**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Act of Wanton Wonder comes to Hull as Land of Green Ginger is unleashed**

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A flagship Hull UK City of Culture 2017 project will culminate next month with *Land of Green Ginger Unleashed,* a spectacular parade by masters of story-telling and street performance Macnas.

Renowned the world over for spell-binding experiences, Galway based Macnas’ impressive portfolio includes performances in China, Australia, San Francisco and most recently in Austin, Texas for SXSW Festival 2016. They’ve even brought the magic to the MTV Awards and to Wilderness Festival. Now Hull 2017 has commissioned the company to bring a procession of wise beasts, giants, shape shifters and mischief makers to Hull’s Old Town on Saturday 11 November.

*Land of Green Ginger Unleashed* is the finale in a series of Acts of Wanton Wonder from the Land of Green Ginger, a project supported by Spirit of 2012 and Hull Clinical Commissioning Group, which to date has attracted an audience of over 50,000.

Katy Fuller, Executive Producer at Hull 2017, said: “Throughout the year, communities across Hull have delighted in the magic and mysticism of the Land of Green Ginger. Old legends have awoken, ancient relics been unearthed and parallel worlds discovered. Now we are bringing a few of those familiar fables back along with a whole host of new exuberant characters as the full force of the city’s imagination is unleashed on the streets of Hull.”

Noeline Kavanagh, Artistic Director of Macnas, said: “The central character is a wise old man, a mystic who has appeared to call the Land of Green Ginger back home, beckoning the joy and waltzing with the darkness. We will create a final night of revelry, populated by dark, delirious and delicious characters to thrill the audience.

Inspired by a street in Hull - the curiously named Land of Green Ginger – the programme of free events leading up to this has been developed over the last 18 months between artists and community groups, often using local stories as the bedrock.

Katy said: “Land of Green Ginger started as a way of reaching audiences who are traditionally harder to engage in the arts. We wanted to be accessible and inviting, sparking the imagination of anyone who came into contact with the project in its diverse guises.”

The story began last year with mysterious happenings springing up across the city from a pop-up shop encouraging passersby to fashion a replica nose out of plastic to tiny people inhabiting a bingo hall.

Earlier this year, news broke that a huge cache of crates, stamped with the words ‘To Hull: From Land of Green Ginger’ had been discovered in a vault underneath the city. Fictional investigative organisation, The Green Ginger Fellowship, was called in to find out more.

The crates heralded the arrival of the first Act of Wanton Wonder, *7 Alleys*. The concept sparked by local resident Christina Reading’s childhood memory of a mysterious alleyway which only appeared at certain times of the year*.*

Artists from Periplum reinvented the myth, weaving social history and fictional characters together to create a performance which saw more than 11,000 people packed into a local park over four nights.

Christina said: “From little tearaways to old boys who sit in the pub, they all loved it. People are still talking about it and I can’t stop smiling when I think about it.

“This year has managed to connect people in ways that all the regeneration schemes never managed to do.”

Subsequent Acts have featured the return of the Gold Nose of Green Ginger to Bransholme, a beacon burning bright in Longhill, the collective power of Hull’s voice distilled in Pickering Park and a mini metropolis in Derringham.

Each Act has its own identity and is created by a different artist, for and with a different community. But the crates, which have become the familiar signal to alert residents that an Act of Wanton Wonder is coming to their neighbourhood, and the Green Ginger Fellowship, which investigates the curious contents of the crates, provide the connecting thread between each.

Katy added: “We made an unequivocal decision to lead with the fictional narrative, bringing a playfulness that encourages engagement at all levels. If the audience are able to suspend disbelief and embrace wonder and magic, the Land of Green Ginger will capture them in beautiful stories inhabited by the most extraordinary people.

“We hope that that the story of the year, when anything was possible and neighbourhoods became places of wild imagination, will live on in the urban mythology of Hull forever.”

The parade - which will see Macnas collaborating with And Now, who were responsible for one of the previous Acts of Wanton Wonder, the Longhill Burn - will start at 6.30pm at Saville Street. It will and weave along Guildhall Road, Lowgate and High Street before finishing at Humber Street at around 9pm.

For more information on this event, visit [www.hull2017.co.uk/greengingerunleashed](http://www.hull2017.co.uk/greengingerunleashed).

For the full backstory of the Land of Green Ginger visit [www.greenginger.org](http://www.greenginger.org) and follow [www.facebook.com/greengingerfellowship](http://www.facebook.com/greengingerfellowship) and <https://twitter.com/GreenGingerHull>.

**ENDS**

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**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**Act I: 7 Alleys by Periplum**

Artists Claire Raftery and Damian Wright talked to residents of the Preston Road area about their childhood memories and the uniqueness of their neighbourhood. A recurring story was the myth surrounding a network of six alleys with a seventh that opens at will to reveal all manner of wondrous phenomena.

Periplum re-invented the myth, weaving social history and fictional characters together to create an after-dark performance that allowed the audience to journey through the stories to one last challenge – travelling through the seventh alley itself.

A beautiful carriage pulled by two black horses travelled around East Hull, stopping outside people’s front doors to hand-deliver invitations to join the search for the 7 Alleys in East Park, which was attended by over 11,000 people.

**Act II: The Gold Nose of Green Ginger** **by Joshua Sofaer**

The Green Ginger Fellowship discovered the Gold Nose of Green Ginger, long considered an urban myth, while delving into the cache of Land of Green Ginger crates under investigation.

Between June and August, the nose took up residency at North Point Shopping Centre in Bransholme, where it was visited by around 30,000 people, before being transferred to Hull History Centre.

Believed to bring unexplainable good fortune to all who come into contact with it, The Gold Nose has received around 30,000 visits from people who have made wishes, shared a secret with it in the ‘secret pocket’ where some also claimed to hear The Nose breathe, and engaged in various nose-themed crafts, activities and even parties.

**Act III: Longhill Burn by And Now**

In July, over 2,400 gathered at Eastmount Playing Fields for music, dancing, surprises, fireworks and the lighting of a huge and beautiful bonfire

**Act IV: Re-Redifussion by Aswarm**

Inspired by the original Rediffusion company which distributed voices out across the city, Re-Rediffusion formed to see if they could reverse the network.

After extracting, gathering and distilling local voices from across the city, they found a way to harness this extraordinary energy within the multi-sensory Voice Park at Pickering Park Pool.

Over 2,800 people visited the Voice Park to play with the collective power of Hull’s voice and help Re-Rediffusion in their quest to find the *Essence de Voix* – the most potent distillation of the city’s combined voices.

**Act V: Micropolis by Davy and Kristin McGuire**

A sprawling miniature city was discovered at Springhead Pumping Station after the Green Ginger Fellowship was inundated with sightings of footprints near to the city’s drains on social media.

Using the constant stream of rubbish discarded by humans, tiny people been gathering, recycling and building, sidestepping the eyes and feet of giants to build their own world.

The Green Ginger Fellowship and the tiny community have agreed to allow the fully-sized general public into their Micropolis for 16 days only, from Saturday 21 October until Sunday November 5, between 2 and 8.30pm each day.

Catch a glimpse of a miniature party in full swing and seek out the Town Crier’s news. From butchers to burlesque dancers, window cleaners to workmen, familiar lives and faces unfold in perfect miniature.

**Act VI: Land of Green Ginger Unleashed by Macnas**

**Act VII: …**

**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