



Canada // Theatre

Australian Exclusive

887

Ex Machina | Robert Lepage

Legendary Canadian theatre director, playwright and pioneer of the stage, **Robert Lepage** comes to Melbourne Festival with the Australian premiere of **887** - a dazzling investigation of memory that sees him turn his eye to the most difficult subject of all: himself.

Universally acclaimed for the scale of his theatrical imagination, **887** sees Lepage himself perform onstage for the first time in Melbourne.

Theatre is the “grand sport of remembering,” says Robert Lepage. How does memory make and unmake us? In **887**, he transports us into the echoing chambers of his own recollected past. Beginning in his childhood home at 887 Avenue Murray in Quebec City and ricocheting across decades, Lepage's own tale proves inseparable from the dramatic events of the half-century in which it plays out.

Questioning the relevance of certain recollections, Lepage examines why we recall the past so vividly, yet struggle with the present. Why do we remember the phone number from our youth yet forget our current one? How does a childhood song withstand the test of time, while the name of a loved one escapes us? Why does meaningless information stick with us, but other more useful information falls away?

The stage becomes the site of memory in **887** as he manipulates scale replicas and actual-sized sets, both private and public spaces in which his memories take place. From the facade of his apartment block, like a giant doll's house, windows open to family lives where Lepage has plundered his childhood to tell the story of Quebec's 70s, sometimes violent struggle.

Robert Lepage is one of the most influential artists working in today's theatre. His unclassifiable career has ranged from epic stagings for the Metropolitan Opera and Cirque du Soleil, to deeply personal solo shows such as *The Far Side of the Moon* and major ensemble works such as *The Seven Streams of the River Ota*. He has directed many films including the acclaimed *Le Polygraphe* and starred in Denys Arcand's *Jésus de Montréal*.

Melbourne Festival has presented several of Lepage's works including Canadian Opera Company's *Bluebeard's Castle* and *Erwartung* (1984), Ex Machina's *The Busker's Opera* (2004) and *Blue Dragon* (2011).

★★★★★ “A masterpiece on so many levels.”
– The Independent (UK)

★★★★★ “This unostentatious, meticulously crafted two-hour performance is touching, intimate, powerful.”
– The Observer (UK)

ARTS CENTRE MELBOURNE
PLAYHOUSE
WED 19 – SAT 22 OCTOBER

Wed-Sat 7.30pm
Sat also 2pm

2 hrs, no interval
Premium \$129
A Reserve \$99 / \$89
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Students \$25

www.festival.melbourne
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