

The Big Draw

Patrons: Sir Quentin Blake, Lord Foster of Thames Bank,
David Hockney OM CH RA, Andrew Marr, Sir Roger Penrose OM FRS, Frances Quinn,
Chris Riddell, Gerald Scarfe CBE, Posy Simmonds MBE, Bob & Roberta Smith RA



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate use

‘Wonder cartoonist’ Zoom Rockman becomes youngest Ambassador of The Big Draw

TODAY, 15-year old Londoner, Zoom Rockman, has been announced as an official ambassador of Britain’s pioneering arts education charity, The Big Draw.

Zoom has been writing, drawing and publishing his own award-winning comic The Zoom! since he was 8; he started working for The Beano! when he was 12, and has a monthly comic strip featuring his character, ‘Skanky Pigeon’ - inspired by the local Pigeons in his home town. Zoom has featured in Evening Standard’s Power 1000 list of influential Londoners, and is a member of the Mayor’s Fund Youth Board.

In March of this year, Zoom donated an artwork in support of The Big Draw for the It's Our World auction at Christie's. Now, as an ambassador, Zoom will support a wide array of The Big Draw's events and activities to champion the power of drawing and the importance of visual literacy and arts education in schools and beyond, including The World's Biggest Drawing Festival.

One of Zoom’s first activities as ambassador of The Big Draw will be to speak at the *STEAM Symposium: Laboratory of Visual Exploration* on 10 September 2016 at BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead. This event, organised by The Big Draw in partnership with The University of Lincoln and BALTIC, will highlight the importance of visual literacy and underline the huge role that 'drawing', in it's widest possible interpretation, plays in underpinning learning and professional practice across a spectrum of subjects and disciplines.

Later this year, as part of The Big Draw Festival he will also be participating in a Parliamentary event on October 11. This event will be a summit of the All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) that support arts education and will feature an activity for MPs as part of The Big Draw Festival, as well as presentations from a variety of speakers and young people.

Zoom Rockman, ambassador of The Big Draw commented:

‘It’s a real honour to be made an ambassador for The Big Draw, I’m really looking forward to working with them!’

To find out more about the work of The Big Draw visit www.thebigdraw.org.

ENDS

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#thebigdraw

Notes to Editors

About Zoom Rockman

Zoom has featured in Evening Standard's Power 1000 list of influential Londoners, is a member of the Mayor's Fund Youth Board, an ambassador for Positive Youth in Haringey, Spirit of London Awards (he won their media award in 2012), and BICOF Comic Festival in South Korea (he won their international kids comic artist award for 2 years running). He runs regular cartoon workshops around the country in schools and at festivals.

Zoom held his first solo exhibition of original artwork at the Westminster Reference Library in Leicester Square, London in December 2015. At the Private View, Zoom was in conversation with Paul Gravett (who curated the 'Comics Unmasked' Exhibition at the British Library – which featured Zoom's work) and also launched his latest comic, 'The Zoom! No.11'. A frame of Zoom's original artwork from this show is the piece that featured in the It's Our World charity auction at Christies.

Zoom has recently exhibited his latest, local artwork at The Queen's Pub in Crouch End. This also featured his Skanky Pigeon Strips for The Beano, which were set in the Haringey area. Visit www.thezoom.co.uk and follow Zoom on Twitter @The_ZoomComic.

The Big Draw

Founded in 2000, The Big Draw is an arts education charity that promotes visual literacy and the universal language of drawing as a tool for learning, expression and invention. The charity leads a diversified programme encompassing advocacy, empowerment and engagement, and is the founder and driving force behind the 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 The John Ruskin Prize and exhibition, and

through events, awards, and competitions, creates platforms for each and everyone who wants to draw. www.thebigdraw.org.

STEAM Symposium: Laboratory of Visual Exploration

'A visual learning adventure for educators'

Date: 9-10 September 2016

Venue: BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, NE8 3BA

Tickets: £35 (Standard Ticket), £25 (Concessions: Students, PGCE Students, Teachers)

This event is sponsored by **The University of Lincoln** as part of a three-year relationship with **The Big Draw**, and is supported by the **BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art**, Gateshead. The event will highlight the importance of visual literacy and underline the huge role 'drawing', in its widest possible interpretation, plays in underpinning professional practice across a spectrum of disciplines. It also aims to raise awareness and understanding of the role of visual literacy as a 'mode of thinking' and the vital role this plays in our contemporary culture. www.thebigdraw.org/steam-symposium

The Big Draw Festival

Launched in 2000, The Big Draw Festival has encouraged over **three 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 Big Draw has transformed national museums, Trafalgar Square, and even the South Kensington underground tunnel into dynamic creative spaces enjoyed by thousands of people for a day.

Every year, The Big Draw Festival includes hundreds of drawing activities in schools, galleries, museums, libraries, heritage sites, village halls and town squares. In 2015, the festival launch took place in 10 leading cultural institutions across Oxford. There were events by more than **1000 organisers** on **seven continents**, engaging around **400,000 people**.

The 2016 theme, The STEAM powered Big Draw Festival 2016, is part of the charity's campaign to give the arts subjects parity with Sciences, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, so that STEM becomes STEAM. Anyone can take part in The Big Draw Festival, by finding their nearest event or organising their own. Find out more: <http://www.thebigdraw.org/the-big-draw-festival>

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