

WUNDERBAR FESTIVAL

Media Release

Who Wants to Be? From The People Speak

The Cluny, 36 Lime Street, Ouseburn
Friday 13th November, 2009 8pm – 10pm

Wunderbar Festival is a brand new festival that will bring exciting multi-artform, contemporary performances and visual art to the North East. The festival will present work by pioneering artists that is challenging, brave, different and thought-provoking, alongside large scale spectacles with a definite 'wow' factor and charming, quirky unexpected happenings that will surprise and delight.

Aimed at nurturing a culture of curiosity, the festival is designed to open people's eyes to a sense of wonder, providing the most unusual of spectacles in everyday places as well as more traditional venues.

Who Wants to Be...? has been devised by an artists' collective called **The People Speak**, and is one of the highlights of the festival which will take place at **The Cluny on Friday 13th November at 8pm**. It's the dangerously spontaneous, democratic theatre experience where the audience makes up the questions, conjures up the answers, and even sets the rules!

People propose ideas, argue, and then vote on how to spend the entire evenings' box-office takings.

Gamble it?
Donate it?
Invest it?
Waste it?

The audience decides!

Marvel as people's wildest ideas materialise instantly on a giant screen, wait with baited breath as the votes come in live. And if you don't like the game, you can vote to change the rules. Previous audiences have come close to sacking the host and putting the money behind the theatre bar. But whatever the outcome - your terms and conditions apply.

Who Wants to Be? was inspired by the 'ask the audience' feature of the popular TV game show. In asking the audience to set the questions, provide the answers and decide what the rules are, Who Wants to Be? gives people an insight into the possibilities of their collective imagination.

One previous Who Wants to Be...? audience decided to collectively purchase and own a woodland in Wales. Another voted to commission a 'democracy bench' for a London park, narrowly beating the second favourite idea: to make a Guinness record attempt for baking the world's biggest crumpet.

At Who Wants to Be...?, anything can happen, and it probably will.

Tickets at £10 for Who Wants to Be...? can be purchased from Wunderbar Festival Box Office based at Dance City, Temple Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4BR, 0191 261 0505.

If you would like to send your idea on how the £1000 - the full box office takings for the event - should be spent ahead of the evening, please mail it to

whowantstobe@wunderbarfestival.co.uk

For more information on the festival programme go to www.wunderbarfestival.co.uk

For more information about Who Wants to Be? go to: <http://www.whowantstobe.co.uk>

For More information about The People Speak go to: <http://thepeoplespeak.net>

Ends.

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Notes to Editors

The People Speak

The People Speak is a London-based art collective founded in 2004 by Mikey Weinkove and Saul Albert, with an ever-expanding group of highly talented specialists.

The People Speak's work prototypes new forms of civic interaction, creating forums for people to surprise and delight each other by generating ideas, having discussions and making decisions together in a fun and engaging way.

Recently The People Speak has been working with Islington Council to get 25,000 young people to decide how to spend 450,000, and are currently working on a 3 public art year commission to develop civic communication on the Craylands Estate in Basildon. Their work has got people speaking internationally, from the Edinburgh Festival to the Prague Biennale, and their next International event will be as part of the official programme of the COP15 Climate Summit in Copenhagen, where they will be running a pyramid scheme to save the planet.

Wunderbar Festival:

Wunderbar Festival's aim is to nurture a culture of curiosity by bringing audiences and artists together on journeys of intrigue and wonder.

Wunderbar is a dynamic new festival of contemporary performances, visual art, and extraordinary happenings for the North East that places the audience at the heart of

the experience.

Everyday places, traditional venues, disused spaces, the internet and the ether are the sites for Wunderbar's eclectic programme of new commissions and collaborations. International meets regional in work that is remarkable, playful, brave and mischievous and across every scale, from the minutest of interactions to some grand city centre spectacles.

Wunderbar's aim is to explore participation and social interaction to their limits, and takes inspiration from the curiosity of its audiences. Wunderbar is a place for activity, spontaneity, society, interaction, dialogue and play – and is a festival with festivity at its heart.

Wunderbar Festival is proud to be working with Saks Hairdressers and Divine Chocolate Ltd, sponsors of Haircuts by Children and the Sponsors Club for Arts & Business and Dickinson Dees, sponsors of the Wunderbar Staff Engagement and Volunteering Programme.

History:

In early 2008, Arts Council England, North East, commissioned Fierce Earth, the organisers of Fierce! festival, “the Hay-on-Wye of performance art, the Glastonbury of experimental theatre” (Daily Telegraph), working with North East based curators Ilana Mitchell and Beth Bate, to research and develop a new participatory live art festival for the North East.

Following a period of consultation and focus groups with arts organisations, artists and individuals across the region, plus audience and artistic research, Wunderbar Festival was established as a new North East organisation to develop and produce a new festival on a biennial model. Ilana has led the creative development of the project working with many partners across the North East. The new organisation has been supported in its establishment by Fierce Earth, who continue to provide development expertise, organisational management and back office support.

Between July and December 2009 Wunderbar Festival is continuing its organisational development, building a strong Board of Directors to carry on the work of the festival while Fierce Earth step back to concentrate on their own exciting projects.