

MELBOURNE
FESTIVAL

08—25
OCTOBER
2015

MEDIA
RELEASE



“A superbly handled multimedia speculation on the nature of truth that never lets the audience off the hook.” ★★★★★ – *The Guardian*, UK

**“A chilling, relentlessly ingenious 101 minutes.”
★★★★★ – *The Times*, UK**

Arts Centre Melbourne
Playhouse

Friday 16 – Sunday 25 October

(No show 19 October)

Tue at 6.30pm

Wed – Sat at 8pm

Wed also at 1pm

Sat also at 2pm

Sun at 5pm

101 mins, no interval

Premium \$109

A Reserve \$89 / \$79

B Reserve \$79 / \$69

Students \$25

Transaction fees may apply

www.festival.melbourne
Southbank Theatre 03 8688
Ticketmaster 136 100

#melbfest

UK // Theatre

Australian Exclusive

Melbourne Festival in association with Philip and Caroline Cornish
presents

1984

Headlong

Written by George Orwell

A new adaptation created by Robert Icke & Duncan Macmillan

The West End smash hit adaptation of George Orwell's dystopian masterpiece *1984* will have an exclusive Australian season as part of Melbourne Festival.

April, 1984. 13:00. Comrade 6079, Winston Smith, thinks a thought, starts a diary, and falls in love.

But Big Brother is always watching, and the door to Room 101 can swing open in the blink of an eye.

Over 250,000 people have already seen Headlong's radically staged production of **1984**, one of theatre's most powerful events of recent times. It received a nomination for Best New Play at the Olivier Awards, won a UK Theatre Award for Best Direction, and forms a timely reminder of the dangers posed by the digital age and society's subconscious cooperation in our own surveillance.

Published in 1949, **1984** is one of the most influential novels of all time, with its depiction of perpetual war pervasive government tracking and mind control and the corruption of language and history. Its ideas have become our ideas, and Orwell's fiction is often said to be our reality.

US Senator Bernie Sanders warned of an “Orwellian future” when responding to the rise of Wikileaks and the release of classified NSA files by Edward Snowden. Filtering the spirit and the ambition of the novel through this lens of contemporary culture, this new staging explores identity, a world where love is forbidden, and how thinking you can fly might actually be the first step to flying.

In this critically acclaimed adaptation co-written and directed by Robert Icke and Duncan Macmillan, the paranoid lives of Winston and Julia crackle into life.

MEDIA CONTACT

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PRESENTING PARTNERS
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SOFITEL
LUXURY HOTELS

774 ABC
Melbourne



PRINCIPAL
PUBLIC PARTNER

CREATIVE
VICTORIA



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Cast

Ben Porter, Christopher Patrick Nolan, Janine Harouni, Mandi Symonds, Mathew Spencer, Simon Coates, Stephen Fewell, Tim Dutton

They bring us an exquisitely realised vision of a permeating tale – a world teeming with flickering screens and hidden cameras.

For the very first time, this visceral reworking looks at the book in its entirety with a focus firmly on the novel's appendix, shedding new light on a canonised text we all think we know but don't.

Melbourne Festival Artistic Director, Josephine Ridge said: "**1984** has, for decades, captured the public and critical imagination alike. With superb theatricality and insightful intelligence, Headlong's production brings all the power and topicality of **1984** into the contemporary arena reminding us all again of Orwell's extraordinary prescience and powerful imagination."

Forward-thinking UK theatre renegades Headlong are famed for their technologically innovative theatre making and dynamic reworkings of classic texts. The Company makes exhilarating, risk-taking and provocative new work to take around the country and around the world, and encourages artists to ask provocative questions of the modern world in the most explosive ways they can imagine.

- ★★★★★ – *Time Out*, London
- ★★★★★ – *The Observer*, UK
- ★★★★★ – *WhatsOnStage*, UK
- ★★★★★ – *Financial Times*, UK

As part of the season of **1984**, Melbourne Festival will present a series of special events responding to this production including: with University of Melbourne **Language, Performance and Power: Reflecting on 1984 in 2015** at Clemenger Auditorium on 21 October; with ACMI, **Aural Contract: The Voice Before the Law** with artist Lawrence Abu Hamdan, curated by Liquid Architecture on 18 October; **George Orwell's 1984: A Live Reading** at the Legislative Assembly Chamber in Victoria's Parliament House on 17 October co-presented with the Wheeler Centre; and **Eyes Without a Face: Surveillance in Cinema** program at ACMI from 8-25 October.

1984 is presented in association with Headlong, Almeida Theatre and Nottingham Playhouse. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell (Copyright, 1949) by permission of Bill Hamilton as the Literary Executor of the Estate of the Late Sonia Brownell Orwell, in a new adaptation created by Robert Icke and Duncan Macmillan.

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