

**BLAST THEORY**



Brighton Festival

photoworks

FABRICA

\*  
University of Brighton  
Faculty of Arts

# VOICES OF THE SEA

## CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

**DEADLINE: 11 JULY 2011**

A partnership of Brighton-based arts organisations are seeking expressions of interest for two major new art commissions, which will result in an exhibition at Fabrica Gallery and a site-specific outdoor artwork, to be delivered in April-May 2012.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

*Voices of the Sea* is a unique commissioning opportunity created by a partnership of Brighton & Hove based arts organisations: **Fabrica, Blast Theory, Brighton Festival, Lighthouse, Photoworks** and the **University of Brighton** and **Musee de Beaux Arts Calais**.

We will commission two artists, each with a strong track record, to create two major new works, which respond to the coastal context and maritime heritage of South East England.

The commissions are inspired by *The Boat Project* <http://www.theboatproject.com> by Lone Twin, which begins its maiden voyage in 2012 and visits Brighton as part of Brighton Festival. The commissions are part of *RELAY*, a programme by Turning Point South East (a network of visual arts organizations). Like *The Boat Project*, *RELAY* is connected to the Cultural Olympiad 2012.

*Voices of the Sea* comprises an exhibition, a site-specific work which links the exhibition to the dock where *The Boat Project* is moored, and an education programme. It will be a key part of Brighton Festival 2012, England's largest arts festival.

We are now seeking expressions of interest from prominent artists for these two commissions.

## 2. THE COMMISSIONS

### 2.1. Voices of the Sea

#### A gallery-based commission

#### Exhibited at Fabrica, Brighton in April-May 2012

For *Voices of the Sea*, the commissioning partnership is seeking expressions of interest from visual artists, who have an international profile, who wish to create a new work which will be exhibited at Brighton's leading contemporary art gallery, Fabrica.

It is also anticipated that the work will be exhibited at Musee de Beaux Arts Calais in late 2012.

Fabrica is based in a former Regency church in the heart of Brighton. It commissions new works, and re-frames existing contemporary visual art installations in relation to the building. Recent exhibitions have featured artists such as **Janet Cardiff, Frederic Guerts, Martin Parr, Brian Eno** and **Anish Kapoor**.

Expressions of interest for *Voices of the Sea* should illustrate a clear connection to the thematic concept set out in the following pages. Expressions of interest should be strongly visual in nature, but should also demonstrate how the artist utilises digital technologies within their practice. We are particularly interested in artists who work with photography, moving image and/or digital and interactive media.

For more information on Fabrica, images of the building and plans of the gallery:  
<http://fabrica.org.uk/about-fabrica> (go to the 'about' section to download a gallery plan)

#### Indicative Budget

The budget for the commission is currently **UK£12,500**, however we anticipate this rising to **UK£20,000** if all our fundraising targets are met.

The budget is inclusive of artist fees, equipment, labour, material and installation costs.

## 2.2. Sea of Voices

### **A site-specific outdoor work / or mobile media work May 2012**

For *Sea of Voices*, the partnership is seeking expressions of interest from artists who wish to create a site-specific work, which will link the exhibition at Fabrica with *The Boat Project*. It is envisaged that *Sea of Voices* will act as a "conceptual mooring line", between Fabrica on Ship Street, and the Brighton Marina, where *The Boat Project* will be docked, during its visit to Brighton.

We are seeking to commission a work which creatively signposts the route between the two locations. It may take the form of a sound-walk, it may take the form of a mobile or pervasive media project, or it may exist in another form, as defined by the artist.

Expressions of interest should illustrate a clear connection to the thematic concept set out below. We welcome proposals from artists who work with digital and interactive media, pervasive gaming, locative media and mobile applications.

We are equally interested in artists who have strong site-specific, or location-based practices, who may wish to use other media to develop an outdoor artwork.

As part of the educational and participative activities which will complement the commissions, we will be collecting comments and stories about Brighton and its coastal context. This audio material may be used as a resource for the *Sea of Voices*. As such, we also welcome proposals from artists who work with sound as a medium.

For more information about the locations - Fabrica and the Brighton Marina - please refer to this map: <http://is.gd/voicesoftheseamap>

#### **Indicative Budget**

The budget for the commission is currently **UK£12,500**, but we anticipate this rising to **UK£20,000** if all our fundraising targets are met.

The budget is inclusive of artist fees, equipment, labour, material and installation costs.

### **3. THE RESIDENCY**

#### **Artist Residency at Blast Theory February 2012**

As part of the commissioning process we are delighted to be able to offer a one-month residency at Blast Theory's internationally renowned residential studio.

Brighton-based Blast Theory is internationally acclaimed as one of the most adventurous artists' groups using interactive media, creating groundbreaking new forms of performance and interactive art that mixes audiences across the internet, live performance and digital broadcasting. They are based in a studio complex, overlooking Shoreham Harbour in Brighton. The building provides a new model for artists, scientists and technologists to collaborate, research and exchange knowledge. It comprises studio and office spaces, a communal area, a project room and meeting space, technological facilities, and residency accommodation.

Artists expressing interest in either commission are eligible for the residency. The residency is available for 4 weeks from 6th February - 2nd March 2012.

The residency would be highly beneficial to artists who wish to spend concentrated time in the Brighton area working on their commission. Blast Theory's expertise in mobile platforms, pervasive gaming, and urban site-specific interactive art interventions, would also be highly advantageous for artists who wish to propose a work which engages with these mediums.

For further information on Blast Theory's residencies visit:

[http://www.blasttheory.co.uk/bt/20wellingtonroad\\_residency.html](http://www.blasttheory.co.uk/bt/20wellingtonroad_residency.html)

## 4. PROJECT OVERVIEW

### 4.1. The Concept

Drawing on the rich connection between the sea and the voice, articulated in literature through the mythic sirens, and in music through the folk tradition of the sea shanty, these new commissions explore the maritime context of the South East region of England.

*Voices of the Sea* is conceived as a visible and celebratory point of connection with the South East region's Artists Taking the Lead initiative - *The Boat Project* by Lone Twin <<http://www.theboatproject.com>>, part of the Cultural Olympiad.

Lone Twin are asking the people of the South East to donate a wooden object of personal significance, be it a favourite pencil or a much used dining table, to be used in the building of a sea-faring boat. The boat will be launched in May 2012. Crewed by trained community members, the boat will make a two-week maiden 'Olympic' voyage in Summer 2012, stopping off at East coastal destinations - including Brighton - before arriving in London for the Olympics.

*Voices of the Sea* thematically explores and extends the maritime themes of *The Boat Project*, and also connects with other coastal ideas. The title comes from *Dombey and Son*, a novel by Charles Dickens, part of which is set in Brighton. In the book the 'voices of the sea' could be read as the whispering of the waves - the murmuring of our unconscious - the voices that seem to confirm or articulate our desires and our fears about the future.

*Voices of the Sea* also acts as a symbolic marker of two important events in 2012. On 5-6 June 2012, the world will witness the last Transit of Venus for 100 years, an astronomic event which historically has inspired some of the great maritime voyages, including James Cook's voyage to the South Pacific. 2012 is also the 100th anniversary of the sailing of the Titanic.

*Voices of the Sea* also resonates with an investigation into 'voice' as an artistic medium, and as a focus for wider audience participation, including current and new partnerships with local groups, businesses, arts and educational organisations.

#### **Cultural Olympiad**

*Voices of the Sea* is part of the programme of events and activities that run alongside The Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. The Games are about more than sport. London 2012 is also staging a Cultural Olympiad - a series of events to showcase the UK's arts and culture to the rest of the world. It is the largest cultural celebration in the history of the modern Olympics, designed to give everyone in the UK a chance to be part of London 2012. The Cultural Olympiad Values are to welcome the world, inspire and involve young people, and to leave a lasting and positive legacy.

*Voices of the Sea* is inherently rooted in these values and ideals. It will inspire through the creation of new art works, it will involve a broad range of people through the education programme, and will leave a legacy through the creation of new work and a series of long-term partnerships. Furthermore the education programme will focus on gathering comments and

stories about the sea as a symbolic reference for aspiration and hope, and loss and separation – emotions experienced by everyone but deeply connected to experience of the Olympic and Paralympic competitors.

#### **Turning Point South East**

*Voices of the Sea* is part of *RELAY*, a programme of artistic activities instigated by Turning Point South East, a network of visual arts organisations based in the South East of England, including Fabrica, Lighthouse, Blast Theory and Photoworks in Brighton, and galleries like De La Warr Pavilion, Towner Gallery, John Hansard Gallery, Turner Contemporary and Modern Art Oxford. *RELAY* connects to the region's Cultural Olympiad programme and extends it through a unique range of ambitious artistic projects.

#### **Across the English Channel**

*Voices of the Sea* will also form part of an Interreg bid called *Artistic Visions*, led by Department Pas-de-Calais that will explore the shared maritime heritage of northern France and south east England.

## 4.2. The Commissioning Partners

*Voices of the Sea* is a partnership between Brighton's Turning Point South East arts organisations - Fabrica, Lighthouse, Photoworks and Blast Theory – England's largest arts festival, Brighton Festival and a state of the art higher education partner, the University of Brighton.

### Lighthouse

[www.lighthouse.org.uk](http://www.lighthouse.org.uk)

Lighthouse is Brighton's digital culture agency. Its mission is to create inspiring and vibrant programmes which show how important artists and filmmakers are in a changing media landscape. Lighthouse advocates for digital art and moving image, nationally and internationally. By supporting artists and filmmakers, through commissioning, exhibition and professional development, Lighthouse shows that digital culture is about much more than just technology and tools; it is about ideas, emotion, learning, and aesthetics. Recent exhibitions have included artists such as **Kutlug Ataman**, **Lynette Wallworth**, and Prix Ars Electronica award-winners, **Julian Oliver** and **Caleb Larsen**. The short films Lighthouse commissioned with the BBC were nominated for 2011 BAFTA and Academy Awards. Lighthouse is also a vibrant venue for events in Brighton, hosting talks, workshops, courses and exhibitions, and it runs Guiding Lights, the UK's leading mentoring programme for filmmakers, which includes **Sam Mendes**, **Alex Garland** and **Barbara Broccoli**.

### Fabrica

[www.fabrica.org.uk](http://www.fabrica.org.uk)

Fabrica is a contemporary art gallery based in a former church in one of the oldest parts of central Brighton. It commissions contemporary visual art installations and reconfigures existing works in relation to its building – its architecture, former use or wider resonances. Exhibitions are organised on a seasonal basis (spring, summer, autumn), reflecting the changing character of audiences in the city at different times of the year and new developments across: site-specific crafts, large-scale sculpture, lens-based installations and interactive digital media. Fabrica's programme comprises four interlinked strands of activity: an exhibition programme of three main shows each year, sometimes interspersed with smaller experimental exhibitions and events promoted in partnership with others; an integrated education programme, serving a range of audiences; The Artist Resource – a project supporting visual arts professional development; a volunteer and work placement scheme.

### Brighton Festival

[www.brightonfestival.org](http://www.brightonfestival.org)

Brighton Festival is an innovative commissioning and producing arts festival offering ambitious new work, premieres, exclusives and site-specific events across the city of Brighton & Hove. It is England's largest multi art-form festival - focusing equally on theatre, dance, classical and contemporary music, books and debates, visual arts, family and free outdoor events - and takes place annually across three weeks in May. Uniquely Brighton Festival also runs the Grade I listed Brighton Dome year-round; a three venue arts and conference centre presenting over 600 events a year and a creative hub for artists and audiences. Brighton Festival is a key event in the international cultural calendar. The programme has been given artistic cohesion over the last three years by internationally renowned Guest Directors; **Anish Kapoor** (2009), **Brian Eno** (2010) and **Aung San Suu Kyi** (2011). Brighton Festival initiates pioneering partnerships and a



commission that produces significant and original multi-disciplinary new work which travels globally, including work by resident companies **Hofesh Shechter** (dance), **dreamthinkspeak** (theatre) and associate companies including **Hydrocracker** (site specific theatre) and **Blast Theory** (interactive art). Brighton Festival 2012 will run from 5-27 May.

### **Blast Theory**

[www.blasttheory.co.uk](http://www.blasttheory.co.uk)

Blast Theory is renowned internationally as one of the most adventurous artists' groups using interactive media, creating groundbreaking new forms of performance and interactive art that mixes audiences across the internet, live performance and digital broadcasting. Led by **Matt Adams, Ju Row Farr** and **Nick Tandavanitj**, the group's work explores interactivity and the social and political aspects of technology. Blast Theory's base at Wellington Road in Portslade near Brighton has five studios/offices and hosts an international residency programme. The building acts as a meeting place for regional, national and international practitioners in games, locative media, mobile applications, experimental performance, interactive art and technological innovation.

### **Photoworks**

[www.photoworks.org.uk](http://www.photoworks.org.uk)

Photoworks commissions new photography, produces exhibitions, initiates research and education projects, publishes books and a biannual magazine. Their work celebrates photography and encourages critical debate. Their projects include local and international initiatives and involves work from all photographic genres. Photoworks provides opportunities for emerging and established artists, curators and writers. They collaborate with individuals and organisations, bringing together ideas and expertise from diverse social contexts and across different artforms.

### **The University of Brighton's Faculty of Arts**

<http://arts.brighton.ac.uk/>

The University of Brighton's Faculty of Arts provides education in art, design and humanities, arts courses, arts research, and community projects. The Faculty of Arts evolved from the Brighton School of Art (founded in 1859). Committed to learning as a collaborative process, the faculty nurtures excellence in the visual and performing arts, architecture, design, art and design history, media studies, moving image and film studies, literature, languages and humanities, and provides a world-leading research environment for the arts. *Voices of the Sea* will be specifically connected to the University's **MA in Digital Media Arts**, which is taught in collaboration with Lighthouse. As part of their 'Cultures of Multi Media Authoring and Web Design' module, the MA students will explore the creation of a website or app that will resonate directly with *Voices of the Sea*.

### **Our Networks**

In the spirit of the Cultural Olympiad, this project is enriched and extended by the relationships we are building with a wide range of community, sporting and leisure organisations, such as:

- Brighton Marina Yacht Club: [www.bmyc.org.uk/](http://www.bmyc.org.uk/)
- Shoreham Sailing Club: [www.shorehamsailing.org](http://www.shorehamsailing.org)
- Lagoon Watersports Centre: [www.lagoon.co.uk](http://www.lagoon.co.uk)
- RNLI Brighton Lifeboat Station: [brightonlifeboat.com](http://brightonlifeboat.com)
- Brighton Fishing Museum: [www.brightonfishingmuseum.org.uk](http://www.brightonfishingmuseum.org.uk)

- Brighton & Newhaven Fish Sales: [www.brighton-fish-sales.co.uk](http://www.brighton-fish-sales.co.uk)
- Hove & Adur Sea Scouts: <http://units.ms-sc.org/hoveandadur>
- Shoreham Port: [www.shoreham-port.co.uk](http://www.shoreham-port.co.uk)
- Brighton Marina: [www.brightonmarina.co.uk](http://www.brightonmarina.co.uk)
- Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club (The Seagulls): [www.seagulls.co.uk](http://www.seagulls.co.uk)
- Brighton Cougars Basketball Team: [www.brightoncougars.com](http://www.brightoncougars.com)
- Brighton & Hove Clarion Cycling Club: [www.brightonandhove-clarion.org.uk](http://www.brightonandhove-clarion.org.uk)
- Brighton History Centre, at the Brighton Museum, a unique resource for information on all of Brighton & Hove's Museums' and Libraries' collections and the key place to research any aspect of the city's heritage.
- QueenSpark, a non-profit community publishing and writing organisation, based in Brighton & Hove. They publish books about local people's lives, run creative writing groups and facilitate oral history projects.

### 4.3 Audiences

Audience involvement and participation is central to the success of these commissions. The audience for the project are the city's residents, visitors to Brighton & Hove, young people, regular arts attendees (visual arts and other artforms), families, older peoples groups, and community groups. Audience engagement will be developed through contextual events such as talks, school workshops, engagement sessions and other activities. Overall we aim to reach at least 35000 people. The provisional audience targets are:

- *Voices of the Sea* commission: 20000 - 25000 visitors
- *Sea of Voices* commission: 10000 users/visitors
- Education and participation programme: 3000 participants/ visitors

### 4.4 Education & Participation

The commissions will provide the focus for a rich programme of education and participation activities. The commissioned artists will be invited to contribute to this programme.

The education and participation programme currently includes:

- 20 education/participation events involving a range of community partners.
- An artist residency that will accompany the exhibition at Fabrica.
- An intergenerational project
- A young peoples singing project
- MA in Digital Media Arts - students undertaking the MA offered by the University of Brighton and Lighthouse will create a website or app in response to the commissions.

## 5. TIMELINE & PROCESS

We are currently calling for short expressions of interest for two commissions - *Voices of the Sea* and *Sea of Voices*. The selection panel for expressions of interest will include of a representative from each of the Commissioning Partners. The partners aims to shortlist 3 – 4 artists per commission.

Shortlisted artists may be invited to undertake a site-visit, submit further material and attend an interview.

Each commission has a budget of **£12,500** (inclusive of all fees, equipment, labour, material and installation costs for the works), which may rise to **£20,000** if the fundraising we are currently undertaking is successful.

10 June 2011	Call for expressions of interest released
11 July	Deadline for expressions of interest
14 July	Notification of shortlisted artists
15 July - 14 August	Optional site visits
15 August	Revised proposals submitted
16 - 19 August	Interviews & final selection
September	Production on commissions begin
February 2012	Residency at Blast Theory
April 2012	Commissions completed <i>Voices of the Sea</i> exhibition opens at Fabrica
May 2012	<i>Sea of Voices</i> commission goes live
Autumn	<i>Voices of the Sea</i> commission tours to Musee de Beaux Arts Calais

## 6. EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

### 6.1 Who Can Apply

We welcome expressions of interest from international artists, artists from across the UK, and artists based in Brighton and Hove.

### 6.2 Criteria

We are seeking to commission artists who have been making work professionally for no less than five years and have a track record of working at the highest professional level.

The commissions will be awarded to artists who demonstrate a genuine interest in the commissions.

- Expressions of interest should make a clear point of connection with *the Voices of the Sea/Sea of Voices* concept set out in the briefing document.
- In addition to being technically adept we wish to see expressions of interest that are critically engaged with ideas, emotion, learning and aesthetics.

We are seeking expressions of interest from artists whose practice incorporates digital media. We are particularly interested in artists who have a track record in interactivity and audience participation.

- Applicants should demonstrate how they utilise digital technologies in the production and presentation of their work. This is understood to be across various media including photography, still and moving image and digital and interactive media, pervasive gaming, locative media and mobile applications.
- We particularly welcome proposals that are experimental, interactive and well informed of current technological and social media innovation.

We will favour expressions of interest that show a clear understanding of audiences. Artists should consider how audiences can readily gain access to and engage with their ideas.

## 6.3 How to Apply

Your expression of interest should include all of the following:

### 1. Your full name

### 2. Contact Details

Your full address

Your phone number

Your email address

Your URL (if applicable)

### 3. A clear indication which commission you are expressing interest in

### 4. Residency

An indication of whether you wish to undertake a residency at Blast Theory in February 2012. If you do, please include a short statement about why, and how the residency will benefit your work.

### 5. Your statement

Please write a short statement which:

- introduces yourself and your artistic practice
- outlines your idea for the commission you are interested in, and how you would approach it
- details any relevant professional experience in relation to this commission

N.B Your submission should be no longer than 1000 words in total and should be sent as a WORD document, a PDF document, or an RTF document.

Send it by email to: [assistant@lighthouse.org.uk](mailto:assistant@lighthouse.org.uk) with:

- a two-page CV
- a link to a website, or downloadable file, which contains documentation of your previous work.

**DEADLINE: MONDAY 11 JULY (1200 British Summer Time)**