

## PRESS RELEASE

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

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*Ashdown Forest presents*  
***The Big One Hundred***  
***The next chapter for Ashdown Forest***  
*Created & Produced by Trigger*



- **Trigger** appoint stellar creative team to lead on ‘**The Big One Hundred**’, the major cultural celebrations taking place this summer marking 100 years of A.A Milne’s beloved **Winnie-the-Pooh** stories in **Ashdown Forest**, home of the **Hundred Acre Wood**.
- Groundbreaking artist and costume designer **Jack Irving** (best known for his costume designs for global pop icons including Lady Gaga and Katy Perry) will work alongside creative director Angie Bual to create the giant puppet creature which will lead the cultural celebrations this summer in Ashdown Forest.
- The creative team will also include Olivier Award Winning Theatre Maker **Laura Cubitt** (*Dinosaur World Live*, Olivier Award Winner for Best Family Show 2024; *The Lion Inside*, The Unicorn Theatre, Rose Theatre Kingston & International tour; *The Enfield Haunting*, West End) as puppetry director, and **Oliver Hymans** (*Coven*, *Kiln Theatre*, *Overheard in a Tower Block*, Little Angel Theatre), the current Associate Director at Little Angel Theatre, as puppetry consultant.
- Local school children are invited to take part in a creative **competition** to help design the creature. The winner’s design will be incorporated into the final creature and the winning child will be invited to be some of the first people to meet the creature in Ashdown Forest before it opens to the public on 18 and 19 July.

## The Big One Hundred

Launching on Saturday 18 July 2026 to mark 100 years of A.A Milne’s beloved Winnie-

the-Pooh stories, Ashdown Forest, home of the magical Hundred Acre Wood are partnering with world-class creatives Trigger for 'The Big One Hundred', a series of free, family friendly cultural events inspiring visitors to connect with this landscape of environmental and cultural significance and help protect it for the next 100 years. Following the opening weekend on 18-19 July in Ashdown Forest, the puppet will then tour to cultural and heritage sites in Wealden across the school summer holidays. Specific dates and locations will be announced in due course.

Ashdown Forest in East Sussex is a rare heathland landscape - a habitat rarer than a tropical rainforest - and a Site of Special Scientific Interest that is home to some of Europe's most threatened species. 'The Big One Hundred' is a magical new story for Ashdown Forest, where interactive performances, heathland walks and shared encounters will reveal a curious new creature and invite audiences to write the Forest's next chapter.

Visitors will be invited to immerse themselves in the enchanting landscape where Christopher Robin played as a child through a series of interactive performances and events for the whole family introducing the Forest's newest inhabitant a giant, mythical creature inspired by the landscape of Ashdown Forest and the special species of animals and plants that live there.

Trigger have appointed internationally renowned artist and costume designer Jack Irving to work alongside lead artist Angie Bual to create the new puppet costume that will be the central feature of 'The Big One Hundred' celebrations.

Originally from Blackpool and now based in East London, Irving is known for his futuristic, experimental practice that blends fantasy, deep-sea inspiration, and transformative design. Irving's work spans wearable art, immersive installations and public spectacle, and he is best known for his collaborations with global pop icons including Lady Gaga, Doja Cat, Katy Perry, Paris Hilton and the Spice Girls. His designs have appeared at the V&A, London Fashion Week, and the Blackpool Illuminations, and have been featured by Vogue, The New York Times and The Ellen Show. Irving is a multi-award winner at the World of Wearable Art Awards and former Cirque du Soleil resident designer.

Jack's design for 'The Big One Hundred' will be operated by 8-10 people simultaneously, an ambitious and rarely attempted approach that pushes the boundaries of live performance, costume and puppetry. Designed to personify Ashdown Forest and its unique landscape and protected species, Irving's design brings a bold vision to 'The Big One Hundred', transforming the project into a living, moving artwork.

Jack Irving said: *"I'm absolutely thrilled to be collaborating with Trigger on 'The Big One Hundred' project to unveil the new creature of Ashdown Forest. Working closely with the Ashdown Forest team, I'll be immersing myself in the Forest's extraordinary ecosystem, from its butterflies and birds to its insects and plant life, and weaving those inspirations together into a vibrant, unforgettable puppetry spectacle."*

Angie Bual, Creative Director, said: *"We're thrilled to have Jack Irving on board as part of The Big One Hundred. His work has a rare ability to feel both spectacular and deeply playful, we can't wait to see how his otherworldly design language responds to the imaginations of local children and the beautiful, ever-changing landscape of Ashdown Forest. We're also very excited to also be joined by the Olivier-award-winning Puppetry*

*Director Laura Cubitt and Puppetry Consultant Oliver Hymans to help us bring this new forest creature to life.”*

The creative team will also include Olivier Award Winning Theatre Maker **Laura Cubitt**. She Co-directed *Dinosaur World Live* (Olivier Award Winner for Best Family Show 2024). Most recently she was the movement director for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (RSC/Unicorn); Puppetry Director for *The Boy who Harnessed the Wind* (RSC); Puppetry Consultant for *Into the Woods* (Bridge Theatre) as puppetry director for the project. Alongside Laura, Trigger will work with **Oliver Hymans** (Coven, *Kiln Theatre*, *Overheard in a Tower Block*, Little Angel Theatre), the current Associate Director at Little Angel Theatre, as puppetry consultant on the project.

### **Children’s Drawing Competition**

To inspire the design of the new puppet creature, Trigger is inviting primary school-aged children (5–11) across Sussex to help imagine and design this brand-new character through a creative competition. Children can submit drawings, collages or short written descriptions of their creature to [hello@triggerstuff.co.uk](mailto:hello@triggerstuff.co.uk) All submissions will be featured on ‘The Big One Hundred’ website gallery. The designs shortlisted will be reviewed by a local panel of judges.

The winning design will be incorporated into the final creature, and the creator will be invited to meet it in Ashdown Forest. Submissions close at 10am on Tuesday 15 April 2026, with the winner announced in May.

### **Five New Walks**

As previously announced, in addition to the giant new inhabitant, five new **themed walks** will also be launched this summer, inviting audiences to explore more of the incredible landscape of Ashdown Forest. The walks will be themed around different special species including the **Dartford Warbler**, the **Tiger Beetle**, the **Adder**, the **Dormouse** and the **Silver Studded Blue Butterfly**.

These new walks and performances draw inspiration from the landscape that has inspired writers for generations from Milne to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to poet Fiona Sampson and encourage young people and families to connect with the Forest and shine a light on the urgent need to protect this magnificent landscape. 100 years ago, the real **Christopher Robin** played in **Ashdown Forest** and gained a deep, genuine connection with the landscape, inspiring him to advocate for its conservation in later life. These site-specific cultural projects seek to reconnect young people with the wonder of the natural world, and in turn inspire the next generation of conservationists.

More information about ‘The Big One Hundred’ is available here:  
[www.thebigonehundred.co.uk](http://www.thebigonehundred.co.uk)

**ENDS**

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**Notes to Editors**

## **The Big One Hundred**

Ashdown Forest

Wych Cross, Forest Row RH18 5JP

Opening weekend at 18 – 19 July at Ashdown Forest then touring to cultural and heritage sites in Wealden across the school summer holidays.

### **Trigger:**

Instagram: @triggerstuff

Facebook: TriggerStuff

Website: [www.triggerstuff.co.uk](http://www.triggerstuff.co.uk)

### **Ashdown Forest:**

Instagram: @ashdownforest

Facebook: theconservatorsofashdownforest

Website: [www.ashdownforest.org](http://www.ashdownforest.org)

### **Wealden District Council**

Instagram: @wealdenc

Facebook: wealden

Website: [www.wealden.gov.uk](http://www.wealden.gov.uk)

## **Biographies**

### **Angie Bual**

Angie Bual is the Creative Director of 'The Big One Hundred' and is the Creative Director and Joint CEO of Trigger. Angie leads on all of Trigger's work and concepts. She directed PoliNations (Unboxed/ Birmingham 2022/ Glastonbury); Each Tiny Drop, MIF's 2023 opening ceremony; Teabreak (Without Walls Commission); GROUND (Brighton International Festival) and was the Creative Director for The Hatchling (Plymouth, Wakefield, Queens Platinum Jubilee).

### **Jack Irving**

Originally from Blackpool and now based in East London, Jack Irving is known for his futuristic, experimental practice that blends fantasy, deep-sea inspiration, and transformative design. Irving's work spans wearable art, immersive installations and public spectacle, and he is best known for his collaborations with global pop icons including Lady Gaga, Doja Cat, Katy Perry, Paris Hilton and the Spice Girls. His designs have appeared at the V&A, London Fashion Week, and the Blackpool Illuminations, and have been featured by Vogue, The New York Times and The Ellen Show. Irving is a multi-award winner at the World of Wearable Art Awards and former Cirque du Soleil resident designer.

### **Oliver Hymans**

Oliver Hymans is an award-winning puppetry artist and director and currently serves as Associate Director at Little Angel Theatre, the UK's leading puppet theatre.

He has worked internationally across four continents, directing, designing and performing in theatre, opera, film, dance, circus and music videos. Oliver's designs,

critically acclaimed as "visually dazzling" and "poetic and precise" by The Guardian, have been presented at a range of world-leading institutions, including Tate Modern, The National Gallery, The Little Angel Theatre, The Royal Albert Hall, Arcola Theatre, The Institute of Contemporary Arts, Circo Para Todos in Colombia and the Camden Roundhouse.

Oliver is a 2021/22 QEST (Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust) Scholar, having been recognised for his commitment to the field of puppetry. He will be using his award to train in traditional and contemporary marionette making, bringing the art form into the 21st Century.

Alongside his artistic practice, Oliver has worked as a qualified teacher, visiting tutor of Theatre Design at Rose Bruford College of Performing Arts and Guildhall School of Drama; as well as an arts education specialist with a huge portfolio of creative learning projects working with thousands of young people and other community groups across the UK.

### **Laura Cubitt**

Laura is an Olivier Award Winning Theatre Maker, specialising in Movement and Puppetry. A highly skilled and experienced visual storyteller, passionate about putting movement and puppetry at the heart of a story.

Her work includes: *The Lion Inside* (Puppetry & Movement Director), The Unicorn Theatre, Rose Theatre Kingston & International tour; *The Enfield Haunting* (Movement Director), West End; *The Secret Garden* (Puppetry), Regent's Park Open Air Theatre; **Wishmas** (Puppetry), Secret Cinema; *Pinocchio* (Movement and Puppetry Director), Unicorn Theatre. Laura is also Co-Director of both *Dinosaur World Live* (Olivier Award Winner) and *Dragons and Mythical Beasts* (Olivier Award nominated) which both tour the UK & Internationally.

### **Trigger**

Trigger are shapeshifting creatives who dream up, create and produce bold and brave live events. Trigger reimagine and revive public spaces, interrupt daily life, and put audiences and togetherness at the heart of everything they do. Their varied output, ranging from The Hatchling - a groundbreaking puppetry and kite flying experience - to PoliNations, a magical pop-up garden featuring five 11m high architectural trees and thousands of live plants and flowers, is inclusive, accessible and aims to shine a light on the creativity of local communities and underrepresented talent. Trigger is for everyone, and everyone is invited.

### **Ashdown Forest**

Ashdown Forest, located in East Sussex, England, is one of the largest areas of rare lowland heathland in the Southeast and is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its unique habitats and biodiversity. Once a medieval hunting forest, today it is celebrated for its wide, open heathland, ancient woodland, and rich wildlife, supporting species that are increasingly scarce across the UK. Owned by the Ashdown

Forest Trust, it is managed by the Conservators of Ashdown Forest. Ashdown Forest was the real-life inspiration for the Hundred Acre Wood from A.A Milne's Winnie-the-Pooh books. The Ashdown Forest Foundation will mark the centenary year by raising awareness and funds for the Ashdown Forest 100 Year Legacy Fund.

### **Wealden District Council**

Wealden District Council is a local government district in East Sussex and is the largest district in East Sussex covering 322.4 square miles and is home to 160,600 people. Two thirds of the District is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There are 41 conservation areas and it has the largest amount of ancient woodland of any district in the country.