



The Man Behind The Music in The Events

Blog
shayna
November 6, 2017
0



This upcoming January Pi is producing an incredible work - [The Events](#). This piece was created by playwright David Greig with music by composer John Browne. We were able to get in touch with **John Browne**, the composer, and he answered some of our questions! Read his answers below.

Tell us three things about yourself - other than the fact that you're a composer.

I'm Irish. From Cork.

I once flew from New York to Ottawa and paid on the plane! Mid-flight, the air steward walked up and down the aisle and one by one we handed over our money. This is true. I was studying in New York and en route to a magical holiday on a lake in upstate Ontario and thought well this is just how Canadians do it.

There are a lot of 2's in my life: apart from the typical 2 hands, 2 eyes, 2 feet etc I have 2 cats, 2 pianos.....and 2 daughters who have 2 dads, 2 mums living in 2 houses.

What is your favourite thing about composing?

Losing myself within it. And what it does to my body. The connection between music and the body is profound. Music is physical - simple as that. Sound is generated physically, it travels physically, it hits our eardrums, makes them vibrate - physically, sets off some other physical activities in the brain and in turn around the body - and it realigns our physicality with the physicality of the universe. Of course music also triggers thoughts, and feelings but the body is at the fulcrum of all this.

When you were composing for [The Events](#), what was going through your head?

Concern. We had a sprawl of words, twice as many as we needed and not sequenced anything like they ended up being, 4 weeks before we opened

at a prestigious theatre, at a prestigious timeslot at the Edinburgh festival. We had three casts in the room as this was co-commissioned by a theatres in Norway and Vienna plus we had the dramaturgs of those theatres, the writer, director, etc and me all in a room together trying to figure out how to shape this text. I was responsible for all sung text and placing the songs within the piece and time was running out.

What do you want audiences to think / feel when they see *The Events*?

Softened. There's a lot of hard stuff in *The Events*: hard emotions like despair, hard images like a massacre, difficult interchanges between people and complex moral, political and philosophical ideas. So the music is a break from all that hardness and a break from thinking. Something felt, something sensuous for a while to remind us of how tightened up we can become - and to remind us of our commonality.

If you could be doing anything else, what would it be?

A beach bum or a witchdoctor.

What's your favourite play and why?

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf. So intense. If it's a play with music then *West Side Story* - of course.

Where can our audiences find out more about you and your work?

The same team that made *The Events* are reconstructing an ancient Greek trilogy right now. Only one play of the trilogy exists and we're currently touring this one - it's called *The Suppliant Women* and we're about to open in London (November 2017). We then go to Hong Kong and sometime in the next couple of years the full trilogy will hopefully be in a theatre in striking distance from you.