**THE WORLD PREMIERE OF**

***dreamthinkspeaks’***

***UNCHAIN ME***

**A HIGHLIGHT OF THIS YEAR’S BRIGHTON FESTIVAL**

**WILL NOW EXTEND UNTIL 12 JUNE 2022**

The world premiere of ***Unchain Me***, a major new site-specific Brighton Festival commission from the critically acclaimed ***dreamthinkspeak,*** directed by the company’s Artistic Director, **Tristan Sharps,** will now extend until 12 June 2022, after selling out due to phenomenal demand when the festival launched earlier this month.

This thought-provoking multi-media performance, taking place at venues across the city centre, is inspired by Dostoevsky’s novel ***The Possessed***, in which a provincial town descends into chaos as it becomes the focal point of an attempted uprising orchestrated by a shadowy conspirator.

Audiences will be invited to join a secret cell of activists. The cell is formed of a disparate group of outsiders, all united by their idealism and hunger for a fairer society. Using a specially designed app with headphones, audiences will be able to interact with the performance, whilst also triggering film and audio sequences.

The action will take place across a range of locations in and around the Brighton Dome and the Royal Pavilion Estate, including the surrounding streets and lanes, permeating the daily workings of the city-centre without the knowledge of the wider public. There will be multiple access points and pathways through these locations, slipping between busy public areas and previously unknown passageways that interlink the buildings of the estate.

**Tristan Sharps, Artistic Director, dreamthinkspeak,** said **“**Creating a new project in Brighton has always felt like pressing a reset button for me. All of the projects we have previously created for the Festival have felt different to each other. With *Unchain Me*, we wanted to find a more sustainable relationship with the environments we inhabit. Instead of taking over and transforming locations, we wanted to move towards inhabiting buildings exactly as they are, as if we are infiltrating them, with minimal set and installation work.

We’ve been skirting around this project since 2009, when we originally planned to create it for three different UK cities simultaneously. Coming to this piece now, it has inevitably absorbed the social media dominated world we currently live in, with its messy mix of conspiracy theories and fake news, coupled with a deep and escalating desire amongst many people for a more fundamental change to our world.

The production will feature 16 predominantly Brighton-based performers who are **Abigail Lythgoe, Antonia Draper, Azaan Symes, Claudia Barba, Georgina Tack, Ian Howarth, John Black, Karl Kennedy-Williams, Lucas August, Marie-Helene Boyd, Oliver Menzies, Rachel Heaton, Rafei Barakat, Rob Horrocks, Tatenda Madamombe** and **Tommaso Giacomin**.

They will be supported by a large pool of local freelancers, including creative and technical teams and a wide variety of personnel from local venues and businesses.

The core creative team includes **Tristan Sharps** (Conception and direction), **Erin Guan and Qianer Jin** (Associate Set and Costume Design), **Enrico Aurigamma** (Sound Design), **Umut Gunduz** (Video), with app development by **Marmelo** and **Joipoloi.**

*Unchain Me* is part of the ‘Rebuilding’ theme for this year’s Brighton Festival, for which Tristan Sharps is a guest co-director alongside Syrian architect and author **Marwa Al-Sabouni**. *Unchain Me* is made possible by the Festival’s Principal Supporter, **The Pebble Trust** who provide support for many people and causes in Brighton & Hove. The Trust’s new annual support of Brighton Festival’s Commission Series of major productions and installations will offer audiences innovative and unique ways of seeing and experiencing the city of Brighton & Hove.

**Louise & Jamie Arnell** of **The Pebble Trust** said *"*We are pleased to support dreamthinkspeak's return to Brighton and delighted at the sense of excitement and anticipation it has created amongst Brighton Festival goers. Thanks to the extension of the run into June, greater audience numbers, both local and from further afield, will get to experience this unique event taking place within the very heart of our city. We cannot wait to see it."

**NOTES FOR EDITORS**

**ABOUT dreamthinkspeak**

*These days, “site-specific” is a label often slung around any play enacted in an uncomfortable space.*[*Dreamthinkspeak’s*](http://www.dreamthinkspeak.com/)*marvellous work is different. It truly draws on a particular place to conjure a subject. It makes the buildings outside become vibrant with undisclosed possibilities.*

**THE GUARDIAN**

*dreamthinkspeak have been quietly reinventing site-specific theatre for some years now, creating walk-through shows all over the world, from a Moscow paper factory to a hotel in Kuala Lumpur*

**THE INDEPENDENT**

Created in 1999 by artistic director Tristan Sharps, dreamthinkspeak is internationally recognised as a key practitioner of site-responsive performance. Their work blends live performance with a range of new technologies to create detailed live experiences that are ambitious, visually layered and popular with audiences wherever they are performed. Previous works have taken place in a variety of physical and architectural contexts from an underground abattoir in Clerkenwell, to the vast Zuidas office-complex in Amsterdam, to the Old Treasury Building in Perth, Australia.

Projects have been commissioned and presented by a range of festivals and partners, including The Brighton Festival, The Barbican, The Royal Shakespeare Company, The Royal Opera House, London International Festival of Theatre, Somerset House, 2012 Cultural Olympiad, Liverpool 08 European City of Culture, Hull UK City of Culture 2017 and a host of international festivals and cultural organisations. The company have won awards for their work including a Total Theatre Award (2005) and a Peter Brook Empty Space Award (2010).

[**www.dreamthinkspeak.com**](http://www.dreamthinkspeak.com)

**ABOUT BRIGHTON FESTIVAL**

Established in 1967, Brighton Festival is the largest and most established annual curated multi-arts festival in England. Taking place over three weeks in May, the Festival is a celebration of music, theatre, dance, art, film, literature, debate, outdoor and community events in venues and locations across Brighton, Hove and East Sussex.

Since 2009, Brighton Festival has attracted inspiring and internationally significant Guest Directors who bring cohesion to the artistic programme. The inaugural Guest Director was Anish Kapoor (2009) and has subsequently included prominent cultural figures such as Brian Eno (2010), Laurie Anderson (2016), Kae Tempest (2017), David Shrigley (2018), Rokia Traoré (2019) and Lemn Sissay MBE (2020/21).

**LISTINGS**

***Unchain Me***

Brighton Festival 2022

Tuesday 3 May – Sunday 12 June 2022

**Poster Image:** click [**HERE**](https://we.tl/t-11p846p50F)to download

**Running time:** Approximately 2 hours 30mins

**Press performances**: 10 & 11 May (with all reviews embargoed until 12 May)

**Performance Times:** Tues – Sun at 7pm\*

\* there are further performances on alternative days, including matinees. For the full schedule please go to [www.brightonfestival.org](http://www.brightonfestival.org)

**Access performances**: Wednesday & Thursday at 7pm and Saturday & Sunday at 2:30pm

**Ticket Price:** **Preview ticket price** Tue 3 - Sun 8 May - £22.50/From 8 May onwards: £30.00

**Recommended age:** 16+

**Website:** [www.brightonfestival.org](http://www.brightonfestival.org)

 **Twitter:** @dreamthinkspeak / @brightfest

**Facebook:** @dreamthinkspeak / @brightonfestival

**Instagram:** @brightonfestival

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