

Saxton Bampfylde

# House of Illustration

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

MAY 2019



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# INTRODUCTION

Founded by Sir Quentin Blake and some of the UK's most respected illustrators in 2002, House of Illustration opened in the heart of King's Cross in London in July 2014. Over the past five years we have developed our position as a significant cultural force, representing and championing the very best of an art form that, in spite of its rich heritage, contemporary significance and broad appeal, is rarely explored by other museums and galleries.

We exist to champion the power of illustration, placing it at the heart of contemporary visual culture and introducing it to the widest possible audience. We have successfully raised its profile to a broad, receptive and diverse audience of over 2 million people by curating critically acclaimed exhibitions, commissioning new work, running international competitions, putting on high-profile events with some of the world's leading illustrators, running a successful retail operation and taking our exhibitions on tour in the UK and internationally.

To expand the breadth and scale of the work we do and to provide the organisation with greater financial security, in 2018 we explored the potential acquisition of a new, long-term home for House of Illustration. Now, thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our Founder, Sir Quentin Blake, we are about to complete the purchase of a major site in central London, just five minutes from Angel underground station and ten minutes from Farringdon. The site features a range of listed historic industrial buildings set in their own land, the earliest of which dates back to the late 17th century. These extraordinary and unique buildings will provide approximately 1000 square metres of space, just over twice our current capacity.

Once the acquisition is complete, we will embark on a fundraising campaign to raise between £3 and £4 million to refurbish the buildings with the goal of opening in the autumn of 2022. While the process of planning and fundraising to turn the site into a suitable home will be challenging, and dependent on the generosity of House of Illustration's current and future supporters, it represents a hugely exciting new chapter in the life of the organisation. Our new Chair will play a crucial role in the development of this project and the resulting expansion of our work across all areas; from exhibitions and events, to and education and community engagement.



## Mission and Vision

House of Illustration exists to champion the power of illustration, celebrating its rich heritage and placing it at the heart of contemporary visual culture; engaging, challenging and inspiring the public through innovative exhibitions, events and learning programmes, commissioning new work and promoting and supporting new talent.

Our aim is that House of Illustration becomes the key place to see, learn about and enjoy illustration in all its forms and we want to develop our galleries and spaces as a vibrant, responsive and welcoming hub for illustrators and the general public.

We fulfil this through:

- Curating a diverse exhibitions programme, exploring all forms of illustration, past and present;
- Developing a vibrant programme of public-facing events, including talks, screenings, debates, workshops and live illustration;
- Promoting new illustration talent via competitions, events and our annual illustrator in residence programme;
- Establishing a dynamic and engaging digital presence reaching national and international audiences;
- Promoting learning both on-site and via our outreach programme with schools, colleges and the local community;
- Establishing volunteer teams to engage with our work and learn new skills by helping in the gallery and learning space.



## Exhibitions

We curate a diverse range of exhibitions each year across three gallery spaces, exploring contemporary and historic illustration, and the work of both emerging and defining illustrators. We highlight illustrators whose work has never been the subject of critical exploration and are the only public gallery in the UK commissioning illustration for public display. One of our three gallery spaces is permanently devoted to the work of Sir Quentin Blake, one of the UK's most celebrated illustrators, drawing on an unparalleled archive of over 35,000 works.

Highlights in 2017 and 2018 include:

- *Gerald Scarfe: Stage and Screen* provided a new perspective on the UK's most prominent political cartoonist, focusing on six of Scarfe's defining works in opera, film and theatre.
- *Made in North Korea: Everyday Graphics from the DPRK* was the UK's first exhibition of graphic design from North Korea, revealing a style honed over decades in a closed society.
- *Enid Marx: Print, Pattern and Popular Art* was a landmark exhibition celebrating the artist, a contemporary of Eric Ravilious and Edward Bawden who made a pioneering contribution to mid-20th century design.
- *100 Figures: The Unseen Art of Quentin Blake*, the first ever exhibition devoted to large scale oil paintings, drawings and prints created by Sir Quentin Blake between 1950 and 2000.
- *Lucinda Rogers: On Gentrification*. The exhibition was our fourth commission of new work and featured drawings the artist made documenting Dalston's 150-year-old Ridley Road Market and the construction of an adjacent luxury apartment block.
- *Christy Burdock: The People in the Gallery* showcased a selection of the work that our illustrator-in-residence, Christy Burdock, created during her time at House of Illustration.
- *John Vernon Lord: Illustrating Carroll and Joyce* showed a selection of recent works by this celebrated illustrator and teacher of illustration.
- *Journeys Drawn: Illustration from the Refugee Crisis*. The first UK exhibition to explore the refugee crisis through illustration featured 40 multi-media works by 12 contemporary artists, two of whom were themselves refugees.
- *John Yeoman and Quentin Blake: 50 years of Drawing*. This exhibition explored Blake's longstanding creative collaboration from Blake's first book for children *A Drink of Water*, to their most recent collaboration *All Year Round*.
- *Quentin Blake: The Model as Artist* (5 October 2018 – 24 February 2019) showed a selection of Blake's earliest figurative works, created in the early 1950s when he was taking life drawing classes at Chelsea School of Art.





## Audiences

Our audiences continued to grow during 2018, with 30,000 visitors to our exhibitions on-site at House of Illustration in Kings Cross and a further 7,000 attending events there. In addition, 10,000 people joined in events off-site, and more than 100,000 visited our touring exhibitions across the UK and internationally during the year.

Digital media plays a vital role in the way in which House of Illustration markets its work, enriches its exhibitions and engages with a larger national and international audience. We continue to benefit from the successful implementation of a dedicated social media strategy which coordinates output across platforms and we now have over 50,000 Twitter, 25,000 Facebook and 36,000 Instagram followers.

## Learning

Encouraging people of all ages and backgrounds to engage with and be inspired by illustration – and to be illustrators - is at the heart of House of Illustration's vision. Working within its Clore Studio and through outreach, [House of Illustration's Learning programmes](#) use illustration as a powerful tool for developing creative and communication skills while supporting literacy, confidence, positive attitudes to cross-curricular learning and professional development. All our education work is delivered by a team of outstanding practicing illustrators who bring with them a broad range of expertise and experience, along with specially commissioned experts for workshops, masterclasses and courses.



## Promoting Illustration Talent

We support emerging talent by commissioning new work, running our Summer and Winter Fairs and the UK's only residency for illustrators and graphic artists. This six-month residency provides a unique opportunity for illustrators to develop their artistic practice by creating a new body of work.

In partnership with The Folio Society, we also run the international Book Illustration Competition. This is a unique partnership that each year seeks to identify and promote new talent. The competition is open to all illustrators over the age of 18, both students and professionals, and attracts very significant numbers of applications from all over the world.

## Events and Public Programme

Throughout the year, House of Illustration runs a regular programme of public events aimed at reaching and engaging a wide variety of audiences. It runs alongside our exhibition programme and provides audiences with opportunities for deeper engagement with some of the themes raised by them. Other events are "stand alone", exploring topical or current subjects including the launch of significant new illustrated books.

## Volunteers

House of Illustration relies each year on the enormous contribution that is made by its volunteers and there are, at any one time, a team of over 50 regularly supporting the organisation across all areas of its activity. Many of our volunteers are early career illustrators and it has been really pleasing to see how beneficial the experience of volunteering has been to their career development. Throughout the year House of Illustration runs a programme of activities for its volunteers which includes talks, question and answer sessions, practical workshops and opportunities for them to sell their own work.

## Fundraising

During 2018 we generated £3,969,000 of income. Of this £646,000 was from exhibitions, retail, competitions and partnerships. The remaining £3,323,000 was generated by fundraising in the form of individual donations, grants from trusts and foundations, corporate partnerships, a major fundraising auction, events and House of Illustration's Friends and Patrons schemes. This year, our fundraised income included an extraordinarily generous donation from our Founder, Sir Quentin Blake, to allow us to complete the purchase of the new site in central London which will become our long-term home.





# THE ROLE

The new Chair will support the Director in addressing these key issues amongst others over the next five years:

1. **Building and Capital development:** Delivery of the new building project, from raising the necessary funds through to the completion of work on site.
2. **Income Diversification:** Leading efforts to diversify the organisation's income, including the creation and delivery of a new business plan to enable House of Illustration to achieve its ambitions.
3. **Fundraising:** Take an active role in developing a highly effective fundraising function to support both House of Illustration's core activity and its capital project.
4. **Organisation:** Restructuring and development of the organisation to take it through this important growth and transformation phase.
5. **Stakeholder Management:** Deepening relationships with key stakeholders including funders and developing relationships within the cultural sector, within business and with local authorities and government.



# PERSON SPECIFICATION

The successful candidate will bring all or most of the following:

1. **Leadership:** A strong understanding of governance and the skills, intellect and stature to be an effective Chair of a very high calibre board.
2. **Strong Ambassador:** An ability to act as an advocate and an ambassador for House of Illustration across a diverse range of senior stakeholders including national and regional government, donors, sponsors, supporters, media and visitors.
3. **Profile:** Be a person of significant standing gained within a high-profile organisation in the commercial, voluntary, public or arts sectors.
4. **Sector Interest:** Possess a strong interest in the cultural and creative sector and a willingness to support innovation and a bold vision.
5. **Change Management:** Have experience of implementing a significant level of organisational change as part of an executive or non- executive role.
6. **Business Models:** Have experience of innovative approaches to diversifying income streams, such as external partnerships, membership strategies, fundraising and commercial offerings. Entrepreneurial flair and energy will be advantageous.
7. **Approach:** A participative style, an ability to take a robust approach when necessary and the capability to build consensus.



# TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

- The post is non-remunerative.
- The commitment is estimated at 2-3 days per month.
- Location is London.

## HOW TO APPLY

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to the **House of Illustration** on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at **[www.saxbam.com/appointments](http://www.saxbam.com/appointments)**, using code **EAEXB**.

Click on the '**apply**' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Tuesday 4 June 2019**.

### GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please **do not** include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

*The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.*