

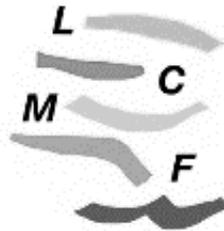
WIGMORE HALL

Saturday 4 December 2021 7.30pm

'Old Food' with Toby Jones

Actor Toby Jones reads Ed Atkins's *Old Food*

Presented by Wigmore Hall, London Contemporary Music Festival, Fitzcarraldo Editions, and Cabinet Gallery, acclaimed actor Toby Jones delivers a dramatic reading of Ed Atkins's epic anti-poem, *Old Food*. Steeped in spoiled language and poorly Englishness, as performed by Jones at Christmas, Atkins's text is a travesty of Dickens and his 'Carol Philosophy'.



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Jones first performed *Old Food* at Conway Hall just before Christmas 2019 and, as such, this performance's return to a London stage is the abortive establishment of a tradition.

Old Food (2019) is published by Fitzcarraldo Editions, and will be available on the night.

Violent, emetic, immoderate, improper, impure – that's to say it's the real thing. Atkins's prose, which may not be prose, adheres to Aragon's maxim 'Don't think – write.' — Jonathan Meades

TS Eliot's definition of English culture ran right down to 'boiled cabbage cut into sections'. Ed Atkins scrapes in Cathedral City, battered calamari, excess margarine, peach cobbler, robin heart, Wotsits, mum, dad – and puts it all on a rotary spit of enjambling sentences. A post-apocalypse filmed on location in the colon of this country, every moreish page of *Old Food* is disgusting as a gastropub, the mince of a language going richly off. — Jeremy Noel-Tod, editor of *The Penguin Book of the Prose Poem*

If 'Chocolate coins seemed doubly cryptic with the collapse of banks...' as Ed Atkins writes towards the end of this almost unbearable but compelling work, then dystopia and climate catastrophe are in our mouths and bodies: they pour through cataracts of names of herbs and meats and slime, of commonplace gestures in strange locations, they disrupt spelling and produce unnatural words and the suspension of proper grammar. Atkins's fiercely flowing anti-poetry takes up the disruption of unthinking indulgence at a point near to where Theodor Adorno left off, moralia now definitively below the minima we need to carry on – other than in the turbulence of the text. — Adrian Rifkin, author of *Communards*

Ed Atkins is best known for his computer generated videos and his weird purple prose. Ed's solo exhibition *Get Life/Love's Work* opened at the New Museum in New York at the end of June 2021. Forthcoming exhibitions include Tank Shanghai and Tate Britain. Recent solo exhibitions include Kunsthaus Bregenz and K21 Düsseldorf (both 2019); Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin; MMK Frankfurt; DHC/ART, Montréal (all 2017); Castello di Rivoli and Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin; The Kitchen, New

York; SMK, Copenhagen (all 2016); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2015), The Serpentine Gallery, London (2014); Julia Stoschek Collection, Düsseldorf (2013); and MoMA PS1 (2012). Atkins was included in the 56th and 58th Venice Biennales, the 13th Lyon Biennial, and Performa 13 and 19. An anthology of Ed's texts, *A Primer for Cadavers*, was published by Fitzcarraldo in 2016, and an extensive artist's monograph from Skira was released in 2017. *Old Food* was published by Fitzcarraldo in 2019. A new book of Ed's drawings for children was published by Koenig Books in July.

Toby Jones is known for his wide ranging roles both in the theatre and on screen. Toby has recently been seen in Kelly Reichardt's acclaimed film *First Cow* (May 2021), the BBC television feature *Danny Boy*, Gil Kenan's *Boy Called Christmas* and *The Electrical Life of Louis Wain*. Next year, he will appear in the fifth *Indiana Jones* film and *Tetris* directed by Jon S Bair. In 2020, Toby returned to the stage at The Harold Pinter Theatre to play the title role in Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* to high acclaim. On television Toby has recently starred in the award-winning comedies *Detectorists* (2017) and *Don't Forget the Driver* (2019) which he also co-wrote with Tim Crouch. In 2006 Toby starred as Truman Capote in *Infamous* for which he won Best British Actor at the London Film Critics Circle Awards. Toby starred in the Oscar-nominated adaptation of le Carré's classic *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* (2011) and the year after he garnered huge critical acclaim for his performance as Alfred Hitchcock in the HBO/BBC television movie *The Girl* (2012), for which he received a BAFTA, Golden Globe and Emmy nomination. He is a BAFTA and Olivier award-winning actor. Other projects include: *Marvellous*, *The Painted Veil*, *Hunger Games*, *Sherlock*, *Berberian Sound Studio* and *Captain America*.

The London Contemporary Music Festival (LCMF) was founded in 2013 to provide a home for the promiscuous music lover. *The Wire* called it 'London's most important festival'. It is currently run by writer/curator Igor Toronyi-Lalic and composer/conductor Jack Sheen. In 2018 we set up the LCMF Orchestra to commission artists from a variety of disciplines to work with full symphonic forces for the first time. LCMF has hosted everyone from Pauline Oliveros to Klein, CA Conrad to Fatima Al Qadiri, Pan Daijing to Lina Lapelyte and presented premières from Yvonne Rainer to Gerald Barry, Cassandra Miller to Michelangelo Pistoletto, Ragnar Kjartansson to Stockhausen. In 2016 it held the world's first retrospective of the work of Julius Eastman. In 2021 LCMF became a charity. LCMF 2022, which will take place in spring, will be its ninth festival.