substance

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a cultural celebration of the north

music, literature, architecture, film, arts

**SUBSTANCE** is a new, bespoke celebration and exploration of the culture and creativity of The North– the people, stories, music, arts, culture, urbanism and architecture. While most conversations around the idea of a ‘Northern Powerhouse’ have centred on politics and business. **SUBSTANCE** will change the conversation and put artists and cultural architects at the centre of any such debate, exploring how the culture of the north has defined its identity and how, in recent times, it has powered its regeneration, civic and regional pride, and international reputation.

In the past few decades, there has been a marked difference in the cultural response to the climate of the times. The North responded to Thatcherism with Joy Division and The Smiths, while London responded with Spandau Ballet. In the 90s and the start of this century, much of the North has been regenerated by the arts, from The Lowry to The Sage, from MIF to Liverpool European Capital of Culture 2008.

**SUBSTANCE** aims to own the discussion about where, what and how the cultural Northern Powerhouse exists. How we might define it;should we try and define it. How it has changed our cities and landscape. How it has regenerated our cities and changed national and international perceptions of them. The impact it has on everything from economy to civic pride. How it has changed, how we might change it.

The first **SUBSTANCE** will be in partnership with Hull UK Capital of Culture 2017. The conversation will start at the end of 2016, with a diverse series of satellite and partner events taking place over the following year – talks, screenings, installations, street art, exhibitions and live performance –leading up to a final weekend **SUBSTANCE** festival in Hull on 7-10 December 2017.

We are in the process of finalising a steering group committee and other creative partners, including key partner venues across the North.

Education and engagement across a wide demographic is key. **SUBSTANCE** should not be a conversation purely among artists, or preaching to the converted. **SUBSTANCE** is about recognising, celebrating and debating the role of culture in shaping our cities, environment, economy, social habits and every other area of life.

Looking forward, post-2017, **SUBSTANCE** will continue as an on-going annual celebration, adopting a different Northern town or city as its base each year, with satellite events across the North.Carrying on the debate and the legacy as a hugely important part of **SUBSTANCE 2017,** facilitating a more open cultural conversation and collaborations between the northern cities. **SUBSTANCE** will continue this debate and keep supporting artists throughout 2017 and for years to come.