

HASTINGS CONTEMPORARY



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A Generous Space



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25 November 2021 – 17 April 2022

Artist Support Pledge (ASP) is moving from our screens and onto real life gallery walls from 25 November, when the first ever exhibition crowdsourced from Instagram opens at Hastings Contemporary.

More than 300 works, created by artists from around the world as well as from just around the corner, will be featured in *A Generous Space*. Paintings, drawings, sculpture, ceramics, textiles, photography, basket-making, weaving and needlework have travelled to the UK from countries including America, Canada, India, Republic of Moldova, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Italy, and the Republic of Ireland. There is also strong representation from local and regionally based artists.

There were more than 3600 submissions for *A Generous Space*, all made via Instagram using the #aspshows hashtag, with ASP founder artist Matthew Burrows MBE and eight other selectors choosing the works to be included in the exhibition. The selectors are acclaimed artist Lakwena; Kate Bryan, TV presenter and Head of Collections for Soho House; a-n's Chief Executive Julie Lomax; Natalie Melton, Creative Director, Arts Council; Sally Shaw MBE, Director of the 2021 'Art Fund Museum of the Year' gallery Firstsite; Jo Baring, Director of the Ingram Collection of Modern British & Contemporary Art; journalist and editor Javier Pes and Jes Fernie, an independent curator and writer working with galleries, architectural practices, and public realm organisations on public programmes, commissioning schemes, exhibitions and residency projects across the UK and abroad.

Lakwena says of the selection process: *"After a long period of us all having been restricted to seeing a lot of art and people through screens, the works that interested me most were those that had some tactility to them, and/or gave some glimpse into the everyday lives of the artists who made them. What I like about these works is the space they open up for simple human connection."*

Artists whose work will be on display include Susan Absolon (recent winner of the British Contemporary Painters prize), critic/artist Matthew Collings, mosaic artist Emma Biggs, Anne Ryan (who has a new commission currently on display at Turner Contemporary as part of their 10th anniversary), wood and glass artist Jayne Armstrong, David Lock, Sarah Dwyer ... and lots more incredibly talented artists.

All the works featured in *A Generous Space* – the design for which is inspired by an Instagram grid – will have an accompanying label that includes the Instagram details of the artist, so that anyone interested in buying the work can get directly in touch with the artist to do just that. The same egalitarian ethos as the online version of ASP.

Hastings Contemporary trustee and artist Esther Fox says: *"Hastings Contemporary is strongly committed to supporting artists and creating the conditions to nurture creativity. A Generous Space is the first public gallery exhibition of its kind as it totally changes the relationship between artists and those buying their art. This show helps and empowers artists, giving them a platform to sell their art and be patrons, buying each other's work. And anyone can buy the art. Buyers are able to have direct relationships with artists. The show makes things really simple and easy for any people who might previously have been nervous or unsure about buying art."*

Matthew Burrows, artist and founder of ASP says: *"The exhibition promises to be a blockbuster, covering two floors of this award-winning gallery – a real-world immersion into the community of Artist Support Pledge. ASP has shown us that with a generous spirit and an open eye we can make meaningful change for the welfare of artists and makers."*

The exhibited works will be profiled on Hastings Contemporary's [website](#).

Hastings Contemporary director Liz Gilmore says: *"This is such an exciting and dynamic show for us, giving people the opportunity to support artists by buying their art at an affordable price in a sustainable way. Breaking down barriers and connecting the public directly with artists is a game changer for the art world. We pioneer approaches that open up access for new audiences to great art, such as our highly popular robot tours, so this exhibition very much aligns with our ethos."*

NOTES FOR EDITORS

[High resolution images for media use can be downloaded here](#)

The history of Artist Support Pledge

On 16 March 2020, as the UK locked down as a response to Covid-19, artist Matthew Burrows came up with an ingenious idea of how to support artists struggling financially during the pandemic by using the social media platform Instagram – #artistsupportpledge.

Artist Support Pledge (ASP) asks artists and makers to post images on Instagram using the #artistsupportpledge hashtag, giving details of their works and price to a maximum of £200. If people are interested in buying, they direct message the artist. Every time an artist reaches £1,000 of sales, they pledge to buy £200 of work from other artist(s).

Over the last 18 months, ASP has become a global phenomenon. Its spirit of mutual support and generosity has enabled artists worldwide to maintain a vital income stream at a time when most sales channels disappeared overnight, and artists found themselves facing uncertain financial futures.

This simple artist-to-patron, artist-to-artist formula has proved revolutionary. ASP was set up as an emergency response to a desperate situation but has now evolved into a new cultural economy formed out of a simple idea.

In 2020, ASP generated an estimated £60 million of sales.

[Hastings Contemporary](#) champions modern and contemporary art. An ambitious programme of temporary exhibitions showcases work by important Modern British artists, internationally celebrated artists and emerging practitioners, often in Kunsthalle-style displays throughout the building. The gallery has developed a reputation for its focus on painting. Innovative programming, partnerships and collaborations support a commitment to outreach, learning and participation. The award-winning building is located on the town's historic fishing beach among the net huts and working structures of the fishing fleet.

For more information about Hastings Contemporary, visit www.hastingscontemporary.org / Twitter @_art_on_sea / Facebook 'hastingscontemporary' / Instagram @_art_on_sea

FOR MORE INFORMATION, INTERVIEWS, AND IMAGES

Tracy Jones, Brera PR – tracy@brera-london.com / 01702 216658 / 07887 514984 / www.brera-london.com