



Embargoed press release until – 00.01am Tuesday 2 April 2019

Artist Pete McKee tours the UK with pop-up galleries and reveals his new book ‘Council Skies’

- **Pop-up galleries with a mix of new work and classic favourites to take place in cities with vibrant music scenes and strong cultural heritage.**
- **Pop-ups galleries in Brighton (14-18 June), Birmingham (4-7 July) and Nottingham (24-27 July).**
- **Pete McKee announces ‘Council Skies’, a new book exploring his career throughout the years, with many works previously unseen by the public.**



(Images left to right: *Holiday Romance*, *Ice Cream Sundays*, *Start of a Beautiful Relationship* – Pete McKee)

Images available to download [here](#)

Artist Pete McKee to open three distinctive pop-up galleries in cities throughout the UK in which he has never presented work in before.



The tour stops-off in **Brighton (14-18 June)**, **Birmingham (4-7 July)** and **Nottingham (24-27 July)**. The pop-ups combine a mixture of classic and new work, including images designed especially for each location reflecting each cities' vibrancy and heritage.

Pete McKee is an internationally-renowned artist whose inimitable style and sense of humour has earned legions of fans the world over, working with some of the biggest names in music and fashion. The pop-up galleries are an exciting opportunity to see a selection of Pete's work, selected for these events, showcasing the diversity of his witty and charming images.

The tour coincides with the release of Pete's new book, '**Council Skies**', a collection of his work over the last 15 years, from his early sketch work right through to images from his most recent exhibitions. It features a foreword from award-winning social affairs writer and author of *Austerity Bites: A journey to the sharp end of cuts in the UK*, **Mary O'Hara**, and an introduction from **Dr Susan McPherson**, lecturer in Sociology at Sheffield Hallam University.

The book will be released on June 14th, available to buy across all McKee platforms including the first pop-up shop in Brighton.

Pete is signing books at each of the pop-ups – Brighton: 4pm - 6pm Saturday 15th June, Birmingham: 4pm - 6pm Saturday 6th July, Nottingham: 4pm - 6pm Saturday 27th July.



(Mods n' Sods – Pete McKee)



Pete McKee explains why Brighton, Birmingham and Nottingham were chosen as locations for the upcoming pop-up galleries:

“Anyone who has flirted with the concept of modernism as I did as a teenager in the late 70s, can’t help but fall in love with Brighton and the role it played in our cultural imagination. When you walk down the sea front you get a sense of the history that it holds and its representation in cult films like Quadrophenia. Brighton is home to some amazing artists and art institutions too so I can't wait to bring my work there.”

“Birmingham and its people are born of hard graft and pride. Its foundations are built on industry and revolution, much like my home town. It has been exciting seeing the city evolve and change over the years with more and more creative spaces popping up. I particularly love the street art dotted about the city.”

“I love visiting Nottingham, the home to my favourite comic book shop, Page 45, and my favourite record shop, Rough Trade. In my youth a trip to Nottingham was essential to pick up some vintage clobber from the great retro shops. In short Nottingham is a fantastic place to shop.”

These pop-ups follow Pete’s biggest show to date, **‘This Class Works’ exhibited in 2018**. Over 10,000 visitors came to this sell out exhibition, lasting just over two weeks at an old spring factory in Pete’s hometown of Sheffield. The exhibition showcased Pete’s work and the work of several other artists. It explored and celebrated working class culture and people, examining their pride and resourcefulness, work ethic and sense of community, and set out to share that spirit with today’s aspirational younger generation.

/ENDS

Listings information

McKee Brighton

Friday 14th - Tuesday 18th June 10am - 6pm

ONCA, 14 St George's Pl, Brighton BN1 4GB

McKee Birmingham

Thursday 4th - Sunday 7th July 10am - 6pm

Arch 21, Custard Factory, Gibb St, Birmingham B9 4AA

McKee Nottingham

Wednesday 24th - Sunday 27th July 10am - 7pm

Floor 1, Rough Trade Nottingham, 5 Broad St, Nottingham NG1 3AJ



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Pete McKee

Born in 1966 Pete McKee has forged an artistic career that over the years has attracted a worldwide following. At a young age Pete discovered his ability to draw, finding that art was the one subject he 'didn't get told off in.' Growing up he read every comic he could get his hands on, with particular favourites including Whizzer and Chips, The Dandy, The Beano and Hergé's iconic Tintin. The strong graphic style prevalent in such comic books was one of the many influences on Pete's unique and immediately recognisable aesthetic.

His work explores various themes including working class culture and humour. Pete grew up on a council estate during the 60s and 70s in Sheffield, a city rooted in the steel industry. His father was a steelworker until an industrial accident forced him to retire. His mother worked part time at a bakery. Pete's upbringing has had a direct influence on the images he creates which often examine facets of working class life, for example depicting holidays, relationships and family. His passion for subcultures and music is also evident in his work, and he has depicted mods and rockers as well as many musical greats including David Bowie, the Beatles and Jimi Hendrix.

As a self-taught artist Pete McKee has developed a signature style partially influenced by his years as a professional cartoonist. His understanding of this genre allows him to create balance in his work, painting 'minimalistically', using only those figures and objects needed to convey a story. There are elements of a brightly coloured 'Pop art aesthetic' mixed with observational character study. His paintings consist of blocks of colour traced with fine black lines. This echoes the 'Cloisonné' style traditionally seen in Chinese pottery where coloured enamel is divided by thin strips of precious metal. Other influences include Vermeer, Hopper and Manet, and while Pete's work is contemporary, his compositions often echo classical paintings.

In 2011 Pete opened the McKee gallery in Sheffield. Since then he has put on several major exhibitions. In 2016 'Six Weeks to Eternity' saw 8,000 people visit the exhibition over a single weekend. In 2018, his collaborative show, 'THIS CLASS WORKS' sold out, with over 10,000 visitors coming to see this exhibition. Pete has collaborated with various creative



individuals and companies including Paul Smith, the Arctic Monkeys, Richard Hawley, Oasis, BBC 6 Music, Disney, ACME Studios, Warp Films and Rega. For several years he has produced work for the Teenage Cancer Trust charity and is also a patron of the Sheffield Children's Hospital charity, Artfelt.