

World Premiere of *Touching the Void* coming to Edinburgh's Lyceum

The world premiere of *Touching the Void*, based on the best-selling true story by British climber Joe Simpson, and adapted for the stage by David Greig is coming to Edinburgh's Lyceum in January 2019.



Written in 1988 before becoming a film in 2003, *Touching the Void* recounts the astonishing true story of Joe Simpson and Simon Yates' near-fatal climb of the West Face of the Siula Grande in the Peruvian Andes – a feat that had previously been attempted but never achieved, and one that would nearly cost both climbers their lives.

This was the Surprise film at the EIFF a few years back, and nobody was more surprised than me that I managed to stay the course!

The heart of the novel is Joe Simpson's mental battle as he teeters on the very brink of death and despair in a crevasse from which he can't possibly climb to safety. Also unforgettable in the story is the appalling dilemma of Simon Yates, perched on an unstable snow-cliff, battered by freezing winds and desperate to rescue the injured Simpson, who hangs from a rope below him. Knowing that they will both ultimately fall into the void, he makes the critical decision to cut the rope, forever changing the lives of both of them.

Written for the stage by The Lyceum's Artistic Director David Greig, whose plays include *The Suppliant Women*, *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart*, *The Events*, and *Midsummer*; *Touching the Void* will be directed Bristol Old Vic's Artistic Director

Tom Morris, whose past work includes *Swallows & Amazons*, *The Grinning Man* (transferring to the West End in December 2017) and the five-time Tony Award winner, *War Horse*.



The Lyceum's Artistic Director David Greig said: "Touching the Void is one of the great true stories of adventure and survival. It's a tale that has reached beyond just the climbing world and become mythological. Joe Simpson made an extraordinary choice. When it would have been easier to die, he chose to live. To make that choice he had to reach into the very depths of what it is to be human: the desire to live, love and connect to others. How do you do climbing on stage? I don't know! Whatever we do it's going to take a thrilling theatricality to realise this book and I can't wait to work with Tom Morris to bring it to life. It's an existential thriller that will have audiences clinging on to the edge of their seats. And it's got Boney M."

Touching the Void

Adapted by David Greig

Based on the book by Joe Simpson

Directed by Tom Morris

Opening: Bristol Old Vic, October 2018

The Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh, January 2019