

Press Release
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Historic waterfront to be illuminated by runners as NVA's *Speed of Light* hits The Quays.

Hundreds of runners will create a beautiful human work of art, illuminating The Quays over three nights in March 2013, in a series of extraordinary performances to bring the former-industrial docklands to life in a celebration of movement, light and sound.

Regular visitors to The Quays will be no strangers to seeing joggers make use of Greater Manchester's waterfront to keep fit, but it's unlikely they will have seen anything like NVA's *Speed of Light*, a remarkable night time event taking place for the first time in England, on Thursday 21, Friday 22 and Saturday 23 March 2013 from 8pm-9pm

Over 400 runners will take part in the extraordinary performance, activating specially designed, individual light suits to bring the urban landscape to life. Each night, runners will animate the canal banks, bridges and public spaces around The Lowry, IWM North (part of Imperial War Museums) and MediaCityUK, home of the University of Salford and BBC North, as they move in choreographed patterns set to a specially commissioned audio accompaniment.

A **free** event for a watching audience, with no advance booking required, thousands are expected to take to the quaysides and plazas of The Quays to experience the remarkable fusion of culture and sport first hand.

Speed of Light, created by public arts charity NVA, uses cutting edge technology to turn runners into human fireflies, attaching a series of LEDs to the joints, limbs and heads of moving bodies to create a beautiful and memorable experience for both participants and onlookers. The advanced technology allows NVA to control the sequence and flow of the light by remotely controlling each individual suit

Having previously been staged as part of the Edinburgh International Festival 2012 and on the docklands of Yokohama in Japan, NVA's *Speed of Light* harnesses the beauty of light, intentional movement and mass participation to encourage a shift in our perceptions of an otherwise familiar environment.

Lucy Dugate, Manager of Quays Culture, says: "NVA's *Speed of Light* is the latest in a series of events commissioned by Quays Culture, inviting audiences to experience The Quays' transformation from an historic place of industry to a modern, vibrant destination that's alive with creativity and

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culture. The performance will use the area's modern architecture and canal side setting to create an experience unique to what has been seen in Edinburgh and Yokohama. We expect the event to be popular with runners from Salford, Trafford and across Greater Manchester, but want to see even more people enjoying the evening with us as spectators."

Angus Farquhar, Creative Director of NVA, says: "Salford Quays is a perfect place to stage our first UK-wide outing for *Speed of Light*, which is set to tour the world over the next two years. The combination of water, bridges, raised routes and signature architecture is a powerful setting in which to experience the subtle patterns of light the runners make as they move through and around the location"

NVA and Quays Culture are advising runners to register for the event as early as possible, with demand from Greater Manchester and around the UK expected to be high. Registration opens to participants on Thursday 17 January 2013.

Runners must be fit enough to run 5k with ease by March 2013 and be available for technical rehearsals. Places are allocated on a first come first serve basis for a fee of £10, which includes a technical t-shirt and a goody bag. Places are available for wheelchair users. Volunteers will also play an essential role in the lead up to, and during the event. A whole host of volunteering opportunities are available, with supporting roles in teams ranging from registration, wardrobe, technical maintenance and stewarding, amongst others.

To register as a runner or to find out more about volunteering roles available visit www.nvaspeedoflight.org.uk

NVA's *Speed of Light* is commissioned by Quays Culture, a partnership for culture supported by the Quays Visitor Destination Group (QVDG) consortia, with principal funders the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA), Arts Council England and Salford Clinical Commissioning Group. *Speed of Light* is also sponsored by IWM North.

ENDS

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Notes to Editors:

About Quays Culture:

Quays Culture is a new arts programme based at The Quays/MediaCityUK and aims to attract local and international talent to Greater Manchester audiences. NVA's 'Speed of Light' March 2013 performance is part of the wider Quays Culture arts programme. They work with artists that use innovation and creativity for live and digital interactions. The world-class location and partners support a collaborative programme of arts festivals, events, new art works, learning and new fun experiences for all to join in. Supported by Arts Council England, AGMA (Association of Greater Manchester Authorities) and Salford Clinical Commissioning Group and the Quays Visitor Destination Group (QVDG) Consortia of; BBC North, Imperial War Museum North, the Lowry, MediaCityUK, Salford University, Salford City Council & Trafford Borough Council.

About NVA & Speed of Light:

NVA was established in 1992 by creative director Angus Farquhar. In recent years the organisation has achieved international recognition with a number of incomparable and critically successful works, notably The Storr: Unfolding Landscape on Skye, the Hidden Gardens, Glasgow as well as Speed of Light. NVA is an acronym of *nacionale vitae active*, a Roman phrase describing 'the right to influence public affairs'. www.nva.org.uk

NVA's Speed of Light, is a tremendous fusion of sport and art bringing runners together through a collective act of mass participation. The work also explores the physical and emotional aspects to endurance running and uses innovative and bespoke lighting technologies to animate rural and urban environments. NVA's Speed of Light was conceived and premiered in 2012 as part of the Edinburgh International Festival and London 2012. Collaborating with local choreographers and runners in each country it visits, Speed of Light is now travelling to new locations worldwide. www.nvaspeedoflight.org.uk

NVA commissioned bespoke technologies specifically for Speed of Light. Head Designer James Johnson designed and produced the runners' LED light suits in collaboration with GDS. The creative team consists of Angus Farquhar, Creative Director, Sharon Watson, Choreographer (Salford) and Phil Supple, Lighting Designer.

Social Media:

Follow on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/NVA> using the event hash tag #nvasol

Make friends via the Facebook page at http://www.facebook.com/SOL_Runners

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