



THE ARTS SOCIETY

The newest longstanding cultural organisation in the UK

- **NADFAS becomes The Arts Society**
- **90,000 member-strong arts education charity aims for greater recognition and influence in arts industry**

17/5/17 – The National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies (NADFAS), a 90,000 member-strong arts education charity founded nearly fifty years ago, has today changed its name and identity in order to better reflect the extent of its role in the cultural life of the UK and overseas.

The Arts Society is the new name for an organisation whose network of 400 volunteer-driven local societies contributes to around 500 separate projects each year, donates around £200,000 annually to arts initiatives and contributes around £3M worth of volunteer work to the heritage sector.

The Arts Society works to promote and advance arts education and preserve our artistic heritage. It offers unmatched opportunities to discover and support the arts, locally, nationally and globally. Its regular events, including study days, cultural visits, tours and lectures provide welcome opportunities to hear expert lecturers share their specialist knowledge about the arts. And its members contribute to our artistic heritage through volunteering and grants. The belief that the arts have the potential to enrich people's lives is at the heart of the Society's work.

Florian Schweizer, Chief Executive of The Arts Society, said, "For some years we have been aware that the work of the Society has far outstripped the rather unwieldy and restrictive title and acronym that we have carried until today. The Arts Society plays a vital, under sung role in generating public enthusiasm for the arts, providing volunteers to projects all over the country and contributing financially and practically with work hours to research projects, which increases understanding of our heritage and informs our cultural life. The Society's field of vision is wider than 'Decorative and Fine Arts', encompassing film and the performing arts for example, and our network of local organisations is a true social enterprise – hence The Arts Society."



A few examples of the work of The Arts Society:

- The Society supports **post-graduate conservation students, interns and apprentices** at institutions such as the Textile Conservation Centre (Glasgow), West Dean College (Sussex) and the University of York, helping to maintain specialist skills.
- **Members volunteer** on arts committees and boards, run the Society's education programme, fund hundreds of positive causes and contribute to arts education across many countries, as well as volunteering in museums, churches, historic houses and galleries to help to keep them running.
- Each year, the Society works with the Royal Society of British Artists to give talented young artists the chance to be displayed in the **RBA Annual Exhibition in London's Mall Galleries** - often the first such opportunity to be offered to student artists. Local societies forge links with the nation's schools to encourage and select the best examples of A-Level work for consideration.
- The Society **provides bursaries and awards grants** for internships at a wide range of museums and galleries, including the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Watts Gallery, Guildhall Art Gallery and British Library.
- For ten years, the Society has supported Dulwich Picture Gallery in offering portfolio development opportunities to gifted young people between the ages of 15 and 18 on the **Life Drawing Masterclass**.
- Volunteers contribute to the **preservation of collections**, deepening the understanding of the nation's treasures through lengthy digitisation work, photography, archiving and cataloguing.
- In Birmingham, the Society has created **arts and history trails** between diverse places of worship, helping to bring communities together and to spread appreciation of the similarities and differences between religions in local areas.

The Arts Society offers **more than 5400 hours of lectures each year**, covering architecture, archaeology, painting, prints, sculpture, textiles, furniture, furnishings, costume, glass and ceramics, enamel, metalwork, garden design, installation art, music, dance, theatre, literature and film, as well as the lives and influences of the artists involved. Recent titles include *Tea, Opium & Hong Kong: The China Trade*, *Pots & Frocks: The world of Grayson Perry*, *Britain's Favourite Transvestite*, *Pop goes the artist: From Bob Dylan to Andy Warhol* and *Behind the Smile: The story of the Mona Lisa*. Every other hour of every day a lecture is taking place somewhere in the country.

The Society's new visual identity and name has been designed by **Jane Wentworth Associates**, led by Director Jo Marsh, alongside Jim Sutherland, Creative Director of **Studio Sutherland**. It is designed to work for the organisation's network of local groups, as well as its national headquarters, aiming to reflect the local community work, while underlining the feeling of belonging to one organisation.

The monogram, with interlocking A and S, communicates a value at the heart of the organisation; that it connects people to the arts and to each other. This was designed by Studio Sutherland from a typeface called Plantin and further refined by Yorkshire lettering artist Charles Stewart to create a unique and bespoke design with a classic and timeless look.

Jo Marsh, Director at Jane Wentworth Associates, said, "It's been a privilege and a huge responsibility to rebrand such an important organisation. What was clear is that this is an organisation made up of a strong network of Societies loved by its members, but they needed a more meaningful way communicating who they are - a clearer name, a unifying message and a more engaging visual identity. We believe we have delivered this through a collaborative process involving as many of the key stakeholders as possible and the new brand will help The Arts Society regain a place at the top table of the arts and heritage sector."

-ends-

NOTES TO EDITORS

About The Arts Society:

The Arts Society brings people together through a shared curiosity for the arts. Our events provide welcoming places – locally, nationally and globally – to hear expert lecturers share their specialist knowledge about the arts. Our 90,000+ members contribute to and preserve our artistic heritage through volunteering and grants. The belief that the arts have the potential to enrich peoples' lives is at the heart of everything we do. We inspire, we do, we give. theartsociety.org

Issued by *The Press Office*. For further information and images, please contact Michael Barrett on 020 8295 2424, 07813-558772 or mb@thepressoffice.uk.com