



THE BIG DRAW PRESS RELEASE



Contact: Electricians' Shop, Trinity Buoy Wharf, 64 Orchard Place, London, UK, E14 0JY
T. 0203 758 4118 | E. press@thebigdraw.org.uk | W. thebigdraw.org | #thebigdraw

Patrons:

Sir Quentin Blake | Lord Foster of Thames Bank | Ivan Harbour | David Hockney OM CH
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 12 SEPTEMBER 2019

The World's Biggest Drawing Festival celebrating links between creativity and wellbeing to be launched in Manchester

The Big Draw Festival 2019 Launch Event

Drawn To Life: Creativity & Wellbeing

Manchester Art Gallery, Mosley Street, Manchester, M2 3JL

Sunday 29 September, 11:00 – 16:00

Free, All welcome

2019 Festival Launch partner: Manchester Art Gallery | 2019 Festival Launch Material Supporter: POSCA



**Manchester
Art Gallery**

POSCA

Uniting people, pencils and pixels across the globe for the 19th colourful year, visual literacy charity *The Big Draw* have announced their annual flagship celebration of creativity *The Big Draw Festival*, this year themed: *Drawn To Life* will be launched in partnership with Manchester Art Gallery, UK on Sunday 29th September with a free, open to all, creative extravaganza.

The launch marks the start of the official Big Draw Festival month (throughout October) which sees over 500,000 visitors enjoy thousands of events hosted by Big Draw Co-creators, at all kinds of venues, in over 25 countries worldwide.

This year, The Big Draw Festival theme: ***Drawn To Life: Creativity & Wellbeing*** invites event organisers and visitors to explore the benefits of being actively creative to make positive change and improve wellbeing for both individuals and communities. This year, The Big Draw Festival will bring people together to champion the mounting evidence, both anecdotal and academic, that a more creative life really can improve your health.

The 2019 Festival will highlight the role of mark making and drawing – in its widest possible interpretation, as a life-enhancing tool not only to help express and navigate the challenges of life around us but also as a tool for healing.

One of the artists leading the way for this year's *Drawn To Life* Festival campaign and helping to kick start the Festival in Manchester is Big Draw ambassador; Gary Andrews. A true champion of the power of creativity for healing, Gary has spent his life as an animator with drawing playing an vital role in both his work and home life, his '*Doodle-a-day diary*' became a crucial outlet for his grief after the sudden death of his wife, Joy, in 2017. He



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continues to illustrate his day-to-day happenings as a widower father of two, from the mundane to the extraordinary - the fantastically frank visual diary continues to be a source of comfort and inspiration to his followers all over the world.

For the launch, Gary joins an impressive line-up of Manchester based artists, illustrators and innovators presenting workshops encouraging wellbeing, mindfulness and collaboration for visitors of all ages, they are: *Naomi Kendrick, Jim Medway, Tony Hall, Interference Art, Tavia Panton, Rabia Begum, Sam Hull and Jayson Glyen.*

The Big Draw is proud to be collaborating with Manchester Art Gallery, with their commitment to actively exploring the links between art, creativity, social change and wellbeing, The Big Draw has found the ideal home to mark the official start of The Big Draw Festival 2019: *Drawn To Life.*

Alistair Hudson, Director of Manchester Art Gallery comments:

“Manchester Art Gallery was founded by artists and business leaders in 1823 as the Royal Manchester Institution, to provide creative education and imagination at the heart of a rapidly growing city. It is where the art school was founded, where the suffragettes protested and where John Ruskin delivered his landmark lecture on the Political Economy of Art.

As the gallery embarks on a new chapter with a vision that reconnects with our past as a Civic Think Tank, an Art School for Everybody and the museum a Tool for Social Change, it is most fitting that we host the launch of the Big Draw Festival here and now - in a time when we need visual literacy more than ever. Ruskin championed drawing because it was the basis for seeing the world most truthfully, so that we might act more ethically. That we might champion this ambition again in this city is a real joy”.

The Big Draw's Director, Kate Mason comments:

“The creative metropolis of Manchester has a long tradition of radical thinking and dynamic social, artistic and civic engagement. The city's identity has become synonymous with that of the true ‘change-maker’. It is these civic and creative identities that make collaborating with the people and places of Manchester such a privilege.

Earlier in the year, The Big Draw's national multidisciplinary art prize; 'The John Ruskin Prize' found its home for the 2019 shortlist exhibition and programme at The Holden Gallery, Manchester School of Art, which perfectly aligned our organisations' shared desires to provoke debate, identify artists as 'agents of change' and connect Ruskin's radical critique of society, art and life with the contemporary moment. All especially pertinent as we join institutions worldwide to mark Ruskin's legacy in the bicentenary year of his birth.

As a visual literacy Charity we passionately support the ambitions of many of the major cultural institutions in Manchester to evolve towards places that are relevant, useful and where socially-engaged artistic activity is central to their work. One of these august institutions leading the way is Manchester Art



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Gallery whose aim is to 'ensure that the city and all its people grow with creativity, imagination, health and productivity'. We look forward to joining with the people of Manchester to mark the start of The Big Draw Festival 2019!"

On this year's partnership with The Big Draw, Councillor Luthfur Rahman, Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure at Manchester City Council, said:

"Manchester is so intertwined with art it would be an impossible task to separate the two. For almost 200 years Manchester has been at the forefront of culture, always pushing the boundaries and staying true to its radical heritage.

"Creative expression is such a powerful force. It can change opinions, it shapes minds and it opens doors to new opportunities. We are proud to welcome The Big Draw into our city and especially use it to inspire the next generation of talent."

ENDS

CONTACT

For further information, comments, images and interviews, or to request a press pass for the launch event or awards ceremony:

E: press@thebigdraw.org

T: +44 (0) 203 758 4118 | www.thebigdraw.org/launch-2019

#TheBigDraw #DrawnToLife

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 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 each and everyone who wants to draw.

thebigdraw.org | Charity no. 1114811



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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 had 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 2019 launch in Manchester will officially mark the beginning of The Big Draw Festival 2019 *Drawn To Life: Creativity & Wellbeing* around the world with events running daily throughout October and beyond

thebigdraw.org/all-events | Charity no. 1114811

Manchester Art Gallery is the original useful museum, initiated in 1823 by artists, as an educational institution to ensure that the city and all its people grow with creativity, imagination, health and productivity.

The gallery is free and open to all people as a place of civic thinking and public imagination, it promotes art as a means to achieve social change.

It has been at the centre of city life for nearly 200 years, created as the Royal Manchester Institution for the Promotion of Literature, Science and the Arts and has been proudly part of Manchester City Council since 1882.

The gallery is for and of the people of Manchester. Through its collections, displays and public programmes it works with all our constituents to ensure creativity, care and consideration infect all aspects of the way we live.

manchesterartgallery.org

POSCA

Launched in the early 80s, the POSCA paint marker was an immediate success among the artistic communities arising from urban cultures, and especially the Graffiti community. From Street Art to Fine Art via Illustration, portraits and all forms of customisation, POSCA now drives artistic momentum among all creators in all media. For temporary or permanent projects, POSCA offers a universal, accessible language that brings artists and amateurs of all ages together around the same passion – creation!

“POSCA are very happy to support the Big Draw Festival launch this year as we believe everyone is an artist, and creativity should be accessible to all!”
