



MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 6 June 2019

The Big Feast - Stoke-on-Trent's Biggest Outdoor Arts Festival - Returns this August!

Stoke-on-Trent's biggest outdoor arts festival, The Big Feast, returns to the streets of the City Centre from Friday 23 – Saturday 24 August, for another weekend of world-class family performances and entertainment.

Following the success of The Big Feast '18 which saw nearly 20,000 people enjoy arts events including lunar installation *Museum of the Moon*, the annual outdoor arts extravaganza, served up by Appetite, an arts programme led by New Vic Theatre, will again fill the streets of the City Centre with a feast of shows all for free.

The Big Feast '19 will be the most jam-packed yet with a programme for all ages, from cutting-edge circus and dance to musical walkabout acts and interactive shows created by local, UK and international artists.

The Big Feast '19 line-up includes: *Bicycle Boy* by Helen Eastman, a hilarious interactive bicycle-powered musical; *Look Up* by Hikapee, a playful puppetry and circus show about finding joy in the world around us; *Sorriso* by Teatro SÓ, a beautiful stilt performance all the way from Portugal which will mesmerise audiences as the sun goes down; *PULSE!* by Joss Arnott Dance, a live music, dance experience on a 3.5m high percussion wheel engineered by Rolls-Royce and *The Band at the End of the World!* by Ramshacklicious, an anarchic, roaming brass band which, dressed in their punk marching band attire, will bring unmissable musical mayhem to the streets, plus many more to be announced.

Audiences will also be invited to an unforgettable tea party in *Smashed* by the acclaimed Gandini Juggling. This mesmerising mix of circus and theatre, and a highlight of the Saturday programme, features 9 performers, 4 crockery sets and 80 apples and has wowed crowds around the world.

This year's programme will also serve up some brand-new treats including *The Piccadilly Stage* which will see a line-up of live musicians and interactive dance acts entertain audiences into the early evening in Piccadilly and *The Big Feast Graff Jam* with Stoke-on-Trent's Entrepreneurs, in which 12 graffiti artists create artworks live on the streets and invite visitors to join in.

Appetite will also team up with Stoke-on-Trent's Frontline Dance, who create work with disabled and non-disabled dancers. Their new dance show to be created with stories collected from the local disabled and non-disabled community will take audiences on a 10-mile rollercoaster ride as they use public transport to dance through all six towns of the city captured in a live video feed screened at The Big Feast and concluding with a performance outdoors at the festival.

Appetite's Creative Producer (maternity cover) **Tim Hodgson** said. *"This year's programme is truly something for all ages and all tastes: from Ramshacklicious' wild marching band and live music to dance to down in Piccadilly, to chilled out vibes in interactive show Cloudscapes by Gobbledegook, which will turn Bethesda Gardens into an outdoor auditorium in which visitors can lie back and gaze at the clouds in the company of a storyteller. We can't wait for you to experience it all"*

The Big Feast '19 is supported by Stoke-on-Trent City Council, The Without Walls Touring Network Partnership and Stoke-on-Trent BID (Business Improvement District).

Stoke-on-Trent City Council Leader, Councillor Abi Brown said: *"The Big Feast is a fantastic example of how cultural and arts events play a vital part in bringing people into our city and boosting our economy. They are also fantastic opportunities to bring our communities together and celebrate Stoke-on-Trent as a place that is on the up."*

Councillor Lorraine Beardmore, Stoke-on-Trent City Council cabinet member for sport, culture and leisure, said: *"The Big Feast offers something for everyone and allows tens of thousands of people to enjoy truly special family entertainment right here in our great city."*

Paul Williams, BID Director for Place Marketing for Stoke-on-Trent City Centre BID said: *"Recognising that city centres thrive when businesses work with cultural organisations, Stoke-on-Trent BID is delighted to be partnering with Appetite to deliver The Big Feast '19. This year's exciting programme of outdoor arts events and cultural activities will once again animate and populate the city centre. Working closely with the Appetite team around a renewed focus on business engagement, the BID will use its place marketing expertise to attract more residents and visitors to enjoy The Big Feast experience, generating footfall into the city centre businesses to boost local spending."*

Appetite, an Arts Council England-funded arts programme led by New Vic Theatre in partnership with Partners in Creative Learning, 6Towns Radio and Staffordshire University, has been presenting thrilling new arts events co-produced with local residents through the Appetite Supper Club in the city since 2013. The programme has recently been awarded funding to continue inspiring new audiences through activities like The Big Feast for another 3 years.

The Big Feast '19 will take place **Friday 23 to Saturday 24 August 2019** in **Stoke-on-Trent City Centre**. The festival is free and tickets are not required. Find out more about The Big Feast and plan your weekend by visiting www.appetitestoke.co.uk. Big Feast '19 brochures will be available to pick up from local libraries, City Centre outlets and the New Vic Theatre from mid-July.

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Notes to Editors:

About Appetite

Appetite is part of the Creative People and Places programme, initiated and funded by Arts Council England. Creative People and Places is about more people taking the lead in choosing, creating and taking part in art experiences in the places where they live. There are 21 independent projects, each located in an area where people have traditionally had fewer opportunities to get involved with the arts.

www.creativepeopleplaces.org.uk

The Appetite programme is supported by funding from the National Lottery through Arts Council England and is led by the New Vic Theatre in partnership with Partners in Creative Learning, 6Towns Radio and Staffordshire University. Appetite is also supported by Stoke-on-Trent City Council.

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www.appetitestoke.co.uk | @appetitestoke | F: @appetite.stoke

About Without Walls:

Without Walls is a network of festivals that brings fantastic outdoor arts to people in towns and cities across the UK. Since 2007, Without Walls has commissioned and supported the development of over 140 shows, many of which have toured beyond our network of festivals to 22 countries worldwide.

Without Walls is supported by Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation.

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