

PRESS RELEASE
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THE JOHN RUSKIN PRIZE

THE JOHN RUSKIN PRIZE 2017: CALL FOR ENTRIES

HAND & EYE: MASTER OF ALL TRADES IN THE AGE OF JACK

Now in its 4th year, The John Ruskin Prize is **open for entries** and looking for work from emerging and established artists and makers aged 18 or over and living in the United Kingdom.

The Prize is an opportunity for artists to get greater exposure for their work and has helped further the careers of many finalists in the past. Previous prize winners and finalists have gone on to be shortlisted and win further major art prizes, instigate joint social art projects with their fellow Ruskin Prize finalists, and secure residencies and scholarships both in the UK and abroad. Facilitated by The John Ruskin Prize, shortlisted works have been acquired by major public and private collections including: *The Victoria & Albert Museum*, *The Ruskin Collection* and *Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners*.

This year's theme: ***Hand & Eye: Master of All Trades in The Age of Jack*** refers to the **Artist as Polymath**. Open to a range of interpretations and approaches, the theme is intended to lend itself to responses from artists and makers whose work celebrates the opportunity to marry diverse materials and disciplines.

There are two main categories to enter: the Main Prize and the Student Prize. Winners from each category are awarded a significant cash prize of **£3000 for the First Prize, £1000 for the Second Prize** and **£1000 for the Student Prize Winner**.

In celebration of 'Artist as Polymath', 2017 marks the first year that The Prize will be open to makers and craftspeople, as well as fine artists. Alongside Ruskin's own career as a polymath, the theme has been jointly inspired by **The Year of Making** in Sheffield, which took place throughout 2016, and The Big Draw's year of **STEAM Power**, which celebrates the interconnections between Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths.

Rachel Price, Managing Director of The John Ruskin Prize, says: “We are seeking entries from creative practitioners who are harking back to a way of working that defies easy categorisation and identifies with the fact that innovation is born from leakage between approaches - be it in concept, discipline or material.”

A shortlist of 20 artists selected from the entrants will be exhibited at the Millennium Gallery, Sheffield from 21st June – 8th October 2017. The shortlist exhibition will provide a contemporary counterpart to **The Ruskin Collection**, which is cared for by Museums Sheffield and on display at the Millennium Gallery.

Artists are invited to submit work in a range of 2D and 3D mediums – though photography and film are not eligible. The deadline is 24th April 2017. Further information can be found at www.ruskinprize.co.uk. #ruskinprize

ENDS

CONTACT

For quotes, images and interviews, please contact Amy Clancy on 0203 758 4118 or email press@thebigdraw.org.

NOTES TO EDITORS

The John Ruskin Prize was inaugurated in 2012 by The Guild of St. George and The Big Draw (formerly the Campaign for Drawing). It aims to uphold Ruskin’s belief that drawing helps us to see the world more clearly and therefore take greater heed of its fragility. The Prize promotes and provides exposure of emerging and established artists and makers using a wide range of media and techniques. Now in its fourth year, The John Ruskin Prize is establishing itself as a showcase for emerging talent and established artists from all reaches of the UK. The John Ruskin Prize 2017, **Hand & Eye: Master of All Trades in The Age of Jack**, is now open for entries. Deadline is Monday 24th April 2017.

Selection Panel: Kirstie Hamilton (Head of Exhibitions & Displays, Museums Sheffield), Zachary Eastwood-Bloom (Sculptor), Mandy Payne (Artist), Julia Bell (Head of Partnerships,

BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art), Clive Wilmer (Master, Guild of St. George), Kate Mason (Director, The Big Draw).

Finalists of The 3rd John Ruskin Prize, Recording Britain Now: Society (2015/16)

Laura Oldfield Ford (1st Prize), Jessie Brennan (2nd Prize), Robin Sukatorn (Student Prize).
The 2015/16 catalogue is available here: www.ruskinprize.co.uk

John Ruskin (1819-1900) was a polymath. As a writer, he commanded international respect. He was an art critic and an art patron, a skilled draughtsman and talented watercolourist, and a fierce critic of prevailing social and political norms. He wrote about nature and architecture, craftsmanship, geology, botany, Greek myth, education. Driven by his deep faith in social justice, he established the Guild of St. George in the 1870s to right some of the social wrongs of the day and make England a happier and more beautiful place in which to live and work. (The Guild of St George, 2016).

“Without mingling of heart-passion with hand-power, no art is possible. The highest art unites both in their intensest degrees: the action of the hand at its finest, with that of the heart at its fullest.” John Ruskin

The Ruskin Collection is a fascinating and eclectic collection created for Sheffield’s workers over **140** years ago and designed to inspire creativity and to provide respite from the smoke-filled city and a world becoming obsessed with mass production. The Ruskin Collection is a physical manifestation of the life work of Ruskin the Polymath. It comprises copies of early Renaissance art, casts of Gothic architecture, geological samples, engravings by Dürer and Turner, mosaic decoration, Japanese cloisonné enamelling, illustrations of birds, flowers, insects and landscapes, medieval illuminated manuscripts, Greek coins and much else. The collection is cared for by Museums Sheffield and on display at the Millennium Gallery.

The Big Draw is an arts education charity that promotes visual literacy and the universal language of drawing as a tool for thought, creativity, social and cultural engagement. The Big Draw (formerly the Campaign for Drawing) was launched in 2000 by The Guild of St George, - the charity founded by John Ruskin in 1871 - becoming an independent arts education charity in 2006. In addition to running The John Ruskin Prize and a visual literacy programme, the charity is the founder and driving force behind the world’s biggest celebration of drawing, The Big Draw Festival. <http://www.thebigdraw.org>