



# The Big Draw Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 9 MARCH 2021

## The World's Biggest Drawing Festival announces 2021 Theme:

### “Make the Change”

The 2021 Big Draw Festival theme, *Make the Change*, is a timely development on last year's exploration into the relationship between people and our living environments. In 2021, we want to take action, to explore and discover ways to live in balance with the world around us, to reconnect with each other and demand a better world for future generations.

Against the flux and events of last year we have all shared our collective experience of what it means to be human, with all its commonality, vast differences and diversity.

The strange melting-pot of extraordinary events that made up 2020 presented a moment to collect our thoughts, to scrutinise, re-evaluate and challenge the status quo. Reflection has amplified understanding of the critical need for a happier, more balanced way of living. One in which humans choose to live sustainably as a key component to counter the environmental crisis – where what we eat, what materials we use, how we build, what energies and fuels we develop, all actively support a positive change for good.

Sustainable and successful living is equally about how we interact with the world around us; it's about kindness shown to nature and our natural world but also kindness shown to each other. It feels as though we are at a major crossroads in the development of our society and we have a responsibility to those who come after us to make the right choices around core-values, need, equality and leadership.

As of today, subscriptions are officially open, and we are ready to equip and support museums, galleries, civic centres, retail shops, businesses, universities, schools, community centres, zoos, wetlands, gardens, individual artists and more to take on our 2021 theme and spark creativity worldwide. Various subscription tiers are available for organisations large and small.

For the second year running, the fee for independent artists and individual event organisers has been waived in an effort to ensure support and opportunity for freelance and self-employed creatives to take full advantage of the opportunity The 2021 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 be offering our Early Bird Subscription Discount for non-fee-paying schools. All eligible schools that sign up before 30 April 2021 will receive 20% off their 2021 Big Draw Subscription. Be inspired by what other schools have done and sign your school up today.

#### What Director of The Big Draw Kate Mason has to say...

“2020 was unprecedented. It was a year of seismic events impacting on world economies, technology, health, education, culture and politics. This impact has been significant, revealing the fragility and inequalities buried within many systems and processes, resulting in many calling for change.

Now is the time, after such a world changing event, to rally our voices and come together. The last year has shown what is possible when we unite for a common cause. By seeking to make the change, we as human beings come together and support the need to protect our planet, the need to seek and maintain a more sustainable way of life, the need to reveal and correct the imbalance we see around us.

We hope this year’s festival will help support all those positive change-makers, those seeking to affect change- those advocating for kindness to our natural world, and kindness to each other. We hope this theme will draw attention to the pioneers and innovators adopting new more sustainable materials and accessible working practises alongside a better way of living together, from our city streets to the irreplaceable countryside.”

## ENDS

### CONTACT

For further information, comments, images and interviews:

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#MaketheChange #BDF2021 #TheBigDraw

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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](http://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](http://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](http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk)**

### **Arts Council England**

Our recent programme has been supported through funding from The Cultural Recovery Fund: Arts Council England. Arts Council England is a government-funded body dedicated to promoting the performing, visual and literary arts in England. Since 1994, Arts Council England has been responsible for distributing lottery funding. This investment has helped to transform the building stock of arts organisations and to create much additional high-quality arts activity.

**[www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)**