

Press release

3 November 2022

About Us, Tower of London: 16-19 November 2022

FREE. Shows run every 30 minutes between 5.30pm and 9.30pm each evening.

UNBOXED BRINGS 13.8 BILLION YEARS OF HISTORY TO THE TOWER OF LONDON IN LIVE SPECTACULAR LIGHTSHOW

From 16 to 19 November, the Tower of London is to become the canvas for a story spanning 13.8 billion years of history, from the Big Bang to the present day. The iconic landmark will be transformed by **About Us**, a spectacular lightshow that combines live choirs from across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales performing an original score by acclaimed composer and musician Nitin Sawhney CBE; poetry by leading poets and schoolchildren; and a multimedia installation.

About Us is part of **UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK**, 10 major creative commissions that have been enjoyed by millions through events in more than 100 locations across the UK and across digital and broadcast platforms this year.

In March, *About Us* launched the UNBOXED live programme in Paisley, before going to Derry-Londonderry, Caernarfon, Luton and Hull. In each location, historic buildings, from abbey to castle to guildhall, played host to a story celebrating the infinite ways that we are connected to the cosmos, natural world and one another, with elements of the show created by schoolchildren and members of each community. *About Us* at the Tower of London brings together content created by and with people from all previous locations.

The 25-minute projection includes words by some of the most exciting poets writing in the UK today: Llŷr Gwyn Lewis, Jen Hadfield, Jason Allen-Paisant, Khairani Barokka, Stephen Sexton and Grug Muse. The choirs performing Nitin Sawhney's score are musically directed by Osnat Schmool. And, for *About Us* at the Tower of London, singers from all five tour locations from around the UK, including choir members of Codetta, Hull Freedom Chorus, Glasgow City Chorus, Côt Dre, Côt Eifonydd, and BIG Hat Factory Choir, will come together for the first time.

By day, pop-up multimedia installations will showcase the creativity of children with the winning entries of an international poetry and coding competition for young people shown alongside poems and Scratch animations created in *About Us* school workshops, as well as live portraits of local people from the UK tour locations. This year *About Us* has continued to work in each of the five tour locations to deliver poetry and coding workshops.

Funded by

Delivered in partnership with

Phil Batty, Executive Director at UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK, said: “*About Us* is a brilliant example of how UNBOXED projects have involved creatives from different sectors, delivered community participation across the UK and inspired children and young people through science and art. *About Us* has already been enjoyed by people in five towns and cities around the UK. We are now thrilled to bring this awe-inspiring show to the Tower of London this month with singers from each of the tour locations making the event even more special.”

Lysander Ashton, Director of 59 Productions and Project Director for *About Us*, said: “*About Us* has been created through a collaborative process that brought together poets, scientists, musicians, visual artists and schoolchildren from across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales to create a dazzlingly rich composite view of the extraordinary universe we all share. It’s an invitation to experience the world where you are made of stars, you’re built from a trillion intricate cells working in harmony and make a connection to the billions of people and other living creatures that followed the Big Bang. After visiting locations around the UK, I am delighted that we are able to bring *About Us* to the Tower of London.”

59 Productions was one of the creative and technological forces behind the London 2012 Olympic Games Opening Ceremony. **Stemettes** is an award-winning social enterprise working to engage, inform and connect the next generation of women and non-binary people into science, technology, engineering and maths by showcasing a diversity of people working in these areas. **The Poetry Society** is one of the UK’s most dynamic arts organisations, producing innovative education and commissioning programmes for all ages.

The [UNBOXED](#) programme has included free events in over 100 towns, cities and villages as well as major content made for digital and broadcast. [SEE MONSTER](#) in Weston-super-Mare draws the UNBOXED live programme to a close on 20 November and audiences can continue to access UNBOXED creative content made for digital and broadcast platforms, such as augmented reality tours of towns and cities around the UK ([StoryTrails](#)); a tour of the solar system ([Our Place in Space](#)); filmed artworks created in the UK’s natural landscapes ([Green Space Dark Skies](#)); and a story from our future ([GALWAD](#)), as well as extensive curriculum-related schools learning resources.

UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK is funded and supported by the four governments of the UK and is commissioned and delivered in partnership with Belfast City Council, Creative Wales, and EventScotland. *About Us* is presented at the Tower of London with thanks to Historic Royal Palaces.

Download **press images**

<https://tinyurl.com/About-Us-Tower-of-London>

Press contacts

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Listings information

About Us, part of UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK

16 to 19 November 2022, Tower of London

This outdoor event is free, unticketed and suitable for all ages.

FREE. Shows run every 30 minutes between 5.30pm and 9.30pm each evening. (Runtime 25 minutes)

To find out more, visit aboutus.earth | unboxed2022.uk

Notes to editors

UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK is a celebration of creativity taking place across the UK in 2022. It includes free large-scale events, installations, and globally accessible digital experiences in the UK's most ambitious showcase of creative collaboration. Produced by some of the brightest minds in science, technology, engineering, arts and maths, UNBOXED features ten major multi-site and digital creative projects that share new ideas and possibilities for the future. Events and activities are taking place from 1 March to 20 November 2022 – from the Outer Hebrides to Southampton and from Omagh to Swansea, and across traditional and online media. UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK is funded and supported by the four governments of the UK and is commissioned and delivered in partnership with Belfast City Council, Creative Wales, and EventScotland.

59 Productions is a design studio and production company that specialises in story-driven design. From architectural projection mapping to exhibitions; from Virtual Reality experiences to events; from theatrical design to technical consultancy, 59's company of writers, directors, architects, animators, visual artists and technologists produce artistic work that seeks to amaze audiences of all kinds. Building on more than a decade of experience making theatrical work for some of the world's greatest venues – including Olivier and Tony Award-winning work for the National Theatre, West End and Broadway, and for many of the major cultural organisations of the world – the company has more recently become renowned for creating spectacular public artworks, projection-mapping some of the world's most iconic buildings, including the Sydney Opera House, Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, the Washington Monument in DC and the United Nations Headquarters in New York. 59 Productions is also known for projects such as the *David Bowie Is* exhibition at the V&A Museum, which it designed, and for its own multi award-winning work in Virtual Reality.

59productions.co.uk | Twitter: @59productions | Instagram: @59_productions

Dr Anne-Marie Imafidon MBE created the **Stemettes** in 2013 to ensure girls, young women, and non-binary young people know that technical fields are for them. The Stemettes' mission is to inspire, encourage and support young people into STEM fields with their 'Free, Fun, Food' ethos. As of 2021, Stemettes has changed the lives of more than 55,000 young people across the UK, Ireland and parts of Europe. Stemettes run more than 50 interventions each year - a mixture of intersectional cohort programmes, impactful events and inspirational content platforms. These interventions improve perceptions of STEM, raise awareness of options within STEM, grow the network these young people have across STEM and improve their self and STEM confidence. The next steps for Stemettes lie in developing the reach and programmes they have across the country to STEM cold spot areas, extending the Stemettes provision to Parents, Guardians and Teachers (who the Stemettes call Influencers) and transitioning alumnae into STEM fields. Anyone wanting to help can donate to Stemettes Futures, spread the word about Stemettes as far and wide as possible, and volunteer on a Stemettes programme. For anyone already in the industry, the best way to support would be to ensure that Stemettes doesn't need to exist. Use your sphere of influence to be a good ally, ensure that equitable practice is employed in your work-place across hiring practices, promotion and the allocation of positions of responsibility.

stemettes.org | Twitter, Instagram, Facebook & LinkedIn /Stemettes

The Poetry Society is the UK's leading organisation for poetry. With innovative education and commissioning programmes, and a packed calendar of performances, competitions, and digital projects, The Poetry Society champions poetry for all ages. The Poetry Society was founded in 1909 to promote a 'more general recognition and appreciation of poetry'. Since then, it has grown into a dynamic arts organisation, representing poets and poetry both nationally and internationally. It has a thriving worldwide membership, publishes the UK's leading poetry magazine, *The Poetry Review*, and runs influential talent development schemes such as the National Poetry Competition and Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award. Every year people of all ages participate in Poetry Society activities from every single postcode area of the UK

and more than 100 countries around the world. Experts in young people's poetry education, The Poetry Society organises poet visits in classrooms year-round, as well as creating trusted teaching resources, facilitating work in informal learning settings and running the vibrant online community Young Poets Network. The Poetry Society is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation and a registered charity.

poetrysociety.org.uk | youngpoetsnetwork.org.uk | Facebook & Twitter @PoetrySociety | Instagram @thepoetrysociety

Historic Royal Palaces is a team of people who love and look after six of the most wonderful palaces in the world. We create space for spirits to stir and be stirred. We want everyone to feel welcome and accepted. We tell stories about the monarchs you know and the lives you don't. We let people explore and we set minds racing. We are a charity and your support gives the palaces a future, for everyone.

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