

Talking rice cookers perform in *Cuckoo* this week

(Kelowna, B.C.) One day when his electric rice cooker informed him that his meal was ready, Jaha Koo experienced 'Golibmuwon' (고립무원). This untranslatable Korean word expresses the feeling of helpless isolation that characterizes the lives of many young Koreans today, and it inspired Jaha to create *Cuckoo*.

"*Cuckoo* is a brilliant example of contemporary European 'lecture/performance,' combining the richness of history with the magic of performance," explains Neil Cadger, founder and artistic director of the Living Things Festival.

After performances at the Festival d'Automne in Paris, *Cuckoo* comes to Kelowna as part of an international tour including Montreal (Usine C), Toronto (Theatre Centre), Vancouver (PuSh Festival) and Seattle (On the Boards).

In bittersweet and humorous dialogues, Jaha, his music and his trio of talking rice cookers take you on a journey through the last 20 years of Korean history following a major economic crash. In *Cuckoo*, Jaha reflects on the impact this crisis had on his generation, from youth unemployment and socio-economic inequality to rising suicide rates, isolation, acute social withdrawal and a fixation on personal appearance.

Technology has also had its role to play in this isolation, and Jaha's three hacked rice cookers have become his co-performers in this internationally-acclaimed performance. Hacked and rigged with small computers, the rice cooker's emotions are displayed on light panels as they have conversations, sing, and argue with each other. One of them even cooks rice. Combined with Jaha's deep reflections, *Cuckoo* promises to be like nothing Kelowna has seen before.

"*Cuckoo* is a perfect example of what the Living Things Festival brings to Kelowna: high-profile, critically acclaimed contemporary international touring performances," says Cadger. "Art that expands our idea of what theatre can be, and resonates with audiences from Brazil to Japan."

Cuckoo will play at the Mary Irwin Theatre in the Rotary Centre for the Arts on January 30 and 31 at 8:00 PM. Tickets are \$25-35, plus taxes and fees, and can be purchased at the Rotary Centre for the Arts box office or online at RotaryCentrefortheArts.com/living-things-festival.

Photo Caption: (Photo: Radovan Dranga) *Cuckoo* is a journey through the last 20 years of Korean history told by a trio of talkative rice cookers.

For Immediate Release

January 27, 2020

About the Rotary Centre for the Arts

Located in the heart of Kelowna's Cultural District, the [Rotary Centre for the Arts](#) is a multidisciplinary visual and performing arts centre.

The RCA continually strives to improve the economic, cultural and social quality of life in the community by fostering participation in, and appreciation of the arts.

As a world-class venue celebrating creative expression through diverse art forms and disciplines, the Rotary Centre for the Arts is a unique City of Kelowna facility in which individuals of all ages and backgrounds can come together to share in the excitement of strengthening art and culture in the Okanagan.

About the Living Things Festival

Founded in 2017, Living Things is a curated festival that brings award-winning performances to Kelowna. 2020 performers include Gemini award-winning Cree actress (Michelle Thrush, *Find Your Own Inner Elder*), an Innovation in Puppetry Award-winner that was supported in part by the Jim Henson Foundation (Kyle Loven, *My Dear Lewis*), and a world-renowned South Korean multimedia artist (Jaha Koo, *Cuckoo*). For a full list of shows, please visit livingthingsfestival.com.

Living Things is financially supported by the City of Kelowna, the Canada Council, the BC Arts Council, the centre culturel francophone de l'Okanagan, UBC Okanagan's FCCS, Heritage Canada, Rotary Centre for the Arts, Mission Group, distrib-u-tec Software, and other local businesses and individuals.

For more information, please contact:

Valaura Jones

Volunteer Marketing Coordinator, Living Things Festival

Email: valaura@byjoveco.com

Phone: 250-317-5253