

The international significance of the art and science of Cook's famous Endeavour voyage explored by Whitby art exhibition

Artists Fiona MacDonald, Ahilapalapa Rands and author Natasha Pulley

Dates:

(FOR PRESS) 6th July, 6pm: 'Encounters' Launch at Whitby Library.

7th-8th August: exhibition, [talks and activities](#) as part of Cook 250 Whitby Festival.

9th July-24th August: exhibition open to the public in library opening hours (see below).

Location:

Whitby Library, Windsor Terrace, Whitby, YO21 1ET

Exhibition curated by Invisible Dust.

- New Zealand artist **Ahilapalapa Rands** and UK Based **Fiona MacDonald** are creating new commissions exploring the scientific and artistic results of James Cook's voyage.
- Award-winning, international bestselling author of *The Watchmaker of Filigree Street* and *The Bedlam Stacks*, **Natasha Pulley**, presents a talk.
- Seven young people take a **trip of a lifetime** on a tall ship, The Atyla from London to Whitby.
- **Talk by Dr William Frame**, Curator of the British Library's major exhibition 'James Cook: The Voyages', on their remarkable Cook objects.

Scarborough based environmental art organisation Invisible Dust is working with Whitby Library to curate an exhibition ['Encounters'](#) on the **worldwide science and art impacts of Cook's famous 1768 voyage**.

The Endeavour South Seas expedition was commissioned by the Royal Society with celebrated botanists Joseph Banks, Daniel Solander and artist Sydney Parkinson's role to collect and document plants and animals. The 'Encounters' exhibition explores the scientific and artistic impact of James Cook's first Pacific voyage and the shared histories of encounter between Cook and Peoples of the Pacific.

The scientists and artists collaboration led to an international growth in studying and drawing plants and animals which resulted in the establishment of Kew Gardens, the Natural History Museum and botanical collections worldwide. Together their work led to a **greater understanding internationally of new species**. We still have many species such as Banksia in our gardens today.

The exhibition is part of a wider festival Cook '250 Whitby' to commemorate its 250 year anniversary and **Whitby's central role** as the place where **James Cook trained as a navigator** and where the HMS Endeavour was built. 'Encounters' includes schools and Library volunteer workshops, documentation and artworks from **seven Whitby young people who will travel on a tall ship** with Fiona Macdonald and Natasha Pulley from London to arrive on 6th July in Whitby.

In the 'Encounters' exhibition **Ahilapalapa Rands**, is creating **'The Oceanic Reading Room'**, an interventional space in the Libraries Reference Section that introduces visitors to ways in which knowledge and learning is gathered and shared by some of the indigenous peoples from the Pacific Islands.

“Being based in the Library seemed like a really great opportunity as I see a Library’s primary function as a facilitator of community learning and exploration. Because of this libraries therefore have the power to be transformative through providing a platform to gain knowledge and understanding. I’m really excited about the more permanent element of my commission, the archive of Pacific Literature which marks this moment of 250 years since the Captain Cook Voyages and hopefully plant the seed toward what we can build in the next 250.” said Ahi.

‘Plant Hunting’ by artist **Fiona MacDonald: Feral Practice**, is an artistic and scientific exploration, reminiscent of that undertaken by botanists Banks, Solander and Parkinson, aboard Cook’s Endeavour. The exhibition is an immersive installation examining plants that grow in Whitby today, but have their origins in the Pacific.

“The particular joy of this project is pursuing my fascination with plants, and being able to share that with such a diversity of people in Whitby, from botanical experts and historians to teenagers. Whatever we learn about plants from observation, use, or technology, there is always something yet to be known, a mystery, in the living plant itself.” said Fiona.

Alongside personal visual investigations, Fiona has invited local experts who have a specific perspective and interest in plants, to describe these same plants using the technical language of their discipline.

Alice Sharp, Director and Curator at Invisible Dust said:

“Through the ‘Encounters’ exhibition at Whitby Library Fiona Macdonald, Ahilapalapa Rands and Natasha Pulley explore the international importance of the art and science created by the Cook voyage and the explorers interaction with the Pacific peoples. The scientists and artists on board the Endeavour formed new ways of collecting and studying plants and animals that inspired worldwide scientific research and led to the establishment of the Royal Horticultural Society, Kew Gardens and the Natural History Museum.”

The week before the exhibition opens, **seven young people from Whitby will echo the experience of the explorers** and will travel from London to Whitby on a tall ship, ‘The Atyla’. Before sailing they will investigate the art and science of the Cook story through visiting London and ‘James Cook: The Voyages’ exhibition at the British Library, the Royal Society, Kew Gardens and the Natural History Museum.

Author Natasha Pulley will be joining the expedition aboard ‘The Atyla’ to work with the seven young people as well as taking the opportunity to expand her current research about a lighthouse-keeper working for the captain of a battleship during the Napoleonic Wars.

“When I heard about the chance to sail on the Atyla, I couldn’t possibly say no; it’s too good a research opportunity to miss. All the more alluring is the focus of this project - Cook and the Endeavour expeditions. While I’m writing about a time slightly after these expeditions, the Napoleonic Wars don’t exist in a vacuum. Many of the people in the navy then would have known Cook — would have joined, even, because of the things the crews of the Endeavour did, or would have known men from those crews. It’s the context in which my whole story sits.” said Natasha Pulley.

As part of the ‘Encounters’ events programme Dr. William Frame Curator of ‘James Cook: The Voyages’ at The British Library, will present a talk on Cook and the fascinating objects and stories from The British Library collections and archives, from 5-6pm on Saturday 7th July.

'Encounters' has been created in partnership with North Yorkshire Library and Information Service and is funded by Arts Council England and the Wellcome Trust with support from Scarborough Borough Council.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

MEDIA CONTACTS

For more details, or to request images or interviews, please contact Emma Hallam, on emma@invisibledust.com and 07813558183

AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW

Please contact Emma Hallam to arrange.

Alice Sharp, Director and Curator - Invisible Dust

Ahilapalapa Rands, artist - <https://www.ahilapalapa.com/>

Fiona MacDonald, artist - <http://www.feralpractice.com/>

Natasha Pulley, author - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natasha_Pulley

IMAGES - <http://bit.ly/IDEnPress>

EVENTS PROGRAMME DETAILS:

After the festival the 'Encounters' exhibition is open from 9th July-24th August:

Library opening hours

Monday, 9.30am to 5pm

Tuesday, 9.30am to 7pm

Wednesday, closed

Thursday, 9.30am to 5pm

Friday, 9.30am to 5pm

Saturday, 10am to 1pm

Sunday, closed

Email: whitby.library@northyorks.gov.uk

Telephone: 01609 534350

**Listing for 'Encounters' events during Cook 250 Festival
7th-8th July 2018 at Whitby Library:**

Saturday 7 July

10am-12pm 'The Oceanic Reading Room' workshop with Ahilapalapa Rands (refreshments provided)

10am-12pm Many Hands Drop-in art workshop with Invisible Dust.

10am-12pm and 1-3pm Archive Explorers: Riding the Waves of Discovery!

11am-11.45am Meet the Author talk: Natasha Pulley*

1pm-1.45pm Meet the Artist talk: Ahilapalapa Rands*

2.30pm-3.15pm Meet the Artist talk: Fiona MacDonald: Feral Practice*

5pm-6pm 'James Cook: The Voyages at the British Library' talk by Dr William Frame, British Library* Tickets: £3

Sunday 8 July

11am-1pm Archive Explorers workshop: Riding the Waves of Discovery!

11am-1pm Drop-in art workshop with artist Fiona MacDonald (for all the family)

11am-1pm The Oceanic Reading Room with Ahilapalapa Rands (refreshments provided)

1.30-2.30pm Cooking up a Storm: Finding James Cook, a Journey Through Time*

The Oceanic Reading Room by Ahilapalapa Rands

'A 'ohe pau ka 'ike i ka hālau ho 'okahi'

All knowledge is not taught in one school - Hawaiian Proverb

In The Oceanic Reading Room, New Zealand artist Ahilapalapa Rands introduces us to ways in which knowledge and learning is gathered and shared by some of the indigenous peoples from the Pacific Islands.

Through film, maps, books, quotations and interviews, Ahilapalapa Rands creates a library within a library, a comfortable and welcoming space in which to explore art, science and research from a non-Western perspective. By looking at different ways of holding and acquiring knowledge we can start to find different ways of accessing our shared histories and make space for our sometimes shared, sometimes distinct world views.

Plant Hunting by Fiona MacDonald: Feral Practice

What might it mean to 'hunt a plant' in the 21st Century? Plant Hunting is an artistic and scientific exploration, reminiscent of that undertaken by botanists Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander, and artist Sydney Parkinson, aboard Cook's Endeavour, and recognises that while systems of knowledge and modern technologies can vastly increase our understanding of these plants that fascinate us, there will always remain some excess, mystery, and a potential to know more.

Plant Hunting is an immersive installation examining plants that grow in Whitby today, but have their origins in the Pacific. Alongside personal visual investigations, Fiona has invited local experts who have a specific perspective and interest in plants, to describe these same plants using the technical language of their discipline.

Encounters with Natasha Pulley

Award-winning, international bestselling author of *The Watchmaker of Filigree Street* and *The Bedlam Stacks*, Natasha Pulley draws on her extensive historical research and interest in speculative futures to describe her fascination with exploration and a history of possibilities. For Invisible Dust, Natasha presents a talk about how a trip to London with seven young people from Whitby and four days aboard the tall ship, *Atyla*, fit into her current research about a lighthouse-keeper working for the captain of a battleship during the Napoleonic Wars.

Cooking up a Storm: Finding James Cook, a Journey Through Time

Seven young people from Whitby are experiencing a unique research trip to London and will be sailing back to Whitby on the tall ship, *Atyla*. Returning fresh from the journey of a lifetime, they will recount their fascinating journey and findings, with artist Fiona MacDonald: Feral Practice and writer, Natasha Pulley.

Archive Explorers: Riding the Waves of Discovery!

A journey into Whitby's past and the natural world using unique archive material from North Yorkshire County Records Office. Volunteers from Whitby and Great Ayton Libraries will also be creating an exhibition to set the scene - exploring art and the natural sciences and Whitby in the time of Cook - drawing on original archive material from North Yorkshire County Records Office.

Social Media

[@Invisible_Dust](#)
[#Encounters250](#)
[#Cook250Whitby](#)

For more information go to: <http://invisibledust.com/project/encounters/>.

Invisible Dust

Invisible Dust works with leading artists and scientists to produce ambitious contemporary artworks exploring our environment. Founded in 2009 by Director and Curator Alice Sharp, our mission is to create powerful art and engagement programmes that spark meaningful international conversations on pressing environmental issues. Our scientist advisors include from Oxford University, Manchester University and King's College, London amongst many others. Our artists include Turner Prize winners Elizabeth Price and Jeremy Deller. In 2017 our Hull UK City of Culture exhibition 'Offshore: Artists Explore the Sea' included artists Tacita Dean, John Akomfrah, Martin Parr, author China Miéville and Mariele Neudecker at Ferens Art Gallery and Hull Maritime Museum and drew a live audience of 400,000. We have attracted over 2 million people to our projects and 3.2 million online through regular coverage in national and international press. www.invisibledust.com

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