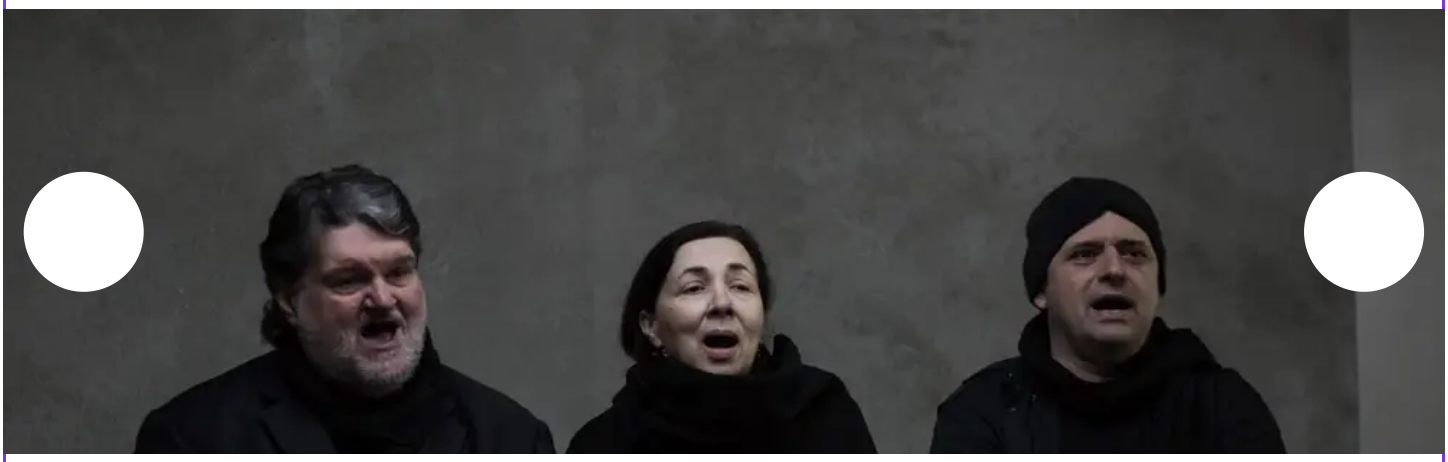
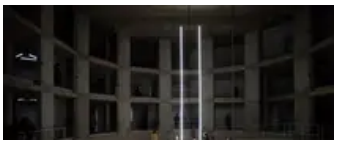
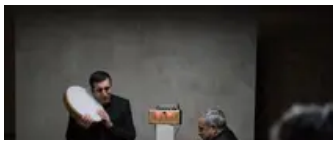
TARYN SIMON: AN OCCUPATION OF LOSS, ARTANGEL (APRIL 17 - 28)







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REVIEW

Taryn Simon - An Occupation of Loss review: Heart-rending mourning and grief is all part of a day's work for some

Reviewed by **BEN LUKE**

Thursday 19 April 2018 08:30

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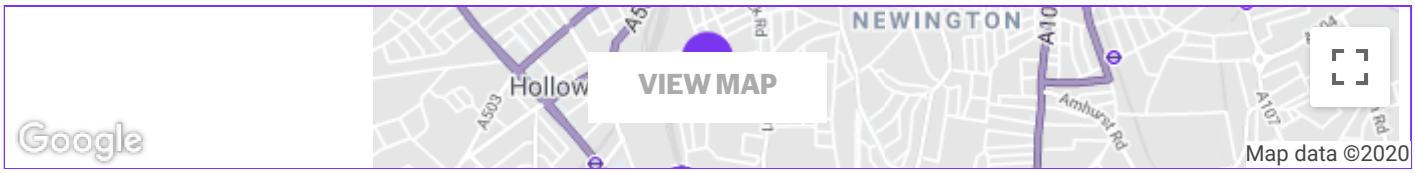

Our rating:

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Islington Green

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artangel.org.uk

Taryn Simon has invited professional mourners from 11 countries to perform on specially built stages at the periphery of a vast central, circular pit.

The mourners enter the silent gloom. Then their chants, wails and songs begin, their voices merging — a cacophony punctuated by unexpected crescendos and harmonies.

We walk among these diverse peoples, whose backgrounds are not clear: a small booklet tells us that they hail from Greece, from the Yezidi community, from Venezuela. From Simon's installation photographs, I learn some of their names: Marisol and Ana Luisa Montiel, for instance, who gesture and sob plaintively beneath patterned shrouds.

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But while they're individuals, they're also symbolic of cultures, communities and their rituals. And it's this that makes Simon's work so powerful and tense: these

By isolating them, Simon reiterates that these are performances, and yet, so often, emotions appear genuine and raw: tears streak down the anguished face of a Ghanaian woman; the soaring song of a Yezidi man is so devastatingly beautiful it's like a blow to the solar plexus. I felt intrusive and beguiled, yet so often deeply moved.

Until Apr 28

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