

2107 ACHATES PHILANTHROPY PRIZE WINNERS ANNOUNCEMENT

North Devon's The Plough Arts Centre and first-time cultural philanthropists, Claire and Ray Gard, win the Individual Philanthropy Award

November Club and Hexham & Northern Marts win the inaugural Corporate Award

28 November 2017 – the winners of the 2017 Achatés Philanthropy Prize, the only annual Prize that celebrates first-time cultural giving in the UK, were announced last night at a special event hosted by the eminent cultural philanthropist, Omar Al-Qattan, at London's Delfina Foundation.

Founder of the Prize, Caroline McCormick, said: *"We are completely thrilled to have two such fantastic winners of the 2017 Achatés Philanthropy Prize. In challenging times, these arts charities and their supporters are leading the way in establishing inspiring new models of support which are relevant and accessible to organisations of all sizes and in all locations; illustrating that culture is an asset which belongs to us all."*

The **INDIVIDUAL PHILANTHROPY AWARD**, supported by Spektrix, was won by The Plough Arts Centre and Claire and Ray Gard. Claire and Ray were nominated by the arts centre for establishing a bursary to give three local young people the chance to attend Plough Youth Theatre.

Claire and Ray live in Kent, but regularly visit an elderly relative in North Devon where they first discovered The Plough, and have now been attending events there for several years. The couple believe in giving young people a chance to shine and established a bursary, totalling £675, to give three local young people the chance to attend Plough Youth Theatre. They also worked with the arts centre to find the best way to reach out to those who could benefit the most.

Claire and Ray were selected from a shortlist of nine outstanding cultural philanthropists: Cambridge Live & Christian Raphael MBE; IOU & Laurence Walker; Park Theatre with Ian McKellen & the individual donors he has inspired: Arthur Yang, Zein Mayassi and Nathaniel Lalone; The Yard Theatre & Gareth Cutter - voted on by an independent judging panel: Nigel Farnall, winner of the 2016 Achatés Philanthropy Prize; Caroline McCormick, Chair of Achatés Philanthropy Foundation; Michael Nabarro, co-founder and CEO of Spektrix; Aliceson Robinson, Trustee and Young Philanthropy champion, and Chair of the panel; Rossella Traverso, Associate at BOP Consulting and Achatés Philanthropy Ltd; John Wilson, journalist and broadcaster.

Claire and Ray Gard were presented with a sculpture by the renowned British artist, Peter Brooke-Ball MRBS. As the winning philanthropists, they will be custodians of the sculpture for one year. The Plough Arts Centre received a £5,000 donation from the Achatés Philanthropy Foundation which will be used to kick-start a wider fundraising initiative - using the £5,000 to match donations made by individuals to create a bursary fund to support more young people to attend the Plough Youth Theatre from Barnstaple as well as from Torrington. As envisaged, this fund would cover the costs of the PYT fees and tickets to performances, including at least one outing for the whole family of each young person.

Quote from Richard Wolfenden-Brown, Director of The Plough Arts Centre: *"The Plough Arts Centre has thrived for forty two years, but this is the first time we've ever won a national award – and we hope it won't be the last! Claire and Ray Gard's generous gift will inspire others to do likewise, and make arts more accessible to even more young people across North Devon"*.

Quote from Claire and Ray Gard: *“It is a great honour for us to receive this Award. We set up the bursary in recognition of the fact that giving young people access to the arts, and specifically involvement in drama, can be life-enhancing and can provide something special outside their everyday lives and responsibilities”.*

The **CORPORATE PHILANTHROPY AWARD** was won by November Club and Hexham and Northern Marts. The Marts were nominated by November Club for their in-kind support of its summer musical ‘*Beyond the End of the Road*’. This new Corporate Award was created at the suggestion of 2016 winner, Nigel Farnall, in response to the rapid decline in corporate support for culture in the UK.

When the performing arts company, November Club, created ‘*Beyond the End of the Road*’, a new musical about farming and rural life, they approached Hexham and Northern Marts, where farmers sell livestock, to ask if they would consider hosting the performance in their venue. The Manager agreed to host the show at no cost, enabling the creation of a unique site-specific theatre production which engaged an audience from a largely farming and agriculture background. The donation also included in-kind support in outreach and promotion through the Marts’ distribution channels, and sparked new thinking about future collaboration and ways to create a unique cultural offer within the Tyne Valley.

Hexham and Northern Marts were selected from a shortlist of six outstanding companies which have supported the arts for the first time within the last 12 months: Coventry City of Culture Trust & PET-Xi Training; The Plough Arts Centre & Martin Pailthorpe TV and Corporate Video Production; Theatre Royal Stratford East & Unite Students; Turner Contemporary & Business Circle; West Yorkshire Playhouse & Prospect Archaeology - voted on by an independent judging panel: Nigel Farnall, winner of the 2016 Achates Philanthropy Prize; Caroline McCormick, Chair of the Achates Philanthropy Foundation; Helen Gaffney, Executive Director of Achates Philanthropy Ltd; Razia Iqbal, journalist and broadcaster; Paul Owens, co-founder of BOP Consulting; Libby Penn, Trustee of the Achates Philanthropy Foundation, and Chair of the panel; Dagmar Walz, Trustee of the Achates Philanthropy Foundation and Senior Associate of Achates Philanthropy Ltd.

Hexham and Northern Marts were presented with a sculpture by the renowned British artist, Peter Brooke-Ball MRBS. As the winning philanthropists, they will be custodians of the sculpture for one year. November Club received a £5,000 donation from the Achates Philanthropy Foundation which will be allocated towards re-mounting the musical ‘*Beyond the End of the Road*’ at other auction marts across the region.

Quote from Cinzia Hardy, Artistic Director of November Club: *“There’s a need for some inventive thinking about how we, as arts organisations, can work with potential sponsors as well as the ways in which potential sponsors can support culture. Our musical *Beyond the End of the Road* is inspired by the stories of hill sheep farmers in rural Northumberland so approaching Hexham Auction Mart, where farmers come to sell and buy livestock made perfect sense. I am absolutely thrilled they have won this award, this is a wonderful thank you to them.”*

Quote from Robert Addison, Manager at Hexham and Northern Marts: *“It is incredible to be recognised for this Award. We thoroughly enjoyed working with November Club on the musical and I have had so many people asking when it will be on again! It has certainly opened our eyes to new ways of working, especially at a time when Marts are under pressure and there is a real need for diversification.”*

Now in its second year, the Achates Philanthropy Prize was created to celebrate and share stories behind the development of a new generation of philanthropists in the context of the urgent need to grow cultural philanthropy in Britain with statutory and lottery funding in decline and a competitive fundraising climate. This Prize is sponsored by Achates Philanthropy Ltd, BOP Consulting and Spektrix, and supported by Delfina Foundation and studioF. To find out more, please visit: www.achates.org.uk or follow us on Twitter and Facebook: @achatesprize

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NOTES TO EDITORS

The 2017 Achates Philanthropy Prize is sponsored by Achates Philanthropy Ltd, BOP Consulting and Spektrix, and supported by Delfina Foundation and studioF. The Prize is a project of the Achates Philanthropy Foundation, which was created in 2016 to support innovation in the cultural sector and the development of models enabling organisational resilience. Achates Philanthropy Foundation is a UK registered charity, number 1173008.

The Plough Arts Centre is a welcoming and dynamic venue for artistic expression and education, responsive to the needs of the local community and a beacon for the arts in North Devon, visible and valued across the South West. It has a packed annual programme including film, live events, exhibitions, workshops and educational outreach for people of all ages, interests and abilities. Initially established in 1975 with an opening night performance by Dame Edith Evans, The Plough has been running successfully as an independent company and charity since 2002. With a turnover of around £650,000 and only 3% of this coming from public funding for core costs, The Plough works hard to grow its audience and values its relationships with its supporters. All this is managed by just four full-time staff and 14 part-time employees but supported by around 50 fantastic volunteers including a strong and supportive Council of Management.

theploughartscentre.org.uk

November Club is a performing arts company based in Northumberland. We make playful and inspiring theatre and installations, telling unexpected stories of all sorts of people and places. The work is made in response to the region's emotional landscape and iconic buildings, to its history, its people and their stories. It capitalizes on unexpected and unusual places in hugely appealing ways. Our authentic and distinctive approach to theatre making, working across different artistic practices and bringing people together on equal terms through participation, has created a strong following that has resulted in some of the region's most innovative performances. novemberclub.org.uk

The 2017 Achates Philanthropy Prize

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