

A new network for artists **Wysing.Outpost.Open School East** **THE W.O.OSE NETWORK**

Press Release, 29 September 2017

PHYLLIDA BARLOW AND YINKA SHONIBARE AMONGST LEADING ARTISTS SUPPORTING CAMPAIGN TO LAUNCH THE W.O.OSE NETWORK



Stills from new film by artist Benedict Drew, created for The W.O.OSE Network

Wysing, Outpost and Open School East have joined forces to launch a campaign to raise £30,000 to help establish The W.O.OSE Network, which will connect and support artists across generations. Artist Advocates who have already joined include Phyllida Barlow, Elizabeth Price and Yinka Shonibare. Artist Benedict Drew has also created a special film for the new network which can be viewed here: www.woose.network

The Network will consist of W.O.OSE Artist Advocates, Supporters and Fellows, and will support a culture of connectivity where artists, curators and patrons can meet, exchange and develop ideas, discuss their work and gain access to exclusive opportunities and events.

W.O.OSE Artist Advocates will provide support for artists through a range of development, commissioning and mentoring programmes, and currently include Ed Atkins, Phyllida Barlow, Simon Bayliss, Sonia Boyce, Mira Calix, Benedict Drew, Paul Purgas, Eddie Peake, Elizabeth Price, Yinka Shonibare, Milly Thompson, Nik Colk Void and Mark Aerial Waller.

Key to the success of the Network are W.O.OSE Supporters who will help to establish a closer, more collaborative relationship between recognised arts practitioners and patrons and the next generation of artists. Supporters will take part in the various networking events organised by the initiative.

The Network will invite emerging artists and curators to become W.O.OSE Fellows. Through membership, Fellows will gain exclusive access to the opportunities offered, which include residencies, exhibitions, networking events and mentoring programmes.

Donna Lynas, Wysing Director; Nell Croose Myhill, Outpost Chair; Anna Colin and Laurence Taylor, Open School East Co-Directors: *“With rising costs of living, increasing tuition fees and an average salary for artists of only £10,000 a year, the next generation of artists is in urgent need of alternative training, development and networking opportunities. By donating to this network and contributing to its vitality through expertise and advocacy, artists and patrons will be at the vanguard of a new way of supporting emerging artists through the creation of new opportunities, what’s more, in burgeoning and increasingly influential arts scenes outside the capital.”*

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All funds raised for The W.O.OSE Network will be matched £ for £ by Arts Council England through their Catalyst Evolve scheme. For more information about The W.O.OSE Network and how you can get involved, visit: www.woose.network

W.O.OSE Artist Advocate Quotes

Elizabeth Price, W.O.OSE Artist Advocate: *"It has never been easy for young people from working and lower middle class backgrounds to become artists. It has always been a precarious career, hard to establish and difficult to sustain, especially if you have family responsibilities. It was hard for my generation, but I look around now at the prospects for younger artists and I have to say it looks virtually impossible. When you combine the costs of education with housing and studio costs, along with low wage, insecure employment on zero-hours contracts (even when working for Universities!) - it leads to the unavoidable conclusion that there is no realistic career route for most. That is why initiatives like this are so essential, providing a life-line of economic and peer support that will enable some, at least, to make it through. This is important, not just because individual artists will be able to fulfill their own potential, but also because art itself desperately needs a broader social demographic. The New Artist Initiative provides a much needed focus, enabling established artists and the wider artistic community to come together and offer support to younger generations, in whatever way they can: providing time and expertise or through donations."*

Phyllida Barlow, W.O.OSE Artist Advocate: *"My experience of Wysing Arts Centre is that it offers an increasingly rare opportunity to bring together artists and audiences in adventurous and experimental experiences of the visual arts. Wysing has established a brave and imaginative emphasis on experimentation and critical discussion in which the Wysing community, and the broader community, are given every opportunity to participate. Wysing offers the practical support of space, time and resources for artists to engage with the more challenging aspects of their creative activities and to bring these to fruition, and the organisation enables both artists and audiences to be rewarded with diverse, stimulating and enlightening encounters: both artists and audiences can collaborate in mutually questioning what art is, who it is for and where it can be seen beyond the commercial precedents of today's art world. This important and imaginative new collaboration serves both artists and audiences with support, challenge and enthusiasm."*

Yinka Shonibare W.O.OSE Artist Advocate: *"Artists at all stages of their career are looking to support each other and provide creative exchange and opportunities. At a time when artists are feeling increasingly isolated and unsupported, The W.O.OSE Network will provide time, space and money – all of which are under threat – to enable artists to fulfil their potential."*

- ENDS -

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Notes to Editors

Wysing Arts Centre

Wysing Arts Centre is a progressive arts organisation that develops new ways to support artists and enable art and ideas to reach a wide range of people in unexpected ways. Integral to the organisation's ethos is the provision of space, support and finance to enable artists to progress their ideas, and artists at all stages in their lives are able to participate in a range of programmes that are developed in response to their needs. Wysing's large rural site near Cambridge includes onsite accommodation in a 17th century farmhouse, artists' studios, a gallery and educational facilities, a range of project spaces and a ceramics studio.

<http://www.wysingartscentre.org/>

OUTPOST

OUTPOST is an artist-run gallery, based in Norwich, committed to the uncompromising presentation of contemporary art. Since its founding in 2004, OUTPOST has established itself as a leading centre for artist activity in the east of England, producing a core programme of seven exhibitions per year alongside offsite projects, events. In 2010, OUTPOST launched OUTPOST Studios, providing affordable workspace for 80 contemporary artists.

www.norwichoutpost.org

Open School East

Open School East is a space for artistic learning that is experimental, versatile and highly collaborative. It runs two mutually reinforcing strands:

- A free, year-long learning and studio-based programme for emerging artists – the Associates Programme;
- A multifaceted programme of events, activities and training, free of charge and open to all.

Open School East works to develop the talent of artists at an early stage of their career and to equip them with the tools to become resourceful and self-sufficient. Central to Open School East's approach is a commitment to foster cultural, intellectual and social exchanges between artists and the broader public. Open School East was founded in 2013 in East London and relocated to Margate, Kent in 2017.

<http://www.openschooleast.org/>



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