



PRESS RELEASE
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Young filmmakers release new film to mark Peterloo 2019 **Peterloo 2019 • HOME BFI Film Academy 2018**

A collection of the region's young up and coming filmmakers have released a new film exploring some of the issues and ideas connected to the legacy of the **Peterloo Massacre** 200 years on, as part of the **HOME BFI Academy 2018**. The film academy has been running for seven years and on this occasion has partnered with **Peterloo 2019**, a project led by **Manchester Histories** to explore the contemporary perspective of this watershed moment in the story of Manchester.

A group of 18 young people aged 16-19 were given chance to take part in an intensive film-training course. Their creative challenge was to consider how the themes of the Peterloo Massacre (16 August 1819) relate to their lives; looking at comparative issues of freedom of speech, democracy and protest 200 years on. The Peterloo Massacre began as a peaceful demonstration in Manchester for rights and representation with thousands gathering to express their views; the filmmakers used this as a counterpoint to look closely at what freedom of expression means to them.

The results of their exploration is a short film entitled **FREESTYLE**, some of which has been shot on the streets of Manchester. The narrative follows the journey of a young dancer, with the students developing the script and storylines.

Jason Wood, Artistic Director of Film at HOME and Professor of Film at Manchester Metropolitan University, said of **FREESTYLE**, "This film is genuinely incredible. Shot with realism but with a sprinkling of hope. Congratulations to all. What an amazing thing to be part of."

Reflecting on the course one of the **young filmmakers** said, "I am inspired to further involve myself in the subject of film, and the history of Manchester is something I

want to take with me when making films.” Another remarked on the message of the film “It inspired me to talk about and explore a cause. If our film helps others see the messages and themes we conveyed then we couldn't be more happier or inspired to do more.”

The partnership between **HOME** and **Manchester Histories** was supported by the **Heritage Lottery Fund** to mark the 200th anniversary of the **Peterloo Massacre**.

Karen Shannon, Chief Executive of Manchester Histories which is leading Peterloo 2019, says, “The issues and themes arising from the legacy of Peterloo are as relevant today as they were 200 years ago and the HOME BFI Film Academy gave young people the opportunity to creatively examine what they mean to them and their lives.

“We're immensely proud of the film they've created which has seen them take on a host of filmmaking techniques during the process including research, camera, sound, directing and editing, mixing and grading. It's a very original and personal take on the core principles of freedom of expression and democracy.”

The film has premiered at HOME and is now available to view on the Manchester Histories website at: www.manchesterhistories.co.uk/projects/peterloo2019. It will also be submitted to international film festivals taking place throughout 2019.

Manchester Histories, a cultural charity that connects people to histories, is leading plans to mark the 200th anniversary of the Peterloo Massacre with a programme of public events, learning and creative exploration working in partnership with cultural organisations and communities. Peterloo 2019 is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, to find out more about plans for 2019 and the public events that will take place visit: www.ManchesterHistories.co.uk and www.Peterloo1819.co.uk

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A selection of images of the filmmakers at work and the premiere of FREESTYLE can be found here:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/bejor2f0314mxnn/AABpdKSytAgA_LniRX6QIy6Aa?dl=0

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Notes to editors

The Peterloo Massacre was a watershed moment that would mark Manchester as a radical city like no other and become a defining moment for Britain's democracy. On Monday 16 August 1819, a 60,000-strong crowd walked to the meeting point at St Peter's Field in Central Manchester from as far afield as Wigan, Rochdale, Saddleworth and Altrincham to call for parliamentary representation. Shortly after the meeting began and whilst the orator Henry Hunt was making his address, local government forces charged into the crowd on horseback and with swords drawn, injuring 700 and killing 18 men, women and children.

About Manchester Histories

Manchester Histories is a growing and dynamic charity. We work collaboratively with people, organisations and partners to reveal and celebrate the stories of the people and places that make up Greater Manchester. We connect people together to explore the past and shape the future through histories and heritage. Manchester Histories runs a yearlong programme of work as well as the magnificent Manchester Histories Festival.

About HOME

HOME is Manchester's centre for contemporary theatre, film, art, music and more.
For more information: www.homemcr.org

About BFI Film Academy

Open to young people from anywhere in the UK and from any background, the BFI Film Academy offers a real chance for talented 16-19 year olds to be part of our future film industry.
For more information: www.bfi.org.uk

About People's History Museum

People's History Museum (PHM) in Manchester is the national museum of democracy and a leading partner in Peterloo 2019. The museum tells the stories of democracy and of its development in Britain: past, present, and future. It provides opportunities for people of all ages to learn about, be inspired by and get involved in ideas worth fighting for; *ideas such as equality, social justice, co-operation, and a fair world for all*. PHM offers a powerful programme with annual themes; 2018 looks at representation and commemorates 100 years since the first women and all men won the right to vote in Britain, 2019 will see a year of activities around protest movements to mark the bicentenary of the Peterloo Massacre in Manchester and the programme for 2020 will be on the theme of migration and identity. 2017-2018 winner of Kids in Museums Family Friendly Museum Award. PHM is an Arts Council England (ACE) National Portfolio Organisation (NPO). The work of PHM is supported using public funding by ACE.
For more information: www.phm.org.uk

About Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. www.hlf.org.uk. Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) and use #HLFsupported.

Peterloo 2019 partners

