

HASTINGS CONTEMPORARY

Artist Support Pledge gets real with exhibition at Hastings Contemporary

Do you want to be a part of it?

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

The Artist Support Pledge (ASP) asks artists and makers to post images on Instagram using #artistsupportpledge 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.

Though simple, this 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 has generated an estimated £60 million of sales.

And now it's time to celebrate, as ASP moves from our screens and onto real life gallery walls with an exhibition - *A Generous Space* – which will open at Hastings Contemporary on 24 November 2021 (until 18 April 2022).

And Matthew is now looking for artists and makers to exhibit in it.

How you get involved works just the same as ASP. Simply post image(s) of the works you are proposing for the exhibition on Instagram using #aspshows by 31 October 2021, the closing date for submissions.

Matthew will pick the (possibly several hundred) works to be included in *A Generous Space* – which will be designed in the style of an Instagram grid - and get in touch to let you know, and how to get your work to Hastings Contemporary.

All the works displayed in *A Generous Space* will have an accompanying label that includes the Instagram details of the artist, so anyone interested in buying the work can get directly in touch with the artist to do just that – exactly the same egalitarian ethos as the online version of ASP. The exhibited works will be profiled on Hastings Contemporary's website too.

Matthew says *"In its 18 months of operating, ASP has become an important micro economy for artists, providing much needed income for hundreds of thousands of artists across the globe and inspiring a revolution in the role of what we understand to be a patron. Now ASP is going hybrid, not just virtual, but in a physical space. All artworks submitted will be for sale, and at a price point of no more than £200. There are amazing opportunities to purchase astonishing art while also supporting artists. If our experience of ASP has taught us anything it is that we can make meaningful change for the welfare of artists and makers, we just need a generous spirit and*

an open eye to see, and that is why I am delighted to collaborate on A GENEROUS SPACE with Hastings Contemporary with this open call.”

Esther Fox, as well as being a Hastings Contemporary Trustee, is Head of the Accentuate Programme that has benefitted from ASP. She says *“As a Trustee I'm delighted that Hastings Contemporary is giving space in the physical world for this truly innovative initiative for artists. 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

[Matthew Burrows](#) is an artist, who lives and works in East Sussex. Matthew is the founder and director of the Artist Support Pledge and has mentored on the Turps Studio Programme, London. Burrows was born in the Wirral UK. He studied as an undergraduate at Birmingham School of Art in 1990-93 and graduated with a Master's degree in painting from the Royal College of Art London in 1995. He is represented by [Vigo Gallery](#).

In 2020, for his work creating Artist Support Pledge, Matthew Burrows was made an MBE in The Queen's birthday honours list, received the Prime Minister's Points of Light award, was named *Apollo's* 'Art Personality of the Year', and was listed among the *ArtReview Power 100*. www.matthewburrows.org / Instagram @matthewburrowsstudio [@artistsupportpledge](#)

[Hastings Contemporary](#) 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

Accentuate challenges perceptions of disability by providing life changing opportunities for Deaf and disabled people to participate and lead within the cultural sector. www.accentuateuk.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION, INTERVIEWS AND IMAGES

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