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**PRESS RELEASE**

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 31 AUGUST 2017**

**Blast to the future**

**See the trailer** [**here**](http://bit.ly/2097trailer)

* **Phone boxes across the city will ring in unison on 1 October to herald the arrival of 2097 – those who answer the call will speak with a character from the future**
* **Interactive experiences will be released online every Saturday in October, including sci-fi shorts via a free app on iOS and Android**
* **Pop-up screenings of short sci-fi films every weekend in locations across the city – interactive map available at** [**wemadeourselvesover.com**](http://wemadeourselvesover.com)

Hull UK City of Culture 2017 opens its fourth season with a view into a future version of the city, 80 years from now.

Inspired by the people of the city, the year-long ***2097: We Made Ourselves Over*** will culminate with a month-long series of extraordinary sci-fi experiences between 1 – 29 October.

Jointly commissioned by Hull UK City of Culture 2017 and Aarhus 2017 European Capital of Culture, in association with KCOM, the project invites people to enter the futuristic hybrid city of Aarhull via a series of sci-fi shorts and a smartphone app.

Award-winning interactive art pioneers Blast Theory launched the project last autumn via a series of workshops which invited groups of people aged 18-24 and over 60 to reimagine their communities 80 years from now. These workshops were followed by a cultural exchange which saw five young people from Hull travel to Aarhus, one of whom has had a film character named after her.

Since then, Blast Theory have continued to liaise with local people, inviting them to recommend locations to film at and locations to screen the films, as well as casting teenagers from East Riding in the films.

The outcome of these workshops, along with conversations with future experts – specialists in climate change, smart cities and community activism – informed Blast Theory’s creation of the hybrid city of Aarhull in 2097.

Kicking off on 1 October, phone boxes across the city will ring in unison to herald 2097’s arrival. Those who answer the call will enter into a conversation with a character from Aarhull, who will ask you to record your own vision of the future.

A short sci-fi film will be released each Saturday in the month, starting on 1 October. Shot on location in Hull and Aarhus before being treated with state of the art visual effects, the shorts will be available to view online via [www.wemadeourselvesover.com](http://www.wemadeourselvesover.com) and on a loop at pop-up screenings each Saturday and Sunday in October in city locations suggested by locals. These screenings kick off in the Bransholme area of Hull on Saturday 1 October.

A smartphone app will also be available to download from 1 October. Talk with the characters onscreen, share your hopes for your future and discover more about the surprising world of 2097. New episodes will be released every weekend in October.

Nick Tandavanitj from Blast Theory says: “During October a leak will spring from Aarhull 2097 - the futuristic hybrid city we’ve created with your help - into Hull.

“Over the last year, we’ve been having a conversation with you and with future experts about what your city could be like 80 years from now. It’s time to find out and we can’t wait to show you.”

Martin Green, Director of Hull 2017, added: “We opened the year with our *Made in Hull* season, celebrating the historic stories of this city, and we will close the year by discovering the new in our *Tell the World* season.

“As the question on everybody’s lips is what’s next for Hull and Aarhus, *2097* invites you to step into a future hybrid version of the cities in an ambitious co-production between the two powerhouses of UK City of Culture and European Capital of Culture.”

2097: We Made Ourselves Over is the biggest and most ambitious project Blast Theory has undertaken in its history of more than 25 years.

Blast Theory has created award-winning interactive apps, including [Karen](http://www.blasttheory.co.uk/projects/karen/) (2015), the life coach inspired by the data mining techniques used by large companies; and critically acclaimed theatrical experiences, including [Operation Black Antler](http://www.blasttheory.co.uk/projects/operation-black-antler/) (2016) exploring state-sanctioned undercover surveillance.

2097: We Made Ourselves Over represents the first time the company has embarked on storytelling across two entire cities: Hull in the UK and Aarhus in Denmark.

Sign up to be the first to find out about film screenings and other exciting ways to get involved at [www.wemadeourselvesover.com](http://www.wemadeourselvesover.com), or follow us via social media @blasttheory #its2097

2097: We Made Ourselves Over is one of a series of Blast Theory projects presented during 2017 that invite audiences to envision the future of our society as part of a global dialogue in and around our work. Take part online @blasttheory #envisionthefuture

***For further information, interviews and images, please contact Lauren Burrow, Blast Theory Communications Coordinator, on 01273 413455 or at*** [***Lauren@blasttheory.co.uk***](mailto:Lauren@blasttheory.co.uk)***; or Chloe Barker, Blast Theory Communications Manager, on 07921 866109 or at chloegudrun@live.co.uk***

**About Blast Theory**

Blast Theory has been making interactive artworks that invite you to question your place in society for 25 years. Renowned internationally as one of the most adventurous artists’ groups creating groundbreaking new forms of performance and interactive art, the group has created work for the Venice Biennale and Sundance Film Festival. Led by Matt Adams, Ju Row Farr and Nick Tandavanitj, the group’s work explores the social and political aspects of technology. Drawing on popular culture and games, the work often blurs the boundaries between the real and the fictional.

www.blasttheory.co.uk

@blasttheory

**About Hull UK City of Culture 2017**

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.

Divided into four seasons, this nationally significant event draws on the distinctive spirit of the city and the artists, writers, directors, musicians, revolutionaries and thinkers that have made such a significant contribution to the development of art and ideas.

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 60 partners supporting the project, including public bodies, lottery distributors, 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, Green Port Hull, Hull Clinical Commissioning Group, MKM Building Supplies, P&O Ferries, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Sewell Group, Siemens, Smith & Nephew and Wykeland Group.

68 per cent of the funding is dedicated to public facing activities, including the widest range of cultural events in every corner of the city, with a further 11 per cent for legacy and contingency. More than £5 million is being invested in volunteering, learning and community engagement. £1.6 million is being invested to ensure a legacy after 2017. This includes capacity building, such as supporting existing events so they can grow, staging curtain-raiser events, developing future programming for after 2017 and building a new platform to support a unified ticketing system for the city.

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

**About Aarhus European Capital of Culture**

Aarhus and the 18 other municipalities in Central Denmark Region celebrate our year as European Capital of Culture in 2017.

The title European Capital of Culture (ECoC) represents one of the most prestigious and prominent cultural events in Europe. Every year, two EU countries are appointed as host countries for the European Capital of Culture. In 2017 Pafos in Cyprus has also been nominated as ECOC. Copenhagen was the first Danish city to host the European Capital of Culture in 1996, and it will be many years before a Danish city can boast the title again.

European Capital of Culture Aarhus 2017 is deeply rooted in strong regional cooperation across the entire region. Royal patronage: HM Queen Margrethe II of Denmark. Official opening: Aarhus, Denmark, Saturday 21st January 2017

www.aarhus2017.dk/en/

Follow us on Social Media: **Facebook:** Aarhus 2017 – European Capital of Culture **Twitter:** @Aarhus2017 **Instagram:** @aarhus\_2017

