

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration to host the launch of the world's biggest drawing festival

*Friday 2nd October (6 - 8pm) and Saturday 3rd October 2026 (10am - 5pm)
Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration, London EC1R 1AG*

This October, The Big Draw Festival 2026 will officially launch at Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration, the **UK's only public space dedicated to illustration**.

Taking place on **Friday 2nd and Saturday 3rd October**, the weekend programme will feature artist-led workshops, drop-in creative activities and conversations for people of all ages and abilities.

Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration was founded by renowned illustrator and **Big Draw Patron Quentin Blake**, making it a fitting home for this year's Festival launch by celebrating a relationship that has shaped The Big Draw charity for over two decades.

This flagship launch event marks the beginning of The Big Draw Festival, **a month-long celebration of drawing worldwide**. Throughout October, thousands of Big Draw events will take place across the UK and internationally, bringing communities together through the universal language of drawing.

With the theme 'Make a Mark', this year's Big Draw Festival celebrates **drawing as a process and a form of playful inquiry and expression**. The theme invites everyone to explore how drawing can help us express ourselves, connect with others and see the world in new ways.

The event is made possible by the generous support of the Trinity Buoy Wharf Trust.

Matilda Barratt, Director of The Big Draw, said:

"We're absolutely delighted to be launching The Big Draw Festival 2026 at Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration. Quentin has been a long-standing Patron of The Big Draw, and so many people have such fond memories of him joining us at our Festival launches in the early 2000s. To kickstart this year's Festival in a place that celebrates his extraordinary contribution to illustration feels incredibly special!"

"'Make a Mark' is about experimentation and the joy of creating. It's a celebration of drawing and mark-making as something that is open to all, and we hope this year's Festival encourages people to have fun and just give it a go, making marks for the sake of it without worrying about the outcome.

"We're hugely grateful to Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration, the Trinity Buoy Wharf Trust, and the artists and facilitators we're working with to help bring this launch weekend to life."

Lindsey Glen, Director of Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration, said:

"We are so delighted to be working with The Big Draw once again for this festival which will celebrate drawing and spark creativity. Drawing is such an important foundation for illustration. With it, everyone can share ideas, exchange stories and express feelings."

Further programme details, artist line-ups and booking information will be released over the coming weeks.

The Big Draw Festival Launch 2026 is open to all and marks the beginning of a month-long international celebration of drawing, creativity and mark-making.

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Event Details:

The Big Draw Festival Launch 2026: Make a Mark

Friday 2nd October (6 - 8pm) and Saturday 3rd October 2026 (10am - 5pm)

Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration, London EC1R 1AG

Full event listings and booking information will be available on:

www.thebigdraw.org/about-us/the-big-draw-festival/the-big-draw-festival-launch-2026

www.thebigdraw.org

www.qbcentre.org.uk

Social Media:

Instagram: @thebigdraw | @qbcentre

Hashtags: #MakeaMark #TheBigDraw #BDF26 #QuentinBlake

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 pick up a pencil, connect with their creativity, and have fun.

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 workshops, exhibitions, installations and community projects taking place across more than 35 countries. Every October, schools, museums, galleries, libraries, artists, cultural organisations and communities around the world come together to celebrate the power of drawing to inspire creativity and bring people together.

www.thebigdraw.org | Charity no. 1114811
Instagram: @thebigdraw

About Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration

Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration is a charity and permanent public arts space, dedicated to championing illustration in all its forms.

Illustration changes everything. It is a universal language, used throughout the world to tell stories, inform, explain and persuade. The charity was founded in 2002 by much-loved illustrator Quentin Blake and previously presented and toured exhibitions from the smaller House of Illustration galleries in King's Cross, London.

The new Centre is located in Clerkenwell, within an 18th Century waterworks, beautifully restored by Tim Ronalds Architects. The Centre offers galleries, a free illustration library, gardens, a café and a shop filled with illustration gifts.

Exhibitions and tours will explore the ways that illustration shapes and changes our world, and share highlights from Quentin Blake's archive. Creative projects with schools, community groups and illustrators will promote visual literacy and empower people of all ages to share stories and ideas.

www.qbcentre.org.uk

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