



ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL



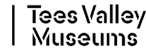
PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Make a Mark in the World's Biggest Drawing Festival This October

The Big Draw Festival 2026 comes to universities, cathedrals, libraries and more across the globe

The Big Draw Festival, the annual, international celebration of drawing, returns this October with 'Make a Mark'. Since launching in 2000, the Festival has taken place in **over 35 countries across all seven continents**, bringing more than **5 million people** back to the drawing board. This year's festival spans **every region of the UK and beyond**, from Kenya to Thailand, Hawaii to Hong Kong, and across Europe from Spain to the Netherlands.

Highlights this October include the **official festival launch at the brand-new Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration** in London on Saturday 3rd October; a **half-term Barber Family Day** inviting visitors to make their mark on the Barber Institute's hoardings; a chance to create your own **decorative piece of armour or add to a large collaborative landscape** in the spectacular Great Gallery at the Wallace Collection on 31st October; and **an intimate exhibition of rarely-seen works paired with community workshops** at Glasgow's Burrell Collection running until 26th November.

Festival Partners and Key Collaborators 2026: Ambassador Education Group / The Barber Institute of Fine Arts / Better Bankside / The Box / Courtauld Gallery / Corstorphine & Wright / The Culture Trust Luton / Falmouth University / Glasgow Life (Burrell Collection) / Inspire: Culture, Learning and Libraries / K Art Studio Ltd / MAC Northwest Museum of Art & Culture / The Maltings (Berwick) Trust / National Trust / Open College of the Arts / Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration / Raclin Murphy Museum of Art / St Louis Artist Guild / St Paul's Cathedral / Tees Valley Museums / The Treasure House / University of Wolverhampton / The Wallace Collection / Walt Disney Family Museum.

The theme for this year's Big Draw Festival is '**Make a Mark**', celebrating mark-making as a form of **playful inquiry and expression**, inviting participants of **all ages** to see drawing as an evolving process and a tool for engaging with the world around them.



Matilda Barratt, Director of The Big Draw, said:

"It's always inspiring to see the programme of events that our Big Draw Organisers run worldwide each year, and we're so incredibly grateful to them all, in particular our Festival Partners, who make the Festival what it is."

"We're absolutely delighted to be launching The Big Draw Festival 2026 at Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration, an event made possible by the generous support of the Trinity Buoy Wharf Trust. Quentin Blake has been a long-standing Patron of The Big Draw, so kickstarting this year's Festival in a place that celebrates his extraordinary contribution to illustration feels particularly special. Our thanks go to Thames & Hudson, Jackson's, and the Trinity Buoy Wharf Trust, as well as the artists and illustrators bringing the launch to life."

An overview of Big Draw events run by 2026 Festival Partners follows below:

- **Ambassador Education Group, Thailand:** As Southeast Asia's first Big Draw Festival Partners, Ambassador Education Group is launching a multi-campus celebration across Thailand. The inaugural event kicks off on 6th October, with collaborative, hands-on creative stations at Unity Concord International School.
- **Barber Institute of Fine Arts:** While the Barber transforms behind closed doors, the art moves outside! On the 28th and 29th October, come along and let your imagination run wild as you decorate a special exhibition on the building's hoardings.
- **Better Bankside:** London's Bankside joins The Big Draw for a second year, with a range of creative events for all ages. Discover what's behind the doors of Bankside's most intriguing venues, join artists for Japanese stab-stitch binding, Chinese calligraphy and neon life drawing, or explore Frida Kahlo's art with the kids.
- **The Box, Plymouth:** Explore what Plymouth's future looks like at the Box, the 2026 Art Fund Museum of the Year between 27th-29th October. Build 3D models from recycled materials and decorate fabric with reimagined drawings of the city! Popular life drawing classes and workshops will also continue throughout October.
- **The Burrell Collection:** 'Drawing Inspiration' is an exhibition that brings together thirteen remarkable drawings, featuring works by internationally renowned artists. The exhibition will run until 26th November and is accompanied by a bustling programme of artist-led community workshops as part of The Big Draw Festival.
- **Courtauld Gallery:** Join the Courtauld Gallery on Friday 30th October for 'Make a Mark, Make a Pattern', sketching colourful patterns inspired by architectural details, artworks and objects in the collection and surroundings. Free drop-in activity with a gallery ticket (under-18s free), all ages welcome.
- **Corstorphine & Wright:** Join an architectural Walk and Draw in South Kensington on Sunday 11th October with C&W Architects and The Big Draw.
- **Culture Trust Luton:** Drop in to Wardown House, Stockwood Discovery Centre or the Hat Factory this October half-term and draw your response to creatures from the museum collections. All materials are provided, and you can take your artwork home or add it to the family gallery!



- **Falmouth University:** On 21st October, 'Drawing Action!' brings playful mark-making to the Art School Campus. Then on 28th October, the Open Air Art School heads outdoors for wild, weatherproof 'En Plein Air' drawing above Pendennis Boatyards.
- **Inspire: Culture, Learning and Libraries:** Inspire's Big Draw programme offers free public workshops throughout October, alongside the 'I Am A Maker' Exhibition on display from 3rd October to 15th November, showcasing co-created artworks from five artist-makers working alongside community groups.
- **K Art Studio Ltd:** Join artist and curator Lin Wu at Sandsend Art and Community, Fulham, on 17th October for 'The Paper-Cut Maiden', a paper-cutting workshop for children. Sketch digital patterns inspired by Jianhua Niangzi, then transform them into hand-cut paper, discovering how a drawing travels from screen to scissors.
- **Open College of Arts:** OCA's free online micro-course explores movement, gesture and mark-making through playful modules, an artist trail, live community events, and a participant gallery, connecting creators worldwide.
- **Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration:** London's new home for illustration will host the official launch of this year's Big Draw Festival on the first weekend of October, with an evening creative panel discussion on Friday 2nd and a programme of artist-led workshops and drop-in activities for all ages on Saturday 3rd October.
- **St Paul's Cathedral:** This half-term, discover the different ways that artists, stone masons, and sculptors 'made their mark' in a series of free, interactive activities included in your admission ticket, including a self-guided trail, experimenting with air dry clay and a hands-on stone carving demo from our Cathedral Stone Masons.
- **Tees Valley Museums:** Free workshops will run from October half term through to late November, led by professional artists at five venues across Tees Valley Museums. Illustration artist Lauren Hubbert will visit each venue, building a large-scale collaborative artwork and hosting a livestreamed Draw Along.
- **University of Wolverhampton:** Get ready for a three-day drawing bonanza! From 27th-29th October, the Mander Centre will become the canvas for one of Wolverhampton's biggest-ever public drawing projects, with an evolving large-scale drawing that responds to the vibrant urban space.
- **The Wallace Collection:** On Saturday 31st October, enjoy the Wallace Collection's free programme of Big Draw events for all ages. Highlights include hands-on experimental mark-making, the chance to create your own decorative piece of armour, and a collaborative landscape taking shape in the spectacular Great Gallery.

The Big Draw has waived the subscription fee for state and non-fee-paying schools to widen access, with **hundreds of schools worldwide** now among this year's Festival organisers.

For the second year running, **The Big Draw is collaborating with National Trust** to bring the Festival to properties across England and Wales including Plas Newydd House and Garden (Isle of Anglesey), Godolphin (Cornwall), Croome, Gunby Estate, Hall and Gardens (Lincolnshire), and Oxburgh Estate (Norfolk).



Carl Greenman, Head of Visitor Experience at National Trust, said:

"For centuries the houses, gardens and landscapes the National Trust cares for have inspired artists, which is why we're delighted to be teaming up with the world's biggest drawing festival. By working together with partners like The Big Draw, we can open National Trust spaces to even more people and connect in completely new ways, whether that's through art workshops and sketching events or community exhibitions and installations."

Matilda Barratt, Director of The Big Draw, said:

"It's fantastic to be working once again with National Trust to bring The Big Draw Festival to so many National Trust properties across the UK. Their incredible spaces offer endless inspiration, and we're excited to see how artists, families, and communities bring them to life through drawing."

ENDS

CONTACT

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#MakeaMark #BDF2026 #TheBigDraw

NOTES TO EDITORS:

These represent a snapshot of the events taking place across the UK and internationally. Full event listings and booking information will be available on: www.thebigdraw.org

Direct links included below for reference:

- **Ambassador Education Group:** www.aegcm.com
- **Barber Institute of Fine Arts:** www.barber.org.uk/event/barber-family-the-big-draw
- **Better Bankside:** www.banksidelondon.co.uk/thebigdraw2026
- **The Box, Plymouth:** www.theboxplymouth.com/events/families/family-fun-imagine-the-future
- **The Burrell Collection:** www.burrellcollection.com/burrell-whats-on
- **Courtauld Gallery:** www.courtauld.ac.uk/take-part/families
- **Corstorphine & Wright:** www.thebigdraw.org/events/walk-and-draw-with-c-w-architects
- **Culture Trust Luton:** www.culturetrust.com/whats-on/big-draw-0
- **Falmouth University:** www.falmouth.ac.uk/events
- **Inspire: Culture, Learning and Libraries:**
www.inspireculture.org.uk/arts-culture/community/big-draw
- **K Art Studio Ltd:** www.thebigdraw.org/events/the-paper-cut-maiden-paper-cutting-workshop
- **Open College of Arts:** www.oca.ac.uk/oca-the-big-draw
- **Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration:** www.qbcentre.org.uk/events/the-big-draw
- **St Paul's Cathedral:** www.stpauls.co.uk/whats-on
- **Tees Valley Museums:** www.teesvalleymuseums.org
- **The Wallace Collection:** www.wallacecollection.org/learn/families/family-events
- **University of Wolverhampton:** www.wlv.ac.uk/news-and-events/events



About The Big Draw:

Founded in 2000, The Big Draw is an arts education charity that celebrates drawing and creativity in all its forms. By making drawing accessible for everyone, The Big Draw encourages people of all ages and abilities to make their mark.

The charity leads a diverse programme of advocacy, empowerment and engagement, and is the founder and driving force behind The Big Draw Festival - the world's biggest celebration of drawing. What began as a single day of events in October 2000 has grown into a global movement, with thousands of events taking place across more than 35 countries. Every October, schools, cultural organisations, libraries, artists, and communities come together worldwide to celebrate the power of drawing.

www.thebigdraw.org | Instagram: [@thebigdraw](https://www.instagram.com/thebigdraw) | Charity no. 1114811

