

Bradford Theatres in association with The Royal National Theatre present

Le Théâtre du Soleil

LES ATRIDES

16-22 July 1992



The Venue:

Robin Mills is the perfect venue for the exceptional experience that is Les Atrides. It is, in fact, the only venue in the UK that closely mirrors in scale and design Le Théâtre du Soleil's own famous headquarters, La Cartoucherie – a converted munitions factory – in Vincennes, Paris.

In honour of the European Arts Festival and the company's visit, Robin Mills has been transformed. Besides its vast *espace du théâtre*, there is a stunningly designed Front of House area with a bistro restaurant serving fine wines and gourmet food. French country fare and Asian Cuisine – as befits a city world famous for its curries! – predominate.

Prices are extremely reasonable – you can enjoy a delicious main meal with fresh fruit and fine cheeses for just £9.95. For the oenophile, there is a wine bar offering 20 different wines, and for the bibliophile, there is a well-stocked theatrical bookshop. As you will see, a festival atmosphere prevails. We encourage you to come early, stay late, and enjoy the European ambience.

Ample free car parking is available.

The Event:

Le Théâtre du Soleil's first performance in the UK for over 21 years has been made possible thanks to a unique partnership between Bradford Theatres, The Royal National Theatre and The European Arts Festival – celebrating Britain's presidency of the European Community.

The Cycle:

Les Atrides is a cycle of four plays recounting the tragic history of the royal family of Argos, the House of Atreus. It begins with Euripides' *Iphigénie à Aulis*, and is followed by Aeschylus' *Oresteia* trilogy, comprising *Agamemnon*, *Les Choéphores* (*The Libation Bearers*) and *Les Euménides*.

The epic story fuses the family's overwhelming personal tragedy with the waste and injustice of an horrendous war, destroying victors and vanquished alike in its consuming fire.

At the heart of the drama are issues as apposite today as they were when these events took place 3500 years ago: the futility of war, the power of men over women and the tragedy of family members locked helplessly in murderous conflict. But the cycle also traces something else – a painful and agonizing progression from savagery to civilisation.

The Production:

This production may well be the best example yet of Mnouchkine's concept of total theatre. Drawing on non-western theatrical techniques such as Japanese Noh, Kabuki and Indian dance, employing exotic instruments under the direction of composer Jean-Jacques Lemetre, and stunning design by Guy-Claude François, *Les Atrides* transports you into a self-created world that is also – miraculously – the world of the Greeks.

Iphigenie à Aulis

The story of Iphigenia is one of the great myths of sacrifice – no less so than the tale of Abraham and Isaac. It begins on the eve of the Trojan War. The Greek fleet has assembled at Aulis, under the leadership of Agamemnon, waiting to sail to Troy to avenge the abduction of Helen, his brother's wife.

All is in readiness, but the gods have decreed that there will be no wind unless Agamemnon sacrifices his daughter Iphigenia. It is, of course, an agonizing and impossible choice. Agamemnon compels his wife Clytemnestra to bring Iphigenia to Aulis, under the pretext of her marriage to Achilles.

Clytemnestra's grief and horror, Iphigenia's terror, bravery and death mark the beginning of the end for the House of Atreus.



Agamemnon

The tragedy continues in this first play of
Aeschylus' Oresteia trilogy.

Clytemnestra awaits the return of
Agamemnon. For ten years she has been
plotting her revenge. Her husband returns
as a conquering hero. But after the
slaughter of the innocents at both Aulis
and Troy, Agamemnon is not fated to enjoy
the fruits of his victory.

The die is cast, Clytemnestra is well up to
her task. This is one of the towering
figures in European drama – ruthless yet,
passionate, diabolic yet touching, she is
practically a force of nature. Tricked into
revealing his guilt, Agamemnon is no
match for his wife.

Clytemnestra kills her husband, avenging
her daughter's death. With her lover,
Aegisthius, she now rules over Argos.



Les Choephores (The Libation Bearers)

The cycle of murder and revenge is compelled to continue. After killing the King there is a rite of spring – a festival of libation to the ancestral dead – as the source of all new life. But the rebirth is not to be.

Orestes breaks free of exile and returns to Argos to avenge his father's death. With the aid of his sister Electra and the god Apollo, Orestes must go about the worst task of all: to avenge his father, he must kill his mother.

Clytemnestra senses her impending fall. "You are the snake I bore – I gave you life" she cries out to her son. But she must accept the fate she has created for herself.

Her destiny is sealed.

Orestes, too, has a price to pay. His mother has unleashed the Furies, which will drive him mad.



Les Eumenides

Finally, with *Les Eumenides*, the cycle of murder and revenge is about to be broken.

The Furies pursue Orestes to Apollo's shrine at Delphi. Although Apollo would purge Orestes of his guilt, he cannot disperse the Furies. Apollo then sends

Orestes to Athena for judgement.

Athena invokes a tribunal that becomes the Areopagus; her famous court of law. At last, justice is about to supplant vengeance.

Orestes is acquitted and restored to his father's land in Argos. Even the Furies are transformed. They become the Eumenides – the 'well wishers' and benevolent patrons of Athens.

At long last, a new age has begun.



Booking Form

*I would like to attend the following performance(s)
of Le Théâtre du Soleil's Les Atrides as indicated below:*

DATE	PLAY	TIME	NO. OF SEATS
<input type="checkbox"/> 16th July	Iphigenie à Aulis	8 pm	
<input type="checkbox"/> 17th July	Iphigenie à Aulis	8 pm	
<input type="checkbox"/> 18th July	Agamemnon	4 pm	
<input type="checkbox"/> 18th July	Les Choephores	8 pm	
<input type="checkbox"/> 19th July	Les Eumenides	4 pm	
<input type="checkbox"/> 21st July	Agamemnon	8 pm	
<input type="checkbox"/> 22nd July	Les Choephores	4 pm	
<input type="checkbox"/> 22nd July	Les Eumenides	8 pm	

PRICES: A discount is available if you are booking for more than one play.

N.B. For Equity member prices and discounts for Over 60s, Children, Passport to Leisure Holders, Unwaged, and Students, please contact the Box Office Hotline.

	4 Plays £48 (£12 each)
	3 Plays £42 (£14 each)
	2 Plays £32 (£16 each)
	1 Play £17.75

Enclosed is a cheque payable to Bradford Council for £_____ for the seats indicated.

PLEASE CHARGE MY CREDIT CARD ACCOUNT:

ACCESS VISA

CARD NUMBER:

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SIGNATURE _____

EXPIRY DATE _____

MR/MRS/MS/MISS FIRST NAME _____

SURNAME _____

ADDRESS _____

POSTCODE _____ DAYTIME TEL _____

Directions to the venue will be sent with your tickets along with details of Hotels offering special rates for 'Les Atrides' attenders.

For the fastest possible service call the Box Office Hotline on 0800 555871.

Please return this form to Bradford Theatres' Box
Office, 64-66 Morley Street, Bradford BD7 1AQ.

Ticket Information

Please note:

Each play, performed in French, stands on its own. There is a discount if you choose to see more than one. The raked seating is an integral part of the set. All seats will be numbered and there is no restricted view.

FULL PRICE SUBSCRIPTION		
4 plays	£48.00	(£12.00 each)
3 plays	£42.00	(£14.00 each)
2 plays	£32.00	(£16.00 each)
1 play	£17.75	

DISCOUNT SUBSCRIPTION FOR EQUITY CARD HOLDERS		
4 plays	£40.00	(£10.00 each)
3 plays	£36.00	(£12.00 each)
2 plays	£28.00	(£14.00 each)
1 play	£15.00	

DISCOUNTS

Over 60s, Passport to Leisure Holders, Unwaged People, Students, Children:

All Seats £10.00

Student Standby on the day of performance (also available to Passport to Leisure Holders and Unwaged People):

All Seats £5.00

NB: LATECOMERS WILL NOT BE ADMITTED. TICKETS CANNOT BE REFUNDED UNLESS A PERFORMANCE IS CANCELLED.



Le Théâtre du Soleil

&

Ariane Mnouchkine

Ariane Mnouchkine's work with the legendary collective Le Théâtre du Soleil has already revolutionised European theatre.

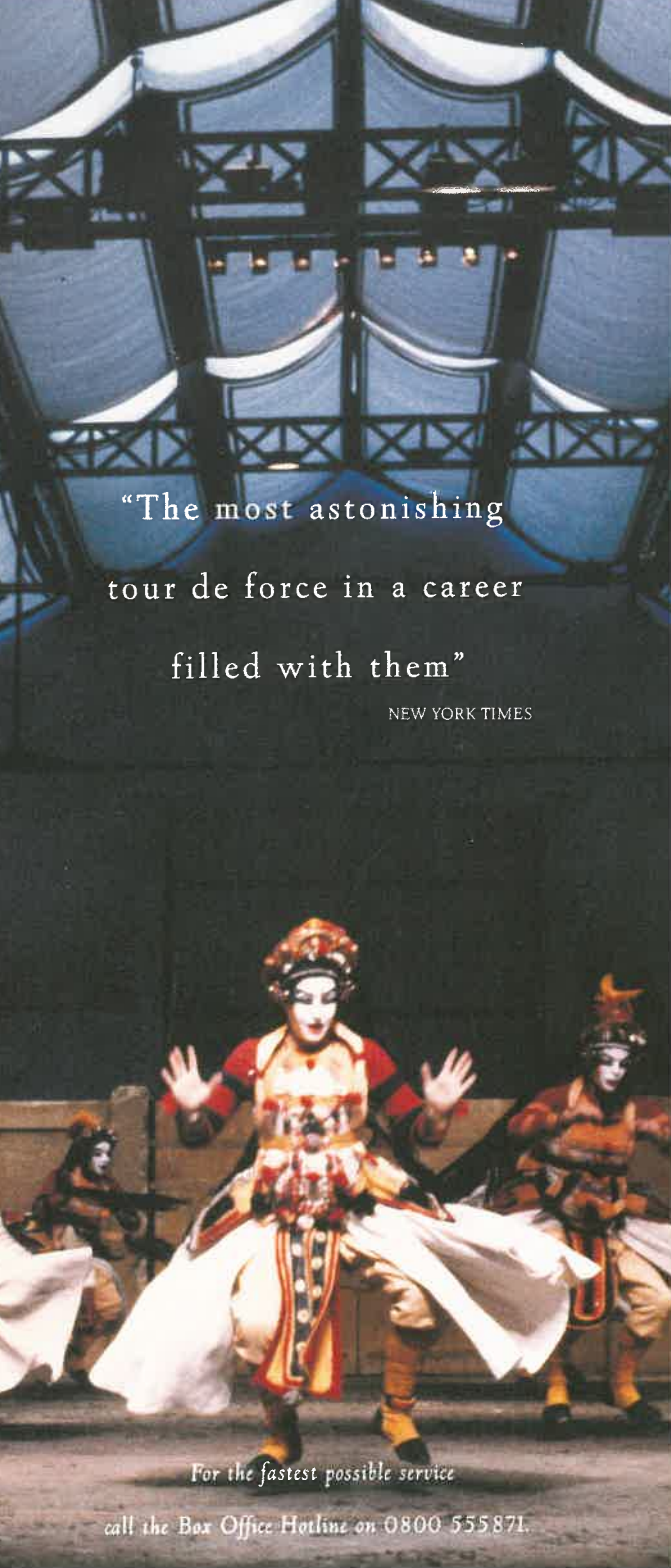
For Mnouchkine, theatre is a total vocation, giving her the opportunity to confront injustice and despair with a positive example of dramatic art as a shared living experience.

Her association with Le Théâtre du Soleil began with its formation in 1964. Their first production, Gorky's 'Petits Bourgeois' marked the beginning of a series of successes – 'L'Age D'Or', three spectacular forays into Shakespeare and – most recently – a unique series of plays written by Helene Cixous.

A visit to the Roundhouse, London in 1971 with '1789' was one of the theatre highlights of the decade and Britain has since eagerly awaited her return visit.

What distinguishes Le Théâtre du Soleil, is their existence as a collective. Irrespective of their status in the company, all members share in the everyday work of the theatre – building sets, sewing costumes, taking tickets – and all receive equal pay.

The company's place in the history of international theatre is already assured. Now, with *Les Atrides*, their first – and only – appearance in the UK for 21 years, Ariane Mnouchkine has returned them to the very roots of Western drama.



“The most astonishing
tour de force in a career
filled with them”

NEW YORK TIMES

For the fastest possible service

call the Box Office Hotline on 0800 555871.

Take your seat
for the centrepiece
of the
European Arts Festival

