

MEDIA RELEASE

DOMINOES IN COVENTRY

Station House Opera's spectacular event comes to Coventry on Bank Holiday Monday 26 May

The 'new' Coventry Mysteries festival, now in its fifth year has commissioned Station House Opera to create their breeze block spectacular Dominoes as the climax to this year's festival on Monday 26 May. Dominoes has become an international phenomenon. Since it first wove its way through London as part of the cultural Olympiad in 2009, it has been created in Copenhagen, Helsinki, Dijon, Ljubljana and later this year will be created in Cape Town. The 1.5km route in Coventry will be the first time it has been created outside of London in the UK.

Part moving sculpture, part community event, Dominoes takes as its starting point the simplest of ideas... a domino line. Thousands of breeze blocks create a moving sculpture which runs across the city, unfolding over the course of the day.

With the help of local volunteers Station House Opera will create a simple but spectacular line of concrete blocks that will weave their way through the city's streets. Occasionally disappearing and then resurfacing the domino line will thread its way through historical and everyday parts of the city. It will start at Fords Hospital, Coventry's iconic Alms house - still in use today, leap from a multi-story car park, before making its way through Sir Donald Gibson's iconic post-war city centre redevelopment, toward Coventry's oldest city centre pub - the Golden Cross - then travelling through the Georgian styled Drapers' Hall, the Dean's House, Priory Gardens and ending at the Cathedral Ruins.

Creating a celebration across the whole city, Dominoes transforms the rhythm of the city for one special day. Hundreds of volunteers and audience members gather together to make this exceptional and unique event. Volunteers are being asked to come along from 9am - 1pm to help build the route before the topple starts at 3pm.

The 1579m route - echoes the last year, that the Mystery Plays were officially performed in the medieval period, 1579 AD.

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PRESS ENQUIRIES

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NOTES

Julian Maynard Smith is the founder and artistic director of Station House Opera. He studied architecture and visual art at Middlesex University and has practised since 1978, producing solo and group performance work as well as sculpture and installation. Julian has conceived and directed (and regularly performed in) all of Station House Opera's projects since the company's formation in 1980, including the city scale breezeblocks project Dominoes, and acclaimed international performances Roadmetal, Sweetbread and Life in Paradise.

Producers Artsadmin are a unique producing and presenting organisation for contemporary artists working in theatre, dance, live art, visual arts and mixed media. At its Toynbee Studios home Artsadmin has established a centre for the creation, development and presentation of new work and a space for artists and audiences to experiment. The organisation offers a range of artist development services, including a free advisory service and mentoring schemes, as well as the bursary scheme. Artsadmin is supported using public funding by Arts Council England.

The Coventry Mysteries aims to transform the urban landscape and create an ambitious programme of events offering artistic encounters and experiences that encourage people to take pride in their city, to rally around the big questions of life, to understand more about each other, and to create and reveal new stories of wonder in Coventry today.

The Coventry Mysteries Company was founded by Coventry City Council, Coventry University, University of Warwick and the Alan Edward Higgs Charity.

The 'modern' Mysteries was reimagined in 2010 as a new festival that draws on the city's tradition of performance and the original guiding principles of the Guilds that created the medieval mystery plays: invention, unity, mutual understanding and the respect of difference. These offer both a cultural continuity with the city's past, but also a blueprint for social and cultural exchange.

This is the fifth Coventry Mysteries festival, and the first where it has been curated by a Festival Director. Elgiva Field (Oblique House, Theatre-Rites, Punchdrunk) and Ian Whitaker (Young Vic, Lyric Hammersmith, LIFT) were appointed as joint Festival Directors at the end of 2013