

## NEWS RELEASE

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### SEVEN ARTISTIC MASTERS TAKE ON MENTORING ROLE IN THE ROLEX ARTS INITIATIVE

**David Chipperfield, Mia Couto, Alfonso Cuarón, Philip Glass, Joan Jonas, Robert Lepage and Ohad Naharin to Mentor Emerging Young Artists**

**Mexico City, 6 December 2015**

Seven of the world's most acclaimed artists have accepted an invitation to mentor a rising young talent for a year, through the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative. The seven artists are: David Chipperfield (architecture), Mia Couto (literature), Alfonso Cuarón (film), Philip Glass (music), Joan Jonas (visual arts), Robert Lepage (theatre) and Ohad Naharin (dance).

The new mentors were announced at a ceremony in Mexico on 6 December 2015 honouring the mentors and protégés of the 2014–2015 edition of the Rolex Arts Initiative.

This international philanthropic programme seeks out highly talented young artists from around the world and brings them together with great masters for a year of creative collaboration in a one-to-one mentoring relationship. The mentoring year will begin in mid-2016.

"These seven artists have had a profound influence on their disciplines for decades and are held in high esteem by the public and their peers," said Rebecca Irvin, head of philanthropy at Rolex. "We acknowledge their generosity in serving as mentors in the Rolex Arts Initiative. They will join the family of internationally acclaimed artists who have committed to passing on their passion and expertise to a younger generation and to be reinvigorated in their own art in return."

Among the notable achievements of the new mentors are:

#### **Architecture**

Driven by an approach to architecture that values "substance, permanence and meaning" above spectacle, British architect **Sir David Chipperfield** has gained renown for a diverse portfolio. Among his notable buildings are the reconstructed Neues Museum in Berlin, the Museo Jumex in Mexico City and the UK's Turner Contemporary gallery, recently chosen as a 21st-century British landmark.

### Dance

One of today's most pre-eminent and visionary choreographers, **Ohad Naharin**, artistic director of Israel's Batsheva Dance Company, is renowned for pioneering some of the most inventive and intriguing styles of movement in contemporary dance, such as Gaga, his innovative movement language that has emerged as a growing force for both dancers and non-dancers.

### Film

Film director, screenwriter, producer and editor **Alfonso Cuarón** is acclaimed for his highly original films. Successes such as *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* and *Children of Men* were followed by the technically innovative thriller, *Gravity* (2013), which won Cuarón Oscars for Best Director – the first Mexican to earn this accolade – and Best Film Editing.

### Literature

**Mia Couto**, one of Africa's foremost writers, uses creative language to craft evocative poetry, short stories and novels. The Mozambique-born author's first novel, *Terra Sonâmbula (Sleepwalking Land)*, is widely considered among the 20th-century's best African books, helping him win the 2014 Neustadt International Prize for Literature. Couto was nominated for the Man Booker International Prize 2015 for his body of work.

### Music

Influential American composer **Philip Glass** is known worldwide for his evocative music that is recognizable by its repetitive structures. The boundary-defying compositions include symphonies, concertos, film soundtracks and operas, the most famous of which is *Einstein on the Beach*, his collaboration with Robert Wilson. The *Washington Post* called it one of the seminal artworks of the 20th century.

### Theatre

Demonstrating a virtuosity in every type of theatre craft, Canadian **Robert Lepage** is an equally talented theatre, opera and film director, playwright and actor whose avant-garde work has captivated audiences worldwide. As head of the multidisciplinary production company, Ex Machina, he has also directed rock shows and circuses, including the Cirque du Soleil.

### Visual Arts

Described as a "titan of the American avant garde", the internationally acclaimed performance and video artist **Joan Jonas** has made an indelible mark on the visual arts over nearly 50 years. A retrospective of her work was recently showcased in Milan and her new multimedia installation drew huge crowds to the US Pavilion at the 2015 Venice Biennale.

Nominating panels of influential artists and arts professionals from all over the world are meeting to select young talents who will be asked to apply to the programme. The mentor will choose a protégé from three or four finalists, whose names will be announced in June 2016.

Each protégé receives 25,000 Swiss francs to support his or her participation in the programme, with a further 25,000 Swiss francs available for the creation of a new work at the conclusion of the mentoring year. Mentors are asked to spend up to six weeks with their protégés, but the pairs have complete freedom to interact in the way that suits them best.

The Advisory Board who suggested the 2016–2017 mentors was comprised of Pierre Audi (Lebanon/France), performing arts director; Jean-Claude Carrière (France), screenwriter; Marie Collin (France), artistic director; Francesco Dal Co (Italy), architecture historian, professor and editor; Anne Teresa De Keersmaecker (Belgium), dancer and choreographer; Lord Norman Foster (UK), architect; Michael Govan (US), museum director and curator; Pico Iyer (UK), writer; Amin Maalouf (Lebanon/France), author and librettist; Shirin Neshat (Iran), visual artist; Luiz Schwarcz (Brazil), publisher and writer; Julie Taymor (US), theatre, film and opera director; Rokia Traoré (Mali), singer, songwriter and musician; Xu Bing (China), visual artist; and Gabriel Yared (Lebanon/France), film composer.

### **The Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative**

The Rolex Arts Initiative is a biennial philanthropic programme created by Rolex to ensure that the world's artistic heritage is passed on from generation to generation, across continents and cultures. Since its launch in 2002, the initiative has built a remarkable artistic community that connects artists around the globe. Some of the world's most distinguished artists have served as mentors. They are: Margaret Atwood, John Baldessari, Tahar Ben Jelloun, Trisha Brown, the late Patrice Chéreau, the late Sir Colin Davis, Anne Teresa De Keersmaecker, Olafur Eliasson, Brian Eno, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, William Forsythe, Stephen Frears, Gilberto Gil, Sir Peter Hall, David Hockney, Rebecca Horn, Alejandro González Iñárritu, Sir Anish Kapoor, William Kentridge, Jiří Kylián, Lin Hwai-min, Toni Morrison, Walter Murch, Mira Nair, Youssou N'Dour, Jessye Norman, Michael Ondaatje, Alexei Ratmanský, Kaija Saariaho, Martin Scorsese, Kazuyo Sejima, Peter Sellars, Álvaro Siza, Wole Soyinka, Julie Taymor, Saburo Teshigawara, Jennifer Tipton, Kate Valk, Mario Vargas Llosa, Robert Wilson, Zhang Yimou, Pinchas Zukerman and Peter Zumthor.

Further information about the Rolex Arts Initiative is available at [rolexmentorprotege.com](http://rolexmentorprotege.com).

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