

**Press Release
09/10/17**

**Cast announced for major new site-specific production *The Last Testament of Lillian Bilocca* by Maxine Peake, with live music by Adrian McNally and The Unthanks**
Hull Truck Theatre and Hull UK City of Culture 2017 today announce the cast for the world première of *The Last Testament of Lillian Bilocca*, a new production written by Maxine Peake, with an original live score by folk’s finest – The Unthanks - especially for season four of Hull 2017.

This unique site responsive piece charts Lillian Bilocca and her crew of head-scarfed women as they campaign for fishing industry reform during the 1960s.

The cast includes **Jon Beney** (Movement Director on *Dancing Through the Shadows,* *A Christmas Treasure Island* and *Our Mutual Friend*, Hull Truck Theatre), **Michelle Butterly** (*A Streetcar Named Desire* and *Hamlet*, Manchester Royal Exchange; *Everyman*, National Theatre), **Helen Carter** (*The Star*, Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse; *Father O’Flaherty Saves our Souls,* Royal Court Theatre), **Laura Elsworthy** (*The Hypocrite*, Hull Truck Theatre, RSC and Hull 2017; *The Skriker*, Manchester Royal Exchange), **Daniel Foxsmith** (*Nothing,* Manchester Royal Exchange; *Licensed to Ill,* Southwark Playhouse), **Lena Kaur** (*Myth and Earthworks*, Royal Shakespeare Company; *The Ghost Train*, Manchester Royal Exchange), **Arian Nik** (*The Ugly One,* Park Theatre; *Jungle,* National Theatre), **Katherine Pearce** (*Husbands and Sons,* Manchester Royal Exchange; *Low Level Panic,* Orange Tree Theatre), **Paul Popplewell** (*The Hypocrite,* Hull Truck Theatre, RSC and Hull 2017; *A Taste of Honey,* Manchester Royal Exchange) and recent Royal Central School of Speech and Drama graduate **Rakhee Sharma** (*The Express, From Morning to Midnight* and *Macbeth*, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama).

The creative team are: Liz Ascroft (Associate Set & Costume Designer), Jon Beney (Associate Movement Director); Chris Davey (Lighting Designer), Sarah Frankcom (Director), Imogen Knight (Co-director & Choreographer), Peter Malkin (Sound Designer) and Amanda Stoodley (Set & Costume Designer).

**Sarah Frankcom, Director, says:***‘I’m delighted to be making* The Last Testament of Lillian Bilocca *for Hull 2017 and Hull Truck Theatre and to be working with an extraordinary cast, creative team and community company to realise this universally significant and inspiring story in a site responsive production at Hull’s stunning Guildhall.’*

**About *The Last Testament of Lillian Bilocca***

This site-specific performance will lead audiences through Hull’s historic Guildhall, the Grade II listed home of Hull City Council. It sees Maxine Peake reunite with regular collaborator Sarah Frankcom and features a live musical score from celebrated folk artists Adrian McNally and The Unthanks.

Follow Hull hero Lillian Bilocca and her crew of head-scarfed women through the Guildhall, joining them in 1968 as they dare to speak out and take action to improve the safety conditions for their men at sea.

Witness the Three Day Millionaires’ riotous return home from the wet and wild west, and dance at the ghostly Silver Cod Ball, the trawler owners’ annual slap on the back.

Become part of their story as it unfolds and immerse yourself in Hull’s fishing community. Celebrate the vivid and dangerous lives of its trawler men and unite against the feudal power of the ship owners.

Written by Maxine Peake, directed by Sarah Frankcom and Imogen Knight, and with an original live score by folk’s finest - The Unthanks - this unique site-specific production will take audiences on an unforgettable journey using music, storytelling, movement and performance to celebrate an inspirational period in Hull’s history and a force for change that resonated far beyond the city. It’s time to tell the world.

**Historical context**

Lillian Bilocca rallied the women of Hull’s close-knit fishing community into fighting for better conditions for men at sea, following the Triple Trawler Tragedy of 1968 in which 58 men were lost in just three weeks. Amongst their demands, the women wanted radio operators on board every trawler and an end to men having to supply their own bedding and clothing. They drew together a petition which attracted 10,000 signatures in just 3 days. Lillian and her fellow women were dubbed the ‘Headscarf Revolutionaries’, taking their fight all the way from the docks in Hull to the Houses of Parliament. Their campaign became headline news around the world and paved the way for better working conditions across the fishing industry. A mural to honour Lillian Bilocca and the ‘Headscarf Revolutionaries’ was unveiled on Hessle Road in Hull last year, which had once been the heart of the city’s fishing community.

**- ENDS -**

**Notes to Editors

Box office information:**Hull Truck Theatre, 50 Ferensway, Hull, East Riding of Yorkshire, HU2 8LB
01482 323638 // [www.hulltruck.co.uk](http://www.hulltruck.co.uk)

**Performance schedule:**
Fri 3 Nov, 7.30 / Sat 4 Nov, 7.30 / Wed 8 Nov, 5.30 / Thurs 9 Nov, 7.30 / Fri 10 Nov, 5.30 & 8.30/ Sat 11 Nov, 3.30 & 7.30 / Wed 15 Nov, 5.30 & 8.30 / Thurs 16 Nov, 7.30 / Fri 17 Nov, 8.30 / Sat 18 Nov, 3.30 & 7.30

N.B. The production is sold-out.

 **Hull Truck Theatre** is a producing theatre right in the heart of Hull, making thrilling work of exceptional quality with a distinctive northern voice. Inspired by their city, they tell powerful human stories that resonate with our times. They make work with local people, programme the very best in live performance and build partnerships with others to create a vibrant and dynamic cultural hub for Hull that is inspiring, creative and welcoming.

**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 contributed 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 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.

For information go to [www.hull2017.co.uk](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/Olk4BF71nztX?domain=hull2017.co.uk) Follow us on Twitter @2017Hull Instagram @2017hull Facebook HullCityofCulture

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