

Press Release: For immediate release

Thousands take part in Museums at Night's inaugural October Festival



Zombies family from The Hepworth Wakefield, Yorkshire (©Tom Arber)

Over the Halloween weekend, hundreds of museums, galleries and historic spaces all over the UK held a fantastic array of special night-time events for the inaugural Museums at Night October festival.

For the first time, Museums at Night, the UK's annual after-hours festival of arts, culture and heritage, took place twice in one year. Over 200 events took place on Friday 30 and Saturday 31 October all over the UK as 179 museums, galleries and historic spaces offered thousands of visitors the chance to experience culture and heritage in a totally unexpected way.

Along with a whole host of Halloween night-time events including sleepovers, zombie

outbreaks, séances and much more - six cultural venues had the chance to work on some spectacular collaborations with some of the UK's leading contemporary artists.

In May 2015, 29 venues took part in Museums at Night's Connect! competition for the chance to work on an event for the October festival with one of six leading contemporary artists in the UK. 34,000 people voted, pairing six venues from up and down the country with the artists: Turner Prize winner **Gillian Wearing** teamed up with Backlit in Nottingham, Turner Prize nominee **Yinka Shonibare MBE** worked with the Novium in Chichester, installation artist **Luke Jerram** visited the Thelma Hulbert Gallery in Honiton, street artist **Pure Evil** made the journey to Verdant Works in Dundee, multidisciplinary artist duo **Davy and Kristin McGuire** went to the Williamson Art Gallery and Museum in Birkenhead and artist **Alinah Azadeh** partnered with the Freud Museum in London.

Nick Stockman, Campaign Manager at Museums at Night, said: "The first ever October Museums at Night festival was a wonderful success, with thousands of visitors discovering the cultural and heritage offer on their doorstep in a new light. The staff and volunteers at museums and galleries programmed fantastically creative events: bringing ghosts from the past to life; introducing new audiences to contemporary art; and creating all kinds of spooky happenings from zombie flashmobs to quarantine escapes to anatomical body painting! We'll be back again in May and October 2016, and we can't wait to make this amazing festival even bigger and better!"

www.museumsatnight.org.uk

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Notes to Editors:

1. **Museums at Night** is the annual after-hours festival of arts, culture and heritage when hundreds of museums, galleries, libraries, archives and heritage sites open their doors for special evening events. It takes place from Wednesday May 13th – Saturday May 16th.

www.museumsatnight.org.uk/

2. **Culture24** is an independent non-profit company, which exists to support the cultural sector to reach and connect with audiences. It is best known for publishing great websites about culture; producing the successful Museums at Night festival of

after-hours openings and leading Let's Get Real, the collaborative action research project involving cultural organisations across the UK and Europe. www.WeAreCulture24.org.uk

3. **Arts Council England** champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. We support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2011 and 2015, we will invest £1.4 billion of public money from government and an estimated £1 billion from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country.

http://www.artscouncil.co.uk