



The Big Draw Press Release

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The World's Biggest Drawing Festival announces 2023 Theme:

“Drawing with Senses”

The 2023 Big Draw Festival theme, **Drawing with Senses**, is announced today, kicking off a new year of creative and artistic expression, exploration, and within the theme, internal reflection.

The last few years have seen huge external forces impact lives across the UK and around the world, forces that are beyond our control and can feel overwhelming. The theme, Drawing with Senses, is a call back to our sense of self and what we experience in the moment. By reconnecting with our senses and self, our perspective and perception can find a place where things can start to feel less threatening and can start to feel more positive.

The theme, Drawing with Senses, is an opportunity to slow down our daily pace, take a moment and reconnect with ourselves through art and drawing. The Big Draw believes that everyone can draw! This year, The Big Draw invites you to rediscover your senses and explore what this looks like for you.

The theme allows for a variety of creative exploration. There are five basic senses we are all familiar with: Touch, Sight, Sound, Taste, Smell.

In addition to these, there are other senses to consider: subtle senses, which have a different physiology. Some are receptive to energetic information from our environments such as ‘extra sensory perception’, or an inner knowing. This is sometimes referred to as a ‘sixth sense’, which can manifest in dreams or feelings like ‘gut instinct’.

Executive Director of The Big Draw, Jane Barnes, commented on the new festival theme announcement: *“I feel excited to share with you this year’s theme, my first in my new role as Executive Director of The Big Draw. 2023’s theme ‘Drawing with Senses’, shifts the focus from the external to the internal. It gives us the opportunity and permission to find a stillness in the chaos and overwhelm we’ve been bombarded with over the last few years, where things have felt beyond our control. It brings us back to the ‘moment’, to ‘this moment’ and the way we personally experience, process and internalise the world through our senses, sharing this through our creativity.*

Being fully present in the ‘moment’ with our senses, means we are not worrying about the past and not fearing the future. We can be fully immersed in what is happening now, feel less stressed, feel more positive, because we feel we have more control over our thoughts. This positivity can be a step change, becoming infectious, spreading more positivity throughout the world, making us less susceptible to overwhelm.

I love this quote by Rumi – ‘The entire universe is inside you’ – if the entire universe is inside us, then it seems a great place to start, by turning our attention inwards. There are so many ways you can interpret this year’s theme. You can choose the familiar senses or explore senses you are less familiar with, learning about how senses are used in different practices and cultures, translating the experiences into drawings.

However, you choose to approach this theme, feel inspired, have fun and enjoy the process!”

As of today, subscriptions are officially open, and The Big Draw is ready to equip and support museums, galleries, civic centres, retail shops, businesses, universities, schools, community centres, zoos, wetlands, gardens, individual artists and more, helping them to take on this theme for 2023 and explore our internal experiences through our senses. Various subscription tiers are available for organisations large and small.

For the fourth year running, the fee for independent artists and individual event organisers has been waived in an effort to ensure continued support and opportunity for freelance and self-employed creatives, helping them take full advantage of the opportunity The 2023 Big Draw Festival presents. Organisers and artists can use festival events to attract new audiences, test market creative ideas, projects and workshops, increase exposure to an international audience and be part of an established and recognised festival celebrating the universal language of drawing.

Schools are a huge part of The Big Draw and we are pleased to offer our Early Bird Subscription Discount for non-fee-paying schools. All eligible schools that sign up before 30 April 2023 will receive 20% off their 2023 Big Draw Subscription.

All organisations and individual artists who take part in The Big Draw Festival can enter The Big Draw Awards, celebrating drawing and creativity without borders. Each year, seven prizes are awarded to organisations, individuals and schools worldwide who demonstrate the vital role of drawing as a tool for communication, innovation and inclusivity as part of The World's Biggest Drawing Festival.

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CONTACT

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#DrawingWithSenses #BDF2023 #TheBigDraw

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.