The UK Premiere of this wild, explicit, experimental production from one of Europe's most controversial directors.

Co-produced by LIFT, the Barbican, Comédie de Clermont-Ferrand - Scène Nationale, Les Théâtre de la Ville de Luxembourg and Théâtre de Liège - Belgium.

EMPATHY MUSEUM UK LIFT Co-commission

By Clare Patey

11 June – 2 July at NOW Gallery, Greenwich Peninsula

[Please contact us to review](#)

'To understand others, we need to walk in their shoes – literally' Philosopher Roman Krznaric

What is it like to walk a mile in someone else's shoes? Choose a pair, put on your headphones and find out.

Across the world our ability to empathise is decreasing. How can we begin to understand the lives and needs of others while we're distracted by Twitter updates, emails, 24 hour shopping and a constant stream of notifications. *Empathy Museum* re-awakens that spark and introduces us to the shoe box of life.

Co-commissioned by Artsadmin and LIFT.

YOUARENOWHERE USA UK Premiere

By Andrew Schneider

14 – 18 June at Shoreditch Town Hall

[Please contact us to review](#)

If you can't keep a secret don't come to Andrew Schneider's new work.

YOUARENOWHERE arrives at LIFT following huge success in New York

'A tour de force - both of acting and design' Time Out

'An extraordinary coup de théâtre.' NYTimes Critics' Pick

A man with a nosebleed appears - possibly from the near future - to tell us what's going on – but something unseen stops him telling us the thing which might prevent his imminent death. Microphones crackle and break. Signals get scrambled, transmissions glitch and modes of communication malfunction. In an extraordinary revelation (in the play's second half) this rapid fire meditation of what it means to be here, now, is a manic, magical delight – but you can't tell anyone ...

Presented by LIFT, Shoreditch Town Hall and Gate Theatre Notting Hill. Produced by Shoreditch Town Hall. A House on Fire project, supported by the Culture Programme of the European Union.

LATE NIGHT Greece UK Premiere

By Blitz Theatre Group

15 – 18 June at the Barbican, The Pit

[Press Night Wed 15 June at 7.45pm](#)

In a dilapidated ballroom, six performers endlessly dance the waltz while they wait for the end. There's music, singing, a drink, some tricks to pass the time, and always the same absurd sense of waiting.

With an otherworldly feel of a David Lynch film, Greece's most innovative theatre collective have created a beautiful, poetic theatrical experience that unfolds to a nostalgic soundtrack. *Late Night* speaks of the past and the future, of hope and despair, of being on the edge of a Europe in ruins.

Presented by LIFT and the Barbican. A blitz theatre group and Onassis Cultural Centre co-production. A House on Fire project, supported by the Culture Programme of the European Union.

EN AVANT, MARCHE! Belgium London Premiere

By NTGent / les ballets C de la B

16 – 17 June at Sadler's Wells

[Press Night Thur 16 June at 7.30pm](#)

Celebrated directors Frank Van Laecke and Alain Platel, and their renowned dance theatre collective, completed by a full brass band, draw their inspiration from the music associations that are integral to communities throughout the world.

One by one the company arrive for rehearsal. This is a group of people with only one thing in common – they all play in the brass band. Commanded by the dying trombonist in his last rehearsal, they revel in the pure, life affirming joy of making music.

Presented by Sadler's Wells as part of LIFT 2016.

OPEN FOR EVERYTHING Germany London Premiere

By Constanza Macras | DorkyPark

16 – 18 June at the Royal Court Theatre

[Please contact us to review](#)

Who are the true nomads of the 21st century?

Musicians, performers and dancers explode out of a packed Louis Vuitton clad car and straight into a journey through the Roma Communities of Europe.

Choreographer and theatre maker Constanza Macras has travelled across Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, seeking out the remnants of Europe's last nomadic tribe, creating a large ensemble of Roma musicians, and five dancers from her own company, for this unexpected celebration of life and music.

With music, dance and irrepressible humour they reveal prejudices, clichés, traditions, hopes, poverty and violence, and honour the dwindling communities to which they belong.

Presented by LIFT and Royal Court Theatre.

DEPART Australia World Premiere LIFT Co-commission

By Circa

16 – 26 June at Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park

[Press Night Fri 17 June from 9pm](#)

A journey through the dark space between life and death...

Led by the internationally acclaimed Circa and the electronic musician Lapalux, haunting sights and sounds seduce audiences down a night-time path punctuated by unexpected encounters. In one of London's old Victorian Cemeteries, overtures drift between the tombstones, while shadowy objects hang precariously like frozen birds above your head...

An ethereal collaboration brings circus artists, choral singers, designers and musicians together in an East End cemetery, a place where many of those who once entered this city are now buried.

A Circa production co-commissioned by LIFT, National Centre for Circus Arts, Spitalfields Music, Hull 2017 UK City of Culture, LeftCoast and Brighton Festival. An Urban Heat project, supported by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union.

MISS REVOLUTIONARY IDOL BERSERKER Japan UK Premiere

Created by Toco Nikaido

22 June – 2 July at the Barbican (The Pit)

[Press Night Wed 22 June at 6.30 & 9.30pm](#)

'blasts the audience with the sound and fury of Japanese youth culture'
Sydney Morning Herald

Orchestrated by Tokyo-based artist and pop-idol Toco Nikaido, this is Japanese subculture conveyed in all its multi-coloured, cacophonous, frenetic glory.

Prepare to be equipped with a rain poncho and earplugs as twenty-five performers swarm the stage at breakneck speed, armed with an abundance of disposable props and sub-cultural references. In a frenzied homage to *otagei*, (ritualised dancing and chanting by groups of fans) this riotous company hurtle towards a festival-like finale that invites everyone to take part.

Presented by LIFT and the Barbican.

CALLING TREE UK UK Premiere LIFT Co-commission
Directed by Rosemary Lee and Simon Whitehead
23 – 26 June at Bruce Castle Park, Tottenham

In a park in Tottenham sits a magnificent ancient Oak tree – a 500-year-old symbol of permanence that dominates a corner in this forever-changing pocket of the city. Bird-like calls and songs beckon knowing audiences and unwitting passers-by alike, enticing them to stop, look up, contemplate and enjoy.

Calling Tree is a free durational performance cycle of music, movement, and messages on an extraordinary stage.

Co-produced by LIFT and Artsadmin. Presented in association with The Place. Originally commissioned by Migrations. An Imagine 2020 (2.0) and Create to Connect project. Supported by the Creative Europe programme and the Culture Programme of the European Union.

MEETING Australia UK Premiere
By Antony Hamilton and Alisdair Macindoe
28 June – 2 July at Battersea Arts Centre
[Please contact us to review](#)

'Antony Hamilton and Alisdair Macindoe, have teamed up to create something unique.'
Sydney Morning Herald

Two men stand in a circle of small boxes. As their arms slowly oscillate, each action is defined by a tiny pop as the boxes begin to move. They are 64 robotic percussion instruments, each tapping a pencil, creating an insistent, mesmerising range of sounds. A stream of activity unfolds, with all actions carried by the meditative pulse of the machine beat.

Part of the thriving Melbourne dance scene, with Hamilton's unique physical grammar and Macindoe's bespoke musical instrument making, MEETING fuses bodies, space and the robots into a dynamic and riveting choreographic sound installation.

Presented by LIFT and Battersea Arts Centre.

THE HAMILTON COMPLEX Belgium UK Premiere
By HETPALEIS, directed by Lies Pauwels
30 June – 2 July at the Unicorn Theatre
[Please contact us to review](#)

'The Hamilton Complex isn't for pussies; Pauwels peppers her nostalgic fantasy with juicy irony and social criticism.' De Standaard, Belgium

'Brutal, uncertain and beautiful' De Volksrant

Thirteen girls reveal what it's like to be on the precipice between youthful innocence and adult sexuality in this exquisitely chaotic journey into the mind of a 13 year old.

Charity, Prudence, Destiny and the rest of their crew exchange horror stories, sing and dance to music from Joan Baez to hip hop and Les Choristes. They talk, rebel, flirt and play. They demand your attention and test your boundaries as they drag you from one shocking image to the next, all the while provocatively flicking their lashes at the adult world they are fated to inherit.

Presented by LIFT and the Unicorn Theatre.

THE CHILDREN'S CHOICE AWARDS Canada
by Mammalian Diving Reflex
1 July at the Unicorn Theatre
[Please contact us to review](#)

'In the future, every child will be given a pair of scissors and invited to shape our destinies.'
Darren O'Donnell; Writer and Artistic and Research Director, Mammalian Diving Reflex.

Who doesn't want their opinions to matter? Who wouldn't like red-carpet treatment? The Children's Choice Awards are an entirely fresh look at the Festival. A group of children from two schools in Tottenham are appointed the Official Festival Jury, and are chauffeured to and from festival shows to see the art, take notes, review, critique and vote.

Subverting traditional jury structures, the children call the shots, and in their own Award Ceremony tell us what they think.

Free

Presented by LIFT. A BeSpectACTive! project, Supported by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union.

NEW INTERNATIONAL VOICES LIFT Co-commission

1 – 2 July at Battersea Arts Centre

[Please contact us to review](#)

New International Voices is a partnership between LIFT and Battersea Arts Centre connecting a new generation of international artists through a two week residency at the Battersea Arts Centre, concluding with an informal Scratch showing of new work and ideas.

Ahilan Ratnamohan's *Michael Essien I want to play as you...* was part of LIFT 2014. In 2016 he will work with **Aloys Kwaakum** and **Etuwe Bright Junior** on *Reverse Colonialism* in which two migrants, from Cameroon and Nigeria, present a European audience with a controversial plan to tempt European Africans back to their motherlands. Interested in place and live performance, Dutch visual artist **Nick Steur's** new piece will respond directly to the building, exploring ways in which his work can inhabit and transform space.

A LIFT and Battersea Arts Centre project.

EAST WALL WARM-UP

Saturday 2 July

Roof East, Stratford Centre Car Park, E15 1XE

Hofesh Shechter curates a group of East London's most talented and exciting up-and-coming choreographers and dancers in pop-up performances high above the rooftops of London. This scratch event is a prelude to a thrilling new project for 2018 and will get the party going for closing night of LIFT 2016.

An East London Dance and Hofesh Shechter Company project with Historic Royal Palaces and LIFT.

TALKS, CONVERSATIONS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Throughout the festival, LIFT 2016 invites you to a series of conversations, talks and events built around the shows and the people LIFT works with and is inspired by, including:

3 June at the British Library: The Wooster Group In Conversation. A screening of the Wooster Group's *Hamlet* is followed by Scott Shepherd, Kate Valk and Wooster Group founding member Elizabeth LeCompte in conversation.

15 June at the British Library: Peter Brook and Associates on A Midsummer Night's Dream – Peter Brook, original 1970 *Dream* company members Frances de la Tour and Ben Kingsley, and Shakespeare scholar Peter Holland discuss this and other productions. Keep watching the website for further announcements.

#LIFT2016

For full booking information please go to liftfestival.com

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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ENGLAND**

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LIFT is delighted to be working with a group of outstanding partners: Artsadmin, Barbican, Battersea Arts Centre, Brighton Festival, Bruce Castle Park, Canary Wharf Arts + Events, Crying Out Loud, David Binder Productions, East London Dance, Gate Theatre, Green Rooms Hotel, Hackney Empire, Historic Royal Palaces, Holland Festival, Hofesh Shechter Company, Hoxton Hall, Hull, UK City of Culture, Künstlerhaus Mousonturm, LeftCoast, National Centre for Circus Arts, Northumberland Park Community School (Tottenham), NOW Gallery, The Place, Pomegranate Arts, Roof East, Royal Court Theatre, Sadler's Wells, Shoreditch Town Hall, Southbank Centre, Spitalfields Music, Stratford Circus, Festival Theaterformen, Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, The Vale School (Tottenham) and Unicorn Theatre.

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LIFT is also supported by the Culture Programme/Creative Europe Programme of the European Union via the following networks: Be SpectACTIVE!, House on Fire, Imagine 2020 (2.0) and Urban Heat.