



## WE INVENTED THE WEEKEND ANNOUNCES 2023 DATES AND LINE-UP OF FREE PERFORMANCES AND ACTIVITIES

- *2023 Programme highlights include CBeebies, Junior Art Battle, Community Clothing and We Get Creative Workshops*
- *Disco boats, DJs, saunas, street food and street sports will also descend onto MediaCity and Salford Quays*

We Invented the Weekend is a bold and imaginative free festival for the UK, which will be taking place on **Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th June 2023**. The brand-new two-day culture-led event in Salford will see festivalgoers getting involved in all sorts of free activities and at its core, celebrate differences in how people spend their leisure time, situated where the weekend was originally invented in Greater Manchester, 1843.

The weekend was invented when Salford Lyceum director and workers' rights activist Robert Lowes (also Sir Ian McKellen's Great Great Grandfather) campaigned to win mill workers the right to leisure time on Saturday afternoons. In this triumph, Greater Manchester gave an enormous gift to the world and We Invented the Weekend will honour this, in true style, celebrating leisure time, free time, quality time, and me-time.

We Invented the Weekend will take place across both MediaCity and Salford Quays, including a main stage on MediaCity's main piazza, satellite stages and a dedicated BBC stage across the festival site, activities on the water and a whole host of indoor spaces, including the newly announced Central Bay waterfront food and drink destination.

Across the two-day weekender **CBeebies Bedtime Stories LIVE** will descend onto MediaCity and delight children of all ages, with festival guests and celebrities reading stories. BBC Children's will continue to spark attention at We Invented the Weekend with **everyone's favourite CBBC and CBeebies' stars** making an appearance on the festival main stage.

We Invented the Weekend will also be hosting the first ever **Junior Art Battle Manchester**, where young artists will compete in live painting competitions to be named champion. In a world-first, the event will take place in The Lowry theatre and gallery complex, which sits in the heart of Salford Quays, named after the early 20<sup>th</sup> century-painter L.S. Lowry. Young artists will take part in the Junior Art Battle Manchester in the Compass Room, which sits adjacent to the historic L.S. Lowry collection.

**Community Clothing**, an ethical clothing brand based in the North, **will be leading a swap shop over the two day weekend, whilst their founder and presenter of BBC's Great British Sewing Bee, Patrick Grant** will join **Wayne Hemingway MBE** to discuss sustainable fashion and the history of the local textile industry, paying tribute to the Greater Manchester workers who fought for our right to have Saturday's off\*.

The festival will also be hosting over 100 **'We Get Creative Workshops'** delivered by talented designer makers from the region. The workshops will be welcoming, age inclusive and free to join. As part of an extensive set of workshops designed to boost creativity and positive emotions, festivalgoers can expect **Hot Bed Press** – a workshop designed for attendees to create their own designed tote bag. **Ghetto Fabulous** will also host a workshop aimed at teaching the whole family how to 'werk' the runway and pull a picture-perfect pose. **Manchester Street Poem** will create a giant participatory artwork to describe what the weekend means to festival goers.

At The Lowry, a key partner of We Invented the Weekend, there will be a whole host of activities as part of the 'We Get Creative Workshops' organised by the festival, including **Lowry by The Lowry**, which will allow the whole family to let loose with the paintbrushes in the iconic setting. **Local Goggleboxer, Helena Worthington** will host the experience in true Salfordian style.

From a musical perspective, the powerhouse of North West talent and fronted by Pops Robert, **Lovescene** will be making an appearance as part of the **'We Get Creative Performances'** as well as an unmissable **Unity Radio** Mainstage takeover, SFTOQuays brought to the festival by local heroes **Sounds From The Other City** and **Get Your Docks Off** musical themed boat trips on the ship canal. **'Playhouse Project'** are also set to get the whole family going with soulful house, rare funk and broken beats on the MediaCity weekend stage, amongst a plethora of other DJ sets across the site

**Wayne Hemingway MBE, co-founder of the We Invented the Weekend festival** said *"We Invented the Weekend is the first festival of its kind which celebrates free time in its unrivalled and universal joyous form. The festival represents an opportunity for everyone to come together and enjoy an ambitious, nationally significant free and inclusive event. The art of 'Try Outs' is at the core of the festival; it's about experiencing something new and inspiring and seeing how others celebrate their weekend. Boxing or box sets, arts and crafts or dinner and drinks – whatever free time means to you, we'll have it here. We can't wait to welcome our audience in June."*

**Salford City Mayor, Paul Dennett** also said *"The people of Salford have always had a strong sense of togetherness and pride in their communities and our city. We have a distinct identity and a passion*

*for what we do here. The idea that We Invented the Weekend is a unique celebration of the city, its people and our progressiveness as a place that has never allowed the status quo to define who and what we are, whilst also acknowledging that the welfare of the people is the highest law in all we do. I'm not only proud to be supporting this festival, but I'm excited to experience everything that will be taking place. There's no better way to celebrate our city and enjoy the weekend than with friends, family, neighbours and loved ones and so I'd urge everyone to come and join us for a fantastic weekend celebrating the Spirit of Salford."*

**Salford Community Leisure** will be on hand to showcase **Try Outs** in the **Weekend Arena**. Festivalgoers will be able to get active with everything from tennis and street cheer, all the way through to cricket and parachute games. Joining this year's programme will be **Great Height Climbing Wall** with **Salford Youth Services** and **Wicked Wickets** with the **Lancashire Cricket Foundation** in a whopping inflatable Bowling Cage. **Northern Rolling** will also be bringing their massively popular skate workshop as the perfect opportunity for the kids to learn how to Ollie like the pros. **Manchester United Youth Foundation** are also set to bring their hugely successful Street Reds programme to We Invented the Weekend, giving young people the chance to learn new skills and get active.

**The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS)** will be joining the stacked line-up to host gardening masterclasses with award-winning designer and TV presenter Lee Burkhill. The RHS will also be hosting talks from Jason William, aka the Cloud Gardener, as well as inviting Bread-and-Butter Theatre Company to perform their hilarious horticultural antics. And everyone is welcome to the Plant and Seed Swap where visitors can bring their spare plants, cuttings or seeds and get new plants for free!

The 2023 programme will also see the introduction of **We Think Big** talks in collaboration with the University of Salford, where industry leading activists, campaigners, mayors and entrepreneurs will discuss big societal issues including the future of work, sustainable travel and ethical fashion in front of a live audience.

We Invented the Weekend will take place 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> June in MediaCity and Salford Quays and is expected to attract more than 150,000 people to the area. More information can be found [here](#).

**-ENDS-**

#### **Notes to editors**

For more information, images and interviews please contact Carousel PR on: [weinventedtheweekend@carouselpr.com](mailto:weinventedtheweekend@carouselpr.com) or 0161 302 0206

#### **About We Invented the Weekend**

\*Up until the 19th century, everyone in the UK worked a 6-day week. In 1843, workers' rights activists launched a campaign to finish early on Saturdays in Greater Manchester. They won, and in doing so, invented

the weekend – a gift to workers the world over. We Invented the Weekend is marking this enormous achievement with a new and imaginative free festival from Salford. One massive, colourful, exciting weekend of music, theatre, sport, workshops, dancing, laughs, and more to celebrate the joy of free time.

We Invented the Weekend is funded by Salford City Council, MediaCity (a Peel Media Ltd and Landsec partnership), GMCA Culture Fund, and supported by Salford's Culture & Place Partnership, a cross-city collective delivering Suprema Lex, Salford's strategy for culture, creativity and place which is led by The Lowry, Arts Council England, Salford City Council, Peel Media Ltd and the University of Salford. The event delivery partner is HemingwayDesign who hold an impressive track record of delivering large-scale public engagement events across the country. We Invented the Weekend is a true partnership project with generous contribution to the festival content from a number of key partners including the BBC, The Lowry and the University of Salford as well as many other arts and community organisations across the city.

### **About MediaCity**

MediaCity is a waterside community that's part of Salford Quays in Salford, Greater Manchester. It's home to some of the world's most exciting creative, tech and media brands, from BBC North and ITV to Ericsson, The Hut Group Group, Kellogg's and over 250 creative and tech businesses. Three education establishments are based there, including the University of Salford's dedicated MediaCity campus, while at its heart is HOST, the Home of Skills & Technology, which supports innovators in data, analytics, cybersecurity, AI, gaming and immersive technologies. Alongside a growing roster of local, independent food, drink and retail operators is a dedicated shopping centre, parks and public spaces, and one of the UK's most visited arts centres, The Lowry. Sustainability is core to MediaCity's future: home to the UK's largest cluster of net zero carbon buildings, it has two dedicated Metrolink tram stops, while 100% of its energy comes from renewable sources. It is also a popular residential neighbourhood, with MediaCity as a whole set to double in size within the next decade. MediaCity is a joint venture between Peel L&P and Landsec. Together, their inclusive and collaborative approach to the development of MediaCity will ensure that it grows into a community united by creativity, and a place of play, imagination and innovation.

### **About HemingwayDesign**

HemingwayDesign are a multi-disciplinary team who work across events, urban design, brand, interiors, product and graphic design. Our award-winning events arm has instigated eight cultural and placemaking festivals across the UK, all with a strong focus on building community, celebrating place, enabling creativity and promoting sustainable and ethical business. Recent work has seen us collaborate with The National Archives, Social Work England, Shelter and Dreamland Margate as well as establishing the new and hugely successful First Light Festival in Lowestoft.