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Triumphs and Laments: A Project for Rome by William Kentridge at Piazza Tevere in Rome



A major new site-specific work by internationally acclaimed South African artist **William Kentridge**, entitled *Triumphs and Laments: A Project for Rome* will be inaugurated this week in Rome. A rich array of events will accompany the inauguration, scheduled to take place on the 21st and 22nd of April 2016.

The artist's most ambitious project to date, *Triumphs and Laments* is a 500 meter-long frieze, erased from the biological patina on the travertine embankment walls that line Rome's urban waterfront. Exploring dominant tensions in the history of the Eternal City from past to present, more than eighty figures, up to 10 meters high, represent Rome's greatest victories and defeats from mythological time to present, forming a silhouetted procession on Piazza Tevere.

"The hope is that, [as] people walk the extent of these 500 meters, they will see images of the history they find both familiar and transformed in some way. And this will reflect the complex way in which a city is represented... We are trying to find the triumph in the lament and the lament in the triumph, putting together a sense of history from fragments." – William Kentridge

Triumphs and Laments will premiere with a live theatrical program – free and open to the public – performed on **21 April (the symbolic birthday of the City of Rome) at 8:30pm** and on **22 April, 2016 at 8:30pm and 10:30pm**.

Created by Kentridge, with original music by renowned South African composer **Philip Miller** and **Thuthuka Sibisi**, the performance features live shadow play and two musical processions – one an expression of triumph, one of lament – converging against the backdrop of the frieze, projecting voices and instruments across the river where the public will gather. The music, inspired by the liturgical songs of late Renaissance Italian composer **Salomone Rossi**, incorporates

traditional sounds of southern Italy, the words of poet **Rainer Maria Rilke**, and fragments of graffiti from the Tiber embankment walls where Kentridge's frieze now stands, interwoven with songs and chants from beyond the borders of Europe. The music of *Triumphs and Laments* is a music of exodus, of tragedy, of hope.

The processions will feature more than forty musicians and vocalists, including soloists **Lavinia Mancusi**, **Ann Masina**, **Joanna Dudley**, **Patrizia Rotonda** and **Bham Ntabeni**, as well as a diverse range of instruments, from the soft tones of the African kora to the rousing drone of the Italian zampogna. Voices from both the past and present will rise and fall in the call and response of *Triumphs and Laments*: a Mandinkan slave song from West Africa, an ancient Southern Italian melismatic folk song, a battle song from the Zulu warriors – with Rilke's words to be recited and sung throughout: "That is the longing: to dwell amidst the waves / and have no homeland in time."

In conjunction with the opening, **TEVERETERNO** will present the first edition of its **Young Composers Commission (YCC) on 22 April 22 at 1pm**. Directed by composer **David Monacchi** and produced in collaboration with two of Italy's leading conservatories, **G. Rossini of Pesaro** and **Santa Cecilia in Rome**, the YCC will feature original compositions created by emerging Italian composers, inspired by the Tiber site.

The public is invited to watch and listen from the left bank (east) of the river, opposite the frieze, which can be accessed via staircases at **Ponte Sisto** and **Ponte Mazzini**, and from the street (**Lungotevere dei Tebaldi**) and bridges above.



William Kentridge at work on "Triumphs and Laments" in his Johannesburg studio. Photo by Marc Shoul (2014)



William Kentridge at work on Triumphs and Laments in his Johannesburg studio. Photo by Kristen Jones (2015)



Triumphs and Laments: A Project for Rome was conceived by artist **William Kentridge** in collaboration with composer **Philip Miller**, with the artistic direction of **Kristin Jones**. The project is promoted by **Associazione TEVERETERNO Onlus** and is produced by **THE OFFICE performing arts + film** under the technical direction of **STEP s.r.l.**

All [TEVERETERNO](#) programs are free and open to the public.

For more information about *Triumphs and Laments* please click [here](#).

< [The Cave by Cristian Chironi at Cava Arte Contemporanea in Cagliari](#)
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