**‘Caravan of Love’**

**The opening event of Hull UK City of Culture 2017**

***‘Are you ready for the time of your life?’***

***‘One by one we gonna stand up with pride’***

***‘Now the children of the world can see***

***This is a better place for us to be***

***The place in which we were born’* The Housemartins: Caravan of Love**

The opening event of Hull UK City of Culture 2017 will a large scale celebration of Hull, its communities, history and future. It will tell the story of a community, the story of what it has achieved, what it has endured and where it is going.

‘Caravan of Love’ will be held over four days on a half mile stretch of closed road in the centre of Hull, this will not only challenge the perception of what an opening event should be but will also allow us to invite everyone of Hull’s 260,000 inhabitants as well as visitors to the city. It will be split into two parts; Discovery and Enactment producing a year-long programme of activity where the sourcing and archiving of the material that makes the event is as important as the event itself.

**Part One: Discovery**

The memories of the city of Hull are stored in the minds, cupboards and lofts of the people of the city. We want to reach out and collect this social history through a major archiving programme enacted jointly between Hull city of Culture, the Hull History centre and the Yorkshire film archive to name just three organisations. Be it oral, pictorial, artistic, filmic are any other media we want to work within communities to access their stories. This we imagine will start with the dominant narratives of the city (the second world war, the fishing industries) but then look deeper for untold stories, new stories that enrich what can sometime be a limited narrative of the city. What do younger people have to say? What do the new, predominantly eastern European communities have to say and share.

For sixth months through 2016 we will seek out material of all kinds and archive it as a lasting social history of the city, available to all but used in the first instance as the source material for caravan of Love.

**Part Two: Enactment**

Caravan of love will be staged over a long weekend (at least) along a mile of road in Central Hull. The road will be closed (itself a statement of how the city will be given over to its citizens). We will take the format of a Christmas market, but through the use of caravans what will be ‘on sale’ will be the stories and memories of the city. Artists will sell there commissioned wares, story tellers will give one on one performances, community groups will sing, theatre groups will take inspiration from the discovery and stage small performances inside and out.

Over laid, projection mapped on the buildings of the street will be archive film of the Hull through the years. Buildings that once stood will live again projected on those that replaced them. Sophisticated mapping will see horse and carts once again travel the streets of Hull. Soundscape artists will take collected material and produce evocative soundtracks along the road.

Additionally large scale volunteer performers will take the source material and turn it into processions, choral works and enactments of key moments in history, but in a way that speaks of the future of the city as it becomes city of culture.