LIGHTS OUT EDINBURGH
Scottish National Gallery To Be Transformed As Lights Go Out Across the UK To Mark the Outbreak of the First World War

In collaboration with Edinburgh Art Festival, 14-18NOW presents a major outdoor re-working of Indian artist Nalini Malani’s haunting and immersive video work *In Search of Vanished Blood* (first exhibited to great acclaim in Documenta) as part of LIGHTS OUT, marking the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War.

On 4th August 2014, from 10.30 pm to midnight, the artist’s pictorial plane becomes the city itself, as Malani uses large-scale projections and shadow play to transform the entire Western and Southern façades of Playfair’s iconic Scottish National Gallery building on Edinburgh’s Mound.

Immersing the audience in a succession of images of war, which include actual film footage of the Cameron Highlanders marching to war and historic representations by other artists such as Goya, Malani creates a mesmerising and moving reflection on war and its impacts, reminding us of the ongoing collective wars around the world. Malani comments: “War is considered a male substance. If more attention were paid to the female thought process, perhaps we might reach something called progress”.

This one-off event is scheduled to commence immediately after the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. Audiences will be invited to leave the Castle and make their way down to the Mound to experience the work.

Malani is one of four leading international artists commissioned by 14-18NOW, the cultural programme for the WW1 centenary commemorations, to create striking public artworks in Belfast, Edinburgh, Bangor and London, as focal points for LIGHTS OUT in each of the UK’s four nations.

In a dramatic UK-wide event LIGHTS OUT is an invitation to everyone to turn off their lights from 10pm to 11pm on 4 August, leaving on a single light or candle for a shared moment of reflection. People can take part in whatever way they choose and with whatever thoughts they have about the moment that Britain joined the First World War exactly one hundred years ago. Either at home or as witness to one of the many creative LIGHTS OUT moments taking place around the country, people will join together for an unprecedented collective experience.

The inspiration for LIGHTS OUT comes from a famous remark made on the eve of the outbreak of war by the then Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey: “The lamps are going out all over Europe; we shall not see them lit again in our life-time”. Britain declared war on Germany at 11pm on 4 August 1914 ushering in one of the darkest periods in our history.
Millions of people are expected to participate in LIGHTS OUT and hundreds of local authorities, iconic buildings, national organisations including the BBC and The Royal British Legion, parish councils and places of worship have already pledged their support. Iconic buildings such as Blackpool Illuminations, the Houses of Parliament, Eden Project, the Imperial War Museums and Tower Bridge will turn off their lights. The Royal British Legion has launched a campaign for at least one million candles to be lit across the nation and theatre productions including those of the National Theatre’s War Horse, both nationally and internationally, will invite their audiences to take part in LIGHTS OUT after their curtain calls.

Each LIGHTS OUT art commission takes a unique approach to creating a light source to bring people together as the UK commemorates the outbreak of the First World War on the evening of 4th August. Welsh artist Bedwyr William’s work will take the form of a large-scale light and sound installation presented at the site of the WW1 North Wales Memorial Arch in Bangor, commissioned with Artes Mundi; leading artist Bob and Roberta Smith’s new large-scale work using thousands of candles will be created by a range of community based groups in Belfast, commissioned with Factotum. Across London a special project will be revealed on the night of 4th August.

Turner Prize-winning artist Jeremy Deller has created an original LIGHTS OUT digital artwork in the form of an app, which anyone can download for free. Over the days leading up to 4 August a new short film will be revealed each day, culminating in a film being revealed for just one hour from 10pm-11pm on 4 August.

LIGHTS OUT complements the candlelit vigil service to be held in Westminster Abbey from 10pm to 11pm on 4th August.

The 14-18 NOW programme is funded by £10 million granted from the National Lottery including The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and Arts Council England (ACE) which are contributing £5million each.

For more information about LIGHTS OUT and to find LIGHTS OUT events in your local area go to: www.1418NOW.org.uk/lightsout

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Notes To Editors

First World War Centenary Partnership Programme
14-18 NOW is a member of the First World War Centenary Partnership and an independent programme hosted within Imperial War Museums.
The First World War Centenary Partnership was established by IWM (Imperial War Museums) in 2010 and to date has over 2,500 members from across 45 countries. The Partnership is presenting a collective programme of activities and events to mark the centenary, developed at grass roots levels. This diverse and far-reaching programme has been developed to reflect how people want to remember, commemorate and debate the conflict in their own communities, in a way that is meaningful for them. 1914.org is the official website for the First World War Centenary Partnership. Throughout the centenary new events and activities will be added each week to the events calendar, produced in partnership with Culture 24.

Full details of 14-18 NOW programme including LIGHTS OUT can be found at http://www.1418now.org.uk/

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)
Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) aims to make a lasting difference for heritage, people and communities across the UK and help build a resilient heritage economy. HLF has supported over 36,000 projects with £6bn across the UK www.hlf.org.uk

About Nalini Malani

For more than four decades, Nalini Malani has in her experimental art addressed social, political and societal issues surrounding the Indian subcontinent, including the conflict between India and Pakistan, the abuse of women and the struggle for democracy. Starting out as a painter, Nalini Malani was a pioneer in India who broke out of the classical painting frame in the late eighties to reach a wider audience, with installations, theatre, ephemeral wall drawings, erasure performances and video/shadow plays. Malani’s intense and committed art reveals her search for the profound certainties of life, of society, of experience-persisting 'evidence', which is encountered and felt.

Profoundly affected by her own childhood experience of India’s Partition, Nalini Malani’s work is an extended exploration of conflict. She is particularly interested in the female experience of war and has often returned to the figure of Cassandra, the ignored prophet of doom in ancient Greek myth.

About Edinburgh Art Festival
Founded in 2004, Edinburgh Art Festival is the UK’s largest annual festival of visual art, offering the chance to experience the best contemporary Scottish, UK and international artists in the context of exhibitions of some of the most important artists and movements of the 20th Century and historical periods. Attracting over 280,000
attendances in 2013, Edinburgh Art Festival (EAF) brings together the capital’s leading galleries, museums and artist-run spaces, alongside new public art commissions by established and emerging artists and an innovative programme of special events. Edinburgh Art Festival is a charitable organization supported by Creative Scotland and the City of Edinburgh Council.

**Centenary Plans for Scotland**

The Scottish Commemorations Panel was appointed in March 2013 to recommend a preferred approach for Scotland’s commemorations. The Panel is chaired by Norman Drummond, a former army chaplain, and comprises a mix of 12 professionals. The Panel is helping to ensure that Scotland’s approach to commemorations are sensitively handled and are relevant to all parts of society. Following the Panel’s recommendations, the First Minister announced on 23 May 2013 the key observance dates for the Centenary which bring together significant events such as the outbreak of war and Armistice Day, commemorations of major military battles with a particular resonance for Scotland, such as those at Loos and Arras, and the observance of the anniversary of significant domestic events, such as the train crash at Quintinshill and the loss of HMY Iolaire. £1 million has been made available to pay for the upgrade and maintenance of war memorials in villages, towns and cities in Scotland. Secondary schools in Scotland will be offered a £2,000 grant to carry out educational visits to European battlefields with additional subsidies for groups travelling to the continent from schools not on the Scottish mainland.