

1 February 2008

ETHER 08

SOUTHBANK CENTRE FRIDAY 18 – MONDAY 28 April 2008

- **Goldfrapp** (Friday 18 April, Royal Festival Hall)
- **Harmonia** (Friday 18 April, Queen Elizabeth Hall)
- **International Beatbox Convention**
(Saturday 19 – Sunday 20 April, Queen Elizabeth Hall)
- **Music Through Unconventional Means: Shlomo vs Mad Professor**
(Saturday 19 April, Queen Elizabeth Hall)
- **Current 93 & Baby Dee with special guest Marc Almond**
(Monday 21 April, Queen Elizabeth Hall)
- **Part Of The Weekend Never Dies – Featuring Soulwax, 2manydjs and special guests** (Thursday 24 April, Royal Festival Hall)
- **Pere Ubu & The Brothers Quay present the world premiere of *Bring Me the Head of Ubu Roi*** (Thursday 24 & Friday 25 April, Queen Elizabeth Hall)
- **London Sinfonietta – Thomas Adès & Tal Rosner World Premiere and Steve Reich's *Music for 18 Musicians*** (Mon 28 April, Royal Festival Hall)

Southbank Centre's innovative festival of art and technology returns in April 2008 with an intriguing mix of experimental new work, rare appearances by influential legends and a brace of suitably strange collaborations. This year's festival features performances by **Goldfrapp** (18 April), **Radio Soulwax** and **2manydJs** (24 April), a **co-bill** between **Current 93 & Baby Dee** with special guest **Marc Almond** (21 April), a first – ever UK performance from krautrock heroes **Harmonia** (18 April) and **Pere Ubu's** staging of Alfred Jarry's theatre of the absurd classic *Ubu Roi* (24 and 25 April) with the aid of the brilliant **Brothers Quay**. The festival culminates on 28 April with the world premiere of a collaboration between composer **Thomas Adès**, video artist **Tal Rosner**, and the **London Sinfonietta**, one of Southbank Centre's Resident Orchestras, co-commissioned by Southbank Centre and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. This programme also features **Steve Reich's** landmark *Music for 18 Musicians*. The ETHER 08 programme is complemented with free performances in The Front Room of Queen Elizabeth Hall and The Clore Ballroom at Royal Festival Hall, including *China Incidenta*, a sound installation, which can be sampled throughout the festival.

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Opening ETHER 08 on 18 April, the preternaturally cool and much loved **Goldfrapp** unveil their new album *Seventh Tree* live at the Royal Festival Hall. *Seventh Tree* follows the platinum-selling and critically acclaimed *Supernature* album which came out in summer 2005. From the captivating electronic balladry of the Mercury-nominated debut *Felt Mountain* and the darkly subversive follow-up *Black Cherry*, Goldfrapp have consistently surprised and delighted – with each new album signalling an exciting new direction. Eschewing the glitterball glamour of *Supernature*, the band step out into the sunshine, their new direction prompting Observer Music Monthly to declare "Goldfrapp's *Seventh Tree* makes you feel like Spring's already arrived". Combining this dreamlike, rural bliss with a paganistic sinister undertone, Goldfrapp once again have created a new musical world.

April 19-20 sees the return of the **International Beatbox Convention** (Boxcon 08), which in 2007 saw over 1000 beatboxers from the world over descend on the Queen Elizabeth Hall to take part in open mic sessions, talk with the professionals during Q+A panels, learn from workshops, meet like-minded musicians, jam all weekend long and enjoy specially curated performances. Among the events planned for beatboxing's premiere gathering is an intriguing collaboration between Southbank centre *Artist in Residence* **Shlomo** and **Mad Professor**, as part of the beatbox king's inspired *Music Through Unconventional Means* series. An international line-up of beatboxers featured in the convention will take to the Queen Elizabeth Hall stage for a closing showcase on Sunday 20 April.

While the 2008 International Beatbox Convention reveals how electronic music has impacted on the human voice, Krautrock pioneers and godfathers of electronica **Harmonia** (18 April) demonstrate where it all came from with their first-ever UK performance. Formed from members of Kraftwerk, Neu! and Cluster (and some of the most important musicians in the 1970s German experimental music scene: Michael Rother, Dieter Moebius and Hans-Joachim Roedelius), Harmonia were once declared to be the world's most important rock band by Brian Eno. In their short lifetime (1973-76), the trio released two albums that captured Krautrock in its prime. Full of twists, turns and hidden depths, these extended experiments-in-sound still sound as cutting edge as they did when they were first released. Harmonia appear live in the UK for the first time ever and following the release of last year's acclaimed album *Harmonia Live 1974*, a dusted-down recording of hypnotic machine music from a gig on 23 March 1974.

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Belgian brothers David and Stephen Dewaele's indie live phenomenon **Radio Soulwax** will take over the spaces and foyers of the Royal Festival Hall on 24 April for a one-night party. The evening features the premiere of their new movie, ***Part of the Weekend Never Dies***, directed by **Saam Farahmand** and **Soulwax**. Soulwax will perform live and **2manyDJs** will play alongside a special guest on the night.

ETHER would not be complete without at least one unholy alliance between strange bedfellows. On 21 April, **David Tibet's** enigmatic post-industrial legends **Current 93** take to the stage with the 'black prince' of leftfield pop **Marc Almond** for a collaboration that could well be the stand-out event of the festival. Current 93, David Tibet's visionary vehicle since 1982, have pursued their hallucinatory gnostic vision through records, books, concerts and paintings for the last 24 years. They have collaborated with some of the most interesting and intriguing artists around today. In this unique event they perform alongside performance artist and musician, **Baby Dee**, described as a mix between a 'NYC titty bar dancer, church organist, accordionist, tricycle-riding harpist, carnival side-show bilateral hermaphrodite, tree-worker, freak-show musician and epiphanic.' Marc Almond appears as a special guest vocalist.

On 24 and 25 April, **David Thomas** with **The Brothers Quay**, **Sarah Jane Morris** and **Pere Ubu** present the world premiere of *Bring Me The Head of Ubu Roi*, an adaptation of *Ubu Roi*, Alfred Jarry's landmark play from which singer David Thomas named his band. Widely seen as the precursor to the Absurdist, Dada and Surrealist art movements, Jarry's plays were widely and wildly hated for their vulgarity, brutality, low comedy and complete lack of literary finish. At the premiere in 1896, the very first word of *Ubu Roi* ('merdre', translated as 'shitter') provoked a riot amongst the audience and fist fights broke out in the orchestra. Jarry's work revealed a lack of respect for royalty, religion and society that prompted some to see his works as the theatrical equivalent of an anarchist bomb attack and an act of political subversion. With this part music, part spoken word, part animated production on the stage of the Queen Elizabeth Hall, David Thomas realises a dream he has had since being turned on to Jarry as a 16-year-old high school student in Cleveland, Ohio.

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ETHER 2008 concludes on 28 April with the world premiere of *In Seven Days* (Concerto for Piano and Six Screens), a collaboration between composer **Thomas Adès** and video artist **Tal Rosner** which has been commissioned for the **London Sinfonietta**, Resident at Southbank Centre. Rosner's architectural video work is created from images of the Royal Festival Hall's major refurbishment, which was completed last June, and of the recently opened Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles. The work is jointly commissioned by Southbank Centre and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. Rosner's previous work includes a commission from pianists the Labeque Sisters, to go alongside their performances of Stravinsky and Debussy, which was first seen at the 2006 Aldeburgh Festival. In 2007 he made the title sequence for *Skins*, the E4 television series. This world premiere is coupled with a performance of **Steve Reich**'s 1974 landmark *Music for 18 Musicians*.

For further information about ETHER events, please contact Sabine Kindel on 020 7921 0917 / sabine.kindel@southbankcentre.co.uk or Miles Evans on 020 7921 0676 / miles.evans@southbankcentre.co.uk

TICKET OFFICE: 0871 663 2500 www.southbankcentre.co.uk

Notes to Editors:

Southbank Centre manages the Royal Festival Hall, The Hayward, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Purcell Room, as well as the Saison Poetry Library, the Arts Council Collection and Hayward Touring Exhibitions on behalf of Arts Council England. It attracts more than 3 million visits annually. The Royal Festival Hall reopened in June 2007 following the major refurbishment of the Hall and redevelopment of the surrounding area and facilities.

ETHER 2008 Listings

Goldfrapp

Friday 18 April 2008, Royal Festival Hall, 7.30pm, Tickets £30 £25

The preternaturally cool and much loved Goldfrapp unveil their new album. *Seventh Tree*

Harmonia

Friday 18 April, Queen Elizabeth Hall, 7.30pm, Tickets £17.50 £15

Harmonia appear live in the UK for the first time, following the release of last year's acclaimed album *Harmonia Live 1974*.

Led Bib

Friday 18 April, The Front room at Queen Elizabeth Hall, 5.30pm, Admission FREE

Jazz with a punk aesthetic. Pulsating with raw energy, Led Bib's driving melodies are delivered at full throttle.

2008 International Beatbox Convention

Saturday 19 – Sunday 20 April, 1pm-6pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Admission FREE

The world's leading beatboxers descend on Southbank Centre as ETHER plays host to the fourth annual Human Beabox Convention for two days of showcases, seminars, talks plus participatory workshops and open mic sessions for all.

Music Through Unconventional Means: Shlomo vs Mad Professor

Saturday 19 April, Queen Elizabeth Hall, 8pm, Tickets £15

Mad Professor combines his pioneering live dub performances with Shlomo's beatbox techniques.

International Beatboxing Showcase

Sunday 20 April, Queen Elizabeth Hall, 7.30pm, Tickets £15

An international line-up of beatboxers featured in the convention will take to the Queen Elizabeth Hall stage for a closing showcase on Sunday 20 April.

Current 93 & Baby Dee with special guest Marc Almond

Monday 21 April 2008, Queen Elizabeth Hall, 7.30pm, Tickets £20 £17.50

A co-bill, which could well be the stand-out event of the festival.

Part Of The Weekend Never Dies

Featuring Soulwax, 2manydjs and special guests

Thursday 24 April 2008, Royal Festival Hall, 8.30pm – 2am, Tickets £20

Live phenomenon Radio Soulwax will take over the spaces and foyers of the Royal Festival Hall for a one-night party, premiering their new movie, *Part of the Weekend Never Dies*, directed by Saam Farahmand and Soulwax. Soulwax will perform live and 2manyDJs will play alongside a special guest on the night.

Pere Ubu & The Brothers Quay present *Bring Me the Head of Ubu Roi*

Thursday 24 & Friday 25 April 2008, Queen Elizabeth Hall, 7.30pm,

Tickets £22.50 £20

David Thomas with the Brothers Quay, Sarah Jane Morris and Pere Ubu present an adaptation of *Ubu Roi*, Alfred Jarry's 1898 landmark play.

Pataphysics In Sound

Friday 25 April, The Front Room at Queen Elizabeth Hall, 5.30pm, Admission FREE

This is a specially curated journey through the history of 'pataphysics in sound to celebrate the genius of Alfred Jarry, creator of *Ubu Roi* and all round literary madman, pistol toting, and cycling maniac.

Adés & Reich – London Sinfonietta

Monday 28 April 2008, Royal Festival Hall, 7.30pm, Tickets £22 £17 £13 £8

ETHER concludes with the world premiere of *In Seven Days* (Concerto for piano and six screens), a collaboration between composer Thomas Adés and video artist Tal Rosner, coupled with a performance of Steve Reich's landmark *Music for 18 Musicians* (1974).

Unknown Devices

laptop orchestra

Monday 28 April, The Clore Ballroom at Royal Festival Hall, 9.30pm, Admission FREE

Members of the London Sinfonietta, students from Royal College of Music and London College of Communication, with visuals from VJ artist Pablo Fiasco. Featuring new music and films inspired by the music of Steve Reich.

China Incidental

Friday 18 – Monday 28 April, The Clore Ballroom at Royal Festival Hall, 10am-11pm daily, Admission FREE

Curated by composer, artist and sound designer Matthias Kispert (D-Fuse, WKsound, CrowdFormation), this series of soundworks present a slice of contemporary China that is not seen but heard. The installation features newly commissioned work by some of China's leading experimental artists including Zhong Minjie and Yan Jun, providing an aural glimpse of everyday life in China.