

**ACTORS TOURING COMPANY**  
**THE ROYAL LYCEUM THEATRE**

## THE SUPPLIANT WOMEN

By Aeschylus

In a new version by David Greig

Directed by Ramin Gray

Composed by John Browne

*Fifty women will leave everything behind. They board a boat in North Africa and flee across the Mediterranean. They are escaping forced marriage in their homeland, hoping for protection and assistance, seeking asylum in Greece.*

Actors Touring Company, together with the Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh, is delighted to present the British premiere of Aeschylus' *The Suppliant Women* in a new version by internationally-renowned playwright David Greig. As the anticipated incoming Artistic Director of The Lyceum, Greig is also collaborating with ATC to reunite the world-class creative team behind the hugely acclaimed *The Events* - director Ramin Gray and composer John Browne.

With local participation at its heart, *The Suppliant Women* revives the tradition of Ancient Greek theatre by recruiting performers from the local community to form a chorus who drive the narrative forward and create an extraordinary theatrical event. With choral odes composed by John Browne and accompanied on the *aulos* (the rarely heard original Greek double pipe), the local participants represent 50 young women who flee forced marriage in Egypt to seek asylum in Greece. This is a story about the plight of refugees, moral and human rights, civil war, democracy and ultimately the triumph of love - a tale that echoes down the ages to find striking and poignant resonance today.

When it premiered at The Traverse in August 2013, *The Events* was greeted with ecstatic reviews and has since been performed on stages across the world to become an international runaway hit.

**Ramin Gray** Artistic Director of Actors Touring Company and director on *The Suppliant Women* says:

'Like confronting a strange ruin and seeing your own plight, Aeschylus' 2479 year old play speaks louder now than ever before. After our work on *The Events* - which used the form of Greek theatre to investigate the politics of immigration - it feels entirely appropriate to bring the same team together to revive this first part of Aeschylus' lost trilogy. *The Suppliant Women* tells an astonishing tale of migration and autonomy with political and moral complexity. Inspired by the Greeks we will work with local community choirs to create a telling collaboration between professional and amateur, between citizen and refugee, between men and women. With the world's oldest reference to the word 'democracy', this play excavates our shared European history to reveal something terrifyingly contemporary.'

**David Greig** says

'The *Suppliant Women* was written nearly 2500 years ago. It's one of the very earliest Greek plays to have survived. Written by Aeschylus on the eve of a democratic revolution in Athens it comes to us, remarkably, as a document of the earliest moments of theatre. But for all its fascination and mystery, this story of Egyptian refugee women sailing to Greece to seek sanctuary could have been written about the world today. Working on the adaptation for this production I felt like a literary Indiana Jones uncovering the covenant. I could feel the energy of the text pulsing through two millennia. Director Ramin Gray and composer John Browne worked with me to create *The Suppliant Women* and delighted that this will be my first show as Artistic Director of The Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh'

**Actors Touring Company** (ATC) makes international, contemporary theatre that travels. We create shows that activate and entertain the audience whilst asking questions of the world around us. We seek out new ideas, artists and perspectives and question what theatre is and can be through openness, invention and curiosity. Placing the actor at the heart of our work, and employing a lean aesthetic which promotes environmental sustainability, we have toured the UK and internationally since we were founded in 1980, reaching audiences far and wide. Under the stewardship of artistic director Ramin Gray, in addition to *The Events*, the company's other recent work has included Marius Von Mayenburg's *Martyr*, Ivan Viripaev's *Illusions* and Roland Schimmelpfennig's *The Golden Dragon*.

Before taking up the post at ATC, **Ramin Gray** was Associate Director at the Royal Court Theatre where he directed Vassily Sigarev's *Ladybird*, the Presnyakov Brothers' *Terrorism*, Marius von Mayenburg's *The Ugly One* and *The Stone*, Simon Stephens' *Motortown*, and Mark Ravenhill's *Over There*. For the RSC he directed David Greig's *The American Pilot*. Ramin's extensive work abroad includes the Salzburg Festival, Schaubuehne Berlin, Praktika Moscow, Husets Copenhagen and many more. Opera credits include Brett Dean's *Bliss*, Beat Furrer's *La Bianca Notte* and Benjamin Britten's *Death in Venice* at Hamburg Staatsoper and Theater an der Wien. Ramin recently directed Gerald Barry's much acclaimed opera of *The Importance of Being Earnest* for the Royal Opera at the Barbican/Lincoln Center.

**David Greig** is Artistic Director of the Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh as well as an acclaimed and award-winning playwright. His plays have been performed across the UK, at the Royal Court, National, the RSC, and the Traverse Theatre in Scotland, and have been produced and toured around the world. Plays include *The Lorax*, which has just been on at the Old Vic, *The Events*, *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart*, *Dunsinane* and the book for *Charlie and The Chocolate Factory* the musical. David writes for screen and radio too and is currently under commission from Hillbilly Films and the BBC.

In addition to *The Events*, **John Browne's** works have been performed at the Royal Opera House (*Babette's Feast*, *Demon Juice*), English National Opera (*Early Earth Operas*, *Midnight's Children*), Southbank Centre (*A Nightingale Sang*) and Westminster Abbey (*Small Selves*, *Out of Suffering*). In the last few years he has been composer-in-residence at FNSNM, Kings College London, created choral arrangements for the band Elbow, composed the score for *The Itch of the Golden Nit*, a BAFTA award-winning film by Aardman, been an adjudicator for BBC Young Musician of the Year since 2012, created a music-theatre piece in Rwanda and run workshops for the British Council in China and India. John is a Cultural Fellow of Glasgow Caledonian University.

Established in 1965, **The Royal Lyceum Theatre Company** is one of the leading drama-producing companies in Scotland. It has gained a reputation for excellence in both classical and contemporary work and is committed to developing the country's considerable indigenous talents while presenting the best of international drama. In recent years, The Lyceum has staged co-productions with Told By An Idiot; Theatre Royal, Bath; The Bush Theatre, London; Nottingham Playhouse Theatre Company; National Theatre of Scotland; Citizens Theatre; Dundee Rep; Liverpool Everyman & Playhouse; Chichester Festival Theatre and the Lyric Hammersmith. In addition, The Lyceum also runs an award-winning, ambitious and acclaimed Creative Learning programme which engages with over 16,000 young people across Scotland annually.



ATC &  
**THE ROYAL LYCEUM THEATRE**  
 EDINBURGH  
 present

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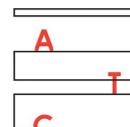
Press night October 3

**30 Sept – 15 Oct**  
**Edinburgh**  
**The Royal Lyceum Theatre**  
<http://lyceum.org.uk>  
 0131 248 4848

**21 – 22 Oct**  
**Belfast**  
**Belfast International Festival (Grand Opera House)**  
<http://belfastinternationalartsfestival.com>

**3 – 5 November**  
**Newcastle Upon Tyne**  
**Northern Stage**  
<http://www.northernstage.co.uk>  
 0191 230 5151

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