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CLOUD CRASH: A peculiar climate crashes into MSI Manchester this October

"In the arts, clouds have occupied a special place in our imaginations. For climate scientists, understanding how clouds regulate earth's temperature is a vast area of research. Earth's atmosphere is changing in such profound ways that the notion of pure natural clouds, untouched by mankind, belong to a more innocent age. From industrial smoke stacks provoking acid rain, car exhaust synthesising in sunlight to form city smog and non-stop carbon emissions: human activity has impacted on the atmosphere in undeniable ways. The visual presence of man-made clouds, increasingly rare, lays bare the inseparable relationship between humans and the environment."

Lovelock 2016 Artists HeHe, 2016

How would you feel if you could see the effect of our actions on the environment in vivid technicolour?

Environmental arts organisation **Cape Farewell** have commissioned internationally acclaimed Paris-based artists HeHe - Helen Evans and Heiko Hansen - to create **Cloud Crash** for their third **Lovelock Art Commission**, to be unveiled at Manchester Science Festival, produced by the Museum of Science

and Industry (MSI), Manchester. The annual Lovelock Commission takes inspiration from pioneering climate scientist James Lovelock's Gaia Theory and this year has a special focus on recent atmospheric science supported by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC).

These exciting new pieces placed in-situ across the Museum site - ***Airbag***, ***Burnout*** and ***Diamonds In The Sky*** - depict micro-climates, pollution and artificially engineered clouds in provocative new contexts, blurring the boundaries between the natural and the man-made and bringing atmospheric science powerfully to life. They ask us to consider society's role in environmental destabilisation, and ways forward to a cleaner, healthier future. These artworks complement NERC's 'Into The Blue' campaign, a series of showcase events in the Northwest throughout October that celebrate the environmental science we live and breathe.

Antonio Benitez, Director of the Manchester Science Festival, said: "This exciting, newly-commissioned work tackles an important issue that affects us all. HeHe's vision for *Cloud Crash* brings the reality of climate change to life in a way that really makes us consider that how we live our lives can damage the environment and have a drastic effect on the future of the planet. I am proud to be able to unveil this powerful, thoughtful work at the Manchester Science Festival."***Cloud Crash*** opens as a headline event for the festival and runs from 20 October 2016 – 3 February 2017.

NERC's Director of Corporate Affairs, Alison Robinson, said: "We are proud to sponsor this year's Lovelock Commission, a prestigious collaboration with a history of successfully engaging new audiences with vital issues around climate change. These impressive pieces showcase environmental science in a new light, bringing the science we live and breathe to viewers in a compelling and innovative way.

"The starting point was NERC's research in the area of atmospheric science, including air pollution, an issue affecting our everyday lives, and cloud formation, helping us to better understand the world's changing climate. The artworks complement our ongoing public engagement activities in the Northwest at the Manchester Science Festival and our Into the Blue campaign."

About the Artworks:

Airbag

Vintage motorcars, like those that can be seen in the Air and Space Hall at MSI, don't disguise their mechanics and materials, whereas modern cars are slickly designed, packaged and crammed with electronics and data technology. Major car manufacturers have been found to digitally manipulate emissions tests to conceal the effect of their products on the atmosphere. The real-world impacts of emissions rarely match those measured in a lab. In *Airbag*, an ordinary car has crashed against a cast iron structure and the bonnet is crumpled. Petrol cars emit choking exhaust fumes into the world, but this wreck no longer can. A faulty light blinks, illuminating a cloud-filled climate inside. The car shields the cloud from the outside world, turning it into a cloud chamber. It is a vehicle for contemplation, a space to consider the daily environmental impacts of human activity.

Burnout

A scale model of a fossil-fuel power station sits next to MSI's Power Hall, filling a suburban greenhouse with clouds. It is a replica of Tate Modern, which used to be the Bankside Power Station. The Bankside powered London from 1952 to 1981, consuming oil and blasting out clouds of pollution. It was designed as a 'cathedral of power', a term that emphasises prestige and modernity. As Tate Modern, it is often referred to as an 'art powerhouse'. Energy production is used as a positive metaphor for art, sanitised and without reference to pollution. In *Burnout*, HeHe mimic the way factory clouds are used to symbolise pollution. Vapour clouds belch out of Bankside's central chimney and pour onto the Tate's glowing gallery spaces, as if the building is simultaneously an art museum and an active energy producer and this site of cultural industry is confronted with the carbon emissions of its past.

Diamonds in the Sky

A coloured cloud swarms, accelerating towards Beetham Tower. Manchester's landmark skyscraper has come to symbolise the post-industrial reinvention of the city. The atmospheric particulate cloud collides with the building, showing that skyscrapers are barriers and windbreakers. On windy days, Beetham Tower generates a sound that can be heard 3 miles away. In *Diamonds in the Sky*, HeHe look to the future and expand on NERC's air quality forecasts. These forecasts map measurements of ozone, nitrogen dioxide and small particulate dust in vivid saturated colour. In the projection, each particle per million is represented by a pixel and invisible matter in the sky becomes visible.

Key dates: Cloud Crash Preview and In-Conversation - Thursday 20 October 2016, 6:00pm - 8:00pm

HeHe present a special viewing of their new work **Cloud Crash**. HeHe discuss how their installations offer a cultural response to James Lovelock's work, while scientists from the Natural Environment Research Council reveal their latest research into atmospherics.

Cloud Crash Artists Tours and Family Workshops- Saturday 22 October 2016, 10:00am - 5:00pm all day

Join HeHe on artist-led tours across the three pieces, and take part in drop-in family workshop space to bring pollution to life in words and pictures.

Search #CloudCrash or #msf16 for more info

ENDS

For all PR, interview & photography enquiries: please contact Kat Dibbits, Press & PR Manager, Museum of Science and Industry on 0161 606 0176 or kat.dibbits@msimanchester.org.uk.

Notes to Editors:

About HeHe

HeHe, Helen Evans (UK) and Heiko Hansen (Germany), is an artist duo based in Paris. Their work questions the ever-present energy needs of contemporary life, visualising social, industrial and ecological paradoxes that result from today's technological landscapes.

Their previous work includes *M-Blem: The Train Project*, which was presented for AND festival at the Museum of Science and Industry in 2012, and the award winning *Nuage Vert*.

HeHe recently published their new book *Man Made Clouds* on their research into art and pollution. It contains HeHe artwork and essays from six authors (Jens Hauser, HeHe, Noortje Marres, Gunnar Schmidt, Malcom Miles and Jean-Marc Chomaz). HeHe is represented by the gallery Aeroplastics Contemporary in Brussels.

hehe.org.free.fr/

About Cape Farewell and the Lovelock Commission

Climate change is a reality, caused by us all. Cape Farewell's mission is to communicate, educate and inspire action on the need for urgent, and achievable, change. Cape Farewell engages with the world's greatest creative, scientific and visionary minds to pioneer the vital dialogue between science and art, seeking to explore and communicate the non-carbon society we must all aspire to.

Launched in 2001 with a series of groundbreaking artist and scientist-manned expeditions to the Arctic, Cape Farewell is now an internationally recognised not-for-profit programme that has supported over 400 artists creating new work, including exhibitions, installations, events, performances, talks, literature, poetry and films, amongst much else. Our four key strands of activity explore climate change through the lens of Energy and Pollution, Food and Landscape, Biodiversity, and the Gaia Principle. In 2015 Cape Farewell ran ArtCop21 - a major global festival to coincide with the monumental Paris Cop21 conference - drawing a live audience of over 900,000 in 54 countries worldwide and millions online.

Supported by the Arts Council and NERC, 'Cloud Crash' by artist duo HeHe is the third annual Cape Farewell 'Lovelock Art Commission' – which each year invites artists to create work inspired by the findings, writings and interventions of the famous scientist James Lovelock.
www.capefarewell.com/

About NERC

The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) is the UK's main agency for funding and managing research, training and knowledge exchange in the environmental sciences. Their work covers the full range of atmospheric, Earth, biological, terrestrial and aquatic science, from the deep oceans to the upper atmosphere and from the poles to the equator. They co-ordinate some of the world's most exciting research projects, tackling major issues such as climate change, environmental influences on human health, the genetic make-up of life on Earth, and much more. NERC is a non-departmental public body. They receive around £330m of annual funding from the Department for Business, Enterprise & Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

www.nerc.ac.uk

About Manchester Science Festival

2016 marks the tenth birthday of Manchester Science Festival (MSF), produced by the Museum of Science and Industry. Billed as part laboratory, part playground, MSF is a showcase for the most creative, surprising and hands-on science, where people of all ages can participate, experience and be curious about the world around them. Last year the Festival staged 138 unique events, exhibitions and installations, delivered by 86 partners from the public, cultural, community and academic sectors across Greater Manchester. Last year's event attracted around 120,000 participants over 11 days – making it England's largest Science Festival. This year's Festival marks the end of the city's year-long role as European City of Science, and runs throughout half-term from Monday 20 October - Sunday 30 October.

www.manchestersciencefestival.com

About the Museum of Science and Industry

The Museum of Science and Industry tells the story of where science met industry and the modern world began. Manchester was one of the first global, industrial cities, and its epic rise, decline and resurrection has been echoed in countless other cities around the world. From textiles to computers, the objects and documents held in the museum's collection tell stories of everyday life over the last 200 years, from light bulbs to locomotives. The museum's mission is to inspire all its visitors, including future scientists and inventors, with the story of how ideas can change the world, from the industrial revolution to today and beyond. The Museum of Science and Industry is part of the Science Museum Group, a family of museums which also includes the Science Museum in London; the National Railway Museum in York and Shildon; and the National Media Museum in Bradford. The Science Museum Group is devoted to the history and contemporary practice of science, medicine, technology, industry and media. With five million visitors each year and an unrivalled collection, it is the most significant group of museums of science and innovation worldwide.

msimanchester.org.uk/