



## PRESS RELEASE

Embargoed until 00:01 Friday 10 February 2017

# Details of first ever *WOW - Women of the World Hull* announced for UK City of Culture

In a year that has seen momentous change across the globe, trailblazers from the arts, politics and activism are set to take part in the first ever *WOW - Women of the World* festival in Hull, created by Hull UK City of Culture 2017 as part of the global WOW Festivals originated by the Southbank Centre.

Comedian **Lucy Beaumont**, actress and writer **Maureen Lipman CBE**, world champion boxer **Barbara Buttrick** and director **Gurinder Chadha OBE** will join women from the city, as well as men, girls and boys, for a weekend of lively debate, music, comedy, art and more.

*WOW Hull* runs from **Friday 10 - Sunday 12 March** at various city centre locations and tickets are available from [www.hull2017.co.uk/wow](http://www.hull2017.co.uk/wow).

*WOW Hull* festival programmer **Madeleine O'Reilly** said: "Globally, women are uniting and making their voices heard on a scale not seen for decades, with millions taking to the streets. The fight for gender equality is more crucial now than ever and *WOW Hull* provides an opportunity to come together, put the debate at the heart of our daily lives and achieve change. It also offers a chance to discover and celebrate the many inspirational trailblazing women from this city and beyond."

*WOW - Women of the World* festival founder and gender equality pioneer, Southbank Centre Artistic Director **Jude Kelly CBE** said: "My vision for *WOW - Women of the World* festivals has always been that they are agents of change in each host city, providing a vibrant space for women and men - wherever they're from and whatever their background - to come together to share stories and experiences and work together to create solutions to challenges facing women and girls today. We need this now more than ever, and it's fabulous to see such an exciting and packed programme for *WOW Hull*, adding to the wealth of opportunities created by Hull's new city of culture status."

Harnessing the energy and spirit of **International Women's Day** (8 March), *WOW Hull* kicks off on Friday 10 March at City Hall with composer and singer **Errollyn Wallen MBE**, spoken word artist **Kate Fox** and the Freedom Chorus led by conductor **Alison Bullivent**. This will be followed by Hull-born Lucy Beaumont and Maureen Lipman, who will present first the ever live staging of *To Hull and Back - Where Do You Think You're Going?* Written by Beaumont, the acclaimed Radio 4 sitcom is set in Hull and about a mother and daughter struggling to make ends meet.

The weekend will culminate with a red carpet screening of the new film *Viceroy's House*, followed by a Q&A with director **Gurinder Chadha OBE**.

**Lucy Beaumont** said: "With national attention focused on Hull in its City of Culture year, *WOW Hull* is a brilliant opportunity to celebrate the lives of Hull women and the contribution we make to the life of this city and the country as a whole. With the world going through incredible change, one thing that is certain is that gender inequality still remains. I hope that the women - as well as girls, men and boys - joining us for *WOW Hull* will be inspired to join this global movement to transform lives."

**Maureen Lipman CBE** said: "I'm thrilled to be joining Lucy for a live staging of *To Hull and Back* in what is a home crowd for both of us. I'm proud to be getting involved with *WOW Hull*, which is an opportunity to bring women's many achievements to the fore, especially the women of Hull."

Lucy Beaumont, whose documentary *Welcome to Hull - City of Culture* airs on BBC2 this Saturday (11 February), is also hosting a two-hour comedy masterclass on Saturday 11 March *Laughing Out Loud*, in which she will share her tips on writing. Places are limited and people wanting to attend the workshop should email to express their interest [wow@hull2017.co.uk](mailto:wow@hull2017.co.uk).

At the heart of the festival will be a series of panels inspired by the series of conversations held across the city with the women of Hull last Autumn, including issues such as domestic abuse, inequality in the performing arts, equal pay, body image and championing care. Panellists include **Bee Lady Jean Bishop**, actress **Maxine Peake**, Kingston upon Hull North MP **Diana Johnson**, Humberside Police Chief **Justine Curran**, Hull-born entrepreneur **Michelle Dewberry**, Kurdish Women's Rights Activist **Houzan Mahmood**, writer **Tazeen Bari**, documentary Producer and BBC Radio 1 presenter and TV broadcaster **Gemma Cairney**.

There will also be a special event with world champion boxer and Hull's *Mighty Atom* **Barbara Buttrick**, who will talk to BBC Look North's Anne-Marie Tasker about her career and success in a typically male sport. Barbara's life will also be celebrated by Single Story Theatre's new one-woman play *Delicate Flowers*. Another Hull trailblazer, composer and conductor **Ethel Leginska**, will be celebrated at a special concert and exhibition, alongside debates around the lack of female composers and conductors represented in contemporary classical music.

Working in partnership with Hull's contemporary theatre festival, Heads Up Theatre, *WOW Hull* presents a series of performance inspired and led by women including Ad Infinitum's acclaimed production telling a powerful story of one Mexican woman's fight for justice, *Bucket List*. Other theatre includes Blazon Theatre's *Icons* is a bold modern re-telling of the Amazon warrior myths and for families, at Central Library there is an immersive experience inspired by Peter Pan for under 3s, *Neverland*. At Hull Truck Theatre *Soror*, reveals a new acrobatic dance performance about female friendship; and The Roaring Girls' new production *Weathered Estates* inspired by Euripides Women of Troy.

Other highlights include **speed mentoring** from engineers, journalists, scientists, artists and other experts; *WOW Bites* with Great British Bake-off winner **Nancy Birtwhistle**, accidental activist **Lian Bell**, former British judo champion **Karen Briggs MBE**, best-selling author **Val Wood** and midwife **Comfort Momoh MBE**, known for her pioneering work on Female Genital Mutilation; the *Under 10s Feminist Corner*, a space where young people can discuss equality and fairness.

There will also be a number of workshops and demonstrations from a seminar by “Courage Queen” Rachael Alexander to a burlesque performance celebrating sisterhood hosted by *Britain’s Got Talent’s Ruby Red Ladies*.

There will be three installations in Hull City Hall. Artist **Alinah Azadeh** has worked with the people of Hull to create *Revolutionary Makers*. The project saw Alinah uncover the revolutionary women of the city to create wearable craftivist objects. Award-winning cartoonist and illustrator **Jacky Fleming** will showcase commissioned portraits of *Hull Trailblazers* alongside work from her recent book *the Trouble With Women*; and *Anything is Possible* an installation by **JZ Flowers**, led by head designer **Kirsty Wordingham**, which is inspired by the extraordinary histories of the women in the city.

There will also be a series of films exploring female stories and experience, identity and equality across the globe. The **WOW Hull Film** programme, supported by the British Film Institute in partnership with Film Hub North, includes *Ovarian Psycos*, about an all-women bicycle crew in Los Angeles; *Wadjda*, the first feature-length movie by a female Saudi director; *Funny Girls*, five new comedy shorts by emerging British female directors; *Kiki’s Delivery Service*, the 1989 Japanese animated film from Studio Ghibli about a thirteen year-old girl who must leave home to train as a witch; an exploration of the Israeli criminal system in *3000 Nights*; the Emma Thompson produced film *Sold* starring Gillian Anderson which tells the story of a 13-year-old Nepali girl sold to a brothel; and *The Fits*, a psychological portrait of a young girl learning to dance.

Visual arts include *The Female Gaze* at Kingston Art Gallery (3 - 25 March). Presented by Kingston Art Group, the Creative Communities Programme supported event is a journey exploring the unique and diverse perspectives of Hull’s fantastic female artists. On Friday 10 March, also at Kingston Art Gallery, London street artist **Shuby** will talk to Hull-based artist **Chloe Roach** about her journey through the art world. *COUM Transmissions* at the newly opened Humber Street Gallery (until 22 March) focuses on the work of Cosey Fanni Tutti and Genesis P-Orridge, two boundary-breaking artists who called the city home. Also at Humber Street Gallery is *Women in Power* by **Sarah Lucas** (until 22 March) which features a series of plaster cast figures depicting the female body.

Other highlights include **Kate Fox** previewing her new solo show on body image, *The Wrong Bits*, and *Art Celebrating Equality*, a showcase of poems, photography and songs which explore gender equality and freedom created by The Warren Youth Project. And for a unique Saturday night, WOW Hull unites infamous female DJs of Hull to take to the decks for *Club WOW* at legendary pub, Hull Cheese.

Today’s announcement follows this Wednesday’s visit to Hull by HRH The Duchess of Cornwall, the current President of WOW, where she met with members of WOW’s Circle of Friends.

WOW Hull is one of four weekend festivals taking place during Hull 2017 looking at contemporary political, social and cultural issues affecting the UK. The others are *Where Are We Now* (part of Root & Routes season), presented by Neu! Reekie!, reflecting on the state of the nations, England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, at a time of great change; *Freedom Talks* (Freedom), which is inspired by Hull’s role in the abolition of slavery; and *Substance* (Tell the World), which will focus on the significance of the North framed within a cultural context.

ENDS

For press information, please contact:

Sara Sherwood at The Corner Shop PR, [sara@thecornershoppr.com](mailto:sara@thecornershoppr.com) / 0207 831 7651

Alix Johnson at Hull 2017, [alix.johnson@hull2017.co.uk](mailto:alix.johnson@hull2017.co.uk) / 07718 100784

## LISTINGS

### **WOW Hull**

10 - 12 March 2017

Venues across Hull city centre

Day Passes for *WOW Hull* (£10 / £5 conc) - please note some events at WOW Hull are separately ticketed and cannot be accessed as part of the Day Pass. Please refer to the [website](#) for ticketing information on standalone events.

[www.hull2017.co.uk/wow](http://www.hull2017.co.uk/wow)

#WOWHull

### Further WOW Hull highlights include:

#### Saturday 11 March

- **WOW Hull Views on the News, Hull City Hall.** WOW Hull guests delve into what today's headlines mean for equality.
- **Neverland, Hull Central Library.** Part of the Heads Up Festival, step into a tended den and discover a magical world inspired by J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*. Suitable for children aged 1 - 3, *Neverland* uses beautiful 360-degree video projection.
- **Women into Manufacturing and Engineering (WiME), The Guildhall.** Supported by Siemens, Swift Group, Airco, ABP, Spencer Group, Ideal and Jobcentre Plus, this industry event gives visitors the opportunity to meet potential employers.
- **Icons, Ferens Studio.** Part of the Heads Up Festival, this new play follows four sisters, leaders of a tribe, and the decisions they take to try and keep their way of life going - and what it takes to survive as a woman.
- **Open Forum, Hull City Hall.** This open space is a space for discussion and debate on what Hull can do to build on the energy from the Women's March and the rise of the Women's Equality Party.
- **Art Celebrating Equality, Hull City Hall.** A showcase of poems, photography and songs created by The Warren Youth Project.

#### Saturday 11 March - Panel Discussions

- **Blazing Trails, Hull City Hall.** A panel discussion exploring the trailblazers of Hull from Amy Johnson to Sir John Hall to Ethel Leginska. Panellists include Surgeon Elizabeth Moulder, Engineering Apprentice Eloise Taylor, Marine Pilot Sue Hickson-Marsay and Primary School Teacher Joshua Guthrie.
- **Equal Pay for Equal Work, Hull City Hall.** Despite the Equal Pay Act 46 years ago, women still earn less than men in Britain. A panel discussion featuring Diana Johnson MP, Maxine Peake and Cllr Mary Glew.
- **Domestic Abuse: Everybody's Business, Hull City Hall.** A panel discussion on how we all play a part in ending domestic violence featuring Ann Clarkson of Preston Road Women's Centre, Chief Constable of Humberside Police Justine Curran, Mark Charlton of The White Ribbon and Michelle Dewburry.
- **Balancing The Stage, Hull City Hall.** In 2015, Lian Bell launched the successful grassroots campaign #WakingTheFeminists to make gender equality a reality in Irish theatre. This panel discussion featuring Amanda Huxtable from Hull Truck Theatre, producer Eleanor Lloyd, director Rachel Bagshaw and actor and writer Maxine Peake join Lian to debate equality in the performing arts.
- **In My Shoes, Hull City Hall.** A panel discussion featuring Kurdish Women's Rights Activist Houzan Mahmood, writer and broadcaster Bidisha and Tazeen Bari, Producer of the Gloria Steinem documentary series *Woman*.

#### Sunday 12 March - Panel Discussions

- **Gemma Cairney - Open, Hull City Hall.** BBC Radio 1's Gemma Cairney discusses her novel book *OPEN: How Magic And Messed Up Life Can Be*.
- **What Are You Looking At?, Hull City Hall.** Gemma Cairney, stand-up comedian and poet Kate Fox and leader of Burlesque Dance group The Ruby Reds Lorraine Courtney discuss body image and confidence.
- **Kate Fox: The Wrong Bits, Hull City Hall.** Stand-up comedian and poet Kate Fox previews her funny and whimsical stand-up show ahead of its premiere on BBC Radio 4.
- **Imagining The Future, Hull City Hall.** A panel, made up of young people across the city, share their thoughts on issues such as education and body issues, how they would challenge these and what their hopes are for the future.

## NOTES TO EDITORS

### About Hull UK City of Culture 2017

Hull UK City of Culture 2017 is a 365 day programme of cultural events and creativity inspired by the city and told to the world. Hull secured the title of UK City of Culture 2017 in November 2013. It is only the second city to hold the title and the first in England.

Divided into four seasons, this nationally significant event draws on the distinctive spirit of the city and the artists, writers, directors, musicians, revolutionaries and thinkers that have made such a significant contribution to the development of art and ideas.

The Culture Company was set up to deliver the Hull 2017 programme and is an independent organisation with charitable status. It has raised £32 million, with over 60 partners supporting the project, including public bodies, lottery distributors, trusts and foundations and local and national businesses. Key contributions are coming from: **Host City** - Hull City Council; **Principal Partners** - Arts Council England, BBC, Big Lottery Fund, East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Heritage Lottery Fund, KCOM, KWL, Spirit of 2012, Yorkshire Water and the University of Hull; **Major Partners** - Associated British Ports, Arco, BP, the British Council, Green Port Hull, Hull Clinical Commissioning Group, MKM Building Supplies, P&O Ferries, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Sewell Group, Siemens, Smith & Nephew and Wykeland Group.

68 per cent of the funding is dedicated to public facing activities, including the widest range of cultural events in every corner of the city, with a further 11 per cent for legacy and contingency. More than £5 million is being invested in volunteering, learning and community engagement. £1.6 million is being invested to ensure a legacy after 2017. This includes capacity building, such as supporting existing events so they can grow, staging curtain-raiser events, developing future programming for after 2017 and building a new platform to support a unified ticketing system for the city.

Hull 2017's International Partners are: Aarhus, Denmark, which is European Capital of Culture 2017; Reykjavik, Iceland; Rotterdam, The Netherlands; and Freetown, Sierra Leone (twinned with Hull). These relationships are reflected in a number of events throughout the year.

For information go to [www.hull2017.co.uk](http://www.hull2017.co.uk)

Follow us on **Twitter** @2017Hull **Instagram** @2017hull **Facebook** HullCityofCulture

### **WOW - Women of the World**

Southbank Centre's WOW - Women of the World festival is a global festival movement launched by Jude Kelly CBE in London in 2011 that celebrates women and girls, and looks at the obstacles that stop them from achieving their potential.

Southbank Centre is now planning a WOW Commonwealth festival at the Commonwealth Games in 2018 with all 53 nations.

Each festival across the world - made up of talks, debates, music, activism, mentoring, pop ups and performance - celebrates women and girls, takes a frank look at what prevents them from achieving their potential, and raises awareness globally of the issues they face and possible solutions. It reaches girls and women, boys and men from a broad range of social backgrounds and

supplies a completely different sense of action and energy than a conventional conference approach. Speakers have included Malala Yousafzai, Christine Lagarde, Salma Hayek, Annie Lennox, Gordon Brown, Julie Walters, Patrick Stewart and many more including hundreds of women and men who don't have public profiles but are working every day to achieve gender equality.

Over 25,000 people came to WOW London in 2016, thousands more have come to WOWs across the world and festival organisers have collaborated on cross-continental projects.  
[wow.southbankcentre.co.uk](http://wow.southbankcentre.co.uk)

#### **About Southbank Centre**

Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre, occupying a 21- acre site that sits in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. Southbank Centre is home to the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery as well as The Saison Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. For further information please visit [www.southbankcentre.co.uk](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk). Southbank Centre is carrying out vital restoration work on the Hayward Gallery, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Purcell Room to make the buildings fit for future generations to enjoy, more information can be found here: [letthelightin.southbankcentre.co.uk](http://letthelightin.southbankcentre.co.uk)

#### **International Women's Day**

International Women's Day is marked on 8 March each year and is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity.

#### **British Film Institute / Film Hub North**

The BFI is supporting Hull City of Culture with a programme of film activity in the city and region in partnership with Film Hub North, and as part of the BFI's Film Audience Network led by Showroom Workstation. The Transformative Film Culture for Hull programme, supported by the BFI with National Lottery funding, will bring a packed programme of more than 400 screenings, one-off events and film festivals throughout the year to Hull and the region.