

Renowned theatre director Eugenio Barba and Denmark's Odin Teatret to present "The Chronic Life" (with photos)

Fifteen years after their last appearance in Hong Kong, renowned theatre director Eugenio Barba together with the acclaimed Odin Teatret will return with the thought-provoking work "The Chronic Life", in which the Danish-based acting lab delves into the disoriented times of 2031.

Famous for the extraordinary calibre of their work, Odin Teatret actors have created their own theatrical language, using bodies and sound to deliver dialogue that those watching must reflect on to work out. The group often performs in multiple languages and "The Chronic Life" has been staged without subtitles across Europe, Asia and the Americas.

"The Chronic Life" takes place in Europe in 2031, after the third civil war. Individuals and groups with different backgrounds come together and challenge each other driven by uprooting, war, unemployment and financial crises. A boy from Latin America arrives in the civilised regions of Europe in search of his father, who has inexplicably disappeared. The child ignores what everybody knows: that life is a chronic disease from which the planet with its history is unable to free itself. It is neither knowledge nor innocence that saves the boy. A new ignorance helps him to discover his door.

The 82-year-old director Eugenio Barba established Odin Teatret in 1964. The theatre group approaches training through total apprenticeship, and it has so far performed in 66 countries. It currently has 44 members from 11 countries across four continents.

Over the years, Odin Teatret has strived to become a professional and scholarly milieu characterised by cross-disciplinary endeavours and international collaborations. One of its most notable research initiatives is the International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA). Since 1979, ISTA, founded by Barba, has become a performers' village in which actors and dancers can meet with scholars.

Apart from research and acting, the "barter" practice of Odin Teatret has also received critical acclaim in Denmark and abroad. The practice stands for an exchange of cultural manifestations. Through different social interactions, actors can earn insights from other forms of expression that they add to their own cultural presentations.

"The Chronic Life" is one of the programmes of the World Cultures Festival 2019 – The Nordics. It will be staged at 8pm from October 31 to November 2 and also at 3pm on November 3 at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre

Studio Theatre. The programme is performed in multiple languages with no surtitles. Tickets priced at \$420 (free seating) are now available at URB TIX (www.urbtix.hk). For credit card telephone bookings, please call 2111 5999.

A "Go Nordic!" limited-time offer is valid until September 30, offering a discount of 30 per cent off all full-price tickets on stage programmes.

Organised by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the World Cultures Festival 2019 – The Nordics will run from October 18 to November 17. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2370 1044 or visit www.worldfestival.gov.hk.

