

WINTER/SPRING SEASON

Jan 19–22	Silencio Blanco <i>Chiflón, El Silencio del Carbón</i>
Feb 11–12	<i>MCA Cunningham Event</i>
Feb 18–19	CCN—Ballet de Lorraine <i>Works by Merce Cunningham, and Petter Jacobsson and Thomas Caley</i>
Feb 25–26	<i>Music for Merce</i>
Mar 11	Spektral Quartet, Morton Feldman <i>String Quartet No. 2</i>
Mar 23–25	Charles Atlas/ Rashaun Mitchell/ Silas Riener <i>Tesseract</i>
Apr 5–8	Peter Brook and Marie-Hélène Estienne <i>Battlefield</i>
Apr 23	Matthew Duvall + guests <i>Whisper(s)</i>

MUSEUM OF
CONTEMPORARY ART
CHICAGO

April 5–8, 2017

BATTLEFIELD

Peter Brook and Marie-Hélène Estienne

Based on the Mahabharata and the eponymous play written by
Jean-Claude Carrière

Adapted and directed by Peter Brook and Marie-Hélène Estienne

MUSIC Toshi Tsuchitori
COSTUMES Oria Puppo
LIGHTING DESIGN Philippe Vialatte

PERFORMERS Carole Karemera
 Jared McNeill
 Ery Nzaramba
 Sean O'Callaghan
 Toshi Tsuchitori (musician)

COMPANY STAGE Thomas Becelewski
MANAGER

PRODUCTION
C.I.C.T. / Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord

COPRODUCTION
The Grotowski Institute; PARCO Co. Ltd, Tokyo; Les Théâtres de
la Ville de Luxembourg; Young Vic Theatre, London; Singapore
Repertory Theatre; Le Théâtre de Liège; C.I.R.T.; Attiki cultural
Society, Athens; and Cercle des partenaires des Bouffes du Nord

Duration is seventy minutes without an intermission.

Copresented with Chicago Shakespeare Theater

chicago
shakespeare theater

Battlefield premiered on September 15, 2015, at Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord, Paris, France.
US tour produced by David Eden Productions, Ltd.

FROM THE ARTISTS

The Mahabharata is not simply a book, nor a great series of books; it is an immense canvas covering all the aspects of human existence. In it we find all the questions of our lives, in a way that is at once contemporary and urgent.

Over many thousands of years the Mahabharata has shown us, always in unexpected ways, how to open our eyes to what reality demands.

The Mahabharata speaks of a great war of extermination, which tears apart the Bharata family. On one side there are five brothers, the Pandavas, and on the other side their cousins, the Kauravas, the hundred sons of the blind King Dritarashtra. Both sides use terrible weapons of destruction. At the end the Pandavas win. Millions of dead bodies lie on the ground. And now the eldest of the Pandavas—Yudishtira—is compelled to become King. The victory has the bitter taste of defeat. Both Yudishtira and Dritarashtra, the old King, feel deep distress and remorse, questioning their past actions and trying to unravel their responsibility for the disaster.

How, having to live with this terrible massacre, having lost their sons, their families, their allies, will the new and former Kings find inner peace?

The richness of the language of this timeless epic and its astonishing stories allow us to bring to the stage situations, which, belonging to the past, reflect at the same time the harsh conflicts of today.

Peter Brook
Marie-Hélène Estienne

ABOUT THE WORK

In *Battlefield* Peter Brook returns to the sacred poem of India the Mahabharata thirty years after creating the nine-hour theater version. Brook explains his decision to create *Battlefield*:

[It was] not to make a revival or something nostalgic, but on the contrary, to create, in the spirit of today, a very essential, very intense piece that speaks about our concerns. If we have decided to come back to this work now, it is because there was the need to find something relevant for us today.

Although parts of the two-thousand-year-old poem the Mahabharata have been used in Indian dance, song, and the ritual Kathakali drama, the version undertaken by Brook was the first to adapt the whole epic for the theater.

Brook observes, "The Indians say—and it could sound a little vain—that everything is contained in the Mahabharata and if it is not in the Mahabharata, then it does not exist."

To create the play the *Mahabharata*, Brook visited India several times and studied Hindu scripture, costume, art, and music with a team of close colleagues, including the writer Jean-Claude Carrière and the composer Toshi Tsuchitori.

Brook's play featured twenty-one actors from sixteen countries, plus five musicians under the direction of Tsuchitori, who is reunited with Brook and plays dozens of Oriental and African instruments in *Battlefield*. Describing the Mahabharata, Brook added this:

This great epic from thousands of years ago has grown over the years, assimilating the most important cosmic and metaphysical ideas alongside the simplest things from everyday life. The poem describes the war that tears apart a family. In the end, one side of the family wins, but the poem mentions "ten million dead bodies," an extraordinary figure for that time. It is a terrifying description—it could be Hiroshima or Syria today.

We wanted to speak about what happens after the battle. How will the old blind king, who has lost all his sons and all his allies, be able to cope and assume their responsibility with his victorious nephew? On both sides, the leaders go through a moment of profound questioning: the ones who won say "victory is a defeat" and the ones who lost admit that "they could have prevented that war."

In the Mahabharata they at least have the strength to ask these questions. Our real audience is Obama, Hollande, Putin, and all the presidents. The question is how do they see their opponents in this day and age?

When one watches the news one is angry, disgusted, furious. But in the theatre one can live through all that and leave more confident, braver, believing that one can face up to life.

For me, theatre is the possibility to live, for an hour or two, in a space of concentration with the audience, a shared experience so that each may leave nourished by his own thoughts.

Apr 23, 2017
at MCA Stage

MATTHEW DUVALL + GUESTS



Matthew Duvall, *Whisper(s)*
Photo: Elliot Mandel

WHISPER(S)

Tickets at mcachicago.org

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

PETER BROOK

was born in London in 1925. Throughout his career, he has distinguished himself in various genres, including theater, opera, cinema, and writing. He directed his first play in London in 1943. He then went on to direct more than seventy productions in London, Paris, and New York. His works with the Royal Shakespeare Company are *Love's Labour's Lost* (1946), *Measure for Measure* (1950), *Titus Andronicus* (1955), *King Lear* (1962), *Marat/Sade* (1964), *US* (1966), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1970) and *Antony and Cleopatra* (1978).

In 1971, he and Micheline Rozan founded the International Centre for Theatre Research in Paris and in 1974, opened its permanent base in the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord. There, he directed *Timon of Athens*, *The Iks*, *Ubu aux Bouffes*, *Conference of the Birds*, *L'Os*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Mahabharata*, *Woza Albert!*, *The Tempest*, *The Man Who, Qui est là*, *Happy Days*, *Je suis un Phénomène*, *Le Costume*, *The Tragedy of Hamlet*, *Far Away*, *La Mort de Krishna*, *Ta Mayn dans la Mienne*, *The Grand Inquisitor*, *Tierno Bokar*, *Sizwe Bansi*, *Fragments*, *Warum Warum*, *Love Is my Sin*, *11 and 12*, *Une Flûte Enchantée* (opera), and more recently *The Suit* (2012) and *The Valley of Astonishment* (2014)—many of which were performed both in French and English.

In opera, he directed *La bohème*, *Boris Godounov*, *The*

Olympians, *Salomé*, and *Le Nozze de Figaro* at Covent Garden; *Faust* and *Eugene Onegin* at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York; *La Tragédie de Carmen* and *Impressions of Pelleas* at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord, Paris; and *Don Giovanni* for the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence.

Brook's autobiography, *Threads of Time*, was published in 1998 and joins other titles, including *The Empty Space* (1968)—translated into more than fifteen languages—*The Shifting Point* (1987), *There Are No Secrets* (1993), *Evoking (and Forgetting) Shakespeare* (1999), and *The Quality of Mercy* (2014). His films include *Moderato Cantabile* (1959), *Lord of the Flies* (1963), *Marat/Sade* (1967), *Tell me Lies* (1967), *King Lear* (1969), *Meetings with Remarkable Men* (1976), *The Mahabharata* (1989), and *The Tragedy of Hamlet* (2002, TV).

MARIE-HÉLÈNE ESTIENNE

began working with Peter Brook in 1974 on the casting for *Timon of Athens*, and consequently joined the Centre International de Créations Théâtrales (CICT) for the creation of *Ubu aux Bouffes* in 1977. She was Peter Brook's assistant on *La tragédie de Carmen* and *Le Mahabharata*, and collaborated on the staging of *The Tempest*, *Impressions de Pelléas*, *Woza Albert!*, and *La tragédie d'Hamlet* (2000). She worked on the dramaturgy of *Qui est là*. With Peter Brook she co-authored *L'homme qui* and *Je suis un phénomène* shown at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord. She wrote the French adaptation of the Can Themba's play *Le costume*, and

of *Sizwe Bansi est mort*, by authors Athol Fugard, John Kani, and Winston Ntshona. In 2003, she wrote French and English adaptations of *Le Grand inquisiteur* (*The Grand Inquisitor*) based on Dostoevsky's *Brothers Karamazov*. She authored *Tierno Bokar* in 2005, and completed the English adaptation of *Eleven and Twelve* by Amadou Hampaté Ba in 2009. With Peter Brook, she codirected *Fragments*, five short pieces by Samuel Beckett,

as an actor, musician, choreographer, and director and has a degree in dramatic arts and jazz from the Royal Music Conservatory in Mons, Belgium. Her stage and film acting credits include the productions *Sometimes in April*, *Bogus Woman*, *If the wind moves the sand*, *Scratching the Innerfields*, *Rwanda 94*, and *Jazz*.

In 2005 she decided to settle in Rwanda, and in 2007 created



Carole Karemera
Photo: Simon Annand

and again with Peter Brook as well as composer Franck Krawczyk, she freely adapted Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Emanuel Schikaneder's *Die Zauberflöte* into *Une flûte enchantée*. She shares in the creation of *The Suit* in 2012 and *The Valley of Astonishment* in 2013.

CAROLE KAREMERA

was born in Brussels and is of Rwandese origins. She is active

the Ishyo Arts Centre, the cultural hub of the town of Kigali, which offers residencies and professional coaching to local artists and a varied and innovative program to the public. She has directed several theater and music performances that toured through Africa and Europe, including *My little hill*, *Kura*, *Umuvunyi*, and *Mboka*, and has coproduced the Kina Festival, Kigali Up Music Festival, and

Centre x Centre International Theater Festival.

Karemera was successively Director of the Pan African Dance Festival and then the Deputy Secretary General of Arterial Network and is presently a member of the Rwandan Academy of Languages and Culture and of the National Institute of Rwandan Museums. Since 2014 she has been working on a

Hutchinson's *She Like Girls* at the Lark Theatre, Larkspur, California. He has played various roles in Peter Brook's *11 and 12* and the role of Maphikela in Brook's *The Suit*. He has also performed in August Wilson's *Fences* at the Geva Theater Center, and in various chapters of Tarell McCraney's *Brothers/Sisters Trilogy* at Pittsburgh's City Theatre, as well as San Francisco's Marin Theatre

musical numbers on the trombone and harpsichord. He was on the recent tour with *The Suit*, directed by Peter Brook.

ERY NZARAMBA

trained as an actor at the Conservatoire Royal de Bruxelles in Belgium and at the Birmingham School of Acting in the United Kingdom. *Battlefield* is his second production with the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord, following two world

2011) and *The Blues Lover* (Portobello Film Festival 2014). He cowrote *Flora & Dambudzo* (2015), the feature film based on the life and work of cult Zimbabwean author Dambudzo Marechera and in which he plays the role of Dambudzo.

Nzaramba's stage credits include *The Suit* (Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord, world tour); *The Bacchae* and *Blood Wedding* (Royal & Derngate); *As You Like*



Jared McNeill
Photo: Simon Annand

multidisciplinary triptych on the theme of memory. She is an activist for the freedom of expression and of creation in Africa.

JARED MCNEILL

trained at Fordham University at Lincoln Center in New York City, where he graduated in theater and visual arts in 2008. The same year he made his professional debut in Chisa

Company and American Conservatory Theater. Most recently, McNeill completed work as an understudy in the Roundabout Theatre Company's production of Stephen Karam's *Sons of the Prophet* as well as adopting the role of Desmond in Young Jean Lee's *The Shipment*. He also played in a recent New York production of Bertolt Brecht's *Life of Galileo*, during which he performed



Ery Nzaramba
Photo: Simon Annand

tours of *The Suit*. Nzaramba has twice been awarded a Grant for the Arts by Arts Council England in 2012 and 2015 to write his play *Dream of a Nation*, of which a public rehearsed reading took place at the Theatre Royal Stratford East, London, in July 2015. He also wrote the one-man play *Split/Mixed* and wrote and directed the short films *To the Naked Eye* (Legacy Film Festival

It (Curve Theatre); *The Epic Adventure of Nhamo the Manyika Warrior* (Tricycle Theatre/Tiata Fahodzi); *Split/Mixed* (United Solo Theatre Festival in New York); *The Snow Queen* (Trestle Theatre/British Council, India tour); *The Jew of Malta* (Hall for Cornwall); *The Three Musketeers* and *The Tempest* (Unicorn Theatre). His film and television work includes *The Gates of Vanity*

(feature film, Future Focus Films) and *The Bill* (television, ITV), and his radio credits include *43:59: Yara*, *The Torturers' Tales*, *Ball & Chains*, *When I Lived in Peru* (radio, BBC Radio Drama).

SEAN O'CALLAGHAN

is from Cork, Ireland, and trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art under Hugh Cruttwell. He worked with Alexander Zeldin at London's

new Globe Theatre with Augustine's Oak, and Abi Morgan's new play *Tender* at the Hampstead Theatre, London. He is an associate artist with Howard Barker's theater company, the Wrestling School, and has worked with them over a sixteen-year period, touring throughout Europe and Australia. He spent the early part of his career working with Peter Cheeseman at the New Vic Theatre in Stoke-on-Trent,



Sean O'Callaghan
Photo: Simon Annand

National Theatre in *Beyond Caring*, and with the Royal Shakespeare Company with directors such as Terry Hands, Michael Bogdanov, Michael Attenborough, and Mathew Warchus, as well as performing in various productions of Shakespeare at the RSC. He has appeared in new plays by David Edgar, Anne Devlin, and Nick Dear. O'Callaghan was in the first new play produced at the

where he continues to work. He is now based in Stoke-on-Trent.

O'Callaghan has been in productions throughout the United Kingdom, including Liverpool, Manchester, Belfast, Cardiff, Birmingham, and Plymouth, and he recently worked with Director Rachel O'Riordan on Conor McPherson's *The Seafarer* and with John Dove in Edinburgh in

Brian Friel's *Faith Healer*. He has won awards and received nominations from The Irish Times Theatre Awards and The Scottish Critics Awards. His credits in television and film include the Canadian series *X Company*; *Maria Graham*, directed by Valeria Sarmiento; *Bigga Than Ben*, directed by Suzie Halewoo; and *Shaffesbury Players*, codirected by Cornelia Hayes O'Herlihy and John Hayes and for which O'Callaghan won a Best Actor Award at the 2010 Granada Film Festival.

ORIA PUPPO

is a stage and costume designer and works in Buenos Aires and Paris. In Argentina, she has created sets and costumes for directors Diego Kogan (*Martha Stutz* by Javier Daulte), Rafael Spregelburd (*Modesty* by Rafael Spregelburd), Roberto Villanueva (*Queen of the Night* by Thomas Bernhard and *The Goldberg Variations* by George Tabori), Ciro Zorzoli (*State of Wrath* after Henrik Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*), and Alejandro Tantanian (*Travellers that die* by Daniel Veronese, *Knives in Hens* by David Harrower, and *Los mansos* by Alejandro Tantanian after Dostoevsky's *The Idiot*). She also worked as technical director for the Buenos Aires International Festival from 1999 to 2007.

In Europe, Puppo has taken part in Alejandro Tantanian's creation of *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare (Théâtre de Lucerne, Switzerland), Tiziano Manca's opera *La gabbia* (Stuttgart Theater, Germany) and for *Amerika*, after Franz Kafka's, and *Threepenny Opera* by Bertolt

Brecht (National Theatre of Mannheim, Germany). For the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord she serves as technical director for works by Peter Brook and Marie-Hélène Estienne, *Tierno Bokar*, based on the novel by Amadou Ampathé Bâ, and Mozart's *A Magic Flute* (cocreated with Franck Krawwzcyk), and as costume codesigner for *The Suit*, based on the novel by Can Themba. Recently, she did the decor for George Frideric Handel's *Resurrection*, directed by Lilo Baur at the Paris opera Atelier Lyrique I La Voca, and sets and costumes for Jean Genet's *Mayds*, directed by Ciro Zorzoli with Marilù Marini in Buenos Aires.

TOSHI TSUCHITORI

was born in Kagawa, a prefecture of Japan, in 1950 and began performing with Japanese traditional drums at an early age. Since the 1970s, he has performed internationally with specialists in free improvisation, such as Milford Graves, Steve Lacy, and Derek Bailey. He began working with Peter Brook's theatre group in 1976, and has since created the music for productions including *Ubu*, *The Conference of the Birds*, *L'Os*, *The Mahabharata*, *The Tempest*, *The Tragedy of Hamlet*, *Eleven and Twelve*, *Tierno Bokar*, and *The Valley of Astonishment*.

He has studied traditional music from all over the world, and for more than a decade he has been researching the earliest strata of Japanese music and presenting the results as musical performances. He has released a series of three recordings of prehistoric Japanese sounds

entitled *Dotaku*, *Sanukaito*, and *Jomonko*. Recently he researched and played ancient music in the prehistoric painted cave of Cougnac, France.

Tsuchitori has also collaborated with the traditional master musician Harue Momoyama since they built a studio together in 1988, working both with local villagers and international artists. He has released many CD recordings and written three

on the light design of *Woza Albert* and *La Tempête*, also directed by Peter Brook. Since the creation of *The Man Who* in Paris in 1993, he has designed the lights for Brook's plays at the Theatre des Bouffes du Nord: *Qui est là, Je suis un phénomène*, *Le Costume*, *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Far Away*, *La mort de Krishna*, *La Tragédie d'Hamlet*, *Ta Mayn dans la mienne*, *Tierno Bokar*, *Le Grand Inquisiteur*, *Sizwe Banzi est mort*,



Battlefield
Pictured: Tosh Tsuchitori
Photo: Caroline Moreau

books: *Spiral Arms*, an autobiography; *The Sounds of Jomon*, a study of the music of prehistoric Japan; and *The Sound of Painted Cave*, about the origins of music.

PHILIPPE VIALATTE

started his career at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord in 1985 as a light operator on *Le Mahabharata*, directed by Peter Brook. He assisted Jean Kalman

Fragments, 11 and 12, and recently *A Magic Flute*, *The Suit*, and *the Valley of Astonishment*. He is responsible for lighting and travels with all the touring productions.

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*Enact Cochair

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To inquire about a lost item, call the museum at 312-280-2660. Unclaimed articles are held for thirty days.

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Please switch off all noise-making devices while you are in the theater.

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