

**Wednesday 12 May 2010**

## **IAN MCEWAN CELEBRATES THE HAND OVER OF NORWICH'S UNESCO CITY OF LITERATURE STATUS BID**

Ian McEwan was in top form at Writers' Centre Norwich's sold out event at the University of East Anglia last night, celebrating the handover of Norwich's bid to be a UNESCO City of Literature.

The event, part of the Norfolk and Norwich Festival, marked the finalization of the bid, which is being handed over to UNESCO in Paris this week. The City will hear news of their success in around three months time.

As a graduate of the first creative writing MA in Norwich, McEwan spoke of why he was supporting Norwich's UNESCO bid earlier in the day, saying "Norwich has turned itself into a world hub for literature," and "I'd be amazed if UNESCO refuses."

McEwan opened the evening by talking about his special relationship with Norwich. He then read a section from his new novel *Solar* and continued the evening in conversation with Professor John Cook. He took questions from the floor that ranged from the differences between science and literature to climate change and the comic novel.

Writers' Centre Norwich's Chief Executive Chris Gribble says:

*"We were delighted to welcome Ian back to Norwich as part of NNF10 to officially deliver our bid to UNESCO. Becoming a UNESCO City of Literature will only increase the profile of reading and writing in the city and the accreditation will be the start of an increased local, national and international programme of events that will benefit writers and readers in the city and county. Ian has always been a great supporter of UEA and Norwich and we can't think of a better writer to help us send off the bid to UNESCO in Paris!"*

The bid for UNESCO City of Literature status comes at an exciting time for Norwich, as it is also down to the final four cities being considered as the first UK Capital of Culture. The Norwich bid for Capital of Culture is being delivered on May 21st.

An Evening Ian McEwan took place at UEA (LT1) on May 11th at 7.00-8.30pm.

**/END**

### **Editor's Notes**

#### **About UNESCO City of Literature**

The UNESCO City of Literature scheme is part of the Creative Cities Network launched by



— National Centre for Writing —

UNESCO in October 2004. UNESCO City of Literature accreditation is permanent, non-competitive and comes with no financial award. UNESCO City of Literature status would:

- bring economic benefit to the city region
- bring the best in writing and reading experiences to the city's population
- deliver improved literacy rates for the city and county
- be a platform in the development of a new Creative Economy Hub

Current Cities of Literature are Edinburgh, Melbourne and Iowa. Vancouver and Kolkata are applying at the moment.

More information on the Writers' Centre Norwich Website.

### **About Norwich City of Culture**

[www.norwichcityofculture.co.uk](http://www.norwichcityofculture.co.uk)

Norwich is one four UK Cities shortlisted to become the first UK City of Culture, and is due to deliver its bid on May 21st. The City will present the bid to a panel on 16th June, with the winner being announced the second week in July. This is a David and Goliath moment for the arts which the city of Norwich is using to champion the many medium-sized UK cities that value culture as a key driver for economic sustainability and civic well-being.

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**Writers' Centre Norwich** seeks to lead on the exploration of the artistic and social power of creative writing through pioneering and collaborative projects with writers and other partners, regionally, nationally and internationally.

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