

NEWS RELEASE -

Festival take-over by Norfolk teenagers

Kicking off day one of Norfolk & Norwich Festival - HANDOVER - a festival in a day organised entirely by young people from Norfolk. Fifteen teenagers have spent months planning for the event which explores social activism and has attracted speakers from across the world.

The festival includes a world premiere performance from Jenny Lindsay one of Scotland's leading spoken word poets as well as talks from Mariam Khan, author of *It's Not About the Burqa* and award-winning American journalist John Dennehy talking about immigration, borders and breaking down divisions.

As a collective the group says:

"This is probably the most interesting thing we've ever done; this has been such a unique opportunity to create an event that represented what we, as young people, want to see. It's been amazing to be around so many positive and talented people and we can't wait to see the final result of all our hard work and planning."

Handover kicks off at 10am on Saturday 11 May at Anteros Arts Foundation and includes interactive workshops, performances and talks. A 'pay what you can' pricing structure will apply to enable the festival to be as accessible as possible.

Peggy Hughes, Programme Director at the National Centre for Writing says:

"From Scottish spoken word to award-winning American journalism, starring *It's Not About the Burqa* author Mariam Khan and Iranian-born theatre-maker Nazli Tabatabai-

Khatambakhsh, the Handover festival line up exploring politics and activism demonstrates that the future of festivals is very bright. The team of 15-17 year olds from Norfolk have demonstrated remarkable commitment, focus, imagination and energy to devise this festival, and will be pulling out all the stops to guarantee an unforgettable day. Don't miss!"

The festival organisers, all aged 15 - 17, have been responsible for every aspect of the event including booking the speakers, planning promotion, designing the promotional material, managing the budget and selling the tickets.

The HANDOVER Festival organisers are;

Mathilda Arminger, Paston College

Martha Dack, CNS

Elizabeth Davy, Hartismere High School

Taryn Everdeen, Paston College

Beatriz Feiteirinha, Dereham Northgate High School

Tomas Frere-Jenkins, Hewett Academy

Hayden Lewis, Thorpe St Andrew

Nicky Matthew, Springwood High School

Grace Murray, Norwich School

Amelia Platt, Litcham School

Eleanor Sparks, Hellesdon High

Joel Starling, Hellesdon High

Grace Stewart, Access to Music

Maud Webster, CNS

Billy White, Norwich School

The festival is taking place as part of the City of Literature programme, organised by the National Centre for Writing for Norfolk & Norwich Festival. The project is funded by the European Union under the Creative Europe fund. As part of the project the young people have visited a literature festival in Krakow, Poland, which like Norwich is a UNESCO City of Literature.

Notes to Editors:

1. For comment and interviews contact Alice Kent, Communications Director at alice@nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk / 01603 877177 / 07779029055
2. Tickets for the Engage Festival are available from nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk or on the door
3. Engage! Is supported by the European Union Creative Europe Fund and supported by Pen Catala.
4. **The Patrons of the National Centre for Writing are -**
Margaret Atwood
John Boyne
JM Coetzee
Anthony Horowitz OBE
Jon McGregor
Kei Miller
Sarah Perry
Elif Shafak
Ali Smith CBE
Rose Tremain CBE
5. **About National Centre for Writing (NCW)**
NCW is a literature development organisation based in Norwich England's first UNESCO City of Literature. The National Centre for Writing at Dragon Hall promotes great literature, inspires communities through the power of writing, reading and literary translation, nurtures literary talent and hosts world-class events. www.nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk
6. **Norfolk & Norwich Festival** shares exceptional arts experiences across East England. We lead and support celebration, creativity and curiosity in our community to make our part of the world a great place to live, work and play. The Festival takes place in Norwich and around Norfolk for 17 days each May. The programme is multi-artform, contemporary, international and audience-centred. The Festival is distinctive because we collaborate with artists – from down the road and around the world – to explore the unique physical and cultural identities of our place and to make art which is meaningful to the lives of our audiences. The organisation has been an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation since April 2012 and is one of 10 Bridge Organisations with a mandate to develop arts and cultural opportunities for children and young people in the East of England. Norfolk & Norwich Festival is funded and supported by Arts Council England, Norwich City Council and the generous support of other sponsors and donors. Norfolk & Norwich Festival 2019 runs from 10 - 26 May. www.nffestival.org.uk