

MEDIA RELEASE

31 MAY 2016

500-YEAR-OLD OAK BRINGS LOCAL COMMUNITY AND ARTISTS TOGETHER FOR INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

CALLING TREE: Rosemary Lee & Simon Whitehead

- Bruce Castle Park, Lordship Lane, Tottenham, London N17 8NU
- Free public performances, talks, walks and events as part of LIFT
- Thursday 30 June – Saturday 2 July 2016
- Performances (on a continuous cycle): 4-8pm daily
- Music and spoken-word, with special guests (*Beneath the Boughs*): Fri 1 July 8.15-9.45pm
- Ecology & bird walks, talks & dance: Sat 2 July 10am-4pm



Photo by Ray Jacobs

Rosemary Lee and Simon Whitehead will present CALLING TREE over three days this summer during the London International Festival of Theatre (LIFT). Bringing together a small cast of aerialists, singers and performers and a host of guests from the local community, they will animate the 500-year-old oak tree in the heart of Bruce Castle Park.

Audiences can expect to see – and hear – the tree in a completely new way.

In a cyclical performance spread over four hours each day, performers will appear and disappear throughout the tree's canopy, filling it with movement, song, messages and

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bird sound. At other times, poets, singers, musicians and dancers will gather beneath its magnificent boughs to celebrate the special place the tree holds within the community.

Drawn together by their shared desire to highlight the significance of nature within an urban context, choreographer-directors Lee and Whitehead have worked with a team of collaborators since February on CALLING TREE for Tottenham. Together, they have developed a cycle of performances in and around the tree and made connections with communities close to the park and across the borough.

Contributions and participation from individuals and groups – ranging from a specially formed choir to poets, school children, running groups and wildlife experts – will be woven through the series of events and performances over three days. Visitors and passers-by will be invited to stop, listen and look up at one of Haringey's oldest trees.

Rosemary Lee, says:

“I have met so many inspiring people - of all ages, from all around the world – thanks to this beautiful historic tree in the heart of Tottenham. Its long boughs reach out to communities in all directions. I hope that people from near and far will come to see what we have created together for this iconic oak tree.”

In the run-up to the public events, Tottenham-based poet Abraham Gibson and poet Deanna Rodger will lead writing workshops with children from Risley Avenue and Lancasterian Primary Schools. Their poems will be incorporated into CALLING TREE.

The daily 'tree' performance cycle spans four hours and can be viewed at anytime between 4-8pm. Groups of young singers will intermittently appear throughout the performance to perform a newly commissioned song by acclaimed composer Terry Mann.

The associated events before and after the core performance cycle on Friday and Saturday will include

- *Beneath The Boughs* featuring an eclectic line up of established and emerging writers, poets and singers will gather to perform after the tree performance on Friday evening (1 July).
- Morning movement session with Simon Whitehead and Rosemary Lee under the tree (2 July).
- Two simultaneous walking tours exploring bird life and the trees, led by ornithologist David Cotteridge and urban ecologist Bob Gilbert around the park and the surrounding area. (2 July)
- Caller and dancer Kerry Fletcher will share line and circle dances traditionally danced beneath trees accompanied by a percussionist and a violinist on Saturday afternoon (2 July).

Find out more in June at liffestival.com/events/calling-tree/

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

MEDIA CONTACT

For more information, interviews and images please contact Jennifer Tomkins:
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LISTINGS

Daily performances between 4pm-8pm.

On Friday 1 and Saturday 2 July there will be additional events and activities.

Thursday 30 June

- 4pm-8pm: CALLING TREE cycle of performances (continuous)

Friday 1 July

- 4pm-8pm: CALLING TREE cycle of performances (continuous)
- 8.15pm-9.45pm: *Beneath the Boughs*, a gathering of emerging and established poets, writers and musicians

Saturday 2 July

- 10am-11am: movement under the tree with Simon and Rosemary
- 1.30pm: walk with local ornithologist David Cotteridge in the park
- 1.30pm: walk with urban ecologist Bob Gilbert in the park
- 2.30pm: talk with local urban ecologist Bob Gilbert covering stories of the tree's biology, history and cultural legacy
- 3pm: circle and line dance
- 4pm-8pm: CALLING TREE cycle of performances (continuous)

More details of the CALLING TREE activities programme will be available in June at liffestival.com/events/calling-tree/

EVENT BOOKING

No booking is necessary for the continuous CALLING TREE cycle of performances. Just turn up to Bruce Castle Park 4-8pm, 30 June – 2 July 2016.

The walks with David Cotteridge and Bob Gilbert have a capacity of 20 people. To reserve a place on the walks, please email boxoffice@artsadmin.co.uk / 020 7650 2350

ABOUT

Artistic Team and Tottenham Community Collaborators

- Devised and co directed by Rosemary Lee and Simon Whitehead
- Movement and Vocal content developed with the performers
- Performed by Gisele Edwards, Milton Lopes, Alesandra Seutin, Ben Stammers
- Riggers Joe White and David Berstein
- Vocal coach Sianed Jones
- Original music by Barnaby Oliver, Isaac Lee-Konick and Terry Mann
- Poetry by local school children working with poets Deanna Rodger and Abraham Gibson
- Walks and talks led by ornithologist David Cotteridge and urban ecologist Bob Gilbert,
- Circle and Line dances beneath the tree by caller and dancer Kerry Fletcher,
- Writers, singers & musicians including: Deanna Rodger, Abraham Gibson, Jess Hardie, Isaac Lee-Kronick, Kerry Fletcher, Phil Minton, Jenny Minton, Sam Lee and others

Credits

Co-produced by LIFT and Artsadmin, presented in association with The Place. An Imagine 2020 (2.0) and Create to Connect project, supported by the Culture Programme of the European Union. Supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England. Additional support from the Adobe Foundation Fund.

CALLING TREE was developed from a commission by Migrations and supported by the Jerwood Choreographic Research Project, with funds from The Jerwood Charitable Foundation, Akademi, Birmingham Repertory Theatre, Dance Initiative Greater Manchester, DanceEast, DanceXchange, Fierce Festival, Greenwich+Docklands International Festival, Independent Dance, Royal Shakespeare Company and South East Dance. Additional support from the National Lottery through Arts Council England and Made at The Place.

Further Information

Rosemary Lee

Known for working in different contexts and media, Rosemary is a choreographer who creates a range of work from large-scale site-specific works and solos, to video installations and short films for the past 30 years. Regardless of the scale, these projects explore our relationship with our environment. Recent performances *Under The Vaulted Sky* created with a cast of 100 in a cathedral of trees in Milton Keynes and *Without a* seven screen video installation which captured over 350 inhabitants of Derry moving and dancing through the streets. Her acclaimed triptych *Liquid Gold is the Air* continues to be presented in a variety of locations – from cathedrals & churches to film festivals and galleries. She is a Work Place artist, Senior Research Fellow at C-DaRE Coventry University, DanceEast Artist Associate 2015, ResCen Research Associate Artist (Middlesex University) and holds an honorary doctorate from Roehampton University. artsadmin.co.uk/rosemary-lee

Simon Whitehead

Simon Whitehead makes performances that reveal the relationships between places, people, animals and memory. These works often exist over long timescales, Walks to Illuminate at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park took place over one year, as did PINGS (2010) a performance project connecting 2 remote river locations, made with Melbourne- based sound artist Barnaby Oliver. Recently he has been developing a research project with National Theatre Wales, focusing on low-impact performance spaces in forests. Simon co-curates an annual programme of artist residencies and events in his home village of Abercych, West Wales. He is a Creative Fellow in the Faculty of Arts, Aberystwyth University.

untitledstates.net

LIFT happens in London every two years. Since 1981 LIFT has been pioneering new forms of theatre, presenting spectacular performances and moments of magic in every corner of the capital. Led by Artistic Director, Mark Ball, LIFT 2016 takes place from 1 June to 2 July. liftfestival.com

LIFT is a festival of international theatre and performance that connects the World with London and London with the World. For LIFT 2016 Artistic Director Mark Ball has travelled the world to curate a very special playlist of performances, politics and pop-culture for London, turning the city into a stage on which artists with radical imaginations conjure visions of other lands, enthralling us with stories born in the worlds from which they come. For 35 years LIFT has presented extraordinary global stories and intense visual and personal experiences from dynamic new international voices, linking Londoners with artists around the world in events and productions that take place across the breadth of the city. From 1 June to 2 July 2016.

liftfestival.com

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Artsadmin enables artists to create without boundaries, connecting bold interdisciplinary work with local, national and international audiences. The advisory service supports artists at every stage of their development with free advice and opportunities. They have established Toynbee Studios, Aldgate East, as a centre for the creation and presentation of new work. artsadmin.co.uk