

MEDIA RELEASE: 31 October, 2019

DREAM DUO SPIN A GOLDEN THREAD OF THEATRE AND MUSIC

Tao of Glass
Philip Glass & Phelim McDermott

A



PERTH FESTIVAL CO-COMMISSION
Australian Exclusive

Image: Tristan Kenton

Storytelling master **Phelim McDermott** and renowned composer **Philip Glass** bring their astonishingly original show ***Tao of Glass*** to Perth Festival after rave five-star reviews at its world premiere at the Manchester International Festival.

Performer-director Phelim McDermott is a theatrical alchemist and spinner of yarns. He and co-director **Kirsty Housey** transport us into a wonderful world of dreams and imagination woven through with a golden seam of new music created by Glass especially for this show.

Glass and McDermott, from UK theatre innovators **Improbable**, have worked together on acclaimed opera productions around the world and ***Tao of Glass*** is their most personal collaboration yet.

Tao of Glass features ten brand-new pieces created by Glass to inform ten gorgeous and magical theatrical reflections on life, mortality and Taoist wisdom performed by McDermott with an ensemble of musicians and puppeteers.

The result is a warm, fun and utterly compelling fusion of music, theatre, puppetry and philosophical musing held together by a riveting, highly-personal monologue about the nature of creativity,

memory and personal identity.

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

Improbable, the acclaimed UK theatre group co-founded by McDermott, is dedicated to improvisation in development, rehearsal and performance even when working on classic plays or operas.

Philip Glass has had an extraordinary impact upon contemporary culture 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 and Natalie Merchant to David Byrne.

Phelim McDermott, the co-artistic director of Improbable, 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 also awarded a National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts fellowship and an honorary doctorate from Middlesex University.

He was a co-creator with *ShockHeaded Peter*, the Olivier Award-winning "junk-opera" which starred the Tiger Lillies and was a dazzling hit at the 2000 Perth Festival.

[Click here for images.](#)

WHAT: Tao of Glass

WHERE: Heath Ledger Centre

WHEN: Wed 19 Feb – Sun 23 Feb

HOW MUCH: \$39 - \$89

BOOKINGS AND FESTIVAL INFO: perthfestival.com.au

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Tao of Glass was commissioned by Manchester International Festival, Improbable, Perth Festival, Ruhrfestspiele Recklinghausen and Carolina Performing Arts – University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in association with Naomi Milgrim AO.

Produced by Manchester International Festival and Improbable.

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Perth Festival acknowledges the Noongar people who continue to practise their values, language, beliefs and knowledge on their kwobidak boodjar.

They remain the spiritual and cultural birdiyangara of this place and we honour and respect their caretakers and custodians and the vital role Noongar people play for our community and our Festival to flourish.

Perth Festival

Founded in 1953 by The University of Western Australia, Perth Festival is the longest running international arts festival in Australia and Western Australia's premier cultural event. The Festival has developed a worldwide reputation for excellence in its international program, the presentation of new works and the highest quality artistic experiences for its audience. For 66 years, the Festival has welcomed to Perth some of the world's greatest living artists and now connects with hundreds of thousands of people each year.

Iain Grandage is the Artistic Director 2020 – 23.