**HULL UK CITY OF CULTURE 2017**

**‘ZEPHYR’**

**1 Introduction**

‘Look Up’[[1]](#footnote-1) is an ambitious programme of temporary artworks, to be realised in the city centre specifically for 2017. It will respond to, and reveal in new and surprising ways, Hull’s remarkable architecture, streets and public spaces.

Artists, architects and designers are being invited to create work that alters the city in some way, shifting perceptions of the place, turning the familiar into something strange and wonderful, playful and celebratory. Commissions will be broad ranging and may include sound design, lighting installations, digital, interactive and socially engaged works, as well as sculptural and architectural interventions*.* The city becomes a dynamic setting for, and subject of, the artists’ work, rather than a stage on which the work is displayed.

The artist Nayan Kulkarni, who is currently leading on the implementation of a creative lighting scheme for the city centre, has proposed marking the launch of 2017’s ‘Made in Hull’ season with the dramatic temporary display of a single 75m turbine blade installed along one of the city’s streets.

**2 Zephyr**

At the start of the twentieth century the Futurists recognized the dawn of the machine age through their celebration of technology; the machine as a means to power and ultimately to war. We now know of a different way, we see differently and are learning to understand a new order of the machine. In this sense the blade of wind turbine, a harvester of energy, is more than a means to an end. It is a material fact, a weight, a pure form: a sculpture made in Hull.

Zephyr[[2]](#footnote-2) proposes to transform Hull’s street scape through the imposition of a single wind turbine blade. As with J.G.Ballard’s ‘The Drowned Giant’ or Richard Serra’s ‘Tilted Arc’ this will be a profound material gesture, a spectacle, an obstacle and an object of wonder. This *readymade* artwork, up to 75 meters long, will divide the street forming a temporary impediment to a free flow. Carefully positioned it will force us to drift around its arabesque edges, our sight taking the place of the breeze. The twisting wing although inert, at rest in the street, speaks of movement but not of freedom.

Zephyr seeks to raise the status of the blade to art, positioning it in the history of material forms that transcend function pointing us towards beauty, reminding us of its relationship to the sublime.

Promoted as part of the ‘Made in Hull’ season ‘Zephyr’ will be an unforgettable physical manifestation, creating an opportunity for anyone to see what is made in the city in a way which will surprise, intrigue and engender pride. This blade will slice through a public space, amazing in its scale and physically breathtaking, an expression of a city at the forefront of sustainable technology.

1. Programme working title only [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Zephyrus or Zephyr was the Greek west wind, bringer of light spring and early summer breezes [↑](#footnote-ref-2)