

11 October 2017

## ***Back To Ours* circus company teaches older people new tricks**

Older people in Hull are being given the chance to experience the wonder of the circus in the comfort of their care homes thanks to a collaboration with contemporary circus company Upswing and Hull UK City of Culture 2017, supported by The Baring Foundation.

Upswing, which is bringing *Bedtime Stories* and *Once Upon A Pillow Fight* to the city as part of the *Back To Ours* festival later this month, is touring six care homes across the city with *Story Box Circus*.

*Story Box Circus* will visit St Clare House, Fernleigh Day Centre, Rockcliffe Court, Buckingham Day Centre, Alexandra Court Care Centre and St Thomas Independent Living Facility for two days each.

Designed to challenge older people to exceed what they thought was physically possible, the project enables residents and carers to have fun together and try something new with Upswing delivering two experiential workshops before performing an exhilarating circus show.

Vicki Amedume, Artistic Director at Upswing, said: “Through working with older participants over the last ten years, we released that there is a desire by older people to challenge themselves, be brave and try something new.

“We designed *Story Box Circus* to challenge all the participants, staff and residents, to exceed what they thought was possible for themselves and each other.”

Cian Smyth, Hull 2017 Producer, added: “We are committed to ensuring that everyone living in Hull has the chance to be part of the City of Culture story, regardless of their age or circumstances. Through *Story Box Circus*, we are enabling people who may not otherwise have the opportunity to participate in the year to play an active part, right on their doorstep.”

This is the latest in a series of projects engaging older people in arts and culture across the city. Other projects include: The Butterfly Effect, a Creative Communities project exploring the lives of people living with dementia through workshops, performances and exhibitions; Storybox, a ground-breaking collaborative story making project designed for people with Alzheimer’s and dementia delivered by Small Things CIC in sheltered housing and day care centres; and a collaboration between Hull 2017 and the Wellcome Trust, which brings together artists, scientists and community groups to examine health issues including dementia, ageing and breathing disorders.

Upswing's *Bedtime Stories* at Hymers College and *Once Upon a Pillow Fight* at Archbishop Sentamu Academy have sold out but there are still a few tickets left for *Once Upon a Pillow Fight* at Kingswood Academy on Tuesday 31 October. Tickets start from £2.50 and are available from [www.hull2017.co.uk/events/back-to-ours](http://www.hull2017.co.uk/events/back-to-ours)

## ENDS

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

### **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.

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.

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

### **About Upswing**

Since being founded by aerialist Vicki Amedume, Upswing has developed a substantial reputation in the world of circus and aerial theatre. It has gained a foothold in touring networks; festivals, events and the commercial sector with its unique combination of highly physical work that profiled Vicki Amedume's cultural perspective with her interest in narrative, story and journey.

Upswing aspires to produce groundbreaking and inspirational work that not only transforms the conventional perception of contemporary circus but also makes a difference in everyday lives whether young or old.

Our work is inspired by universal questions and contemporary issues and driven by our ethos of respect, inclusion and innovation.