

**FONDAZIONE PRADA TO HOST SPECIAL PRESENTATION OF DAVID BYRNE'S
REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL ON 26 JANUARY 2018**

Milan, 18 January 2018 - On Friday 26 January 2018, Fondazione Prada will host at its Milan Cinema a special presentation of David Byrne's *Reasons to Be Cheerful*, an ongoing series of hopeful writings, photos, music and lectures curated by Byrne himself. The project is linked to his forthcoming new solo record *American Utopia*, to be released on 9 March 2018 on Todomundo/Nonesuch Records.

Over the last year, renowned musician and artist David Byrne has been collecting stories, ideas, news and other items that all either embody or identify examples of things that inspire optimism, such as a tech breakthrough, a musical act, or a new idea in urban planning or transportation – something seen, heard or tested. This research is now being collected in the *Reasons to Be Cheerful* project. Byrne explains: "I began to look for encouraging things that are happening anywhere, and if they have been tested, if they have been proven to work, if they can be transferred and adopted in other places, if they can scale up, then let's hold them up for consideration, and let's invite others to add to this project. There are actually a lot of encouraging things going on around the world—they've given me hope, and I'd like to share them".

This event is part of an ongoing research activated by Fondazione Prada to contribute to our understanding of present times and to present culture as an attractive and engaging experience, creating an in-depth dialectic between different languages and disciplines. By investigating areas in which visual arts, music, technology and thought converge, *Reasons to Be Cheerful* is therefore perfectly integrated in Fondazione Prada's program.

Byrne's forthcoming *American Utopia*, his first solo album since 2004, was written and recorded while he was collecting such material and is therefore informed by his vision for the series. Just as the record questions the current state of society while offering solace through song, the content of *Reasons to Be Cheerful* recognizes the darkness and complexity of today while showcasing alternatives to the despair that threatens us.

The talk will start at 7pm and will be followed by a Q&A with David Byrne. Entry to the event is free. The tickets will be available on Friday 26 January 2018 from 5pm at Fondazione Prada's ticket desk. Seats are allocated on a first-come first-served basis and subject to capacity.

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DAVID BYRNE – biographical notes

David Byrne's recent works include *Joan of Arc: Into the Fire*, a theatrical exploration of the historical heroine which premiered at The Public Theater in New York (2017); *The Institute Presents: NEUROSOCIETY*, a series of interactive environments created in conjunction with PACE Arts + Technology that question human perception and bias (2016); *Contemporary Color*, an event inspired by the American folk tradition of color guard and performed at Brooklyn's Barclays Center and Toronto's Air Canada Centre (2015); *Here Lies Love*, a twenty-two-song theatrical production about the life of Imelda Marcos, authored in collaboration with Fatboy Slim that premiered at The Public Theater in New York (2013), travelled to London's National Theatre for a sold-out run (2014–15), and was remounted at the Seattle Repertory Theater (2017); *Love This Giant*, a studio album and worldwide tour created with St. Vincent (2012); and *How Music Works*, a book about the history, experience, and social aspects of music (2012). In 2015 Byrne curated Southbank Centre's annual Meltdown festival in London. A co-founder of the group Talking Heads (1976–88), he has released nine studio albums and worked on multiple other projects, including collaborations with Brian Eno, Twyla Tharp, Robert Wilson, and Jonathan Demme, among others. He also founded the highly respected record label Luaka Bop. Recognition of Byrne's various works include Obies, Drama Desk, Lortel, and Evening Standard awards for *Here Lies Love*, an Oscar, Grammy, and Golden Globe for the soundtrack to Bernardo Bertolucci's *The Last Emperor*, and induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame with Talking Heads. Byrne has published and exhibited visual art since his college days, including photography, filmmaking and writing. He lives in New York City.