

PRESS RELEASE

THE JOHN RUSKIN PRIZE 2017: SHORTLIST ANNOUNCED

For immediate release: Tuesday, 16TH MAY 2017

The John Ruskin Prize 2017 Shortlist Exhibition

MASTER OF ALL TRADES

21st June – 8th October 2017

Millennium Gallery, Sheffield

Photo call: 5pm, Tuesday 20th June 2017

Preview: 6 - 8pm, Tuesday 20th June 2017

The Big Draw today announced the shortlist of The John Ruskin Prize 2017, which this year celebrates the 'Artist as Polymath' and attracted a record number of submissions from fine artists, makers and craftspeople from across the UK.

The shortlisted artists are: Louisa Boyd, Holly Brodie, Nuala Clooney, Andrew Ekins, Erin Dickson, Paul Hazelton, Marielle Hehir, Anne Howeson, Rebecca Ilett, Shelley James, Debbie Lawson, Emily Lazerwitz, Sue Lawty, Bethan Lloyd Worthington, Hugh Miller, Rosa Nguyen, Kyle Noble, Briony O Clarke, Sumi Perera, Shauna Richardson, Conor Rogers, Fi Smart, Serena Smith, Harland Viney, Simon Ward & Robert Mach, and Ray Winder.

About the shortlist

Selected from over 1000 entries, the final shortlist of 26 artists, makers and innovators responded to the call for contemporary Polymaths with work that defies categorisation, dissolves boundaries and has a joyous disregard for the conventions of their chosen materials and disciplines. The artist / scientist parallel is apparent in the shortlist but there is also evidence of traditional craft combined with social commentary, skilful material manipulation and a visual wit within the selected artworks.

Sumi Perera's '2B or not 2B' fuses Shakespeare, sketching and soundwaves to form undulating wave graphs. With her unique form of 'Participatory Cartography' Briony O'Clark's 'See Fax' draws on the power of a different kind of wave; closing a gap of hundreds of miles she brings the tide into the gallery itself with an ingenious marbling printing machine. Emily Laberwitz skilfully and painstakingly utilises traditionally feminine crafts of tapestry and embroidery to comment on the masculine arena of the stock market, creating infographics with statistics whose relevance is lost before the first stitch.

Among this year's largely sculptural shortlist is a Sheffield artist whose work is gaining increasing attention. Conor Rogers' intricate paintings on unlikely objects such as cough medicine bottles, polybags and cigarette packets create an uneasy experience for the viewer;

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with the modesty of these 'everyday canvases' at odds with the loaded scenes depicted on them.

The Prize

The John Ruskin Prize is now in its fourth year and invited entries from emerging and established artists and makers aged 18 or over living in the United Kingdom. The Award is £5000 with £3000 going to the winner, and £1000 going to both the Second Prize and Student and Recent Graduate Prize winners.

Winners will be announced on **Tuesday 20th June** at a private view and prize-giving ceremony at the Millennium Gallery, Sheffield. The shortlist exhibition, **Master of all Trades**, will be on display from **21st June – 8th October 2017**, and will provide a contemporary counterpart to **The Ruskin Collection**, which is cared for by Museums Sheffield and on display at the Millennium Gallery.

The members of **The John Ruskin Prize 2017 selection panel** are: Kirstie Hamilton (Head of Exhibitions & Displays, Museums Sheffield), Zachary Eastwood-Bloom (Sculptor), Mandy Payne (Artist), Julia Bell (Former Head of Partnerships, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art), Dr Rachel Dickinson (Director for Education, Guild of St. George / Principal Lecturer, Manchester Metropolitan University), and Kate Mason (Director, The Big Draw).

Further information can be found at www.ruskinprize.co.uk.

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CONTACT

For press information, including quotes, images and interviews, please contact Amy Clancy: email press@thebigdraw.org or telephone T: 0203 758 4118.

#ruskinprize

NOTES TO EDITOR

Master of All Trades

Photo call: 5pm, Tuesday 20th June 2017

Preview: 6 - 8pm, Tuesday 20th June 2017

Shortlist Exhibition: 21st June – 8th October 2017

Millennium Gallery, Arundel Gate, Sheffield, S1 2PP

Open Monday-Saturday 10am-5pm, Sunday 11am-4pm

Free entry.

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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.

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>

Artwork credit: Rebecca Illet 'Spinning Straw into Gold' (2016). Photo: Simon White.