

The Big Draw Press Release

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ART EDUCATION IS AN ELECTION ISSUE

A message from Bob & Roberta Smith RA

A filmed interview with Bob & Roberta Smith RA, acclaimed Artist and independent candidate in the General Election 2015, has been released today by The Campaign for Drawing.

The film, produced in partnership with The Campaign for Drawing and The National Society for Education in Art and Design (NSEAD), asks “Why is art an election issue?”. Bob & Roberta Smith RA is standing as an independent candidate in Michael Gove’s constituency of Surrey Heath.

In the film Bob & Roberta Smith explains that the arts are Britain’s unique selling point, why STEM should become STEAM, and why teaching art in schools is a route to success. Bob says that we should be “Teaching art and visuality in the same breath as engineering and maths, and science.”

He continues:

- “We need more kids who are visually literate, digitally literate and who can combine those two skills... That will make them really powerful, and make some of them very wealthy.”
- “If we don’t fund the arts we lose the opportunity to inspire the next generation of designers, artists, musicians, film-makers, architects... the list is endless of people involved in the creative industries”.

Watch the full interview:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KYXf4cbwBGE&feature=youtu.be&a>

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For comments, images, and interviews contact: Amy Clancy on +44 (0) 208 351 1719 or email press@campaignfordrawing.org

NOTES TO EDITORS

- 1. The Campaign for Drawing** is a pioneering arts education charity dedicated to raising the profiles of visual literacy and drawing as tools for thought, creativity, and social and cultural engagement. Against a background of hugely reduced numbers of art, craft and design-related GCSEs and A-levels, the Campaign's year-round programmes promote drawing's role in developing the talent and skills necessary for the continuing success of our Cultural and Creative Industries. The Campaign aims to get everyone drawing and its long-term ambition is to change the way drawing is perceived and used by the public and professionals. In 2014, the Campaign's annual international drawing festival, The Big Draw, involved over 1000 organisations delivering drawing events in 26 countries. www.campaignfordrawing.org.
- 2. The National Society for Education in Art and Design (NSEAD)** is a professional association and an independent trade union. The Society promotes, and when necessary defends, the interests of art, craft and design education in the United Kingdom. Patrons include: Professor Sir Christopher Frayling (former Rector of the Royal College of Art and former chair Arts Council England), Sir John and Lady Frances Sorrell (Sorrell Foundation), Sir Nicholas Serota (Director of Tate) and Professor Magdalene Odundo OBE.
- 3. Bob & Roberta Smith RA** is a British [contemporary artist](#), writer, author, musician, art education advocate and keynote speaker. He is known for his "slogan" art, is an associate professor at Sir John Cass Department of Art at [London Metropolitan University](#) and has been curator of public art projects, like *Art U Need*. He was curator for the 2006 *Peace Camp* and created the 2013 *Art Party* to promote contemporary art and advocacy. His works have been exhibited and are in collections in Europe and the United States.
- 4. The Warwick Commission** on the Future of Cultural Value conducted a 12-month inquiry into how Britain can secure greater value from its cultural and creative assets. Vikki Heywood writes in her foreword to *Enriching Britain: Culture, Creativity and Growth*: 'The key message is that the government and the Cultural and Creative Industries need to take a united and coherent approach that guarantees equal access for everyone to a rich cultural education and the opportunity to live a creative life. Barriers and inequalities in Britain today prevent this from being a universal human right. This is bad for business and bad for society.' http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/research/warwickcommission/futureculture/finalreport/warwick_commission_final_report.pdf