

Tours of People's Homes

Media Release Tours of People's Homes Wunderbar Festival 2009

Do you have a story to tell?

Do you enjoy welcoming people into your home?

Have you ever fancied being a tour guide?

**Perhaps you have a collection you want to share,
or a talent you want to showcase?**

Tours of People's Homes will be a public programme of events that will take place in and around Newcastle and Gateshead in November 2009 as part of the new Wunderbar Festival.

Internationally acclaimed artist and director Joshua Sofaer is looking for members of the public to work with him over the next few months to develop a tour, or performance, in their own home. They will give their tour to a paying audience as part of the Festival.

The 'tour' could take a number of different approaches, for example a coffee morning, an architectural tour, group decorating session, a meal, or even a sleepover. It will be up to each person to decide how to develop his or her piece.

No performance experience is necessary. All you need is enthusiasm and a willingness to experiment. There is no lower or upper age restriction. We would like to hear from all kinds of people who live in all kinds of different homes.

For further information or to be considered as a participant go to:
www.wunderbarfestival.co.uk/toph

Wunderbar Festival 2009 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.

Watch press for further details of the full programme which will be announced shortly.

Wunderbar Festival is funded by Arts Council England, North East and One North East. It was originated and developed by Fierce Earth and forms part of NewcastleGateshead's world-class festivals and events programme developed by culture¹⁰.

www.wunderbarfestival.co.uk

Ends.

Press contact for Wunderbar Festival 2009:

Nicky Harrison, White Hot Communications

Tel: 0191 280 8020 / 07824 390826

Email: nicky@whitehotcomms.co.uk

www.whitehotcomms.co.uk

Editor's notes:

Tours of People's Homes is one of the highlights of the festival and is a new commission for the artist Joshua Sofaer, who will lead a number of workshops culminating in a series of public performances inside the homes of selected participants.

Josua Sofaer is an artist who is centrally concerned with modes of collaboration and participation. Often with irreverent use of humour, he plays with established forms of production, appropriating and reconfiguring the chat show, competition, lecture, or museum display. He acts as curator, producer or director of a broad range of projects, including large scale events, intimate performances, and publications. He is well known for his Scavenger events which take place worldwide and Name in Lights which celebrated a non-celebrity and put her name in lights in Centenary Square, Birmingham in 2007. This year he ran a unique project entitled Rooted in the Earth whereby he asked Londoners to laud new role models with the five chosen heroes' names being planted as extra large floral artworks in park flowerbeds across London's five Olympic host boroughs.

www.joshuasofaer.com

Wunderbar is a new biennial festival, the first of which will take place across the North East of England from 6th – 15th November 2009.

In early 2008, Arts Council England, North East commissioned Fierce Earth, a West Midlands based organisation that curates and produces Fierce! Festival, along with North East consultants Ilana Mitchell and Beth Rowson, to research and develop a potential new festival.

Between January and June 2008 the research team conducted an in-depth consultation process with potential partner organisations, artists, and producers, including local authorities across the region. This was very much a two-way process, not only aimed at securing support for such a festival, but determining very clearly from the outset how each organisation could become a stakeholder in the festival and get involved, whether as a collaborator, offering something for the programme, or as a producing or presenting partner. Alongside this Fierce Earth contracted Audiences North East to research potential audiences for a new festival, based on existing data from past events in the region and Tent, a North East based research consultancy firm, to run focus groups with potential audience and partners on the programme, shape and branding of the festival.

The outcome of this process is a new company based in the North East called Wunderbar Festival Ltd. The company has three founding directors – Ilana Mitchell, Kevin Isaacs and Helga Henry. Wunderbar Festival Ltd is developing a board during 2009/2010.

Key partners for the first festival are Culture 10, Dance City, Northern Stage, Baltic, Locus+, Gallery North, Tyne and Wear Museums along with independent producers with each of these hosting or producing a significant element of the festival. Smaller collaborations are planned with a wide variety of partners including Star and Shadow Cinema, National Glass Centre, Theatre Royal and Culture Lab.

