

Subject: MEDIA RELEASE - LETTERS FROM PRESTON SOLDIERS ON THE FRONT ARE THE BASIS FOR NEW SOUND ART WORK

ICP media release

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Letters from Preston soldiers on the Front are the basis for new sonic art work

From Saturday 21 May at the Harris Museum & Art Gallery.

- **Saturday 21st May 11am - 4pm.** Meet the artists and experience the work.
- **Wednesday 25 May 5 - 6.30pm.** Launch event. Meet the artists, hear more about the project and experience the work. Refreshments available

Homing is a new sound art work created by artists Jen Southern and Sam Thulin with the Media Innovation Studio at the University of Central Lancashire; a special commission for the WW1 centenary commemorations. **Homing** uses sound to make connections at a distance; between presence and absence, people and place, displacement and home.

The work is based on the original letters of Preston soldiers serving in the front line trenches of World War 1, taken from the archives of Lancashire Infantry Museum. The letters are testament to the attempts of soldiers and their loved ones to keep in touch despite the distances and atrocities of the war. The distance was not only physical; the longer the war continued the greater the distance in life experience between soldiers and those at home. Each letter represents an attempt to bridge that gap and, as much as is said, more is left unsaid or is unsayable.

The experience, which is accessed through headphones, begins at the Roll of Honour in the Harris Museum & Art Gallery and moves out onto the Flag Market and the Cenotaph. At the Roll of Honour, a sound composition from the cemeteries at the Somme can be heard, with all the sensory qualities of the local conditions; wind, rain, whistling, stonework. Out on the Flag Market, these sounds give way to fragments of stories from the men in the trenches; a stilted marriage proposal, an enquiry about health, a thank you for kippers sent through the post, a description of daily conditions and accounts of the terrible realities of the conflict.

Approaching the Cenotaph, the soldiers' words are disrupted by ever intensifying GPS interference. This distant, targeting technology of modern day warfare, creates a sonic fog through which individual voices can no longer be heard, reflecting the difficulty of communication through the constant battle between signal and noise.

Homing contrasts the modes of communication used in WW1 and contemporary war. Voices from the harrowing fight on the front collide with the current technology that emphasises accuracy, immediacy and removal of the body from warfare, but that cannot know the context on the ground.

Walk, sit, drift and meander to experience this new sonic art work. Photographs, drawings and letters belonging to the soldiers can also be seen in the first floor cabinets of the Harris Museum.

Homing is a special commission by [In Certain Places](#) and [Preston Remembers](#), developed with the support of the [Lancashire Infantry Museum](#), [Harris Museum & Art Gallery](#), [Lancaster Institute for the Contemporary Arts](#) and the [Centre for Mobilities Research at the University of Lancaster](#).

Follow [@homingpreston](#) for daily quotes from the soldiers' writings
incertainplaces.org/homing

ENDS

For further information please contact info@incertainplaces.org or rbartholomew@uclan.ac.uk. 01772 893204.

NOTES TO EDITORS

[In Certain Places](#) is a programme of artistic interventions and events, led by curators Elaine Speight and Professor Charles Quick with associate Rachel Bartholomew, in the School of Art, Design and Fashion at the University of Central Lancashire. Based in the City of Preston, in the North West of England, the project examines how artists can contribute to the form and functions of a place, by exploring new approaches to art, culture and urban development.

For 10 years, ICP has been working with artists and architects to generate new understanding of the urban environment, testing new ideas in the city's public spaces, and forming collaborations with artists, institutions, communities, businesses and other individuals in Preston and beyond. The fountain sculpture [Appearing Rooms](#) by artist [Jeppe Hein](#) drew hundreds to the Market Square in 2006 and in 2013 the popular [Harris Flights](#) staircase became a new destination and a cultural hub, with over 60 events organised on and around the installation. In 2015 [The People's Canopy](#) designed by [People's Architecture Office](#) (PAO), Beijing, took central place at the inaugural Lancashire Encounter and subsequently exhibited at the [Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture](#), Hong Kong. 2016 sees the launch of [The Expanded City](#), a pilot programme of work in a new context; the boundaries and rural edges of the city of Preston and the imminent future of development.

In Certain Places has recently been celebrated by the publication of the book [Subplots to a City. Ten Years of In Certain Places](#), a resource for those interested in place-based art, which also contributes to the critical discourse around such practices. Alongside images, project outlines and reflections from artists, audience members and collaborators, the book includes texts by Speight and Quick, and contributions by specialists from various fields, including [Owen Hatherley](#), [Lubaina Himid](#), [Sophie Hope](#), [Paul O'Neill](#) and [Jonathan Vickery](#).

To view all In Certain Places projects since 2003 visit www.incertainplaces.org.
ICP is funded by Arts Council England, Lottery; University of Central Lancashire and Preston City Council.

[Preston Remembers](#) is a partnership project that is joining together the activities, exhibitions and events that are happening from 2014 – 2018 in Preston to mark the centenary of the First World War. Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, this project started with the restoration of Preston's Cenotaph in 2013. As a barracks town, Preston has a unique relationship to the First World War. This project hopes to uncover the stories and lives of both those that served and those that lived in Preston throughout this period.

[The University of Central Lancashire](#) (UCLan) in Preston was founded in 1828 as the Institution for the Diffusion of Knowledge. Since those early days it has grown into one of the UK's largest universities with a staff and student community approaching 38,000 and an employment-focused course portfolio containing over 350 undergraduate programmes and nearly 250 postgraduate courses. The University has an established research reputation with world-leading or internationally excellent work taking place within the areas of Business, Health, Humanities and Science.

As a truly global institution with an established campus in Cyprus, UCLan's student body includes 120 nationalities and its partnership network extends to 125 countries. In 2013 the Quacquarelli Symonds World University Rankings awarded UCLan the full five stars for its global outlook in all aspects of international educational provision. In 2015 the Centre for World University Rankings placed UCLan in the top 3.8 percent of all worldwide universities.

The University has a strong focus on continually improving the student experience and recently unveiled a 10-year, £200 million plan to redevelop its Preston Campus to create an attractive and inviting, world-class campus helping to create jobs, kick-start regeneration and attract inward investment into the City.