



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: THURSDAY 14 DECEMBER 2023

PRESS RELEASE:

THE 6TH JOHN RUSKIN PRIZE: *SEEING THE UNSEEN, HEARING THE UNSPOKEN* SHORTLIST ANNOUNCED

THE JOHN RUSKIN PRIZE

SEEING THE UNSEEN, HEARING THE UNSPOKEN

The Buoy Store, Trinity Buoy Wharf, 64 Orchard Place, Poplar, London E14 0JW

1-17 February 2024

Private View: 6-9pm, January 31 2024

Prize Giving: 7.30pm

The Big Draw today announced the shortlist of **The 6th John Ruskin Prize**, which called for artists to explore the theme, '***Seeing the Unseen, Hearing the Unspoken***' and has attracted a record number of submissions from fine artists, makers and craftspeople from across the globe. For the first time, submissions were open to a digital audience to facilitate international entries. There are also **two new prizes - The International Prize and The 2024 Kate Mason Prize for Innovation**

The shortlisted artists are: Graham Short, Claudia Barreira, Nick Grellier, Keith Ashcroft, Fiona Hodges, Elmira Zohrehnejad, Pascal Miehe, Blythe Plenderleith, Belinda Ellis, Sally Muir, Lorsen Camps, Jared Barbick, William Bacon, Helen Restorick, Linda Hubbard, Julie Graves, Matt Lee, Abby Cocovini, Isobel Scarsbrook, Thomas Cameron, Muhammad Hossain, Olana Light, Anna Larin, Scott Kelly, Francesca Alaimo, Max Bainbridge, Alyson J Barton, Katy Shepherd, J.G.Fox, Patricia Townsend, Simone Guideri, Rhys Thorpe, Trudie Shutler, Lucy Stopford, Ruth Swain, Sally Hewett, Wyatt Carson, Kirsty Bogle, Maayan Sophia Weisstub, Alan Fortescue, Julia Polonski, David Aston, Helen Restorick, Zoja Kalinovskis, Olga Kataeva- Rochford, Eithne Healy, Frances Gynn, Emily Lucas, Blair Cahill, Lydia Adams, Donna Fleming, Duncan Cameron, Julie Barnes, Eddy Greenwood, Sally Baldwin, Antoni Kuźniarz, Caroline Burraway, Kerry Collison, Dorcas Casey, Kate McDonnell, Fiona Hodges, Pinkie Maclure, Zac Weinberg, Francesca Centioni, Chris Alton, Hanfei Dyson, Daniel Hosego, Curtis Holder, Sarah Gillespie and Elias Mendel.

About the shortlist

Selected from over 4000 entries, the final shortlist of **78 pieces** from **68** artists, makers and innovators have been given a platform for the *unseen to be seen* and *the unspoken to be heard*. What happens when we look beyond what we initially see, beyond the obvious, beyond what we are being told to look at, when we peel back the layers or change the lens or position through which we see the world? The shortlist explores this through traditional craft combined with social commentary and visual wit within the selected artworks.

Julie Graves 'Cyclic Iterative' represents a combination of fragility and strength, the cycle of life, loss and of renewal. It has been meticulously crafted from fallen pine needles collected from the ground on walks during Covid. **Pascal Miehé's** film 'ARENA' documents the performance of a five-way tug of war, exploring intertwined systems of power and domination, whilst **Abby Cocovini's** painting, 'This Train Terminates At Kennington' celebrates an egalitarian space where only the elderly, disabled and pregnant hold higher status.

The Prize

There are five prizes available: 1st Prize: £3000, 2nd Prize £2000, The Alan Davidson Under 26 Prize of £1000, The International Prize of £1000 and The 2024 Kate Mason Prize for Innovation of £1000.

Winners will be announced on **Wednesday 31 January** at a **Private View and Prize Giving Ceremony at The Buoy Store, Trinity Buoy Wharf**. The shortlist exhibition will be open from **February 1- February 18**, with a series of workshops on offer to the public.

The members of The 6th John Ruskin Prize selection panel are: Narinder Sagoo MBE, Cornelia Parker CBE RA, Bob and Roberta Smith RA, Gary Hill, Dr Rachel Dickinson and Jane Barnes.

Partners include: The Guild of St George, The Alan Davidson Foundation and Trinity Buoy Wharf

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The 6th John Ruskin Prize: ***Seeing the Unseen, Hearing the Unspoken***

Preview: 6 - 9pm, Wednesday 31 January 2024

Shortlist Exhibition: 1st February –17th February 2024

The Buoy Store, Trinity Buoy Wharf, London E14 0JW

Open Monday- Friday 11am-4pm, Saturday & Sunday 11am-5pm

Late night Thursday 11am - 6pm.

Free entry.

Notes

Visual literacy charity *The Big Draw*, organisers of The John Ruskin Prize, together with the Prize founders and sponsors *the Guild of St George*, **announce the shortlist for The 6th John Ruskin Prize. The John Ruskin Prize shortlist was selected from a panel** that includes artists whose socially and politically engaged practice addresses issues of identity, social class, language, architecture and the environment around us. The judges are: **Narinder Sagoo MBE, Cornelia Parker CBE RA, Bob and Roberta Smith RA, Gary Hill, Rachel Dickinson and Jane Barnes.**

Dr Rachel Dickinson, Master of the Guild of St George and Reader of Interdisciplinary Studies/English at Manchester Metropolitan University, is an expert on **John Ruskin's life and legacy** and Jane Barnes is an artist and Executive Director of **The Big Draw** and **The John Ruskin Prize**. The Ruskin Prize returns following the critically acclaimed exhibition '*Agent of Change*' held in Manchester in 2019 which attracted over 1260 entries (3000 artworks).

The prize organisers welcomed entries from artists, designers, architects and makers, at all stages of their careers, and for the first time, entries were open to the **medium of photography** and to creatives **across the globe**. Artists were invited to respond to the theme, ***Seeing the Unseen, Hearing the Unspoken*** which could be explored and interpreted in many different ways.

John Ruskin, an impassioned and influential critic of art, society and life, believed that art has the power to expose universal truths. Ruskin was a writer, artist, social critic, polymath and aesthete who fiercely opposed the social, political and environmental injustices of his day. These injustices – the 'haves' and the 'have nots', social and economic uncertainty, rapid environmental change and a complex ever shifting political landscape remain issues that are as pertinent today as they were in Ruskin's day.

The Prize also embraces Ruskin's polymathic sensibilities, focusing on the strengths of multidisciplinary practice and inviting submissions from creatives whose work defies easy categorisation.

"The greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world is to see something, and tell what it saw in a plain way. Hundreds of people can talk for one who can think, but thousands can think for one who can see. To see clearly is poetry, prophecy and religion, all in one." John Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, vol. 3.

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CONTACT

For quotes, images and interviews, please contact Sandra Borszcz on 0203 758 4118 or email ruskin@thebigdraw.org

NOTES TO EDITORS

The **John Ruskin Prize** was inaugurated in 2012 by The Guild of St. George and The Big Draw (formerly the Campaign for Drawing). The Prize aims to uphold John Ruskin's beliefs whilst challenging the nation's artists to respond to challenging themes. The resulting exhibitions have attracted diverse audiences and received wide critical acclaim. The 6th John Ruskin Prize: *Seeing the Unseen, Hearing the Unspoken* opened for entries on 28 June 2023. Deadline is 20 September 2023..

For further information on past winners, prizes, programme, eligibility, submission and exhibition dates please visit: ruskinprize.co.uk

John Ruskin

John Ruskin (1819-1900) was a writer, artist, social critic and philanthropist, someone influential enough to attract praise from figures as varied as Tolstoy, George Eliot, Proust and Gandhi. He championed many of the tenets of the welfare state, and inspired the founders of the National Health Service, the formation of Public Libraries, the National Trust and many other cornerstones of civil society. His influence reached abroad in such areas as women's education, the minimum wage, child labour, and environmental protection and has served both as a restraining influence on unbridled capitalism and a moral conscience for the nations of the world.

He wrote and spoke on a dizzying variety of subjects: art and architecture, nature and craftsmanship, literature and religion, political economy and social justice. He also worked tirelessly for a better society; the depth and range of his thinking, his fierce critique of industrial society and its impact on both people and their environment, and his passionate advocacy of a sustainable relationship between people, craft and nature, remain as pertinent today as they were in his own lifetime. In 1871 he founded the [Guild of St George](#) 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.

"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 Guild of St George

The Guild of St George is an educational charity founded in the 1870s by the Victorian polymath, John Ruskin, devoted to the arts, crafts and the rural economy. It has more than 300 Companions (members) around the world who share an interest in how the values and teachings of Ruskin's art, social and political criticism can inspire us to help make lives better, and the planet healthier, today. We own and support the Ruskin Collection in Sheffield and a land-holding in the Wyre Forest, as exemplars of good stewardship for the public benefit. The Guild founded the Campaign for Drawing in 2000, which later became the independent charity The Big Draw, and it has been a partner in the John Ruskin Prize since its inception, providing the first and second prize. Find out more about the Guild at guildofstgeorge.org.uk

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. 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: thebigdraw.org and contemporary art show, The John Ruskin Prize.

For further information please contact:

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