



ACTORS TOURING COMPANY APPOINTS ANDREW SMAJE AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The board and directors of the internationally acclaimed Actors Touring Company announced today that Andrew Smaje will be taking up the position of Executive Director from March 21. This follows the departure of Nick Williams earlier in the month after a successful five years in the post.

Known for his work producing contemporary theatre, particularly new writing, Andrew Smaje is a consultant for leading theatre companies, organisations and artists, with a list of clients that include Theatre Royal Plymouth, Greyscale and The Empty Space. His past productions and commissions were nominated at the TMA UK Theatre Awards in 2003, 2011, 2012 and 2013. From 2010 to 2012 he was Chief Executive of Hull Truck where he produced work by contemporary playwrights both in Hull and on tour, co-producing with partners that included Headlong, Paines Plough and The Gate. Smaje's productions at Hull Truck were nominated for the Renee Stepham Touring Award (TMA UK Theatre Awards) in 2012 and Best Visiting Production (Manchester Theatre Awards) in 2013. He was Associate Director of Theatre Royal Bath 2000 - 2010, supporting and developing new and innovative theatre across a broad spectrum of performance genres and practice, principally new writing. Smaje also created the Bath International Puppet Festival, a showcase for adult puppetry; he was co-Director of the Bath Shakespeare Festival, an unplugged festival of contemporary perspectives on Shakespeare's work; and produced plays on both large and small scale, by writers such as Gregory Burke, David Greig and Lucinda Coxon.

Since he took up the post at Actors Touring Company in 2011, Nick Williams has overseen a 78% increase in the Company's turnover despite the tough climate for arts funding. The touring output has doubled, with extensive touring in the UK, and international touring has been revitalized under his stewardship. Williams' notable producing credits at Actors Touring Company include the multi-award winning *The Events* created by the writer David Greig and Artistic Director Ramin Gray, Marius von Mayenburg's *Martyr*, Ivan Viripaev's *Illusions* and Roland Schimmelpfennig's *The Golden Dragon* as well as the current production of Mark Lockyer's *Living With The Lights On*. Williams leaves Actors Touring Company to pursue a variety of freelance projects over the coming months.

Smaje's first projects at Actors Touring Company will be announced in April.

Actors Touring Company Chair, Maria Delgado says

"Andrew joins us at an exciting time for ATC. His leadership experience working with a range of high-profile companies outside London will stand him in good stead as he takes on the challenge of leading ATC into a new chapter in its development. We are delighted to welcome him to ATC and look forward to the projects that the new partnership with Ramin Gray will offer up for the remainder of 2016 and into 2017"

"I also want to take the opportunity of acknowledge Nick's outstanding work leading ATC over the past five years. His visionary leadership and commitment have now firmly established ATC's reputation for taking the best in international contemporary theatre to audiences throughout the UK and beyond. On behalf of the Board, I wish him every future success"

Actors Touring Company Artistic Director, Ramin Gray says

"Great Executive Directors are few and far between. ATC has been blessed with Nick Williams for the last five years and we're delighted to now be welcoming Andrew Smaje to the fold. Andrew brings taste, experience and, most importantly, a passion for touring. Based in Bradford, he will deepen ATC's commitment to the regions."

Andrew Smaje says

"I'm thrilled to be joining ATC. I love the company for its imagination and boldness. I love its commitment to touring contemporary, international theatre to the broadest range of audiences around Britain - and the world. I relish the opportunity of leading the company alongside Ramin Gray and supporting his exciting vision for ATC's future."

Actors Touring Company tours extensively in the UK and overseas, creating fresh insight and challenging perceptions by forging partnerships writers and performers, placing them at the heart of the creative process. Under the stewardship of artistic director Ramin Gray, recent work has included Marius Von Mayenburg's *Martyr*, the multi-award winning *The Events* by David Greig which has recently toured across the USA and played to sell out audiences and critical acclaim at New York Theatre Workshop having premiered at The Traverse Theatre and previously enjoyed two sell out runs at The Young Vic. The production, directed by Gray, has also been staged in German and Norwegian at Schauspielhaus, Vienna, Brageteatret in Drammen. Other recent work has included Nassim Soleimanpour's *Blind Hamlet*, Ivan Viripaev's *Illusions* and Roland Schimmelpfennig's *The Golden Dragon*.