**Symphony of Us**

**Symphony of Us is an original and unique piece of theatre and a brand-new symphonic performance for and of the city of Coventry. It will form a key part of Coventry’s year as UK City of Culture.**

It will be an epic and personal piece, combining the stories, experiences and achievements of six people from Coventry. Diverse in background, age and language, they will tell their stories on stage in a one-off performance, accompanied by a live orchestra playing a bespoke score that has been written entirely for them. The performance will be held, hosted and presented by **Paul O’Donnell**.

Performed in the new Coventry Cathedral, Symphony of Us will place centre stage people of the city who often go unseen and stories that are untold and unrecognised. It will explore the seemingly small moments, encounters and events that are the special fabric of our lives but so often go ignored. The piece is not interested in celebrating epic acts of bravery and heroism, instead it will explore everyday moments and celebrate the day-to-day achievements that make us human.

In the recruitment of and collaboration with our six participants we are deeply committed to representing the demographic make-up of the city. We will partner widely with community organisations in the city; having conversations, running workshops, attending events. We commit to every person we meet as a part of this process, either literally or figuratively, being reflected in the final piece. Collaborating with our six participants we will develop an ensemble whose stories combine and entwine. Together we will discover what our small triumphs are, how music might help us tell our stories and what it is that Coventry means to us. We will develop, dramaturg and make the piece together. It will belong to all of us.

We are delighted to have created a team of brilliant Coventry practitioners to deliver the project; award winning director **Tessa Walker** and Ivor Novello award-winning composer **Daniel Fardon** are both from the city. **Orchestra of the Swan** will be our musical partners both playing in the performance and contributing to the process of making the show. Coventry Cathedral are supporting with venue hire, rehearsal space and technical support. We are partnering with Coventry University to offer placements to students from backgrounds currently under-represented in theatre and classical music.

As artists who are Coventry born and bred we know that modesty, that not showing off, is at the heart of the Cov identity. We cannot think of a better way to recognise and celebrate this than in joyfully and playfully celebrating the stories of its people in its most iconic landmark. It is in the placing of these personal stories in the awe-inspiring surrounds of the cathedral, with an epic score to accompany them, that we hope to tell a more universal story about the city we love; to celebrate its achievements, its hopes, its dreams, its progress and the everyday warmth and openness of its people that make it such a brilliantly special place.