UK’s Top Composers work up new songs and sounds of Hull in series of residencies with residents to soak up the culture.

HULL UK City of Culture 2017

Five of the UK’s top composers are bringing music to the heart of the community in Hull as part of the PRS Foundation’s New Music Biennial. The residencies will take place throughout spring and early summer as part of the build-up to the New Music Biennial (30 June – 2 July 2017). The Biennial kicks off the third season of Hull UK City of Culture 2017, entitled *Freedom*.

Errollyn Wallen, Brian Irvine, Sam Lee, Jason Singh and Eliza Carthy are the composers who are getting under the skin of the city with a wide range of local people and groups. The residencies are designed to ensure as wide a spectrum of people as possible from all parts of Hull have the opportunity to spend time creating music with some of the New Music Biennial’s brilliant music creators.

As well as offering all those taking part a rich experience with storytelling, songwriting, beatboxing, instrumental and experimental music in many genres, the residencies will each create music which will be woven together into a large-scale finale by James Redwood and presented as part of the New Music Biennial weekend. This finale brings together community participants and musicians from all five residencies for a ‘supergroup’ moment.

The five visiting composers will be working with local music leaders, trainee student music leaders from Hull University and professional musicians from Hull and further afield. This will leave a legacy of workshop structures and practical tools as well as an exchange of practice which PRS hopes will continue to benefit the communities engaged in this project.

**ABOUT THE RESIDENCIES**

**SAM LEE**

Sam Lee is a Mercury Prize nominated folk singer, song collector, promoter (of BBC award-winning folk club The Nest Collective) and radio host. His two critically acclaimed albums (‘Ground of Its Own’ and ‘The Fade in Time’) showcase songs he has collected first hand from the Gypsy Traveller Community.

Sam is taking the artistic lead in a collaborative project with regular sessions led by a musician from the Nest Collective, Jack Durtnall.. He is starting by interviewing members of the Traveller and former sea faring communities, and capturing their stories to use as a starting point for creating songs with young people.

Sam and his fellow musicians will work in schools to explore listening and recording sounds in pupils own lives perhaps interviewing their elders or inspirational people from their own families, or recording familiar sounds. This becomes a resource for song writing, creating lyrics and exploring musical forms and song construction. Sam Hopes that Travellers and sea farers may visit the schools and there will be an opportunity for children to share the results of their work with those who have inspired them.

The project will work with Trinity House, with former sea farers from Hull, the Traveller community, Year 5 pupils of Buckingham School and Year 8 and 9 pupils in Trinity Academy.

Sam is working with guest artists including Jack Durtnall, Richard O’Neil Hazel Richings and Sam Pirt.

**ELIZA CARTHY**

If there is one musician who embodies the dynamism and vitality of the current English folk revival, it’s Eliza Carthy. Beloved of staunch traditionalists and iconoclasts alike, Eliza’s music effortlessly crosses boundaries of genre and style. Whether performing a centuries-old ballad or a self-written song, her powerful, nuanced voice, fiercely beautiful fiddle playing and mesmerizing live performances have influenced a whole generation of young musicians.

Born into a formidable musical dynasty, Eliza grew up steeped in the folk traditions of England. Her mother Norma was one of The Watersons, whose tight harmony arrangements of traditional songs became one of the defining sounds of the 1960s folk revival. Her father, Martin Carthy, is a hugely significant singer and guitarist, who influenced the likes of Bob Dylan and Paul Simon.

Eliza is going to run a residency called ‘Hull Is’ based on a reworking of *Three Day Millionaire* by (her uncle) Mike Waterson, Eliza will write a new song inspired by Hull in the present. She is workshoping and having conversations with a wide cross section of the Community, including students at Wyke College Kingston Boxing Club Dancers from the Hindu Cultural Association, Hessle Road residents at Boulevard Village Hall Coffee Morning, volunteers atGiroscope Housing Co-operative, Year 1 and 5 pupils at Spring Cottage Primary School – employees at Associated British Ports, local Market Traders and a cross section of Hull2017 volunteers. Eliza will work with Hull based folk duo Gary Hammond and Sam Pirt (aka The Hut People) to create a ‘Hull Is’ song, and to write a cup percussion pattern which can be learned by everyone.

**ERROLLYN WALLEN**

Errollyn Wallen is at ease both as a singer-songwriter of pop-influenced songs and a composer of contemporary new music. She describes her own Ensemble X with the motto, ‘We don’t break down barriers in music…we don’t see any.’

Her residency in Hull searches for the modern spiritual. Gathering people’s stories and reflections on hardship and how music can sustain us through hard times, the work will reach out to the local refugee and migrant communities involved in Hull’s Open Doors project (a community organization working with refugees, migrants and asylum seekers) as well as working with year 4 pupils and parents at Thoresby Primary School.

Over the course of the coming months, Errollyn will work in these communities with the support of local musicians Gary Hammond,Pete Jack and Frankie Banham of Mambo Jambo (world music), choral specialist Em Whitfield Brooks and with the assistance of Cecil Jones, Gabrielle Awre and Nola Marshll from Open Doors to explore the theme of the modern spiritual. Together they will create music which will go into the mass finale performance at the Festival weekend in July 2017.

Errollyn and her team of local musicians will be running workshops in schools, meeting with parents, running a Composition Lab masterclass day, performing and taking part in a panel discussion at WOW.

[are there any community performances ahead of July?]

**JASON SINGH**

Jason Singh is a beatboxer, vocal sculptor and sound artist whose work is rooted in inspiring people to engage in creative experiences through voice, technology, performance and participation. A prolific solo artist, he also collaborates and performs alongside artists such as Nitin Sawhney, Rokia Traorè, Sebastian Rochford, Leafcutter John, Shabaka Hutchings and Soumik Datta.

His residency *Ebb and Flow* explores peoples’ memories of Hull. It connects to Hull’s links with water, transformation, regrowth and change. Jason is interested in capturing peoples’ memories of Hull through sound. “I would like to include stories, songs, vague and vivid accounts of the past, seasons, descriptions of spaces that once existed, fond memories, stories about the war and its effects on people’s lives.”

The sound piece will also contain sounds of spaces, buildings and places around Hull which may be re-interpreted to create musical textures and provoke a dialogue about perception of a place and space.

*Ebb and Flow* will be a 23-speaker, fully immersive Ambisonic sound installation. It will be constructed using a Higher Order Ambisonics sound-field, almost like a dome-shaped structure, which will be programmed and installed in the History Centre by Liverpool based 3D/Ambisonics company, Kinicho. Aesthetically, the sound of the piece will incorporate an “ebb and flow” feel to simulate tidal movement and breathing as well as speech, field-recordings and music.

A wide range of participants are engaging with Jason to create this installation including o The Warren youth project, the Colours of Music Orchestra - which brings together young people from 4 special schools with Youth Groups, other Youth Music projects in Hull and adults involved in Hull Freedom Chorus, and people with Dementia attending Buckingham Day Centre.

Local musicians involved in Jason’s project include Jez Riley French, Wai Wan, Stewart Baxter, Gary Hammond, Donna Smith, DJ Chile, Paul Clark, Santino Roberts and Rob Mackay.

**BRIAN IRVINE**

Composer/conductor Brian Irvine’s huge body of work includes operas, orchestral works, large-scale participatory work, films, multi-media installations, dance works as well as ensemble, solo, and chamber pieces. His sound world is a personal concoction of contemporary classical, cartoon, punk, jazz, thrash and trash. It often takes the form of giant super structures - as in the head on collision of two symphony orchestras, or the 7 day performance installation of 3000 collected objects, symphony orchestra, choir, intervention performers and soloists in NEST (the Northern Ireland Artists Taking The lead commission for the London 2012 Olympics).

Brian is working in a specific geographical area just outside the city centre to the East. It is economically deprived and neglected, culturally underserved or even unserved, with housing nestled amongst industrial units. Brian intends to base himself there an engage with a wide range of people. .

Brian will kick off his work in March. He’ll explore forming music groups within the communitywith older people in Pickering and Ferens Homes who will form the Big Elastic Band andresidents at The Crossings and Emmaus Hull (place of change schemes for former homeless people) being invited to form a band. Buckingham Day Centre for older people with Dementia is gathering up its secret musicians to get involved too

Brian is also holding a composition masterclass in May based on improvisation, open to all, as part of Albemarle Saturdays project.

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