

**PRESS RELEASE: For immediate release**  
**6 August 2015**

### **British Ceramics Biennial calls out for an army of Ceramic Flower Makers**

The British Ceramics Biennial (BCB) team is calling out to ceramic flower makers from across the City to join in the creation of a Stoke-on-Trent memorial sculpture to mark the centenary of the start of World War One (WW1). BCB needs help make over 5,000 bone china forget-me-nots for an installation at this year's festival.

The physical installation and accompanying sound sculpture *Resonate* by artists Stephen Dixon and Johnny Magee, commemorates WW1, including the soldiers of the North Staffordshire regiment who fought in the war, and the 5,608 men who lost their lives. Made using a tonne of clay sourced from the WW1 battlefield sites of Passchendaele, the physical sculpture is based on the angel as appears on the Victory Medal of 1919. Visitors will be invited to make a donation to add single bone china flowers to the structure, commemorating family members and loved ones lost in conflict.

Over 500 local people and schoolchildren in the area have taken part in one of BCB's flower-making workshops over the last year, in a variety of locations across the City, including Royal Stoke hospital, London Road Festival and Staffordshire Fringe Festival. BCB now needs the support of professional ceramic industry flower makers to join the BCB flower army.

The first flower-making session will take place on **Friday 14 August between 10:00am-12:00pm** to make flowers in the BCB Studio at the original Spode factory site, and on other dates throughout August and September, under the instruction of skilled local flower artist Rita Floyd.

The City has a long-established history of bone china flower making. Clusters of the glazed flowers made up as 'florals' were once extremely popular, with the industry employing several hundred-flower makers. The flower making industry has now all but disappeared, however many skilled flower makers are still living and working within The Potteries.

Over the last five years the BCB has been successfully working with flower makers and artists, revitalising flower making by repurposing their use as beautiful and symbolic objects in their own right, and as components for compelling sculptural and art installations.

BCB continues to work towards its ambition of repurposing traditional local skills and helping to rebuild a small part of the ceramics industry that was almost lost – bone china flower making.

If you're interested in being part of this important WW1 commemoration project by making flowers please email [katie@britishceramicsbiennial.com](mailto:katie@britishceramicsbiennial.com).



**-Ends-**

A photocall will take place at the Original Spode Factory Site on **Friday 14 August at 11:00am.**

For more press information, please contact:

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**Notes to editors**

**Resonate**

Donations will contribute to the ongoing local community and education work delivered by The Clay Foundation.

**About the British Ceramics Biennial:**

The British Ceramics Biennial is a prestigious cultural event taking place in Stoke-on-Trent from 26 September to 8 November 2015. This six-week long festival will present work from the UK's leading contemporary ceramic artists in a series of new exhibitions and special events in the city, embracing the heritage of Stoke-on-Trent as the home of British ceramics, and celebrating the city's creative edge as an international centre for excellence in contemporary ceramics.

The British Ceramics Biennial launched in 2009 as a five-year initiative of residencies, fellowships, commissions, education and enterprise projects from 2009 to 2013 with a major festival every two years. BCB is intended to be a catalyst for regeneration in the region and to create a platform for innovation and excellence celebrating the best in current ceramic design, both nationally and internationally.

The Biennial draws on the historical strengths of the past in championing new future directions for the city.

The Biennial works in partnership with organisations and individuals in the museums, cultural, industry, business, education, community and voluntary sectors across the city in the development and delivery of projects with a particular focus on public engagement.

The festival and supporting Engaged programme will not only highlight and raise the profile of the many ceramics industries still working in Stoke-on-Trent, but will also create commissioning and exhibition opportunities for local ceramic artists as well as national and international artists.



**The Clay Foundation:**

A new cultural agency and registered charity for Stoke-on-Trent configured into three core components:

- Artists' programme of commissions and residencies, developed in partnership with education, culture, industry and community partners in the city
- British Ceramics Biennial – realising the vision for the 2015 and 2017 festivals
- Ongoing community & education programme

**British Ceramics Biennial funders:**

The British Ceramics Biennial Ltd is funded by Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Arts Council England and Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

**BCB Sponsors:**

Staffordshire University, Johnson Tiles, Potclays

**BCB Partners:**

AirSpace, Appetite, B arts, Contemporary Applied Arts, Craft Potters Association, Mitchell Arts Centre, North Staffordshire Regiment, Spode Museum Trust, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Valentine Clay, Wienerberger Ltd

**Media Partners:**

Ceramic Review, BBC Radio Stoke

