



PRESS RELEASE

Thursday, 21 September, 2017

Polish poetry celebrated in Hull

A unique 'shop of poems' is opening in Hull this weekend.

Over the last few months, Polish poet Bohdan Piasecki has been taking his Pop-up Poetry Station around Hull, gathering stories and writing poems with the local Polish community as part of **Hull Gada**.

From Sunday 24 September to Saturday 30 September his work will be displayed in Princes Quay at **Hull Gada Shop of Poems** offering a glimpse into this foreign world, steeped in art and culture, just a language away.

Bohdan said: "Hull Gada is a fantastic project: I get to talk to people, get to know their stories, and offer them brand new poems in return.

"This is poetry at its best, there on the street, made by the city, jotted down by me.

"I have been talking a lot to members of the Polish community, of course, but not exclusively, and that's very exciting - we don't get to shape many writing projects, us Poles, especially not ones which will make our stories heard on the other side of the language barrier."

Shop of Poems is a space with poetry for all. The exhibition features brand new poems from and about Hull's Polish community.

The 'shop' allows people to sit down with a book of Polish poems in English translation, write their own text and add it to the collection, or even catch a poetry workshop.

Shop of Poems will be open from 11am - 6pm, with free admission.

It will be located on the second level of Princes Quay, near River Island.

There is a launch event at 3pm on Sunday 24 September, featuring a unique bilingual open mic event of brand new Polish and English poetry.

There will also be two free workshops as part of the week open to people of any experience with poetry, and suitable for both Polish and English speakers.

The first is on Sunday 24 September at 11am and is suitable to anyone over the age of 16.

The second, suitable for all ages, is on Saturday 30 September at 2.30pm.

Hull Gada is part of **Contains Strong Language**, a major new national spoken word and poetry festival as part of Hull UK City of Culture 2017.

Hull Gada is supported by British Council and Polish Book Institute.

Contains Strong Language takes place across four days from National Poetry Day on Thursday 28 September to Sunday 1 October. It has been produced by BBC Radio in partnership with Hull 2017, Hull City Council, Humber Mouth, The British Council, BBC Learning, Wrecking Ball Press

The finale of Hull Gada will see two live free poetry shows at Kardomah 94 in Alfred Gelder Street on Saturday September 29.

The shows will feature Bohdan Piasecki, Weronika Lewandowska, Wojciech Cichoń and Hull-based Polish poets discovered over the course of the project.

The shows start at 2.30pm and 3.15pm, for more information and to book tickets visit the Hull 2017 website, www.hull2017.co.uk.

Martin Green, Director of Hull 2017, said: "There is a strong Polish community in Hull and it's fantastic that Bohdan has been able to work with them over the last couple of months to ensure that they can be part of Hull 2017.

"Hull Gada has seen internationally renowned poets performing in Hull alongside some of the most exciting spoken word performers the city has to offer.

"Thanks to the support of the British Council, it has offered a taste of what can be expected from the wide-ranging programme being put on for the Contains Strong Language festival which starts next week."

HULL GADA FINALE as part of Contains Strong Language

Kardomah 94, 94 Alfred Gelder St, Hull HU1 2AN

Two live spoken word poetry shows featuring Bohdan Piasecki, Weronika Lewandowska, Wojciech Cichoń and Hull-based Polish poets discovered over the course of the project. Identity, migration, language, and belonging, in new, raw, urgent poems.

Poetry from Poland: Wojciech Cichoń, Weronika Lewandowska, Bohdan Piasecki

29 Sep, 2:30pm, Free

Advance booking required book your ticket -

www.hull2017.co.uk/whatson/events/poetry-from-the-polish-community/

Wojciech Cichon, Weronika Lewandowska, and Bohdan Piasecki perform poetry in celebration of polish culture and heritage here in the UK. This event sees the three poets present their work in varying styles.

Bohdan Piasecki and HULL GADA project participants

29 Sep, 3:15, Free

Advance booking required, book your ticket -

www.hull2017.co.uk/whatson/events/bohdan-piasecki/

Bohdan Piasecki is a poet from Poland based in Birmingham. He has taken his poems to venues ranging from the upstairs room in an Eastbourne pub to the main stage of the Birmingham Rep. Bohdan will be presenting work created over the last few months at his pop-up poetry stations from the streets of Hull.

As part of Hull Gada project Bohdan Piasecki has spent the summer talking to Poles living in Hull. In schools and community centres, in bars, theatres, in barbershops and on the streets, he has asked his compatriots for their stories, and turned their answers into poetry so you can hear them too.

A multilingual, many-voiced attempt to make the unheard louder, this show features brand new work from Bohdan Piasecki and a selection of Hull-based Polish poets discovered over the course of the project. Identity, migration, language, and belonging, in new, raw, urgent poems.

Find us on Facebook: @hullgada and Twitter: #hullgada

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For more information, please contact:

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Contains Strong Language

Contains Strong Language is a brand new spoken word festival kicking off on National Poetry Day on 28 September and running until 1 October. The four-day festival will celebrate both new and existing work, packed with world premieres, concerts, outreach activity and television commissions.

Packed with world premieres, special gala readings, events and concerts, including the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, plus performances from John Cooper Clarke and others, Contains Strong Language also features several new projects that absolutely everyone can get involved with - such as a mammoth washing line of poetry to be created from 2017 new poems about city landmarks written by Hull residents.

At the heart of the festival will be The Hull 17 - an ensemble of 17 artists, commissioned to create new work, who will be resident in the city, including Imtiaz Dharker, Kate Fox, Joe Hakim, Harry Giles, Helen Mort, Alice Oswald, Bohdan Piasecki, Jacob Polley, Louise Wallwein, Fred Voss and Dean Wilson.

BBC national and local radio stations from Radio 1 to 6Music, television and online will record and broadcast much of the festival where live shows will include Jo Whiley on BBC Radio 2, The Verb with Ian McMillan on BBC Radio 3 and Front Row on BBC Radio 4.

Contains Strong Language is being produced by BBC Radio in partnership with Hull UK City of Culture, Hull City Council, Humber Mouth, British Council, BBC Learning, Wrecking Ball Press and a number of poetry organisations.

www.hull2017.co.uk/containsstronglanguage

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 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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Humber Mouth Literature Festival

The Humber Mouth Literature Festival has always sought to be different, in the way it presents literature and Hull to the world.

2017 marks its 25th anniversary presenting six further days of poetry and other literature performances.

Using conventional and digital platforms to explore Hull as the gateway to Europe and the world, new work for this year includes *How Was Your Day?*, a digital project which gathers experiences of everyday life across Hull's twin cities.