

Voices Gloucester Makes History with Picturedrome Launch

Friday 2 September, 2022

The stories behind three remarkable Gloucester 'firsts' will open this year's Voices Gloucester autumn programme at a special screening at the Picturedrome in Barton Street. The evening will see the première of a film of the city's first inter-racial marriage produced and directed by Gloucester-based artists Tarsier Creative and Rider Shafique. Films telling the stories of the opening of Gloucester's first mosque, and the first black-owned business, which were created during Covid, will be shown for the first time in front of a live audience.

Guests will also be able to relive five decades of Gloucester Carnival through a special exhibition of recently-discovered photographs, curated by Gloucester artist Georgia Williams. The photographs, discovered in boxes during the recent Guildhall renovations, have already sparked a lot of interest via online media with people sharing their memories of the event.

'My films and documentaries are a glimpse into events and untold stories that shape life as we know it today,' says Rider. 'They're made in recognition of those who have made a contribution to Gloucester's community and hopefully fill a void in regards to what and whose stories have traditionally been celebrated. I hope these films inspire others to collect, value and tell their own stories.'

Visitors to the People are Cities exhibition will have the chance to be part of history as artists Georgia Williams and Rider Shafique invite people to tell their own stories of Carnival.

'Looking through these carnival photographs sparked a fascination with the people of Gloucester and the spirit that there once was,' says Georgia. 'I wanted to display these images to reignite energy and love for this city where I'm from.'

The films and exhibition are part of the award-winning Voices Gloucester programme which offers funding, mentoring and support for individuals or organisations wanting to explore their own stories about and relationships with Gloucester's past.

This year's autumn programme of walks, talks, photographs, films, exhibitions and workshops includes the untold story of the early days of the city's Muslim community; a 'textiles trail' exploring the rich 'Wild West' heritage of Westgate Street; and the moving tales of the ten boys who fled Nazi Germany and arrived in Gloucester as part of the Kindertransport. Talks are an eclectic mix, including a 500-year gallop through the city's history and a workshop examining the way in which DNA tracing has revolutionised and rocked family history. The autumn programme ends with a 'Green Day' picnic at the Heritage Hub.

'The autumn programme is so exciting,' says Voices Gloucester director Jacqui Grange. 'And this is just a start – Voices Gloucester will be showcasing stories throughout the year. Get involved...we've all got a story to tell.'

Voices Gloucester is supported by The Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic England, GUST and Gloucester City Council.

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