



Keynote address by Robert Wilson Arts Festivals: The Long and Winding Road

On the occasion of Sydney Festival's 40th anniversary, Sydney Opera House and Sydney Festival present a special keynote address by acclaimed playwright, director and visual artist Robert Wilson on the place of arts festivals in today's society. Sydney Festival hosted Wilson's quintessential music theatre work *Black Rider* in 2005 under Brett Sheehy. In 2016 the Festival is hosting another Wilson-Waits collaboration, *Woyzeck*, directed by acclaimed German theatre director Jette Steckel of Thalia Theater Hamburg.

Robert Wilson is without a doubt America's most prolific playwright and director active today. For over 40 years Wilson has made waves with his uncompromising and radical work across a wide range of disciplines.

Over the course of his career (spanning four decades and counting) he has worked as a choreographer, playwright, director, performer, painter, sculptor, video artist, and sound and lighting designer. Wilson travels the world with his work – he famously staged a 168-hour play at the Shiraz Festival in Iran in 1972, but also directed operas at the Scala, the Paris Chatelêt Theatre and the NY Met, and his work has visited all the major Australian arts festivals.

He is best known for his collaborations with Philip Glass on *Einstein on the Beach*, and with numerous other artists, including Heiner Müller, William S. Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg, Lou Reed, Tom Waits, Laurie Anderson, Marina Abramović, Willem Dafoe, Mikhail Baryshnikov, and Lady Gaga.

Since the 1990s Robert Wilson has close ties with the famous Berliner Ensemble, which was originally founded by Berthold Brecht and later run by Heiner Müller.

His installations and drawings have been shown at major museums around the world, and amongst the many awards he received throughout his career are a Pulitzer Prize, a Venice Golden Lion for his sculptures and an Olivier award for his opera *Einstein on the Beach*. Aged 74, Wilson divides his time between Europe, Australasia, his downtown Manhattan home and the Watermill Centre, an arts laboratory near Hampton Bays, NY which he founded and runs, and where he prepares his large-scale projects with summertime development weeks and rehearsals. Photographer Eva Vermandel portrayed Wilson at his Watermill Arts Center for our anniversary project *40 Portraits*.

Join us for this unique opportunity to hear about Robert Wilson's body of work, commissioned and presented in the context of arts festivals around the globe.

Sydney Festival events such as this one are made possible by the generous contributions of Festival donors. Contributions can be made via this [link](#). Private donations of \$2 or more are tax-deductible.

Sydney Festival will also be presenting a ticketed private lunch with Robert Wilson after the talk courtesy of Park Hyatt Sydney. Proceeds from this exclusive event will support Robert Wilson's free talk Arts Festivals: The Long and Winding Road. Bookings can be made online [here](#).

When	Wednesday 6 January at 10am
Where	Sydney Opera House, Drama Theatre
Duration	60mins
Price	Free (bookings required)
Bookings	sydneyfestival.org.au/2016/robert-wilson

MEDIA RELEASE

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