



PRESS RELEASE

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Hull Takeover off to a roaring start at Edinburgh Fringe Festival

The first reviews are in and it's clear that the Hull Takeover of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe is off to a flying start, with sell-out audiences, four and five star reviews and award wins in the first week.

Hull UK City of Culture 2017 is presenting five, highly regarded and exciting theatre companies across the festival throughout August. The theatre companies include, four Hull-based companies, Middle Child, Bellow Theatre, Pub Corner Poets and Silent Uproar and the internationally acclaimed, Norwich-based Curious Directive with their Hull 2017 commission, **Frogman**.

On Monday 7 August, Marc Graham became the first winner of The Stage Edinburgh Awards 2017 for his performance in Middle Child's **All We Ever Wanted Was Everything** and was commended by The Stage critic Fergus Morgan who said "His is a frenzied, fearless, unconventional performance, as thrilling for its ballsy spontaneity as it is for its obvious integrity. His stunning, galvanising closing speech will stay with me for a long time." The Stage Edinburgh Awards are presented throughout the festival and are chosen by The Stage's team of Edinburgh critics and celebrate outstanding performances.

Marc said: "I am well and truly honoured and shocked to have received this award. Thank you so much to The Stage and everyone who has reacted so kindly."

In addition, Silent Uproar's **A Super Happy Story (About Feeling Super Sad)** was given a five-star review by What's On Stage, with their review saying "you'll be hard pressed to find a better musical at this year's Fringe". This playful and provocative work recently won the Kevin Spacey Foundation Artists of Choice Award in the UK Musical Theatre category.

Bellow Theatre have been shortlisted for the Sunday Times National Student Drama Festival (NSDF) Edinburgh Award for **Bare Skin on Briny Waters**, a story of two women trying to escape and survive. Giving the show four stars in their review, The Stage called it a 'beautiful, sensitive show' and described it as a 'quietly devastating hour'.

curious directive are premiering **Frogman** at the fringe. This co-production with Hull UK City of Culture 2017, Hull's The Deep aquarium and The Old Market co-production, in association with Brisbane Powerhouse and with guidance from The Great Barrier Reef Foundation, recently received a five-star review from Broadway Baby who described it as "brilliantly pitched and quietly captivating". The show was also highlighted by the Telegraph's Mark Cavendish as one of his best theatre shows to see at the festival and was described as "gripping" by the Guardian's Lyn Gardner.

Pub Corner Poets are making their Edinburgh Festival Fringe Debut with ***Sad Little Man***, a stand-up tragedy performed by the mind of a young man in shock at Paradis Green. Written by Josh Overton, winner of The Times Playwriting Award 2015, *Sad Little Man* was described as 'a stunning, bittersweet story' and 'theatrically beautiful' by Noises Off Magazine.

In addition to the success being enjoyed by the Hull Take Over theatre companies, Hull born and bred poet Ian Winter was selected and competed in the BBC Edinburgh Fringe Poetry Slam, a nationwide slam involving the best poets on the fringe. Ian also went through to the final rounds of Hammer and Tongues Poetry Slam. His company A Car Load of Poets finish their run this week as part of the Free Fringe, with some high calibre guest artists including Joyce France, who features in the Nationwide advert.

This incredible first-week success comes ahead of the debut of ***The Ballad of Paragon Station***, which opens at the festival on Monday 21 August. Written by Beverley-born and Hull-raised Hester Arden Ulliyart, the play focusses on four people who are still awake in the middle of the night in a city most people think is rubbish, despite never having been. One is escaping, one is returning and two used to be lovers. This is a funny, intimate story for a generation of millennials trying to find the everything in nothing much.

Martin Green, director of Hull 2017 said: "This is an excellent start to the Hull Takeover, with some wonderful reviews and recognition for Marc's performance in *All We Ever Wanted Was Everything*. This city is a hotbed of creative talent and its exciting theatre scene one of the reasons it was awarded UK City of Culture status. It is thrilling to see the theatre companies we are supporting in Edinburgh getting such a positive reception, from audiences and reviewers alike."

For those who missed Marc Graham's performance in ***All We Ever Wanted Was Everything*** earlier in the year, he will be returning to Hull to appear in part four of ***Flood***, which will be staged live at Victoria Dock from 26-29 September. Tickets went on sale on Monday 14 August at www.hull2017.co.uk/floodnewworld priced from £10-£12.50.

curious directive's ***Frogman*** will come to Hull later this year as the finale of a nationwide tour. It will be staged in the city from 1-11 November as part of the Tell the World season with ticketing and venue details yet to be announced.

Below Theatre's ***Bare Skin on Briny Waters*** will return to the city for two performances on 6 and 7 October at Hull Truck Theatre. Tickets are priced from £10.50-£12.50 and are available [here](#).

Pub Corner Poets' ***Sad Little Man*** will be returning to Hull Truck Theatre on 27 and 28 October. Tickets are priced from £10.50-£12.50 and are available [here](#).

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NOTES TO EDITORS

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, 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 contributed to the development of art and ideas. The second season, *Roots and Routes*, from April to June, explored Hull's unique place as a gateway to Europe and one of the world's busiest ports. *Freedom* runs from July to September, building on the legacy of Hull-born anti-slavery campaigner William Wilberforce MP, explores the concept of freedom in all its many forms. The fourth season, *Tell the World*, runs 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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