

PRESS RELEASE – 17 September 2025

Complicité

Complicité and Nederlands Dans Theater win Sky Arts Dance Award
for trilogy *Figures in Extinction*



Image credit: Sky Arts Awards

Complicité is delighted to announce that *Figures in Extinction*, our urgent dance trilogy co-created by Simon McBurney and choreographer Crystal Pite, in a co-production with Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT), has been awarded the 2025 Sky Arts Dance Award.

Developed over four years and performed by the astounding dancers of NDT 1, *Figures in Extinction* responds to escalating environmental and social collapse, evolving through three interconnected works that fuse dance, spoken word, music and documentary.

It journeys through themes of ecological loss, human disconnection and collective grief. From a stark catalogue of extinct species to a raw examination of human longing and finally, in the third instalment, a reflection on death and remembrance.

Ultimately, *Figures in Extinction* offers a glimmer of hope – asking where we might go next, collectively and imaginatively, in the face of crisis.

The complete trilogy premiered at Aviva Studios, Manchester in February 2025. It has since toured in Europe, most recently playing at the 2025 Edinburgh International Festival,

receiving widespread critical acclaim. It has been described as a ★★★★★ *“towering achievement”* by The Observer, a ★★★★★ *“must-see triumph”* by The Telegraph, a *“total artwork”* by Midi Libre and *“this year’s major dance event”* by Hufvudstadsbladet. The next stops on the show’s tour will be to Théâtre de la Ville, Paris from 22 - 30 October and Sadler’s Wells, London from 5 - 8 November.

Launched last year as an evolution of the South Bank Sky Arts Awards, The Sky Arts Awards honours outstanding achievement across a wide spectrum of artistic disciplines. It remains the only event in the world that recognises the full breadth of cultural genres with categories including classical music, comedy, dance, film, literature, poetry, opera, popular music, television, theatre and visual arts.

Emily Molnar, Artistic Director at NDT said: *“Thank you Sky Arts Awards for this incredible honour. Thank you to Simon McBurney and Crystal Pite - who daringly exchanged and fiercely grappled with the situation threatening to engulf us, and never once flinched. Thank you to the extraordinary dancers of Nederlands Dans Theatre, who turned their brilliant creative energy into acts of response. And thank you, to the remarkable creative teams behind these four years, and everyone at NDT and Complicité for their unwavering trust, care and commitment.”*

Simon McBurney, Artistic Director at Complicité said: *“We are at a moment where many people in this world do not have a voice. This was sent to us by a writer in Gaza. Her husband is gravely ill, and we are working to get her evacuated:*

‘I speak to you from Gaza, where the artist does not carry a brush, but a light that refuses to fade.

Our stage is not made of wood, but of earth itself, heavy with dreams.

We dance not because our feet are light, but because the soul longs for space.

You, artists of the world, are not far from us.

You are the extension of our voices — carrying our cries where our echoes cannot reach.

You are the ones who can translate our pain into paintings, into plays, into songs, into poems, into dances,

so that no one may ever say we lived in shadow and went unseen.

Carry our hearts in your paintings, in your songs, in your theatres.

Carry with us this noble burden.

*Let the world hear that silence is not our choice —
that life still clings to us, as we cling to it.”*

[Find out more about Figures in Extinction](#)

[LINK FOR IMAGES](#)

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Biographies:

Complicité

Complicité is an international touring theatre company led by Artistic Director and co-founder, Simon McBurney. Complicité creates work that strengthens human interconnection, using the complicity between performer and audience that is at the heart of the theatrical experience. Complicité works across art forms, believing theatre, opera, film, radio, installation, publication and participatory arts can all be sites for the collective act of imagination.

Complicité's recent work includes: the dance trilogy *Figures in Extinction* (in co-creation with Crystal Pite and co-produced by Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT)) which is currently on tour, the reimagined *Mnemonic* which played at the National Theatre in 2024, *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead, Can I Live?* and *The Encounter*, as well as *The Dark is Rising*; an audio drama for BBC World Service and BBC Sounds based on Susan Cooper's cult novel.

Founded in 1983, the company has won over 50 major theatre awards worldwide, and played in more than 40 countries.

Alongside Simon McBurney's work, Complicité supports artists through its 'Mudlarks' strand; widening access and pro-actively seeking to support talented artists who are under-represented in the theatre sector.

Learning and engagement are central to Complicité's work and its award-winning creative engagement programme includes professional development, work in schools and colleges, and participatory projects with a range of communities.

The company is committed to responding to the climate and ecological emergency. It is a founding member of Culture Declares Emergency and a member of a working group of UK Touring Theatre Companies to share best sustainable practice and to develop the Theatre Green Book Touring Guidance.

To find out more about Complicité, visit [complicite.org](https://www.complicite.org)

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