

First crowdfunding platform dedicated to art raises almost £300,000 for museums

Art Fund raises almost £300,000 with museums through crowdfunding

Ambitious campaigns for Modern Art Oxford and River & Rowing Museum currently live on the site

Art Fund has announced that Art Happens, the first crowdfunding platform for art, has raised almost £300,000 for 16 projects since its inception in June 2014.

Successful campaigns have ranged from £25,000 to restore the Bloomsbury interiors painted by Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant at Charleston, to the creation of a 12.5 tonne vintage steamroller printing press for Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft. A film showcasing some of the most successful campaigns to be funded through Art Happens launches on Artfund.org today.

Since its launch in June 2014 Art Happens has had a high success rate – with 16 out of 18 projects successfully funded, while Kickstarter sees just over a third of its projects realised. Each project forges an ongoing dialogue between museums and donors ‘thanking’ all supporters with limited edition rewards. Unlike other crowdfunding platforms, every penny raised goes directly to the projects, with no fees charged.

Current projects include Modern Art Oxford, who are celebrating 50 years of exhibitions by artists including Marina Abramović, Richard Long and Yoko Ono and hope to raise £17,500 for a landmark publication. The project is currently on 11% with 22 days to go. Meanwhile in Henley, River & Rowing Museum are championing the revival of one of England’s greatest yet most overlooked artists – John Piper. They would like to raise £22,000 to create the largest permanent exhibition of the Henley artist’s work in the world. The project has raised 77% so far and has 9 days remaining.

Stephen Deuchar, Art Fund director, said: *“We launched Art Happens in order to harness people power in the process of making great creative things happen. It’s a free fundraising service to help UK museums realise long-dreamed of projects in a challenging climate. Crowdfunding is very hard work, but we can help”.*

Art Happens’ achievements have been recognised by industry awards: the platform recently won an Emcees Arts & culture Award for Excellence in Fundraising for ‘Best use of digital channels in a fundraising campaign’ and was

also highly commended for 'Most Innovative Fundraising Campaign' in the Institute of Fundraising's National Fundraising Awards in 2015.

Paul Hobson, Director of Modern Art Oxford, said: *"We are so excited about this new publication which celebrates 50 inspirational years founding on the vision of some of the world's greatest artists. We are grateful for the generous support and partnership of Art Fund for this project, which forms part of our year-long 50th anniversary celebration in 2016. By helping us to realise this project, contributors will help to shape and share an extraordinary history with audiences today and for generations to come, while benefiting from some really unique offers in return."*

Ludo Keston, River and rowing Museum Chief Executive said: *"To work on a project that brings together works of art from one of the most important artists our country has ever produced is a massive thrill. When that artist is local it becomes hugely more personal and significant, especially when that project is entirely in the hands of the community."*

Darren Clarke, director of Charleston House, which raised £25,000 to restore their painted Bloomsbury interiors, said: *"The project was really successful - it enabled us to raise funds in a new and exciting way and it exposed Charleston to a new audience that may not know about the place and hopefully might visit it in the future."*

The Foundling Museum raised £25,000 for their recent exhibition the Fallen Woman. Caro Howell, the Museum's director, said: *"The Art Happens campaign was vital for us, without it we would not have been able to achieve the funding that we needed to get this show off the ground."*

Art Happens was launched following focused research into what motivates visitors to give, co-commissioned with the National Museum Directors' Council (NMDC). Unlike other commercial crowdfunding platform, Art Fund absorbs all associated costs for the museums taking part, and takes no commission – so all funds raised go straight to the participating museum.

In two years Art Happens had received almost £300,000 in contributions, (including Gift Aid) from over 2,500 unique funders, across all projects. 14% of funders have contributed to more than one project. The smallest single donation has been £5, the largest single donation has been £5,000. The average donation to the site so far has been £82.

-Ends

Notes to Editors:

About Art Fund

Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for art. In the past five years alone Art Fund has given £34 million to help museums and galleries acquire works of art for their collections. It also helps museums share their collections with wider audiences by supporting a range of tours and exhibitions, including ARTIST ROOMS and the 2013-18 Aspire tour of Tate's *Salisbury Cathedral from the Meadows* by John Constable, and makes additional grants to support the training and professional development of curators.

Art Fund is independently funded, with the core of its income provided by 122,000 members who receive the National Art Pass and enjoy free entry to over 230 museums, galleries and historic places across the UK, as well as 50% off entry to major exhibitions. In addition to grant-giving, Art Fund's support for museums includes the annual Art Fund Prize for Museum of the Year (won by The Whitworth, Manchester, in 2015), a publications programme and a range of digital platforms.

Find out more about Art Fund and the National Art Pass at www.artfund.org
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