



PRESS RELEASE
16 October 2020

Call out for North East musicians to help celebrate *Unsung Heroes* in song

Queen's Hall Arts have commissioned international multimedia artists Davy & Kristin McGuire and North East musician Bridie Jackson to create *Unsung Heroes* - a brand new augmented reality gig co-created with the local community.

Communities in and around Hexham have nominated their *Unsung Heroes*, sharing stories about the everyday people who have inspired them, and now Bridie is looking for North East musicians to take part in the next stage of the project.

Bridie explains, "*For me, writing songs is all about capturing stories that would otherwise be lost so it's a real joy to write about these Unsung Heroes who have made a difference in their local community, and until now, not received the recognition they deserve. We've had some really heart-warming nominations and now we're looking for local people with a passion for music to get involved. While it's not a professional gig and you don't need to be able to read music, it would be great if you had some live performance and studio experience because they'll be recording the songs I've written and then performing them on camera.*"

Once the songs have been recorded, the musicians will be filmed performing in front of a green screen for an augmented reality app being developed by the McGuires. Audiences will be able to experience a 'mini gig' wherever they are simply by pointing their camera phone at a postcard which will make the musicians pop up to perform the songs on a 'postcard stage'.

Last month, Davy & Kristin McGuire won the Innovation Award at the 2020 Museums + Heritage Awards for 'A Night at the Mansion', using audio-visual projections to delight visitors to Yorkshire's Harewood House museum and bring its collections to life. For *Unsung Heroes*, they will use augmented reality so audiences can experience a pop up music performance from the comfort of their own home. The McGuires said, "*In this time of isolation where people can't go to gigs, we thought it would be a good idea to transport the gigs to the people. Tabletop Rock will be an augmented reality app where musicians will be shrunk down to the size of a coffee cup and perform to people directly from their kitchen table. We are really excited to be working with Bridie and Queen's Hall Arts on this first of a kind project.*"

Musicians should send a short video of themselves performing, plus a paragraph explaining why they want to get involved to bridiejacksonarts@gmail.com by Friday 6 November. Audition videos can also be submitted on social media using #UnsungHeroesHexham and tagging @QueensHall Musicians of all ages in all genres are welcome, and individuals, duos or ensembles of up to four people can apply as long as they're from the same household or bubble.

As well as a smartphone app which will allow people to access the mini gigs from wherever they are, there will also be an interactive exhibition at the Queen's Hall in Hexham and *Unsung Heroes* will tour in 2021. To find out more visit www.queenshall.co.uk/events/unsung-heroes

ENDS

Contact

For more information or interviews please contact [Helen Fussell](#) / 07801 369 778

Images are available [here](#)

Queen's Hall Arts Centre, Beaumont Street, Hexham, NE46 3LS

E: boxoffice@queenshall.co.uk

Online booking at www.queenshall.co.uk

Notes to Editors

- *Unsung Heroes* is part of **Here and Now**, a national and local celebration of culture within communities. 40 brand new projects will take place in and around 40 arts centres across the country, led by artists and co-created with local people. The project is supported by Arts Council England and Future Arts Centres, marking The National Lottery's 25th birthday.
- **Davy & Kristin McGuire** are British multidisciplinary artists, renowned for their idiosyncratic experiments in digital projection and storytelling, combining physical installations and virtual experiences they create delicate and exquisitely crafted worlds full of visual wonders. Winners of the Innovation of the Year award at the 2020 Museums + Heritage awards, their projection mapping installations have been exhibited, sold, published and screened internationally, and their critically acclaimed theatrical projects have been invited to tour to more than 100 venues in 23 different countries over 4 continents. Drawing on Davy's background in theatre and Kristin's training as a dancer, the couple have an eclectic, award winning portfolio.

"What follows makes the jaw drop and the head whirl." The Times

"Magical and exquisitely crafted, Davy and Kristin McGuire's universe is full of visual wonders."
The Guardian

Impeccably crafted and expertly executed, the couple's work has included the world's first projection mapped pop-up book *The Icebook*; an atmospheric stage adaptation of popular fantasy novel, *Howl's Moving Castle*; and *The Paper Architect* which won the Oxford Samuel Beckett Theatre Trust Award 2013 and received the Helpmann Award for Best Visual Theatre Production after touring Australia in 2015.

Crossing genres of theatre, film, live performance and installations the McGuires have been commissioned by organisations such as The Royal Shakespeare Company, Hull UK City of Culture 2017, Canal+, Museums at Night, the Swedish Museum of Performing Arts and the Projection Mapping Association of Japan.

Their commercial installations include *Floating City* for Barneys' Madison Avenue Christmas windows; *Alchimie de Courvoisier*, an animated diorama displayed at Harrods; and an installation for Mikimoto in Tokyo which won the Japan Space Design Association Award and the Ginza Association Division Excellence Award. The couple has also created commercial films for ELLE China and Courvoisier, and music videos for international music labels such as Polydor and Epitaph Records. Based in Hull, Davy and Kristin export their work all over the world. Their video sculptures are regularly for sale at international art fairs and exhibitions through Woolff Gallery London, Wanrooij Gallery Amsterdam and Muriel Guepin Gallery New York. www.studiomcguire.com

- **Bridie Jackson** is a musician based in North East England, well known within the region and beyond for her work as a song writer and performer. For many years, Bridie toured with and wrote for Bridie Jackson and The Arbour, a multiple award winning folk band, who gained national recognition when they were chosen from 8,000 other bands across the country to win the Glastonbury Emerging Talent Contest. *"The remarkable voice of Bridie Jackson is beautiful yet haunting..."* The Guardian, Emily Brinnand

As a songwriter, Bridie's expertise is now in socially engaged projects, and she enjoys working collaboratively on community focused projects, having written for a range of organisations, including Streetwise Opera, Curious Monkey Theatre Company, Sage Gateshead and Summer Streets Festival. "*Bridie Jackson is one of the most exciting young composers working in Britain today. It was a privilege to work with her.*" Matt Peacock, CEO of Streetwise Opera Company www.bridiejackson.com

- **Queen's Hall Arts** (QHA) is a registered charity and multipurpose arts centre based in the heart of Hexham. We develop and deliver a vibrant arts programme offering a wide range of shows, exhibitions, concerts and special events, support professional and aspiring artists, provide opportunities for our community to take part in the arts and offer a valuable creative resource to our local area. Through the arts we make life better, having positive impacts on our community and the individuals who live and work within it. Queen's Hall Arts (QHA) is the company that manages the Queen's Hall Arts Centre venue within the Queen's Hall, Hexham. The Queen's Hall building is a magnificent early Victorian building which faces Hexham Abbey (dating from 647AD). From its christening as an arts centre in 1983 until the hand over to the charitable organisation, Queens Hall Arts, in 2001 the building was under local authority control. Queen's Hall Arts Centre boasts a 350-seat theatre and two galleries managed by Queen's Hall Arts. Queen's Hall has established itself as a strong base for an extensive range of artistic activity, attracting the best international and national artists from music, drama, dance and national touring comedy to non professional shows put on by local community groups. In addition to activity in the building, QHA delivers an extensive outreach programme bringing workshops and performances to communities throughout Northumberland. www.queenshall.co.uk