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News release

Baltic invites families to explore ocean-themed creative activities during February half term

Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art will offer three days of free, creative activities for children and families from 25-27 February (during Gateshead schools half term) as well as a one-off family disco on 19 February (during Newcastle schools half terms)

Baltic's Big Days Out: Underwater Worlds is inspired by the gallery's current exhibition, *For All at Last Return*, which explores the deep sea, ocean habitats, marine species and the human connection to the world's fragile marine ecosystems.

Families visiting during Gateshead schools half term can take part in a range of free activities designed to encourage thinking about the environment, oceans, and to foster appreciation for these delicate habitats. Hands-on sessions will encourage exploration and play, focusing on themes that emphasise the importance of the world's rivers and oceans - all against the scenic backdrop of the River Tyne at Baltic.

During Newcastle schools half term, Baltic will host an Under The Sea: Family Disco (Thursday 19 February, 10:30-12:30 or 14:00-16:00. £7.50 per child - accompanying adult goes free). Inspired by magical sea creatures and the *For All at Last Return* exhibition, the family disco will feature ocean-themed beats, a creative corner to make jellyfish and starfish, and a cinema.

Activities during Gateshead schools half term include interactive talks on regional coral reefs by local exhibiting artist Michelle Allen (Friday 27 February, 10:00-18:00) and a Rockpool School workshop for children aged five-12 years old led by a qualified marine biologist (Thursday 26 February 10:00-18:00). Children aged five-plus will have the chance to create a potato battery and learn about underwater electricity generated by deep-sea nodules with local exhibiting artist Rob Smith (Friday 27 February, 14:00-16:00). An artist-led workshop on Wednesday 25 and Thursday 26 February (10:30-15:00) will give children and young people aged five-plus the chance to sculpt deep-sea creatures and underwater scenes from recycled materials in an immersive ocean-themed setting.

Other activities include daily age-adapted gallery tours (13:30-13:50), and engaging, daily self-led play in Baltic's Sensory Room for early years (10:00-18:00). Baltic's Play and Learn sessions for early years/under fives (Wednesday 25 February, 10:30-12:00) include a special tour of the *For All At Least Return* exhibition, and there are also offers on children's meals in Baltic Kitchen throughout Baltic's Big Days Out.

Baltic's free breakfast event, Cereal Disco, will run daily from Wednesday 25 - Sunday 1 March and also during Newcastle's half term week (18-22 February). Providing free breakfasts for those in need during the school holidays every Wednesday to Sunday, Cereal Disco is suitable for all ages. Breakfast includes cereal, fresh fruit, and juice each morning, along with music and dancing. Breakfast is served from 10:00 to 11:00.

To find out more, visit baltic.art

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NOTES TO EDITORS

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About Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art

Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art is a major international centre for art situated on the south bank of the River Tyne in Gateshead, England. It has welcomed over 10 million visitors since opening in July 2002. Baltic presents a distinctive and ambitious programme of temporary exhibitions and events and is a world leader in the presentation and commissioning of contemporary visual art. Housed in a landmark ex-industrial building, Baltic houses 2,600 square metres of art space, making it one of Europe's largest dedicated contemporary art institutions.

Baltic has presented the work of over 877 artists of 78 nationalities in 266 exhibitions to date including Joy Labinjo, Hew Locke, Heather Phillipson, Antony Gormley, Cornelia Parker, Daniel Buren, Lubaina Himid, Steve McQueen, Jenny Holzer, Judy Chicago, Lorna Simpson, Imran Perretta, Huma Bhabha and John Akomfrah. www.baltic.art

Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art South Shore Road, Gateshead NE8 3BA Open Wednesday – Sunday, 10am–6pm. Free entry.