

An aerial photograph of Birmingham, UK, showing a mix of modern and traditional architecture. In the foreground, there are several large industrial-style buildings with corrugated metal roofs. In the middle ground, a prominent feature is the Birmingham Royal Opera House, a large, modern building with a distinctive, textured, silver, spherical roof. Behind it, the city skyline includes several high-rise buildings, including the cylindrical, glass-clad Beetham Tower. The sky is filled with large, white, fluffy clouds. The text 'REDEFINING CULTURE' is written in large, bold, white, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the image, and 'BIRMINGHAM'S INDEPENDENT FESTIVALS' is written in a smaller, bold, white, sans-serif font below it.

REDEFINING CULTURE

BIRMINGHAM'S INDEPENDENT FESTIVALS

/ LEFT TO RIGHT: PIP MCKNIGHT AND IAN FRANCIS (FLATPACK FESTIVAL), LAURA MCDERMOTT AND HARUN MORRISON (FIERCE FESTIVAL)
SARA BEADLE (BIRMINGHAM BOOK FESTIVAL), JIM SIMPSON (BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL JAZZ AND BLUES FESTIVAL)
RHONDA WILSON (RHUBARB-RHUBARB), LISA MEYER AND JENNY MOORE (SUPERSONIC FESTIVAL), AMMO TALWAR (BASS FESTIVAL)





INDEPENDENT FESTIVALS GROUP

2007 - 2010

OVERALL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY GENERATED
£5,097,417.00

NUMBER OF JOBS CREATED FOR LOCAL PEOPLE
144

NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS
544

VALUE OF VOLUNTEER TIME
£97,850.00

GREAT BALLET, GREAT OPERA, A GRAND THEATRE BUILDING - THESE ARE THE BREAD AND BUTTER OF THE CULTURAL OFFER IN MANY MAJOR EUROPEAN CITIES. BUT THRIVING CULTURE DOESN'T LIE SOLELY IN THE MAIN STREETS IN THE BIG PLAZA; IT'S ALSO TO BE FOUND IN FORMER WAREHOUSES, IN PUBS, IN CLUBS, ON A ROOFTOP WITH THE CITY AS A BACKDROP. A GREAT CITY OF CULTURE ALSO NEEDS A SENSE OF THE FUTURE; FOR IF OUR CULTURE DOES NOT EVOLVE IT STAGNATES. BIRMINGHAM IS A PLACE WHERE NEW KNOWLEDGE IS FORGED, WHERE NEW IDEAS ARE BEING IGNITED, NURTURED AND ENCOURAGED.

IN BIRMINGHAM WE BOAST AN UNPARALLELED SELECTION OF INDEPENDENT CULTURAL FESTIVALS. FROM LITERATURE TO LIVE ART, FROM FILM TO PHOTOGRAPHY AND ALL TYPES OF MUSIC, THESE FESTIVALS PRODUCE WORK THAT IS AT THE CUTTING EDGE OF THEIR RESPECTIVE ART FORMS. THEY ARE A RICH AND INDISPENSABLE PART OF OUR CITY'S CULTURAL ECOLOGY - THEY ARE INFUSED WITH THE SPIRIT OF INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION THAT HAS BEEN A PART OF BIRMINGHAM'S IDENTITY SINCE THE DAYS OF THE LUNAR SOCIETY.

THE INDEPENDENT FESTIVALS COMPLEMENT AND EXPAND ON THE WORK OF OTHER CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE CITY, OFTEN INSPIRING UNIQUE ARTISTIC COLLABORATIONS. THESE FESTIVALS ALSO WORK IN PARTNERSHIP BEYOND THE CULTURAL SECTOR, KNITTING TOGETHER THE OFFER OF OUR HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY - OUR WONDERFUL HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS - AND UNDERPINNING INVESTMENT INTO THE CITY'S AND REGIONAL ECONOMY AS A RESULT.

INDEPENDENT FESTIVALS, WITH THEIR ENTREPRENEURIAL ZEAL AND LINKS TO CUTTING EDGE ART FORMS AND CULTURE OFFER OUR CITY A UNIQUE RICHNESS. BIRMINGHAM IS EPHEMERALLY REDEFINED AND EXPANDED DURING OUR FESTIVALS - BOTH LOCAL INHABITANTS AND INTERNATIONAL VISITORS ARE BROUGHT TOGETHER IN EXCITEMENT AND CELEBRATION, WHERE HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE ARE BROUGHT TO LIFE, FACES AND STREETS ARE ANIMATED AND THE MEDIA IS SET ABUZZ.

LET US CHERISH THE UNIQUE OFFER THAT THESE FESTIVALS PROVIDE AND SALUTE THE AMBITION THAT MAKES BIRMINGHAM, OUR CITY, A GREAT FORWARD THINKING CITY OF CULTURE.

COUNCILLOR MIKE WHITBY, LEADER OF BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL



WHAT
MAKES
FOR A
GREAT
CITY OF
CULTURE?



FIERCE FESTIVAL

FIERCE FESTIVAL CREATES ICONIC, TALKING-POINT MOMENTS THAT ANIMATE THE CITY, GENERATING PR AND BOOSTING THE PROFILE OF CONTEMPORARY BIRMINGHAM. / THE FIERCE FESTIVAL MODEL INVITES INSPIRING INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS TO THE CITY, ENCOURAGING THEM TO EMBED THEIR PRACTICE IN THE LANDSCAPE AND IN THE LOCAL AND ARTISTIC COMMUNITIES. / THE FIERCE FESTIVAL AUDIENCE IS YOUNG: THE MAJORITY OF ATTENDEES AT FIERCE ARE AGED BETWEEN 18 AND 34 YEARS OLD.



BALLET-DANCING BUS CONDUCTORS. A HOT AIR BALLOON ORCHESTRA AT DAWN. A HUMAN BIRDS NEST PERCHED ON THE ROTUNDA. SINCE 1998 FIERCE FESTIVAL'S ADVENTUROUS PROGRAMME OF INTERVENTIONS AND PERFORMANCES HAS ESTABLISHED IT AS A LANDMARK EVENT IN THE UK'S CULTURAL CALENDAR. FIERCE FESTIVAL HAS WORKED WITH DIVERSE PARTNERS AND VENUES FROM IKON GALLERY AND BIRMINGHAM TOWN HALL TO A BARBER SHOP, AN UNDERGROUND TUNNEL, AND AN ART DECO SWIMMING POOL. MARK BALL WAS THE FOUNDING DIRECTOR OF FIERCE FESTIVAL FROM 1998 TO 2007 AND A NEW CHAPTER BEGAN IN 2009 WITH THE APPOINTMENT OF ARTISTIC DIRECTORS HARUN MORRISON AND LAURA MCDERMOTT, WHO DEVELOPED THEIR COLLABORATIVE APPROACH AS PRODUCERS AT BATTERSEA ARTS CENTRE IN LONDON. THEIR VISION FOR THE NEXT FESTIVAL (IN MARCH 2011) INVOLVES WORKING WITH A 'CARAVAN OF ARTISTS' OVER THE YEAR TO DEVELOP DISTINCTIVE PROJECTS THAT CONNECT WITH COMMUNITIES IN BIRMINGHAM AND ENHANCE THE TEXTURE OF THE CITY.

WWW.WEAREFIERCE.ORG



/ WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT BIRMINGHAM

THIS CITY IS A POROUS ENTITY – NEW PEOPLE AND NEW IDEAS ARE WELCOMED IN, AND ALWAYS HAVE BEEN. IN CONTEMPORARY BIRMINGHAM THE CULTURAL AND DIGITAL OFFERING IS AT THE CUTTING EDGE. THERE IS ALSO A TREMENDOUS SENSE OF OPENNESS AND RECIPROCAL SUPPORT BETWEEN THE CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS THAT WORK HERE – THAT IS VERY UNIQUE. BIRMINGHAM IS BURSTING WITH CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION AND IS SCREAMING WITH THE POTENTIAL TO GROW AND BE MORE WIDELY UNDERSTOOD. IT'S OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO SHOUT ABOUT WHAT IS HERE, NURTURE IT AND INVEST IN ITS FUTURE.

WWW.WEAREFIERCE.ORG

**'THE GLASTONBURY OF
EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE'**

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

FIERCE FESTIVAL



FLATPACK FESTIVAL

IN 2008 FLATPACK FESTIVAL WAS SINGLED OUT BY THE UK FILM COUNCIL AS ONE OF SEVEN KEY NATIONAL EVENTS IN RECOGNITION OF ITS INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO PROGRAMMING AND PROMOTION. / FLATPACK FESTIVAL IS RECOGNISED AS A TRAILBLAZER FOR A NEW GENERATION OF FILM EVENTS, USING UNCONVENTIONAL SPACES AND COMBINING FILM WITH OTHER ART FORMS IN ORDER TO REACH FAR BEYOND THE TRADITIONAL FILM FESTIVAL AUDIENCE. / SINCE STARTING OUT IN 2006 ADMISSIONS HAVE GROWN YEAR ON YEAR, WITH ALMOST HALF OF THAT AUDIENCE VISITING FROM OUTSIDE THE CITY. / IN 2010 FLATPACK FESTIVAL'S DIRECTORS WERE LISTED IN THE HOSPITAL CLUB 100, HIGHLIGHTING INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES.



RECALLING THE VERY EARLY DAYS OF CINEMA WHEN FILM SHOWS TRAVELLED FROM TOWN TO TOWN, [FLATPACK FESTIVAL](#) IS A CELEBRATION OF FILM IN ALL ITS FORMS, A TRULY PORTABLE EVENT WHICH CAN BE FOUND IN CHURCHES, BARS AND WAREHOUSES ACROSS BIRMINGHAM - AS WELL AS THE ODD CINEMA. FEATURING A COLOURFUL STEW OF SCREENINGS AND LIVE EVENTS FOR ALL AGES, FLATPACK FESTIVAL HAS ESTABLISHED ITSELF AS AN UNUSUALLY INCLUSIVE FILM FESTIVAL WHICH CREATES A SENSE OF OCCASION AND SURPRISE BY COMBINING FILM WITH OTHER ART FORMS AND BY JOINING THE DOTS BETWEEN EXCITING NEW WORK AND THE PIONEERS OF THE PAST. CO-DIRECTORS [IAN FRANCIS](#) AND [PIP MCKNIGHT](#) MET IN AN ODEON PROJECTION BOX, AND FIRST PILOTED THE FLATPACK FESTIVAL FORMULA WITH A SERIES OF MULTI-MEDIA FILM NIGHTS UNDER THE BANNER OF 7 INCH CINEMA. THEY NOW PRESENT EVENTS ACROSS THE UK AND BEYOND, WITH AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO PROGRAMMING AND PROMOTION WHICH HAS HELPED TO TURN THE TRADITIONAL FILM-GOING EXPERIENCE ON ITS HEAD.

WWW.FLATPACKFESTIVAL.ORG



/ PERSONAL HIGHLIGHT

RECREATING A 1900S FILM SHOW AT BIRMINGHAM
TOWN HALL, COMPLETE WITH LIVE SOUND EFFECTS
AND 15-PIECE BAND.

/ WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT BIRMINGHAM

BECAUSE THE CITY HAS A TENDENCY TO KNOCK
THINGS DOWN AND START AGAIN, IT HAS
ACCUMULATED LAYERS AND LAYERS OF HISTORY
WHICH CAN BE GLIMPSED IF YOU LOOK HARD
ENOUGH. THE PEOPLE ARE FRIENDLY. AND THERE IS
A WILLINGNESS TO COLLABORATE WITHIN THE ARTS
SECTOR, AND TO TRY OUT DIFFERENT IDEAS AND
SPACES IN ORDER TO REACH NEW AUDIENCES.

WWW.FLATPACKFESTIVAL.ORG

**‘SUGGESTING LONDONERS GO
TO BRUM FOR A WEEKEND
DOESN’T COME NATURALLY.
BUT FLATPACK FESTIVAL
MIGHT MAKE US BREAK THE
HABIT OF A LIFETIME’
TIME OUT LONDON**

FLATPACK FESTIVAL



BASS FESTIVAL

BASS (BRITISH ARTS AND STREET SOUNDS) FESTIVAL IS THE UK'S ONLY MONTH LONG BLACK MUSIC AND ARTS FESTIVAL. / BASS FESTIVAL FEATURED IN THE TIMES BEST 100 FESTIVALS OF THE UK. / BASS FESTIVAL HAS SECURED OVER £500,000 WORTH OF PR FOR BIRMINGHAM AND ITS ARTISTS OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS. / BASS FESTIVAL COMMISSIONS NEW WORK EVERY YEAR ACROSS THE ART FORMS. / BASS FESTIVAL 2009 HAD MINI EVENTS ACROSS 7 CITIES, 4 ARTS COUNCIL REGIONS AND 2 COUNTRIES.



AMMO TALWAR'S MUSIC CAREER BEGAN WHEN HE OPENED PUNCH RECORDS IN PERRY BARR, A SHOP WHICH BECAME A MECCA FOR BLACK MUSIC AND HIP HOP CONNOISSEURS. PUNCH SWIFTLY BRANCHED OUT INTO MUSIC EVENTS AND EDUCATION WORK INCLUDING A HUGE POPULAR PROGRAMME OF DJ WORKSHOPS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. PUNCH'S OPEN-MINDED, ENTREPRENEURIAL ETHOS HELPED TO LAY THE FOUNDATIONS FOR BASS (BRITISH ART AND STREET SOUNDS), THE UK'S ONLY MONTH-LONG COMMISSIONING BLACK MUSIC AND ARTS FESTIVAL. STARTING LIFE IN BIRMINGHAM IN 2006 BASS NOW STRADDLES THE WHOLE OF THE MIDLANDS AS WELL AS SATELLITE EVENTS ACROSS THE UK, AND ITS ECLECTIC CALENDAR HAS MADE ROOM FOR EVERYTHING FROM AEROSOL ART TO GRIME THEATRE, FROM AFRO-BEAT TO REGGAE SOUND-SYSTEMS. THE FESTIVAL MAKES A LASTING CONTRIBUTION TO THE INDUSTRY WITH ITS EMPHASIS ON NEW COMMISSIONS AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, WHILE ALSO RAISING CULTURAL AWARENESS THROUGH A COMMITMENT TO HIGHLIGHTING THE LESS DOCUMENTED CORNERS OF OUR HERITAGE. THE TIMES HAVE SINGLED OUT BASS AS ONE OF THE UK'S MOST INFLUENTIAL EVENTS, AND IN 2008 AMMO'S WORK IN THE SECTOR WAS RECOGNISED WITH AN MBE.

WWW.PUNCH-RECORDS.CO.UK



/ WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO RUN A FESTIVAL

AS THE CITY AND ITS CULTURAL ASSETS WERE CHANGING I FELT THE FESTIVAL OFFER WASN'T REPRESENTING NEW FORMS, PARTICULARLY FROM THE AFRICAN CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY. WE SAW A GAP IN TERMS OF PRESENTING SMALL-SCALE THEATRE, INTERESTING DANCE AND MUSIC IN TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL SPACES, AND JUST RAN WITH THE IDEA.

/ WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT BIRMINGHAM

ITS DIVERSITY.

'BASS FESTIVAL TRULY REPRESENTS THE LEGACY OF BLACK MUSIC IN BIRMINGHAM'

JAZZY B

SOUL TO SOUL



RHUBARB-RHUBARB

RHUBARB-RHUBARB HAS THE REPUTATION FOR BEING THE BEST PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTFOLIO FESTIVAL IN EUROPE. / RHUBARB-RHUBARB PROMOTES THE PHOTOGRAPHIC TALENT OF THE WEST MIDLANDS TO COUNTRIES INCLUDING CHINA, AUSTRALIA, FRANCE, AMERICA, INDIA AND SOUTH KOREA. / RHUBARB-RHUBARB ATTRACTS GALLERISTS, PHOTO PUBLISHERS, CURATORS AND PICTURE EDITORS TO BIRMINGHAM, FROM SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST RENOWNED PHOTO INSTITUTIONS. / RHUBARB-RHUBARB HAS WON TWO WORLD PREMIERE COMMISSIONS OVER 2009-2010, ATTRACTING OVER 2 MILLION VISITORS TO THESE EXTRAORDINARY PROJECTS.



COMBINING LESSONS LEARNT IN HER FORMER LIVES AS A MAGAZINE AGONY AUNT AND PHOTOJOURNALIST, IN 1993 **RHONDA WILSON** WROTE A SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS CALLED SEEING THE LIGHT. THIS SOWED THE SEED FOR A SERIES OF PORTFOLIO REVIEWS AND EXHIBITIONS, WHICH ULTIMATELY GAVE BIRTH TO THE ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY REVIEW KNOWN AS **RHUBARB-RHUBARB**. AS WITH THE BOOK, THE IMPETUS BEHIND THE EVENT WAS TO HELP IMAGE-MAKERS NAVIGATE THEIR WAY THROUGH THE CHOPPY WATERS OF PUBLISHING, JOURNALISM AND EXHIBITIONS – IN THIS CASE BY BRINGING THEM FACE TO FACE WITH CURATORS AND COMMISSIONERS FROM ACROSS THE WORLD WHO COULD HELP THEM ON THEIR WAY. THE INDUSTRY DIMENSION HAS BEEN COMPLEMENTED BY A GROWING PUBLIC FACE FOR RHUBARB-RHUBARB, WITH A SERIES OF INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS WHICH CULMINATED IN A RAPTUROUS RECEPTION FOR THE OBAMA'S PEOPLE SHOW IN 2009. UNDERPINNING ALL OF THE ABOVE IS THE TEAM, WITHOUT WHOM THE ORGANISATION'S YEAR-ROUND ROLE AS A DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, A SALES AND PUBLISHING NETWORK AND AN ADVOCATE FOR THE SECTOR AS A WHOLE, WOULD BE UNABLE TO FUNCTION AND GROW. IN 2006 RHONDA WAS AWARDED AN MBE FOR SERVICES TO PHOTOGRAPHY AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE.

WWW.RHUBARB-RHUBARB.NET



/ WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO RUN A FESTIVAL

RHUBARB HAS BEEN WORKING WITH PHOTOGRAPHERS SINCE 1993, RUNNING REVIEWS THROUGHOUT THE UK. THE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL BEGAN IN 2000, INSPIRED BY THE NEED FOR A MORE GLOBAL COMMUNITY OF EXPERTS AND ARTISTS TO COME TOGETHER AND BRING TO BIRMINGHAM NEW ENERGY, IMAGES AND IMAGINATION.

/ WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT BIRMINGHAM

PEOPLE COME HERE TO MAKE IDEAS HAPPEN - SOMETIMES CREATING THE IMPOSSIBLE. THAT HUNGER TO INNOVATE AND INVENT STILL RUNS THROUGH THE BLOOD.

WWW.RHUBARB-RHUBARB.NET

'OBAMA'S PEOPLE IS UNRESERVEDLY ONE OF THE SIGNIFICANT EXHIBITIONS OF THE DECADE AND THE RHUBARB TEAM HAD THE INSIGHT, SECTOR RESPECT AND CONTACTS TO MAKE IT HAPPEN. IT'S A WORLD SUCCESS AND EVERYONE WAS WATCHING'

**FRANCIS HODGSON
FINANCIAL TIMES**

RHUBARB-RHUBARB



BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL JAZZ AND BLUES FESTIVAL

DURING 10 DAYS IN JULY, BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL JAZZ AND BLUES FESTIVAL HAVE MORE THAN 200 PERFORMANCES ACROSS 60 VENUES THROUGHOUT THE CITY AND THE REGION. / ALL STYLES OF JAZZ, BLUES AND BEYOND ARE INCLUDED, WITH ARTISTS AND AUDIENCES COMING TO BIRMINGHAM FROM THROUGHOUT THE UK AND OVERSEAS. / THE FESTIVAL IS A PARTNERSHIP WITH MORE THAN 40 LOCAL COMPANIES WHO ANNUALLY CONTRIBUTE SUPPORT TO MAKE BIRMINGHAM THE GREATEST FREE JAZZ AND BLUES PARTY IN EUROPE.



[JIM SIMPSON](#) HAS BEEN A LYNCHPIN OF THE BIRMINGHAM MUSIC SCENE FOR OVER 40 YEARS. STARTING OUT AS A TRUMPETER IN JAZZ OUTFIT LOCOMOTIVE HE WENT ON TO MANAGE THE BAND AND WITHIN A COUPLE OF YEARS HAD BUILT UP A STABLE OF ACTS WHICH INCLUDED BLACK SABBATH, WHILE ALSO RUNNING ICONIC VENUE HENRY'S BLUESHOUSE – A DESTINATION FOR COUNTLESS UP-AND-COMING STARS AND BLUES LEGENDS. NEVERTHELESS JAZZ HAS ALWAYS BEEN JIM'S FIRST LOVE. GROWING OUT OF A 1984 JAM SESSION IN CANNON HILL PARK THE [BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL JAZZ AND BLUES FESTIVAL](#) HAS ATTRACTED THE LIKES OF COUNT BASIE, RAY CHARLES AND MILES DAVIS OVER THE YEARS, AND CONTINUES TO FEATURE A LIP-SMACKING LINE-UP OF INTERNATIONAL TALENT. ONE OF THE UNIQUE ATTRACTIONS OF THE FESTIVAL IS THAT A LARGE PROPORTION OF THE PERFORMANCES ARE FREE, WITH A PROGRAMME OF ESTABLISHED AND EMERGING NAMES SEAMLESSLY INTEGRATED INTO THE FABRIC OF THE CITY. THE PSYCHEDELIC 60S MAY BE LONG GONE, BUT JIM'S COMMITMENT TO MAKING SOMETHING SPECIAL HAPPEN IN BIRMINGHAM REMAINS AS STRONG AS EVER.

WWW.BIRMINGHAMJAZZFESTIVAL.COM



/ WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO RUN A FESTIVAL

JAZZ WAS IN A FUNNY STATE IN THE MID-80S;
I WANTED TO REMIND PEOPLE HOW EXCITING
AND LIFE-AFFIRMING GOOD MUSIC CAN BE WHEN
IT'S PLAYED WELL. OUTSIDERS' PERCEPTIONS
OF BIRMINGHAM HAVE IMPROVED MASSIVELY
SINCE WE STARTED OUT, AND I LIKE TO THINK
WE'VE PLAYED A PART IN THAT. BUT MOST OF ALL I
WANTED PEOPLE LIVING IN THE CITY TO FEEL THAT
THESE THINGS DON'T ONLY HAPPEN ELSEWHERE,
THAT THEY DIDN'T NEED TO GO TO NICE OR
MONTREUX TO ENJOY GREAT MUSIC.

/ WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT BIRMINGHAM

THE PEOPLE. THEIR WILLINGNESS TO LISTEN
TO SOMETHING NEW. IT'S THAT CURIOSITY AND
OPENNESS WHICH MAKES EVERY FESTIVAL FEEL
LIKE A JAZZ PARTY.

WWW.BIRMINGHAMJAZZFESTIVAL.COM

**'THE CITY IS TRANSFORMED BY
THE INFLUX OF VISITORS FROM
AROUND THE WORLD, AND LIVE
JAZZ SEEMS TO DRIFT FROM
AROUND EVERY CORNER OF
OUR FINE CITY CENTRE'**

**COUNCILLOR MIKE WHITBY, THE LEADER
BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL
JAZZ AND BLUES FESTIVAL



BIRMINGHAM BOOK FESTIVAL

BIRMINGHAM BOOK FESTIVAL IS THE ONLY LITERATURE FESTIVAL IN THE CITY. / BIRMINGHAM BOOK FESTIVAL BRINGS THE UK'S BEST WRITERS TO THE HEART OF BIRMINGHAM. / BIRMINGHAM BOOK FESTIVAL IS A FESTIVAL OF IDEAS, BRINGING GREAT MINDS AND IMPORTANT CONVERSATION TO BIRMINGHAM. / 69% OF THE AUDIENCE COMES FROM OUTSIDE OF BIRMINGHAM. / BIRMINGHAM BOOK FESTIVAL IS A PROJECT OF WRITING WEST MIDLANDS



ead, candle
candle-guy, he finds
across the table and
will tell her that he lo
u' before, not sober a
you', but that's differe
the words in their pur
he is momentarily unal

ter?' asks Sylvie's mothe
Cope, birdlike and alo

aze at Sylvie, who is raisin
ter?'

ne of Sylvie's twin brothers.
wer's back, Sam is a hulking,
s twin brother Murray.
sentsing these days?' smirks
fringes at each other. Sporty,
like they were raised in a lab.
urray,' snaps Sylvie.
orts,' says Dexter and think
s. They've had run-in
on. Through
y de

BIRMINGHAM HAS ALWAYS BEEN FERTILE TERRITORY FOR INDEPENDENT THINKERS. ITS LITERARY SCENE FLOURISHED IN THE 1930S WHEN IT WAS A FOCAL POINT FOR AUTHORS AND POETS INCLUDING AUDEN AND MACNEICE, AND MORE RECENTLY IT HAS BECOME THE SOURCE OF RICH HUMOUR FROM WRITERS LIKE DAVID LODGE, JONATHAN COE AND CATHERINE O'FLYNN AS WELL AS THE PERFORMANCE POETRY OF BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH AND ROI KWABENA. SINCE 1999 THE [BIRMINGHAM BOOK FESTIVAL](#) HAS HELPED TO HIGHLIGHT THIS PEDIGREE, WHILE BUILDING A MORE SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR WRITERS IN THE CITY TODAY THROUGH CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH LIBRARIES AND PUBLISHERS LIKE THE AWARD-WINNING TINDAL STREET PRESS. THIS IS A LITERARY EVENT WHOSE SUCCESS IS BUILT ON ITS STRONG CONNECTION WITH LOCAL AUDIENCES, NOW AUGMENTED BY AN EXTENSIVE PROGRAMME OF EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT WORK THROUGHOUT THE YEAR WHICH IS OVERSEEN BY FOUNDING DIRECTOR JONATHAN DAVIDSON. AS YOU MIGHT EXPECT, BOTH HE AND FESTIVAL DIRECTOR [SARA BEADLE](#) ARE THEMSELVES PASSIONATE READERS AND WRITERS.

WWW.BIRMINGHAMBOOKFESTIVAL.ORG



/ PERSONAL HIGHLIGHT

LISTENING TO WRITER AND ACTIVIST GEORGE
MONBIOT DELIVER A SPECIALLY COMMISSIONED
KEYNOTE ON THE RESPONSIBILITY OF WRITERS
TO 'BREAK THROUGH THE SCREENS ERECTED BY
SOCIETY TO SHIELD ITSELF FROM UNCOMFORTABLE
TRUTHS'

/ WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT BIRMINGHAM

BIRMINGHAM HAS A RICH LITERARY COMMUNITY,
AND WE WANT TO PROMOTE THAT. WE BELIEVE
THAT ALL WRITING IS INTERNATIONAL, AND WE ARE
PROUD TO WORK IN A CITY SO FULL OF WRITERS,
READERS AND THINKERS.

**'BIRMINGHAM BOOK FESTIVAL
BRINGS THE SHARPEST WRITERS
AND THINKERS TO THE WEST
MIDLANDS, PROVIDING AN
EXCELLENT FOCUS FOR DEBATE
AND DISCUSSION'**

**MATTHEW TAYLOR, CHIEF EXECUTIVE
ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS**



SUPERSONIC FESTIVAL

SUPERSONIC FESTIVAL WAS VOTED 'FESTIVAL OF THE YEAR' BY PLAN B MAGAZINE. / THE 2009 SUPERSONIC FESTIVAL GENERATED AN ECONOMIC IMPACT OF £1.9 MILLION FOR BIRMINGHAM. / 10% OF SUPERSONIC FESTIVAL TICKETS ARE SOLD INTERNATIONALLY. / SUPERSONIC FESTIVAL 2009 WAS FEATURED IN 23 NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS AND NUMEROUS ONLINE JOURNALS INCLUDING THE GUARDIAN, NME, AND MTV.



FOR ONE WEEKEND EACH YEAR DIGBETH'S ARCHES VIBRATE WITH STRANGE, WONDERFUL SOUNDS AS THE CUSTARD FACTORY BECOMES THE FOCAL POINT FOR ONE OF THE UK'S MOST DISTINCTIVE AND RESPECTED MUSIC FESTIVALS. AS WELL AS GIVING A WARM WELCOME TO MANY INFLUENTIAL, ERA-DEFINING ARTISTS, SUPERSONIC FESTIVAL HAS AN UNCANNY KNACK FOR HIGHLIGHTING NEW ACTS BEFORE EVERYONE ELSE IS TALKING ABOUT THEM, AND WHEN YOU COMBINE THIS WITH A FRIENDLY, BUSTLING ATMOSPHERE YOU HAVE A PACKAGE WHICH DRAWS FANS, PERFORMERS AND INDUSTRY FOLKS FROM ACROSS THE GLOBE. PULLING THE WHOLE THING TOGETHER ARE DYNAMIC DUO LISA MEYER AND JENNY MOORE, WHO FORMED CAPSULE AFTER BECOMING FRUSTRATED WITH THE NUMBER OF EXCITING TOURS WHICH BYPASSED BIRMINGHAM. TEN YEARS ON THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR BRINGING HUNDREDS OF MEMORABLE EVENTS TO THE CITY AS WELL AS GIVING A LEG-UP TO MANY UPCOMING LOCAL ARTISTS, AND NOW WITH AMBITIOUS ARCHIVE PROJECT HOME OF METAL THEY ARE SET TO CELEBRATE ONE OF THE REGION'S MOST SIGNIFICANT MUSICAL LEGACIES.

WWW.SUPERSONICFESTIVAL.COM



/ WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT BIRMINGHAM

FOR YEARS BANDS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD HAVE BEEN COMING TO BIRMINGHAM TO PLAY CAPSULE GIGS WITH SUCH ENTHUSIASM ABOUT BEING IN THE HOME OF BLACK SABBATH. BUT THIS CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF THE REGION WITH HEAVY METAL IS SOMETHING THAT PEOPLE OFTEN FORGET, AND ONE THAT HAS NOT REALLY BEEN CELEBRATED IN THE PAST. WITH HOME OF METAL WE HAVE CREATED A DIGITAL ARCHIVE WHICH SO FAR INCLUDES GEMS LIKE HAND-DRAWN NAPALM DEATH ARTWORK AND JUDAS PRIEST STAGE OUTFITS, PLUS RECORDS, CLIPPINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHS THAT FANS HAVE BROUGHT ALONG TO OUR EVENTS.

WWW.SUPERSONICFESTIVAL.COM

'HAVING ATTENDED MANY MUSIC FESTIVALS UP AND DOWN THIS FAIR ISLE OF OURS OVER THESE PAST FEW YEARS, ONE OF THE MOST ECLECTIC AND EXCITING HAS TO BE BIRMINGHAM'S SUPERSONIC'

NME

SUPERSONIC FESTIVAL

/ IMAGE CREDITS

/ FEIRCE FESTIVAL

MAIN IMAGE: DOMINIC JOHNSON, DEPARTURE (2010). FIERCE FESTIVAL 2011 / PHOTO: MANUEL VASON

RIGHT IMAGE: THE SKY ORCHESTRA - BY LUKE JERRAM AND DAN JONES. FIERCE FESTIVAL 2007 / PHOTO: LUKE JERRAM

LEFT IMAGE: RED LADIES - BY THE CLOD ENSEMBLE, PRODUCED BY FUEL. FIERCE FESTIVAL 2006 / PHOTO: FIERCE FESTIVAL

/ FLATPACK FESTIVAL

MAIN IMAGE: KODACHROME WAKE / PHOTO: DAN BURWOOD

RIGHT IMAGE: PAUL SHARITS / PHOTO: MARK RHODES.

LEFT IMAGE: GANGPOL UND MITT AT FAST FORWARD / PHOTO: MARK RHODES

/ BASS FESTIVAL

MAIN IMAGE: TWO GIRLS DANCING AT CARNIVAL / PHOTO: BRIGITTE WINDSOR

LEFT IMAGE: DREAD RASTA'S GUYS LEANING OVER / PHOTO: POGUS CAESAR

/ RHUBARB-RHUBARB

MAIN IMAGE: RHUBARB-RHUBARB INTERNATIONAL REVIEW 2010 / PHOTO: TOMMY ZULIANI

RIGHT IMAGE: DETAIL FROM 'WALKING AS ONE' BY ADAM MAGYAR, RHUBARB-RHUBARB 2010, BIRMINGHAM AND NEWHAM, LONDON / PHOTO: BY TOMMY ZULIANI

LEFT IMAGE: OBAMA'S PEOPLE OPENING, 2009 / PHOTO: TOMMY ZULIANI

/ BIRMINGHAM JAZZ AND BLUES FESTIVAL

MAIN IMAGE: CHICK WILLIS, MACON, GEORGIA / PHOTO: MERLIN DALEMAN

RIGHT IMAGE: BULLMOOSE K. SHIRLEY, KING PLEASURE & THE BISCUIT BOYS / PHOTO: MERLIN DALEMAN

LEFT IMAGE: LEWIS FLOYD HENRY / PHOTO: MERLIN DALEMAN

/ WITH THANKS

LAUREN AMERY AT THE WEST MIDLANDS CULTURAL OBSERVATORY

IAN RICHARDS AT HEAVY OBJECT

LIZ LOCK AND MISHKA HENNER

JIGISHA PATEL, PROJECT MANAGER

/ FESTIVAL DIRECTORS' PORTRAITS AND COVER IMAGES BY

LIZ LOCK AND MISHKA HENNER

DESIGN BY HEAVY OBJECT



