



The Big Draw Press Release

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The Big Draw announces Jane Barnes as new Executive Director

Jane Barnes has been announced as the new Executive Director of visual literacy charity, The Big Draw, founder of the global, year-long festival celebrating the universal language of drawing. Jane takes on the leadership of The Big Draw from Kate Mason who joined the charity in 2013 and has steered The Big Draw for close to ten years.

Commenting on her recent appointment, Jane Barnes said: "I am delighted to be appointed to the role of Executive Director for The Big Draw. Kate Mason has developed the charity exponentially, creating rich experiences nationally and internationally, supported by a highly skilled professional team.

"As Executive Director, I'm looking forward to exploring visual literacy in education at all levels and forms, looking at creative thinking as a key skill and exploring how we are developing creative thinkers, regardless of profession. As an artist myself, I am passionate about drawing. I learnt on drawing trips with my dad around Wales, it's in my DNA.

"I am very grateful to Kate for her visionary leadership, and as I step into this role and the Big Draw moves into a new era, the future is filled with many exciting possibilities."

Commenting on her legacy, Kate Mason said: "After close to 10 very rewarding years at The Big Draw, it's time for me to explore a new chapter. I'm extremely proud to have been involved with such a wonderful charity and have hugely appreciated the opportunity to be a part of The Big Draw's ongoing story and development. I am delighted to welcome Jane to the helm of this entrepreneurial and creative organisation which consistently punches way above its weight.

"I've loved working and collaborating with so many partners, and fantastic artists, creatives and practitioners over the years. It has been a pleasure to be part of such a dedicated and passionate group of individuals across the broader team of staff, board members and Big Draw associates. With Jane leading the way, I know there are very many significant and exciting opportunities on the horizon for this wonderful charity."

Jane Barnes is an artist and a well-being specialist and yoga teacher, her work often merging creativity and wellbeing. Studying Fine Art at university, Jane secured a Tate Fellowship at Tate Liverpool and has worked as a member of the Cheshire Arts Advisory Team, led by renowned painter, David Firmstone. Her experience in further and higher education has led her to a variety of management positions, including Director of Visual, Performing Arts and Media at Riverside College Halton. Jane went on to grow a freelance artist and consultant portfolio before moving into cultural management and administration as Relationship Manager for Visual and Combined Arts with Arts Council England. Her work in education and wellbeing has been focused on understanding how an individual thinks and enabling them to achieve their highest potential, enjoying their creative journey and celebrating their individuality.

Commenting on the appointment, Chair of the Board, John Stachiewicz said: “It is the end of one era and the beginning of another! With Kate Mason set to leave her post as Director of The Big Draw after almost ten years of extraordinary achievement, the board of trustees are delighted to announce Jane Barnes as her successor. During her tenure, Kate has developed The Big Draw into a highly successful charity and organisation with a clear sense of purpose, furthering The Big Draw on the international stage, and guiding it through the difficult period of the pandemic, and much more.

“The Big Draw is now set for its next phase under Jane Barnes’s leadership, and we are excited to welcome Jane, whose energy and enthusiasm combined with her experience in art, education and wellbeing will help the organisation to blossom further.”

To find out more about the work of The Big Draw and The John Ruskin Prize, organised by The Big Draw, visit thebigdraw.org and ruskinprize.co.uk.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

The Big Draw

The Big Draw is a visual literacy charity promoting 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 with support from and spearheaded by The Guild of St George, the charity founded by John Ruskin in 1871 - becoming an independent arts education charity in 2006.

The charity leads a diverse programme of advocacy, empowerment and engagement, and is the founder and driving force behind The Big Draw Festival – the world’s biggest celebration of drawing. The Big Draw manages collaborative research projects, campaigns and educational conferences on visual literacy, digital technology and STEAM. The charity supports professional and emerging artists through its national contemporary art prize, The John Ruskin Prize and exhibition, and through events, awards, and competitions, creates platforms for anyone who wants to draw.

www.thebigdraw.org | Charity no. 1114811

The Big Draw Festival

Launched in October 2000, The Big Draw Festival has encouraged over five million people back to the drawing board. It has notched up two world records – for the longest drawing in the world (one kilometre) and the greatest number of people drawing simultaneously (over 7,000). The first Big Draw Festival in 2000 attracted 180 partner organisations. Since then, the number has risen to over 1,000, with over 500,000 people participating each year.

What began as a one-day celebration of drawing in October 2000 in the UK, is now an annual month-long festival of drawing across the world.

The John Ruskin Prize

The John Ruskin Prize was initiated in 2012 by The Big Draw in partnership with the Guild of St George. The Prize is the fastest growing multi-disciplinary arts and crafts prize in the UK. With the values of the radical

polymath John Ruskin at its core, the #RuskinPrize has a growing representation for supporting and promoting artists, designers and makers whose work defies easy categorisation.

www.ruskinprize.co.uk

The Guild of St George

The Guild of St George is an educational charity, founded in 1871 by the Victorian art and social critic, John Ruskin, devoted to the arts, crafts and the rural economy. The Guild is based in England but has a worldwide membership of Companions, which seeks to uphold the values and put into practice the ideas of its founder, John Ruskin

(1819-1900). The Guild of St George founded “Campaign for Drawing” in 2000 which is now, The Big Draw.

www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk