Beat: Entertainment

14 - 18 The Musical

A Spectacular New Musical

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USPA NEWS - “˜14-18´ is a spectacular musical production which aims is to communicate the turbulent background of World War One to a modern audience in a new and totally innovative way. This is an authentic, never-seen-before theatre experience, and totally unique in Europe!

Performed in a specially adapted venue in Belgium with a capacity of nearly 2000, “˜14-18´ fully immerses the audience in the action giving them an insight into the all-consuming, devastating affects a war of this magnitude can have on the lives of everyday people. This awe inspiring production has a huge 150 metre stage and is staged in a venue that spans an area as big as two football fields. It´s unique and ground breaking seating design allows the audience to be propelled 150 metres forwards and backwards. The audience are thus able to view from a distance the magnitude and violence of war during battle whilst being brought very close during the more touching and romantic scenes.
Aimed at an international audience, ´14-18´ premiers on April 20th in the Nekkerhal in Mechelen, Belgium and an unprecedented 160,000 tickets have been sold to date. The play is performed in Dutch; however there will be some English speaking performances, with an English cast, from May 22nd, which are set to attract theatre fans, historians, war commentators, ex patriots based in Belgium and teachers and students from the UK.
“˜14-18´ is a collaboration between Studio 100, Laurence Olivier award winning writer and director Frank Van Laecke, Dirk Brossé and Allard Blom. Dirk Brosse was nominated for a prestigious Emmy Award for BBC series “˜Parade´s End´ and is also the Music Director of The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia. Frank Van Laecke had previously collaborated with Emmy winner Allard Blom and Dirk Brosse on the hit musical “˜Daens´ and the trio were thrilled with the concept and challenge of “˜14-18´;
“˜We knew we would be able to reach a large audience, it is a powerful story of romance and unconditional friendship set against a backdrop of horror and war.´

14-18: A Spectacular Musical

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An Unforgettable Event

28 July 1914: “The Great War breaks out. Among the mobilised Belgian troops are the loyal band of friends consisting of Jan, his younger brother Kamiel, his best friend Fons and head-strong Albert.

At the outset, everyone is convinced that the hostilities will be short-lived but the conflict not only drags on much longer, it is also more barbaric than could ever be imagined.
Jan, who is now a father, needs to see his son and wife, Anna. Albert longs for his sweetheart, while Kamiel, quaking with fear at any form of violence, tries desperately to escape the situation. Fons shows his softer side when he falls for pretty nurse, Celine.

What follows is a heroic battle for survival.

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UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
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