

Tuesday, June 9, 2009, 8pm
 Wednesday, June 10, 2009, 8pm
 Thursday, June 11, 2009, 8pm
 Friday, June 12, 2009, 8pm
 Saturday, June 13, 2009, 2pm & 8pm
 Zellerbach Playhouse

Ex Machina



The Blue Dragon

by Marie Michaud & Robert Lepage

Ex Machina is funded by the Canada Council for the Arts,
 Quebec's Arts and Literature Council and the City of Quebec.

Cal Performances' 2008–2009 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo Bank.

The Blue Dragon

Québécois director Robert Lepage's characters are often travelers drawn to the revealing encounter with the other, the exotic, the unknown. Yet in all the stories Mr. Lepage has told through opera, film or theater, only one of his characters has ever gone away for good—Pierre Lamontagne, the central figure in *The Dragons' Trilogy*, who departs as the play closes to study art in China.

Twenty years later, Lamontagne resurfaces in Shanghai's Moganshan 50, a former industrial complex converted into an arts center, now the heart of the contemporary Chinese art scene. Here he meets Claire Forêt, a Montreal ad executive, arrives for a visit to rekindle their friendship and adopt a Chinese baby. Claire, who had known Pierre in another life at art school, casts a decidedly Western eye on his current existence. Through the shock of their rediscovery and confrontation, their common past opens an unexpected door to the future for both. Enter Xiao Ling, a Chinese artist exhibiting at Pierre's gallery. As she faces wrenching choices, the young woman awakens hopes long buried in Claire.

In the effervescent paradox that is modern China, the collision of these three characters brings about fundamental changes for each.

Co-written by Robert Lepage, winner of the 2007 Europe Theatre Prize, and his collaborator Marie Michaud (who also co-authored *The Dragons' Trilogy*), and performed by Mr. Lepage, Ms. Michaud and dancer Tai Wei Foo, *The Blue Dragon* bears all the hallmarks of Mr. Lepage's original, brilliant and highly visual style. As always, Mr. Lepage relies on the one inexhaustible resource the theater possesses—the audience's intelligence.

Ex Machina
The Blue Dragon

<i>Text</i>	Marie Michaud & Robert Lepage
<i>English Translation</i>	Michael Mackenzie
<i>Director</i>	Robert Lepage
<i>Assistant to the Director</i>	Félix Dagenais
<i>Performers</i>	Marie Michaud, Robert Lepage, Tai Wei Foo
<i>Set Designer</i>	Michel Gauthier
<i>Properties Designer</i>	Jeanne Lapierre
<i>Sound Designer</i>	Jean-Sébastien Côté
<i>Lighting Designer</i>	Louis-Xavier Gagnon-Lebrun
<i>Costume Designer</i>	François St-Aubin, <i>assisted by</i> Jessica Poirier-Chang
<i>Projection Designer</i>	David Leclerc
<i>Choreographer</i>	Tai Wei Foo
<i>Director's Agent</i>	Lynda Beaulieu
<i>Production Manager</i>	Julie Marie Bourgeois
<i>Technical Director</i>	Pierre Gagné
<i>Tour Manager</i>	Danielle Fiset
<i>Stage Manager</i>	Christian Garon
<i>Sound Manager</i>	Jean-Sébastien Côté
<i>Video Manager</i>	Alexis Rivest
<i>Lighting Manager</i>	Félix Bernier Guimond
<i>Wardrobe & Prop Manager</i>	Jeanne Lapierre
<i>Chief Stagehand</i>	Chloé Blanchet
<i>Stagehand</i>	Yannick Dufour
<i>Technical Consultants</i>	Tobie Horswill, Catherine Guay
<i>Wigs</i>	Richard Hansen
<i>Set Construction</i>	Astuce Décors inc., Les Conceptions visuelles Jean-Marc Cyr inc., Conception Alain Gagné inc.
<i>Chinese Calligraphy</i>	Truong Chanh Trung

Producers

<i>Ex Machina, in co-production with</i>	
La Comète (Scène Nationale de Châlons-en-Champagne)	
La Filature, Scène Nationale de Mulhouse	
MC2: Maison de la Culture de Grenoble	
Le Théâtre du Nouveau Monde, Montréal	
Festival Internacional de las Artes de Castilla y León, Salamanca 2008	
Théâtre du Trident, Québec	
Simon Fraser University, Vancouver	
UCLA Live	
Canada's National Arts Centre, Ottawa	
Cal Performances	
barbican bite 10, London	
BITEF: Belgrade International Theater Festival	
Le Volcan, Scène Nationale du Havre	
TNT: Théâtre National de Toulouse Midi-Pyrénées	
<i>Associate Producer, the Americas, Asia</i> <i>(except Japan), Australia & New Zealand</i>	
Menno Plukker	
<i>Producer for Ex Machina</i>	
Michel Bernatchez	
<i>AEA Stage Manager</i>	
Kate Stewart	
<i>Ex Machina appears by permission of the Actors' Equity Association.</i>	



Versatile in every form of theater craft, **Robert Lepage** is equally talented as a director, scenic artist, playwright, actor and film director. His creative and original approach to theater has won him international acclaim and shaken the dogma of classical stage direction to its foundations, especially through his use of new technologies. Contemporary history is his source of inspiration, and his modern and unusual work transcends all boundaries.

Robert Lepage was born in Quebec in 1957. He took an early interest in geography, and when he later discovered all art forms, theater caught his particular attention. He entered the Conservatoire d'Art Dramatique de Québec in 1975 at the age of 17. After a study period in Paris in 1978, he returned to Quebec and became involved in many creative projects, gaining experience as actor, author and director. Two years later, he joined the Théâtre Repère.

In 1984, his play *Circulations* toured Canada and received Best Canadian Production award at the Quinzaine Internationale de Théâtre de Québec. The next year, *The Dragons' Trilogy* gained him an international reputation, quickly followed

by *Vinci* (1986), *Polygraph* (1987) and *Tectonic Plates* (1988). In 1988, he formed his own professional management company, Robert Lepage Inc. (RLI).

From 1989 to 1993, he was Artistic Director of the Théâtre Français at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. Meanwhile pursuing his own creative projects, he directed *Needles and Opium* (1991–1993 and 1994–1996), *Coriolanus*, *Macbeth* and *The Tempest* (1992–1994). With *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1992, he became the first North American to direct a Shakespeare play at the Royal National Theatre in London.

A turning point in his career came with the founding of his multidisciplinary production company, Ex Machina, in 1994. Under his artistic direction, this new team produced a steady output of plays, beginning with *The Seven Streams of the River Ota* (1994), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1995) and a solo production, *Elsinore* (1995). In 1994, he made his début in the world of cinema. He wrote and directed his first feature film, *Le Confessionnel*, which appeared the following year at the Cannes Festival Directors' Fortnight. He went on to direct *The Polygraph* in 1996, *Nô* in 1997, *Possible Worlds* in 2000 (his first feature film written in English) and, in 2003, a film adaptation of his play *The Far Side of the Moon*.

The Caserne, a multidisciplinary production centre in Quebec City, opened in 1997 under Robert Lepage's leadership. In their new quarters, he and his team created and produced *Geometry of Miracles* (1998), *Zulu Time* (1999), *The Far Side of the Moon* (2000), *La Casa Azul* (2001), *The Busker's Opera* (2004), a new version of *The Dragons' Trilogy* with a new cast (2003), and *1984*, an opera based on the novel by George Orwell, composed and conducted by Lorin Maazel (2005). This was followed by *The Andersen Project* (2005), *Lipsynch* (2007), *The Rake's Progress* by Igor Stravinsky, which premiered at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels in April 2007, *The Blue Dragon* (2008) and Ex Machina's newest production, *Eonmagata* (2009).

Robert Lepage is often asked to turn his creative hand to new fields. His staging of *Bluebeard's Castle* and *Erwartung* as a double opera bill was an instant hit in 1992, and the following year he directed Peter Gabriel's *Secret World* tour. He returned to the world of song with *The Damnation*

of *Faust* in Japan (1999) and Paris (2001, 2004 and 2006), and in 2000 he was involved in producing *Métissages*, an exhibition at the Musée de la Civilisation in Quebec City. In 2002, he joined forces with Peter Gabriel again to direct the *Growing Up* tour. He later designed and directed *KÅ*, a permanent Cirque du Soleil show in Las Vegas which premiered in February 2005. In 2008, for Quebec City's 400th anniversary, Robert Lepage and Ex Machina created *The Image Mill*, the largest architectural projection ever achieved.

Robert Lepage's work has been recognized by many awards. Among the most important was the medal of the Officers of the Ordre National du Québec in 1999. In September 2000, he was given the SORIQ Award (La Société des Relations Internationales de Québec) for the impact of his work outside Quebec. In October 2001, he was recognized with the World Leaders Association of Harbourfront Centre, once again in honor of the international scope of his career. In 2002, France received him into the Légion d'Honneur, the Quebec Chamber of Commerce named him "Grand Québécois," and he won the Herbert Whittaker Drama Bench Award for his outstanding contribution to Canadian theater. The following year, he won the Denise Pelletier Prize, the highest distinction awarded by the Quebec government in the performing arts field, as well as the National Theatre School's Gascon Thomas Award. In 2004, he was awarded the Hans Christian Andersen Prize for his outstanding artistic contribution to honoring Hans Christian Andersen worldwide. In 2005, he received the Institut France-Canada's

Samuel de Champlain Prize for his contribution to French culture and the Stanislavski Award for his contribution to international theater and the dissemination of his productions *The Dragons' Trilogy*, *The Seven Streams of the River Ota* and *The Busker's Opera*. In 2007, the Festival de l'Union des Théâtres de l'Europe honored him with the distinguished Prix Europe, previously awarded to Ariane Mnouchkine and Robert Wilson, among others. The production of *The Far Side of the Moon* was recognized by the Golden Mask Festival of Russian Performing Arts 2007 in the category of Best Foreign Production.

In 1993, when Robert Lepage asked his collaborators to help find a name for his new company, he had one condition: the word theater could not be part of the name. **Ex Machina** is thus a multidisciplinary company bringing together actors, writers, set designers, technicians, opera singers, puppeteers, computer graphic designers, video artists, film producers, contortionists and musicians. Ex Machina's creative team believes that theater needs new blood. That the performing arts—dance, opera, music—should be mixed with recorded arts—filmmaking, video art and multimedia. That there must be meetings between scientists and playwrights, between set painters and architects, and between artists from Québec and the rest of the world. New artistic forms will surely emerge from these gatherings. Ex Machina wants to rise to the challenge and become a laboratory, an incubator for a form of theater that will reach and touch audiences in this new millennium.