

The Manifesto For Tyneside Upon England – Julia Darling

“Friends. I am inventing a life in which your ingredients are returned to you!

Our lives are run by car parks, carrier bags, suits and credit cards.

So, from this evening I am removing power from our city leaders and this city shall be run by its artisans and makers, by bread-kneaders and stone masons, sculptors and chocolate fanciers, by egg painters and flower arrangers, blacksmiths and conjurors.

The old leaders shall go to the great hall, where they shall be asked to cut up their suits and make them again.

And I am confiscating all luxury flats and offices and giving them rent free to artists and makers.

All property developers shall report to the great hall for retraining in creative play.

All supermarkets will be barricaded, all chain stores closed.

Fenwick’s Fine food, the tobacco shop on Pink Lane, the delicatessen counter in Café Royale, and Brighton Oriental Stores, Taylors on North Shields Fish Quay, the Sweet Shop on Heaton Road, and other particular businesses will be allowed to flourish.

Everyone shall be taught the history of their street. (Joan Miro, the great Catalan artist said that to be truly cosmopolitan we should begin by learning about our home.)

There shall be no brown signs, no information stands, no mobile phone centres, no mobile phones.

We shall each learn a disappearing language.

And there shall be compulsory napping from 2.00 p.m to 3.00 p.m each day. Workforces must be provided with blankets and mattresses.

Musicians from the hills shall play them to sleep.

No one should own more than they can carry.

We shall pull down Eldon Square and rebuild it as it was.

I shall rebuild Handyside Arcade.

We shall pull down Swan House Roundabout, and make the Tyne Bridge pedestrian.

Each of us will learn a contemporary dance.

We shall not travel, although we may have pen pals and we are free to imagine travel.

The air of the new city shall smell of pies.

There will be many bicycle repair shops and free bikes.

The city shall be filled with the sounds of making, of sparking metal, of whirring minds, of fresh cheese, of new poetry.

We shall all discuss small things.

There shall be lesbian happy hour between six and seven.

Schools will be small. Doctors will be cheerful.

Everyone shall make their own coffin and use it as a table.

We shall be encouraged to grow English apples and raspberries.

Plain English shall be used at all times.

Porridge and soup will be plentiful.

Visitors who will come in droves, must bring gifts to the great hall.

Perhaps food, chocolate or wine would be appropriate. These gifts shall be shared equally. You cannot enter the city without a gift.

We shall know our saints.

We shall know our devils.

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This is my homage to you."