

**For Immediate Release**

**Artist Marc Quinn's Upcoming Work, *Odyssey*, to Raise Awareness and \$30 Million for the Global Refugee Crisis**

- *Odyssey* to consist of two cubes of frozen blood composed of donations from 5,000 refugee and non-refugee volunteers; donors include Paul McCartney, Sting and Anna Wintour
- Public artwork to be unveiled in Fall 2019 at the New York Public Library's plaza in New York City, followed by a global tour

**New York, 24 October 2018**

British contemporary artist Marc Quinn today announced *Odyssey*, a major non-profit public artwork aimed at increasing awareness for the global refugee crisis and raising \$30 million to benefit refugee-supporting organizations. The project, which was created in collaboration with refugees, will debut on the steps of The New York Public Library's iconic 42 nd street building in fall 2019, to be followed by a tour of cities around the world.

"The global refugee crisis is one of the greatest humanitarian tragedies we have seen," said the artist, Marc Quinn. "The idea behind *Odyssey* starts with the simple truth that my blood and your blood is the same, under the skin we're all the same. *Odyssey*'s ultimate goal is to – through showing and sharing our common humanity – create an artwork and social sculpture with a lasting impact that will raise both awareness and funds for refugees. I truly believe that art is not only the memory of the world but that art can also change the world."

Inspired by the nearly 68.5 million people who have been forced from their homes globally, *Odyssey* is a direct challenge to the divisive conversations currently driving refugee and immigration debates and policy decisions. As a collaborative sculpture consisting of two substantial, identical cubes of frozen human blood – one composed of donations from approximately 2,500 resettled refugee volunteers and one composed of donations from approximately 2,500 non-refugee volunteers – *Odyssey* is meant to demonstrate the basic idea that we are all connected by our humanity.

*Odyssey* is entirely not-for-profit and aims to generate around \$30 million through the sale of the artwork and other fundraising initiatives. The International Rescue Committee (IRC), one of the world's largest refugee-focused NGOs, will receive 50 percent of the project proceeds. The remaining 50 percent will go to other refugee and immigrant organizations selected by an advisory board and trustees of Quinn's charity, Human Love. This includes supporting education programming at The New York Public Library, emergency aid on the frontline, integration initiatives throughout the world, and many other projects to be confirmed.

"Art can be a powerful force for positive and impactful societal change," said David Miliband, president and CEO of the International Rescue Committee. "We are in the midst of the greatest humanitarian crisis of our lifetime with millions fleeing from crisis and conflict. Now, more than ever before, platforms like *Odyssey* are needed to educate, engage and inspire individuals, communities and society to act. To stand up for the world's most vulnerable and demand they are not forgotten."

*Odyssey* is supported by a global network of advocates – business leaders, artists, academics, humanitarians – who are lending their blood and voices to raise awareness for the global refugee crisis, including prominent refugees Angok Mayen and George Okeny, as well as non-refugees Anna Wintour, Paul McCartney and Arizona Muse, among many others.

"I could go on and on of a list of places that I've had to live, leave and flee because of a lack of imagination and the poverty of thoughts," said Clemantine Wamariya, author and person who sought refuge from Rwanda. "I am getting involved with *Odyssey* because of its creative message that highlights our shared humanity."

"I am giving my blood to *Odyssey* to show that we're all the same," said Paul McCartney, English singer - songwriter. "No matter who you are, the color of our blood proves we are all one."

# Norman Foster Foundation

*Odyssey* will debut in fall 2019 in New York City – a city built on immigration and the ideals of freedom, acceptance and diversity – at The New York Public Library, which since its inception has worked to make knowledge, education and opportunity accessible to all.

“We are in the midst of a global crisis: more than 65 million people displaced after being denied the opportunity to create lives for themselves in their homelands,” said New York Public Library President Anthony W. Marx. “It is important that we call attention to this issue here in New York, a city built by waves of immigrants. Marc Quinn’s *Odyssey* is a powerful, prominent statement, and we are proud to host it on the plaza of The New York Public Library, an institution that has stood for inclusiveness and opportunity for all for almost 125 years.”

The two cubes of frozen blood will be publicly displayed in bespoke refrigeration units housed in a pavilion designed by renowned British architect Norman Foster with the Norman Foster Foundation.

“Art can raise issues of equality, non-equality, that has to be one of the functions of art,” said Norman Foster, President of the Norman Foster Foundation. “The architectural challenge to create an environment that will work with the two frozen cubes of blood and be able to adapt to different locations and climates is also an environmental one. In a way, perhaps that diversity also highlights the diversity of the refugee crisis; it is not confined to one continent, to one kind of people. It’s universal. We are all the same, under the skin, it’s the same blood.”

Following *Odyssey*’s exhibition in New York City, the artwork will travel to cities around the world. At each location, *Odyssey* will provide a video platform for self-expression and storytelling. Using public spaces and outdoor media, each host city will become virtually populated with the stories of blood donors, transforming individuals into temporary citizens for the duration of the exhibition. While it is on display, refugee and non-refugee guides – indistinguishable from one another, except through interaction – will be present and engage with guests in order to create a public realm for engaging with the artwork and its meaning.

For more information on *Odyssey*, including how to get involved or donate, and to view testimonials from blood donors, please visit [www.bloodcube.org](http://www.bloodcube.org) and follow *Odyssey* on Twitter at, Instagram and on Facebook. Be a part of the conversation using #ourblood

## **Marc Quinn**

Marc Quinn is one of the leading artists of his generation. His sculptures, paintings and drawings explore the relationships between art and science, man and nature, the human body, and the perception of beauty. His work also connects frequently and meaningfully with art history, from modern masters right back to antiquity.

Learn more about Marc Quinn at [www.marcquinn.com](http://www.marcquinn.com) and follow Marc on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

## **Human Love**

Human Love is a UK charity established by Marc Quinn to enable the realization of *Odyssey* and facilitate Quinn’s broader charitable efforts. Human Love’s board of trustees will identify a range of charitable, refugee-focused initiatives as beneficiaries of 50 percent of the funds *Odyssey* raises through the full sale price of the artwork and all the proceeds of the fundraising events.

## **International Rescue Committee**

The International Rescue Committee responds to the world’s worst humanitarian crises, helping to restore health, safety, education, economic wellbeing, and power to people devastated by conflict and disaster. Founded in 1933 at the call of Albert Einstein, the IRC is at work in over 40 countries and 25 offices across the U.S. helping people to survive, reclaim control of their future, and strengthen their communities.

Learn more at [www.rescue.org](http://www.rescue.org) and follow the IRC on Twitter & Facebook.

# Norman Foster Foundation

## **New York Public library**

The New York Public Library is a free provider of education and information for the people of New York and beyond. With 92 locations — including research and branch libraries — throughout the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island, the Library offers free materials, computer access, classes, exhibitions, programming and more to everyone from toddlers to scholars, and has seen record numbers of attendance and circulation in recent years. The New York Public Library serves nearly 17 million patrons who come through its doors annually and millions more around the globe who use its resources at [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org). To offer this wide array of free programming, The New York Public Library relies on both public and private funding.

Learn more about how to support the Library at [nypl.org/support](http://nypl.org/support).

## **Norman Foster Foundation**

The Norman Foster Foundation promotes interdisciplinary thinking and research to help new generations of architects, designers and urbanists to anticipate the future.

We believe in the importance of connecting architecture, design, technology and the arts to better serve society and in the value of a holistic education that encourages experimentation through research and projects.

The Norman Foster Foundation holds the Norman Foster Archive and Library, which provide a window into the larger narrative and history of our built environment through the work of Norman Foster.

The Norman Foster Foundation is based in Madrid and operates globally.

Visit [www.normanfosterfoundation.org](http://www.normanfosterfoundation.org) for more information and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Vimeo.

## PRESS INQUIRIES

Dylan Abolafia  
Edelman  
[Dylan.Abolafia@edelman.com](mailto:Dylan.Abolafia@edelman.com)  
+1 (212) 729-2141