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***These Artists Work* – Pete McKee announces artists invited to join him in new exhibition celebrating working class**

**THIS
CLASS
WORKS**
A NEW EXHIBITION FROM PETE MCKEE



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Sheffield artist Pete McKee today announces the nine artists he has invited to share their work alongside his own in the upcoming exhibition ***This Class Works***.

Fellow artists, musicians, actors, designers, photographers and poets each contribute their own unique interpretation of the exhibition's themes, which aim to explore and celebrate the lives of the working class.

The featured artists include: **Anthony Bennett, JB Barrington, Jo Peel, Jon McClure, Martyn Ware, Maxine Peake, Natasha Bright, Sarah Jane Palmer and Tish Murtha**, whose work will be shown alongside Pete's.

In addition to these artists Pete has invited several designers and illustrators to complete a special brief for the exhibition. Those included in this special project are: **Cafeteria, Dust, Field, Nick Bax, Jon Cannon, Kid Acne, Patrick Murphy, Nick Deakin and Peter & Paul**.

Although most of the work will be kept secret until the exhibition opens, we can reveal that the following will be included:

- live sculpting by Anthony Bennett
- poetry inspired by Pete's paintings (& vice versa) by JB Barrington
- a visual history of Sheffield's industry pubs by Jo Peel
- soundscapes that reflect the atmosphere of industrial sites and other places of work by Martyn Ware
- written accounts of what it means to be working class from Maxine Peak
- photography exploring both social clubs which still exist to this day by Natasha Bright
- unemployed youth - an insight into a day in the life on a typical council estate by Tish Murtha
- Sarah Jane Palmer's secret hidden messages in everyday items
- and a special selection of long-lost government propaganda.

Pete McKee said, "I've always enjoyed working with other artists to achieve the realisation of some of my ideas and for this exhibition I've taken that one step further by asking some incredible artists to produce their own work for this show.

I originally came up with the concept for the show as I was recuperating from my transplant last year. I wanted other artists to be a part of the show and make sure there was plenty of incredible work to see".

All of this work in addition to Pete's new series of paintings will be on display at ***This Class Works***, 92 Burton Road, Sheffield, S3 8BX, from the 14th to the 29th of July.

Tickets are available now and are priced at £5 per person; the ticket also includes a copy of the exhibition programme. Children under 12 can attend for free as long as they are accompanied by an adult.

Listings:

This Class Works

92 Burton Road, Sheffield, S3 8BX

14 – 29 July

Tickets available at www.thisclassworks.com

ENDS

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Information on the artists

Pete McKee

www.petemckee.com

Pete McKee was born in 1966. It was the year England won the World Cup, but also the year that his beloved Sheffield Wednesday lost the FA Cup. Perhaps it is this bittersweet beginning that has given rise to some of Pete's most poignant work, images that can make you laugh out loud or break your heart. His dad Frank was a former steelworker who retired after an industrial accident and his mum Marjorie worked part time at a bakery.

Growing up on a Sheffield council estate throughout the 1960's and 70's has become the inspiration for much of Pete's work. His relationships, his childhood, his passion for music and his wonderful self-deprecating humour come together to create evocative images that have earned him a worldwide following. His home city of Sheffield also provides a constant source of inspiration, with exhibitions such as 'The Joy of Sheff' and '22 Views of Sheffield' celebrating all that is great and good about the city.

Pete's love of music is clear in his work and he is a proud member of ukelele band The Everley Pregnant Brothers, alongside occasional DJ slots. Pete is a proud patron of The Sheffield Children's hospital's arts charity Artfelt as well as an ambassador for the Teenage Cancer Trust and Record Store Day.

Anthony Bennett

Anthony was born in The Black Country, son of Tom, a bolt forger/machinist, and Barbara, mother/potato eye remover/sausage maker/home help. They lived on an estate, an ordinary working class family. Anthony did well at school and seemed to be heading for university, to do engineering (heading upstairs in the factory), but his love of Art, the advent of Punk, and Rock Against Racism steered him toward Walsall College of Art. He moved to Sheffield in 1980, inspired by Sheffield Bands such as Artery, having gained a place on the Sculpture degree course at Sheffield Art College on Psalter Lane. Anthony, somewhat a non-conformist, revelled in the multidisciplinary arts at the college, and was very active politically, such as in the 'occupations' of the campus in the early eighties. After completing his course in 1984, he decided to stay and make Sheffield his home.

Whilst on the dole, he created music and artworks in bands, co-founding the 'intermedia' performance group Fabricata Illuminata. After meeting Karen, a Sheffield born and bred sewing machinist, soon to be wife, and the birth of his daughter, Anthony had to eek out a way to earn some money to support his family. Following an opportunity working with Neil Gidley, props master at the Crucible theatre, Anthony became self-employed working professionally as a sculptor, making museum exhibits. In 1998, he started creating sculptural artworks working with artist Yinka Shonibare, a working relationship which continues to this day. A creative

collaborative relationship with Professor Vanessa Toulmin conceived the Festival of The Mind at the University of Sheffield. Anthony has spent many years working with Sheffield's last jobbing grinder Brian Alcock, producing sculpture and other artworks, exhibited around the city as 'Swarfhorse', on 2013. Latterly, Anthony has collaborated with artists, academics and workers with traditional skills, as well as digital creatives, producing a cornucopia of engaging, sometimes challenging, artworks.

Jo Peel

Jo Peel spends her time documenting in great detail her fascination with everyday scenes and scenarios. From abandoned east London construction sites to the streets of Tokyo and Pittsburgh, all are captured in her well observed and uniquely executed style.

By drawing, Peel offers her view that it is these cityscapes that are as important to the topographic psyche as the natural beauty of the nature that surrounds it. This is not finding beauty in the dust; this is offering a new language to understand what is beautiful.

This exploration of the urban metamorphosis is executed in a variety of mediums ranging from huge public murals and hand painted animations to canvas and fine art editions.

Jo has created a number of short animated films based upon huge wall murals which she painstakingly paints and repaints for each frame in a time-lapse process which may take three or four weeks for a 3 minute edit. Her "Things Change" short film painted on the Village Underground Wall in Shoreditch, London was shortlisted for best animation as part of the 2012 programme at Encounters Short film and Animation festival and went on to become a Vimeo online sensation with over 100,000 views.

Projects & clients include:

Chanel/ The Southbank Centre/ Moniker Projects/ London Legacy Development Commission/ Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park/ Enfield Council/ Sheffield University/ Sheffield Council/ East Street Arts/ Leeds BID/ The Canal and River Trust/ Chelsea Flower Show

JB Barrington

Poet JB will be transforming one of Pete's paintings into a Poem and in return Pete will transform one of JB's poems into a painting both will be on display at the exhibition.

JB Barrington is a Salford born award winning performance poet renown for his searing and satirical poetry and snarling delivery of strong sentiments and sharp rhymes. He's is funny, endearing, nostalgic and a spoken word maestro who provides one of the most powerful performances on the UK scene. JB's one man shows have been selling out and they've been described as a rollercoaster of emotions with a brilliant and imaginative display of poetic writing covering social issues, economics, class and loss. JB has been on tour with Sleaford Mods performing in front of huge

sell out crowds across both England and Scotland and he supported The Charlatans on the main stage at Kendal Calling last year plus, as well as performing his own show at Festival No6 to a packed venue as part of Tim Burgess's Tim Peaks Diner, he also performed with both Johnny Vegas and Ricky Tomlinson. JB has written commissions for BBC Radio Manchester, York Council for the York Fairness Commission, Kendal Calling and Salford Arts Theatre. Suggs from Madness was so impressed by JB's book 'Woodchip Anaglypta And Nicotined Artex Ceilings' he took a copy on stage with him at Kendal Calling 2016 and during the Madness Saturday night headline show and in front of a sell out crowd he read one of JB's poems. JB has recently been performing on tour as support to Reverend And The Makers as well as his own one man shows in Plymouth, London, Hull & Glasgow.

Jon McLure

Jon was born in Sheffield in 1981 and is best known as lead singer and frontman of Reverend and the Makers, and ex-vocalist of 1984 and Judan Suki. He's been nicknamed "The Reverend, which he says is because "I'm a big mouth and always running on at people". He is good friends with Alex Turner from the Arctic Monkeys and together the two have co-written songs including "He Said He Loved Me", "The Machine", and "Old Yellow Bricks". McClure cites his key influences as being Bob Marley, Oasis and John Cooper Clarke.

Martyn Ware

Martyn was born in Sheffield in 1956. After leaving school he worked in computers for 3 years, and then in 1977 formed The Human League. He went on to form production company/label British Electric Foundation in 1980 and Heaven 17 the same year.

Martyn has written, performed and produced two Human League, five BEF and nine Heaven 17 studio albums. As record producer and artist has featured on recordings totaling over 50 million sales worldwide - producing Tina Turner, Terence Trent D'Arby, Chaka Khan, Erasure, Marc Almond and Mavis Staples, etc. He founded Illustrious Co. Ltd. with Vince Clarke in 2000 to exploit the creative and commercial possibilities of their unique three-dimensional sound technology practice in collaboration with fine artists, the performing arts and corporate clients around the world. He also lectures extensively on music production, technology, and creativity at universities and colleges across the world. He has just been appointed the first ambassador for the international arts organization Memebation In Place Of War, and is a board member and trustee for the charity Street Sports Hope in Sierra Leone. Martyn is proud to be a supporter of artists' rights, and is also a proud socialist and international activist, helping to fight oppression and injustice worldwide.

Maxine Peak

As one of the nation's favourite actresses, RADA trained Maxine Peake has enjoyed a prolific career as a theatre, television and film actress with many career highlights including *Black Mirror*, *Red Riding*, *The Devil's Whore*, *The Theory Of Everything*, *The Falling*, *The Village*, *Silk*, *Shameless*, *Criminal Justice*, *The Hollow Crown*,

Dinnerladies, *Three Girls* and many award-winning TV dramas and theatre productions. Constantly looking for new challenges and surprising audiences, she has already played a range of colourful and award-winning characters, most notably Myra Hindley in *See No Evil* and the title role in *Hamlet* which was at the Manchester Royal Exchange and then filmed and released as a feature film in cinemas in the UK and USA. Regarded by critics as an important adaptation of one of Shakespeare's finest tragedies, with The Times writing 'Maxine Peake and company make this 400-year-old revenge tragedy come alive in a way you've never quite seen before.'

2018 projects include *Funny Cow* (EOne) will be out in cinemas following the story of a comedienne working the northern comedy circuit in the 1970s also starring Stephen Graham, Paddy Considine and Martin Freeman. It screened at the London Film Festival to rave reviews with The Guardian saying she "dominates the screen" with a "fierce blazing energy and holds everything together through the magnetic force of her performance"; *Peterloo* directed by multi-award winning British director Mike Leigh also starring Rory Kinnear and Nico Mirallegro (date tbc), *Fanny Lye Deliver'd* with Charles Dance and Freddie Fox (directed by Thomas Clay) and *The Dark Outside* (prod. Hilary Bevan Jones and BFI). She's currently filming TV movie *The Bisexual*, a modern story about love and adventure set in London. Peake stars with actor/writer/producer Desiree Akhavan, who recently won the Grand Jury Prize at Sundance for her film *The Miseducation of Cameron Post*.

In theatre, her work includes the iconic role of Blanche DuBois, the deeply troubled and tragic protagonist in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Directed by Sarah Frankcom, a woman who has worked on many critically acclaimed productions with Peake - *The Skriker*, *The Masque Of Anarchy*, *Miss Julie*, *The Children's Hour* and *Hamlet* all at the Royal Exchange, where Maxine has the honour of being 'Artist in Residence.' This year she will star in *Happy Days* at the venue, directed again by Frankcom.

As a writer, she has retold fascinating stories of women in British history who achieved greatness or faced adversity. She had critical success with her plays *Beryl*, based on the real life professional cyclist Beryl Burton, which has been made into a radio and stage play, and is currently being developed into a film. *Queens Of The Coal Age* told the incredible story of Anne Scargill and the miner's wives who attempted to save UK pits from closure by occupying the mines in the early 1990s. It's currently being adapted from radio play to TV and it will make it's premiere as a stage play at the Royal Exchange in July.

Natasha Bright

Natasha Bright is a self-taught photographer who specialises in documentary photography. Her work aims to reflect life as it really is, by photographing subjects where they feel most comfortable. Despite being tall, Natasha tries to blend in to the background and let the scene tell the story without artificial construction.

Natasha's photographs of Working Men's Clubs were taken in 2015-16 and show that the clubs are still working, but undoubtedly need to try new things to be sustainable for the future.

Sarah Jane Palmer

Sarah Jane Palmer is an artist with a passion for illusion and storytelling. From the historical Nottingham lace trade to the romance of the circus, her designs for wallpaper, prints and textiles draw from her practice, and her tales all come with a bit of a twist.

“What I love is that I can create stories within pattern that a glance could miss, but that a second take might reveal. I love it when an artwork keeps showing you something new.”

She is passionate about the importance of developing precision skills by hand, and is a voracious student, constantly adding to a bank of finessed techniques, such as hand-flocking and building her own screen printing press and studio on a shoestring budget in Sheffield, England. Handmaking is such an important element of her design – it adds a second layer to that story, creates elements of human touch that give people more to look at, discover, wonder about...

She is passionate about the importance of developing precision and skills by hand, and merges both modern and historically traditional techniques.

'I am particularly interested in the immersive experience of developing patterns, animations and illusions, drawing on elements of eroticism, humour and suspense.'

Sarah has experimented with designing and printing wallpapers and wall-art since 2003. In 2004 she graduated with a BA (hons) Degree in Painting and Printmaking, and in 2013 received a Masters Degree in Fine Art with distinction. Following a billboard commission she created a range of subtly erotic wall-art designs, showing what at first appeared to be wonderfully crafted pattern-work, and on closer inspection revealed something unexpected. She has sold her wallpapers on commission to private clients in London, Leipzig, New York and LA.

'An artist? you're daft as a brush, get yourself a job in a factory and work your way up.' Doris Bellamy (Sarah's Grandma) 1984, 'who was so proud of me before she died for not conforming to the rules she'd been led to believe she had to follow and instead following my heart and my dreams of being an artist.'

Tish Murtha

Patricia Anne "Tish" Murtha (14 March 1956 - 13 March 2013) was a British social documentary photographer best known for documenting marginalised communities, social realism and working class life in Newcastle upon Tyne and the North East of England.

In 1976, aged 20, Tish left home to study at the School of Documentary Photography at Newport College of Art, newly set up by Magnum Photos member David Hurn. After graduating in 1978, she returned to Newcastle and set out to document “marginalized communities from the inside” - unlike other photographers who came to document social poverty in the region at the time, Tish didn't just document it, she actually lived it, as the third of ten children brought up in Elswick, she captured the

lives of her friends, family and the community around her while herself on a job scheme for the unemployed.

Tish's interest in photography was always on a practical level, she loved to photograph people and was always very interested in them. She found she had a gift and a strong social conscience, and really believed she could help change things and make people take notice by stimulating discussions on real issues through her photography.

Tish sadly died on March 13th 2013 the day before what would have been her 57th birthday, after suffering a sudden brain aneurysm.

As an organ donor she went on to save the lives of four women and eyesight of four men.

A book of the Youth Unemployment series was posthumously published by her daughter Ella through Bluecoat Press in 2017.