



Press release: 14 May 2014

VocalEyes audio description for 'Museum of the Year' finalists enhances engagement with the arts

Audio description is being created by **VocalEyes**, a national charity which provides access to arts and heritage for blind and partially sighted people, for each of the six finalist museums for the **Art Fund Prize for Museum of the Year 2014**. The museums are: Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft, East Sussex; Hayward Gallery, London; The Mary Rose Museum, Portsmouth; Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich; Tate Britain, London; and Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield.

The audio descriptions will be available on the Art Fund website (www.artfund.org/prize/vocaleyeyes2014) from today, 13 May 2014. The audio descriptions provide a useful guide to each of the finalist museums, detailing their 2013 achievements as well as providing detailed descriptions of distinctive architecture and features of each, and enhancing overall engagement with the arts for listeners.

The Art Fund Prize for Museum of the Year, awarded annually with a value of £100,000, was established in 2003 (formally the Gulbenkian Prize for museums and galleries 2003-2007) to recognise the very best of the UK's internationally acclaimed museums. It has been supported by the Art Fund since 2008. Previous winners include the William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow, London (2013); the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter (2012), and the British Museum, London (2011).

<http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/venues/hayward-gallery/hayward-touring>
www.southbankcentre.co.uk/venues/hayward-gallery

The Mary Rose Museum, Portsmouth

The Mary Rose Museum opened in May 2013 and demonstrates excellence, innovation and imagination in the presentation of a truly unique artefact and its associated objects. The museum displays the starboard section of the flagship that served Henry VIII for 34 years, before spending over 400 years under the Solent. For the first time, the ship has been reunited with the possessions of the crew and all the material of a Tudor warship. The Mary Rose and its unique collection are now housed in an extraordinary and elegant museum. The permanent exhibition engages visitors through the intensely personal nature of the objects and the stories they tell of the people on board, providing an inimitable insight into Tudor life. Everything in the museum is from one archaeological site, capturing the moment when the ship and most of the crew were lost. The museum is the fulfillment of the ambitions of the thousands who have worked on the project.

www.maryrose.org

Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich

Housed in a listed masterpiece of modern architecture, the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts is at once a public gallery of art and a centre for scholarship, its collections, exhibitions, and activities driven by two core ideas: the Modern, and World Art. In the last quarter of 2013 the Centre brought to completion a two-year strategic plan which saw every aspect of the institution's functions transformed. Foster+Partners, the building's original architect, designed new facilities, which include the largest contiguous space for temporary exhibitions in eastern England; superb new spaces for the permanent collections; two galleries themed around modern and contemporary art; and a new shop, café and leisure area. On 14 September 2013 the Centre launched its new facilities with a complete redisplay of the permanent collection (of over 500 works), and its largest and most ambitious exhibition to date, Masterpieces: Art and East Anglia. The exhibition contains 280 works across all media and explores the artistic heritage of the region from prehistory to the present. The exhibition has received wide-ranging national critical attention. In the single year of 2013, the Centre more than doubled its normal annual attendance.

www.scva.ac.uk

Tate Britain, London

The new Tate Britain was unveiled to the public in 2013. The transformation of the

oldest part of the Grade II* listed building by architects Caruso St John marked a significant moment for the gallery. In May 2013, following the refurbishment of nine galleries to 21st century standards, the world's greatest collection of British art was represented in a new continuous chronological display: the *BP Walk through British Art*. The display now places well known favourites alongside less familiar artworks. Additionally *BP Spotlight* collection displays were also introduced to offer more variety and depth on particular artworks, artists or themes. In November, the main entrance on Millbank reopened, combining newly created spaces around a new spiral staircase along with the restoration of some of the most beautiful original elements of the building. New learning studios and a dedicated schools' entrance and reception, together with the opening of the Rotunda's balcony as an elegant members' area, a new café, artist commissions and a new focus on the archive have transformed the experience of the 1.5 million visitors who enjoy Tate Britain each year.

www.tate.org.uk

Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP), Wakefield

Showing work by UK and international artists, including Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth, YSP seeks to provide a centre of international, national and regional importance for the exhibition and appreciation of modern and contemporary sculpture. 2013 was YSP's busiest year ever with the presentation of world-class exhibitions by acclaimed artists such as Yinka Shonibare MBE, Amar Kanwar and Hans Josephsohn. The year also marked the momentous opening of Roger Hiorns' *Seizure, 2008/2013*, an important and stunning addition to the Park. Its innovative learning programme has gone from strength to strength with the introduction of the groundbreaking new project, *Breathing Space*, the successful pilot *All Aboard* and further development of *Spark*, *Ignite* and *Vivify*, all of which have been vital in engaging new audiences and providing a unique art experience for hard to reach groups. In improvements to YSP's 500-acre estate, restoration work was carried out on YSP Chapel and Dam Head Pump House. Both buildings will reopen to the public in 2014.

www.ysp.co.uk

Full information about the Art Fund Prize for Museum of the Year 2014 can be found at Artfund.org/prize Follow the conversation **#MOTY2014**

High-res images are available here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/qrstyld3mu0xsgu/loV78zZFU4>

Films are available here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/xy29scyeossb9kk/pRM95lh3mV>

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NOTES TO EDITORS

The Art Fund

The Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for art, helping museums to buy and show great art for everyone. Over the past 5 years we've given over £26m to help museums and galleries acquire works of art for their collections and placed hundreds of gifts and bequests, from ancient sculpture and treasure hoards to Old Master paintings and contemporary commissions, with 25% of grants going towards works by living artists. We also help museums share their collections with wider audiences through supporting a range of tours and exhibitions, including the national tour of the Artist Rooms collection and the 2013-2014 tours of Grayson Perry's tapestries *The Vanity of Small Differences* and Jeremy Deller's *English Magic*, the British Council commission for the 2013 Venice Biennale. Our support for museums extends to the Art Guide app – the comprehensive guide to seeing art across the UK, promoting a network of over 650 museums and galleries throughout the country, and the £100,000 Art Fund Prize for Museum of the Year – an annual celebration of the best of UK museums, won in 2013 by William Morris Gallery in Walthamstow. We are independently funded, the majority of our income coming from over 100,000 members who, through the National Art Pass, enjoy free entry to over 220 museums, galleries and historic houses across the UK, as well as 50% off entry to major exhibitions.

VocalEyes

VocalEyes is a charity which works with partners in museums, heritage, architecture and theatre to enhance blind and partially sighted audiences' engagement with and

enjoyment of the arts and culture, through audio description. VocalEyes is funded by Arts Council England.