

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

Press Release

Date: Monday 20 September, 2pm

Contact: press@southbankcentre.co.uk

Exhibition install images: [HERE](#)

Participant portraits, artwork and referral partner images: [HERE](#)

Bus and billboard tour images: [HERE](#)

20 September - 27 March 2022

Art by Post: Of Home and Hope

Opening today - Southbank Centre, London

Opening from 18 Oct - The Mill Arts Centre and Banbury Museum & Gallery (Oxfordshire), Arts Centre Washington (Sunderland), The Beaney House of Art & Knowledge (Canterbury), HOME (Manchester) and De Montfort University (Leicester)

HOME and The Beaney among six nationwide venues confirmed for Southbank Centre's *Art by Post* exhibition as the show gets underway in London



Credits (L-R): Art by Post exhibition SC - CR Thierry Bal; Art by Post participant - CR Robert Darch; Art by Post bus and billboard campaign - CR Robert Darch, Kate Elliott, Eoin Carey

- *Art by Post: Of Home and Hope* launches today at Southbank Centre before touring nationwide for five months to showcase the power of art and culture on health and wellbeing
- Creative responses from over 4,500 *Art by Post* participants have been selected and carefully curated for this one-of-a-kind exhibition
- Social prescribing link workers referred people to Art by Post during the lockdown – and Art by Post is a great example of people connecting to activities that help manage their health and wellbeing through social prescribing
- The ambitious project is delivered in partnership with the National Academy for Social Prescribing (NASP) and supported by leading international health bodies, including the World Health Organisation, as well as 13 delivery partners and over 150 domestic referral partners
- The announcement comes as the Southbank Centre makes the continued case for enhanced community access to art for health and wellbeing

The Southbank Centre unveils the six venues which will participate in the nationwide tour of its much-anticipated exhibition *Art by Post: Of Home and Hope*.

The exhibition launches today at the Southbank Centre in London, in partnership with the National Academy for Social Prescribing (NASP), before touring the UK from October.

Touring sites announced today are: **The Mill Arts Centre** and **Banbury Museum & Gallery** in Oxfordshire, **Arts Centre Washington** in Sunderland, **The Beaney House of Art & Knowledge** in Canterbury, **HOME** in Manchester and **De Montfort University** in Leicester.

In May 2020, Southbank Centre launched *Art by Post*, sending monthly creative booklets to 4,500 people across the country who were at risk from social isolation and digital exclusion during the pandemic. Many participants were supported by friends, family members, neighbours, healthcare professionals and social prescribing link workers who were vital in referring people to the initiative and joining in with the activities themselves. Included in the packs were Freepost envelopes, encouraging participants to share their artwork with us. To date, over 40,000 booklets have been sent out and over 600 artworks sent back.

Shaped by the isolating experience of lockdown, the new exhibition, curated by Persilia Caton and endorsed by international health bodies including the World Health Organisation, showcases the power of art on health & wellbeing and celebrates creativity and resilience of participants. It draws on many of the themes included in the commissioned booklets, such as nature, hope, sound and movement.

With participants from Aberdeen to Bangor and Truro to Dover and aged between 18 and 103, the Southbank Centre looks ahead to taking *Art by Post* on tour to bring the work of participants back to local communities. The tour will be supplemented by a UK-wide poster and bus stop campaign featuring specially-commissioned portrait photography of *Art by Post* participants.

An online gallery also launches today as the in-person show gets underway in London. This digital exhibition offer will connect those who are continuing to shield or who are unable to travel. Meanwhile, pop-ups at major NHS Hospital Trusts and care settings nationwide to sustain deep community engagement.

The National Academy for Social Prescribing has been instrumental in the roll out of *Art by Post* since the body formally partnered with the Southbank Centre in 2019. NASP will be based on site by the end of the year, enabling both organisations to carry out urgent work in this area – the need for which has been exposed by the pandemic.

The Academy aims to champion the value of social prescribing by demonstrating the power of the arts, culture, sports, leisure and the natural environment in connecting people and communities. Working with its Thriving Communities programme, online masterclasses for community groups will be held across the country, showing how *Art by Post* can be emulated by community groups elsewhere, and build local momentum for social prescribing.

Art by Post is being supported by 13 strategic partners and a further 156 delivery groups nationwide. Alongside the touring venues, additional strategic partners include organisations in the arts, health and social care space. These are: Age UK Oxfordshire & Camden, artsdepot, Beacon Arts, Dulwich Picture Gallery, NAPA Arts in Care Homes, Nightingale Hammerson, Philharmonia Orchestra, HOME, Platform, Kings College Hospital Trust, Sunderland Culture and The Barn.

Art by Post project participant, said: *“Since starting the Art by Post and putting words down on paper, especially the poems, it seems to be much easier, you have brought out a part of me that has laid hidden for virtually all my life, so for that alone, I thank you.”*

Alexandra Brierley, Director of Creative Learning, Southbank Centre, said: *"We are so proud to announce our six partner venues for Art by Post: Of Home and Hope as the exhibition gets underway today at the Southbank Centre. Art by Post's success is down to the participants who have given so generously to the project over the past 18 months and we are delighted to be able to showcase so much of their work in this one-of-a-kind exhibition. Art by Post is demonstrating the transformative power of art for health and wellbeing and, alongside the National Academy for Social Prescribing and over 160 partners, we will continue to make the case for enhanced community access and funding to it."*

James Sanderson, Chief Executive of the National Academy for Social Prescribing, said: *"Arts can be powerful and meaningful for many, whether it's taking part in an activity, learning something new or going to an exhibition."*

Art by Post engaged people in their homes, providing a way to feel connected to others. Social prescribing link workers can connect people to projects like this to support them alongside wider health plans. We're delighted to be working with the Southbank Centre and our touring venues on this inspiring and engaging exhibit, demonstrating the power of art and enabling more people and communities to connect to art for their health and wellbeing as they travel around the country."

Darren Henley, CEO, Arts Council England, said: *"We've invested in the National Academy for Social Prescribing since its launch, so it's exciting to see how its work in partnership with the Southbank Centre is helping people across the country to lead happier, healthier lives by unlocking their own creativity."*

Conceived at the 1951 Festival of Britain - at the time seen as a tonic for the nation's wellbeing - through to the present day, the Southbank Centre has long been an advocate of the role of the arts and culture in improving the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

Art by Post: Of Home and Hope is open now at the Southbank Centre. Admission is free. Please visit www.southbankcentre.co.uk/artbypost for more information.

Listings information

Art by Post: Of Home and Hope

Southbank Centre: 20 Sep – 3 Oct 2021

The Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX

Non ticketed; Admission free

Please contact: press@southbankcentre.co.uk

www.southbankcentre.co.uk

The Mill Arts Centre: 18 Oct - 31 Oct 2021

The Mill Arts Centre, Spiceball Park Road, Banbury OX16 5QE

Non ticketed; Admission free

Please contact: Sarah Wright - sarah.wright@themillartscentre.co.uk

www.themillartscentre.co.uk

Banbury Museum & Gallery: 18 Oct - 31 Oct 2021

Banbury Museum & Gallery, Spiceball Park Rd, Banbury, OX16 2PQ

Non ticketed; Admission free

Please contact: Caz Davies - caz.davies@banburymuseum.org

www.banburymuseum.org

Arts Centre Washington: 9 Nov – 27 Nov 2021

Arts Centre Washington, Biddick Lane, Fatfield, Washington, NE38 8AB
Non ticketed; free admission

**Please contact: Matthew Blythe - matthew.blyth@sunderland.gov.uk
www.artscentrewashington.co.uk**

The Beaney House of Art & Knowledge: 11 Dec – 23 Jan 2022

The Beaney, 18 High Street, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 2RA

Non ticketed; free admission; donations encouraged

**Please contact: Holly Buggins-Eaves - holly.buggins-eaves@canterbury.gov.uk
www.canterburymuseums.co.uk/the-beaney**

HOME Manchester: 13 Jan – 27 Mar 2022

HOME, 2 Tony Wilson Place, Manchester, M15 4FN

Non ticketed; Admission free

**Please contact: Kat Harrison-Dibbits - kat.Harrison-Dibbits@homemcr.org
www.homemcr.org**

De Montfort University: 3 Feb – 19 Feb 2022

De Montfort University, Mill Lane, Leicester, LE2 7PT

Non ticketed; Admission free

**Please contact: Sian Brewis - sbrewis@dmu.ac.uk
www.dmu.ac.uk/home.aspx**

- ENDS -

Join the conversation

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#artbypost

For further press information please contact:

press@southbankcentre.co.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS

Many of our Art by Post participants are vulnerable adults with long term physical and mental health conditions. Therefore, to safeguard our participants and protect their identity, we have made the decision not to publicly name them. We will be finding many other ways to celebrate their vital contributions and artistic and creative achievements in Art by Post throughout the year.

About the Southbank Centre

The Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre occupying a prominent riverside location that sits in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. We exist to present great cultural experiences that bring people together and we achieve this by providing the space for artists to create and present their best work and by creating a place where as many people as possible can come together to experience bold, unusual and eye-opening work. We want to take people out of the everyday, every day. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. The Southbank Centre is made up of the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery as well as being home to the National Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. It is also home to four Resident Orchestras (London Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, London Sinfonietta and Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment) and four Associate Orchestras (Aurora Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, Chineke! Orchestra and National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain).

About the National Academy for Social Prescribing

The National Academy for Social Prescribing (NASP) is an organisation dedicated to the advancement of social prescribing through promotion, collaboration and innovation. We work to create partnerships, across the arts, health, sports, leisure, and the natural environment, alongside other aspects of our lives, to promote health and wellbeing at a national and local level. We will champion social prescribing and the work of local communities in connecting people for wellbeing.

Our objectives are to

- Make some noise – raising the profile of social prescribing
- Find resources – develop innovative funding partnerships
- Build relationships – broker and build relationships across all sectors
- Improve the evidence – shape and share the evidence base
- Spread what works – promote learning on social prescribing

Website: socialprescribingacademy.org.uk

Twitter: [@NASPTweets](https://twitter.com/NASPTweets)

Instagram: [@NASP_Insta](https://www.instagram.com/NASP_Insta)