



PRESS RELEASE

Protest punk rock band added to stellar festival line-up including Hull's leading lights LIFE

Radical London punk rock band *The King Blues* will join one of Hull's finest *LIFE* next month as part of an incredible line-up of musicians, comics and circus acrobatics for one of Hull UK City of Culture 2017's most diverse and exciting offerings.

Back To Ours is returning for another week of special shows across the city led by a stellar line-up of "proactive" and "provocative" bands.

Hull 2017 is today delighted to announce that *The King Blues* will join Hull's very own 'DIY' punk outfit *LIFE* on the festival's bill.

The Hull self-starting underdogs will take to the stage at *Back To Ours* just days after releasing their debut album, *Popular Music*, on Friday May 26, and appearing in front of thousands on the BBC Introducing Stage at Radio 1's Big Weekend.

Back To Ours will see a number of diverse acts performing at various locations across the city during May half-term from Tuesday May 30 until Sunday June 4.

LIFE will perform at Sirius Academy West on Thursday June 1. Tickets are already on sale for £2.50.

The King Blues are performing at the Freedom Centre on Friday June 2. Tickets go on sale at 2pm today (Thursday May 18) priced at £5.

The King Blues frontman Itch said: "We are a protest band. If you are in a rock 'n' roll band and are not trying to save the planet, what's the point? That's why we have had a 13-year career; we stay true to who we are, don't follow trends and stay true to our legacy."

Itch performed at Hull's iconic Adelphi club a few years ago as a solo performer, but it is a while since *The King Blues* performed in the city.

"We are super excited and looking forward to it. We haven't played in Hull for a long time, many years. It's a city we can relate to. When we have played in Hull the crowds have always been really good to us.

"Music has a way of bringing people together like nothing else - it's inclusive. I just needed a pen and paper, not expensive sports equipment, I just needed the heart to do it.

"If we can take people away from the boredom of their lives for half an hour, I'm happy."

The King Blues are currently touring the country promoting their fifth album, *Gospel Truth*.

LIFE's headline performance on Thursday June 1 comes in the same week as the release of their debut album, *Popular Music*.

The album is being launched on Friday May 26 at Spin-It Records in Hull Trinity Market where the band will be signing albums from 12pm - 2pm.

The first 50 lucky fans to buy the record will also get a free ticket to the *Back To Ours* performance at Sirius Academy West, and an exclusive art print.

LIFE frontman Mez Green said: "The process of the album was unreal, it felt like all our hard work was climaxing in an electrifying moment, the four of us in a studio for two weeks in London with our good friend Ian Dowling at the helm.

"Popular Music has three core characteristics. First there's the anxiety that goes hand-in-hand with being a grassroots band, where every purchase is a dent in your income and where every month-long tour might mean having to quit your day job.

"The second characteristic is a sense of frustration - at globe-changing political events, right through to the day-to-day of being in a band hundreds of miles from the capital and shunned by the industry's merry-go-round.

"The third characteristic, and the one that truly defines this debut, is one of action. These songs are proactive, as well as provocative. They command attention through sheer will alone.

LIFE are riding the crest of a wave at the moment.

As well as being invited back as 'returning special guests' on the BBC Introducing stage for Radio 1's Big Weekend, the band recently recorded a live set at Maida Vale Studios for Radio 1, headlined SXSW in Texas for BBC Music at The British Embassy and were the main support for Slaves on their UK and European tour.

This summer LIFE will also headline Hull's Humber Street Sesh where 30,000 are expected to descend on Hull Marina for the UK's biggest festival for emerging talent.

Mez said: "We are humbled by the buzz around the band, it's such a great feeling to see our hard work validated by genuine respect from fans and media alike.

"Music is everything to us. It's what makes us vibe and we will always give our all no matter what we are doing, that said the shows and achievements we are ticking off at the moment are insane for a band that are creating these opportunities through sheer hard work.

"What else can I say, we are having a blast!"

Back To Ours, which offers something for everyone, will also include stand-up comedy for kids, mesmerising circus acrobatics and an interactive theatre show telling the true story about how a boy became friends with one of the greatest artists that ever lived - Pablo Picasso.

This is the second in a series of Back To Ours festival taking place this year following The Pigeon Detectives, Mark Thomas and Ceri Dupree performing to sell-out crowds during February half term.

Once again, Kingswood Academy, North Point Shopping Centre, Winifred Holtby Academy, The Freedom Centre, Archbishop Sentamu Academy, William Gemmell Club, Hymers College and Sirius Academy West will open their doors to welcome world class performers alongside local talent.

Joining *LIFE* and *The King Blues* as part of the music line-up are Hull rockers *Black Delta Movement* and *Audio Subscene*.

Black Delta Movement will support *LIFE* AT Sirius Academy West on June 1.

Vocalist and guitarist Matt Burr said: “We formed in 2010 and our first show was at Freedom Festival that September. Some of the highlights of our career so far have been in our own city, particularly headlining Freedom Festival in 2015, which was an incredible experience.

“We even got to play with The Stranglers and The Mick Ronson Benefit at Hull City Hall which were a real thrill.

“It’s great to be involved with Hull 2017 and seeing what a positive effect this is having on our city. The place seems to be revitalised, which can only be a good thing!

“Having played several festivals over the last few years we see how much hard work goes into organising such events and it is a real privilege to be part of Back To Ours - maybe taking our music to the next generation as well!

“The last 18 months have been great, playing all over the country and playing shows in Russia, Holland, France, Italy and Switzerland have given us a real buzz. The rest of 2017 and particularly 2018 look to be a really exciting time for the band and we can’t wait to get cracking. Hopefully, we should have some major announcements very soon.”

Audio Subscene will finish off three days of fantastic music playing North Point Shopping Centre on Saturday June 3. Tickets are on sale for £2.50.

Martin Green, Director of Hull 2017, said: “The first *Back To Ours* festival was a fantastic success and I can’t wait for the next instalment. It’s great to have *LIFE* headlining a Hull 2017 event during what is such a busy and exciting time for the band.

“The amazing thing about Back To Ours is that there truly is something for everybody. We’ve got children’s theatre then hours later punk rock...where else would you get that?”

Tickets available from www.hull2017.co.uk/back-to-ours.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Back To Ours

The festival is supported by Arts Council England, Hull Clinical Commissioning Group, The British Film Institute and Spirit of 2012.

The programme has been developed in partnership with China Plate, Leeds Young Film Festival in association with Sneaky Experience, Film Hub North and Revolver.

About Hull UK City of Culture

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, starting with **Made in Hull**, 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.

Hull 2017's second season, **Roots and Routes**, runs from April to June and explore Hull's unique place as a gateway to Europe and one of the world's busiest ports. Its maritime history and global connections inspire the stories of the city; this season of work will also celebrate Hull's international links, including Rotterdam, Reykjavik and Freetown.

Freedom runs from July to September. Building on the legacy of Hull-born anti-slavery campaigner William Wilberforce MP, *Freedom* will explore the concept of freedom in all its many forms. The final season, **Tell the World** will run from October to December.

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 70 partners supporting the project, including public bodies, 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, British Film Institute, Green Port Hull, Hull Clinical Commissioning Group, MKM Building Supplies, P&O Ferries, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Sewell Group, Siemens, Smith & Nephew and Wykeland Group. The National Lottery has contributed more than £10m of this funding, making it the largest single funding body for Hull 2017.

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

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