



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Two colourful exhibitions celebrating the contribution, passion and personality of the Hull 2017 volunteers to open at Humber Street Gallery

The contribution, passion and personality of the Hull 2017 volunteers is to be celebrated with two unique exhibitions at Humber Street Gallery.

*Grains of Scandalous Blue* and *Big Picture* both open at the contemporary art space in Hull's Fruit Market cultural quarter on Saturday 20 January 2018.

*Grains of Scandalous Blue* by artist Julia Vogl explores the scale of the volunteer programme using data and drawing on the artist's recent residency in Hull.

Hull 2017's volunteer programme has engaged thousands of individuals, but to understand who they really are and what they have experienced, the Anglo-American artist was invited to be official artist in residence throughout the Tell the World season.

Her large-scale, colourful and experimental exhibition draws upon her residency and the data on the volunteer programme that has been amassed over the course of the year.

Julia has collected a range of data, including gender, the most popular names and even shoe size.

Julia Vogl said: "As artist in residence I had the great privilege to listen, learn, and be on active duty with volunteers on shift. Additionally, I engaged with hundreds of volunteers through a fun coloured sand survey of sorts that enabled them to creatively express their experience and collective impact on Hull 2017.

"I am encapsulating the spirit, pride, journey, and challenging, yet also joyful experiences of the volunteers into two colour fields that will transform the gallery into a fun yet also analytical all-encompassing installation. I want people to aesthetically feel the incredible passion and monumental collective action of the thousands of volunteers of Hull 2017."

Also on display at Humber Street Gallery from 20 January is *Big Picture*, a photographic exhibition by Leo Francis in collaboration with Chris Fenton.

The exhibition showcases what can be achieved when people come together - in this case, 2,500 people - as well as the personality and spirit of the volunteers.

Over the past few months unique images of the volunteers have been taken at some of the area's most iconic spots including the Humber Bridge and Burton Constable Hall.

Some of the shots involve hundreds of volunteers, whilst others capture individual portraits projecting their colourful personalities.

Leo Francis said: "When people come together they can create something that is bigger than themselves, but it's the character of these people that creates something unique. We wanted to celebrate what the volunteers have achieved for the city as a whole, but also give an insight into the unique individuals that have been under the anonymity of the blue coats.

"The project has been challenging but fun, we have shot from 150 metres up on the top of the Humber Bridge on a freezing November morning, shot in the rain on a kayak on Princess Quay, 30 metres up on a cherry picker at St Stephens at 5am, in the luxury of Burton Constable, the list goes on.

"We have shot over 2,000 volunteers for the project in very challenging locations and conditions and their positive spirit and tenacious attitude has been unbelievable throughout. I turned up to the Humber bridge shoot at 4:30am on a freezing cold November morning and there they were all smiles and singing away, amazing characters!"

The Hull 2017 volunteer programme is funded by Big Lottery Fund, Spirit of 2012, Arco, University of Hull & Garfield Weston Foundation.

Shaun Crummey, Head of Volunteering at Hull 2017, said: "The scale and uniqueness of the volunteer programme deserved to be celebrated with its own artistic project.

"Throughout the year we have become one big volunteer family and the team behind the scenes have been fortunate to learn all about the wonderful and diverse volunteers who make that family.

"I'm delighted that we are able to share their colourful and extraordinary personalities, as well as their incredible commitment, through the commission of two outstanding exhibitions."

Rosie Millard, Chair of Hull UK City of Culture 2017, said: "Our Hull 2017 volunteers are total stars. Their enthusiasm, knowledge and dedication, as well as boundless good humour, have been central to the success of Hull's City of Culture year. We cannot thank them enough, but these exhibitions shine a light on the spirit they have brought to events and activities over the last 12 months."

2,500 volunteers have given 33 years of activity, or more than 300,000 hours, including a starring role in Middle Child's panto *Cinderella*, currently running at Früt. Plans are already in place to continue the volunteer programme into 2018, with more details to be announced shortly.

Both exhibitions are free and open at Humber Street Galley on 20 January 2018. They run until 25 February.

**Big Picture images**

[www.dropbox.com/sh/g2p6eva12969ly5/AACdPWjWGNd\\_Sq0gyt5jLm25a?dl=0](http://www.dropbox.com/sh/g2p6eva12969ly5/AACdPWjWGNd_Sq0gyt5jLm25a?dl=0)

**Julia Vogl image**

[www.dropbox.com/sh/ot08xl8c7gc98q6/AAD-cEQqARKR0DglADZB3MN7a?dl=0](http://www.dropbox.com/sh/ot08xl8c7gc98q6/AAD-cEQqARKR0DglADZB3MN7a?dl=0)

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**ENDS**

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## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **About Julia Vogl**

Julia Vogl's social sculpture incorporate public engagement, architectural interventions and colour. She is resolved to create experiences and memories for the viewer, prompting discourse, while creating aesthetically rich works.

### **About Leo Francis**

Leo Francis is a professional Hull-based photographer. Known for his powerful portraits and dynamic sports shots, he has worked with and been featured by Red Bull, Mystic Wetsuits, x Blades, The Telegraph, Hybrid Wake Magazine, Alliance Wake Magazine, Merrell shoes, Runner's World magazine, DJ magazine and Mixmag to name a few.

### **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 contributed 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 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.

For information go to [www.hull2017.co.uk](http://www.hull2017.co.uk) Follow us on Twitter @2017Hull Instagram @2017hull Facebook HullCityofCulture