

For immediate release: 19 July 2021

VENUE CHANGE FOR 2021 BRITISH CERAMICS BIENNIAL

British Ceramics Biennial moves to Swift House in the centre of Stoke-on-Trent for 2021 festival

Since 2011 the China Hall of the original Spode factory site, which is owned by Stoke City Council, has been home to the British Ceramics Biennial (BCB). Stoke City Council has secured significant investment for the ongoing regeneration of both the China Hall and other buildings at Spode. Following the most recent surveys of the site, some new structural safety concerns have been identified in China Hall and as a result we are not able to use the space as a festival venue for 2021.

We have been working with our partners – Stoke-on-Trent City Council – to find an alternative venue and can now confirm that Swift House in the heart of the city will be the main festival hub for BCB 2021, which takes place from 11 September to 17 October.

Swift House was built in the 19th century as a bonded warehouse used to transfer goods and materials between the railway, which lies on one side of the building, and the canal, immediately on its other. The building was also a vital staging point in the ceramics supply chain, transporting the raw materials used in manufacturing and then sending out the finished products around the world. The festival will be presented over two floors of Swift House, bringing together work by some of the UK's most talented and progressive contemporary ceramic artists for a programme of exhibitions, new commissions and hands-on events.

Iain Cartwright, Executive Director of the British Ceramics Biennial comments: *'Swift House is one of Stoke-on-Trent's hidden gems - a building that that even local residents won't know about. We're really excited about once again welcoming visitors to the city for a vibrant 2021 festival presented against the backdrop of Stoke-on-Trent's extraordinary industrial heritage.'*

The Swift House site is part of a major Stoke-on-Trent City Council regeneration project, working with partners Capital & Centric to completely transform the area, called the Goods Yard project.

Hosting BCB 2021 is part of a wider marketing initiative around the site as well as consultation on the Goods Yard project and brings with it opportunities for cross-fertilisation of our audiences.

The British Ceramics Biennial, an international contemporary ceramics festival in Stoke-on-Trent, the home of British ceramics, returns for its seventh edition from 11 September to 17 October 2021. The full BCB festival programme can be viewed at www.britishceramicsbiennial.com

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Notes to editors

About the British Ceramics Biennial:

The next British Ceramics Biennial festival takes places from 11 September to 17 October 2021.

The British Ceramics Biennial (BCB) is a prestigious and high-profile festival of contemporary ceramics that takes place in Stoke-on-Trent. BCB presents artworks from the UK's leading ceramicists alongside work by international artists, in exhibitions and special events held across the city. BCB is underpinned by an exciting year-round programme of artists' commissions, education and community engagement projects.

British Ceramics Biennial is a prestigious project that embraces the heritage of the Potteries as the home of British ceramics; that stimulates creativity and innovation across the breadth of its practice and sharpens Stoke-on-Trent's creative edge as an international centre for excellence in contemporary ceramics.

Initiated in 2009, BCB has grown to be the single largest ceramics event in the UK, a flagship cultural project for Stoke-on-Trent City Council, and a catalyst for regeneration. BCB has been successful in bringing great art, creative energy and critical attention to the city, and has facilitated meaningful new public engagement with local communities, visitors and cultural tourists.

British Ceramics Biennial funders:

The British Ceramics Biennial is funded by Stoke-on-Trent City Council and is supported using public funding by Arts Council England.



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