

ROYAL ACADEMY KEEPER EILEEN COOPER RA RECOGNISED BY WOMEN OF THE YEAR

Royal Academician and Keeper of the Royal Academy of Arts, Eileen Cooper, will join over 400 women from all walks of life at the Women of the Year Lunch as a '2016 Woman of Achievement'. Each guest is regarded as a 'Woman of the Year' and represents not only herself, but the millions of women who make a difference every day.

Eileen Cooper RA is attending in celebration of her contribution to the arts and arts education.

Cooper has strong ties to both the Royal Academy and the Royal Academy Schools. She became a Royal Academician in 2000 and was elected as the Keeper of the Royal Academy in 2010, the first woman in this role since the Academy began in 1768. Born in 1953 in Glossop, Derbyshire, Cooper studied at Goldsmiths College from 1971-1974 and was taught by fellow Royal Academicians Michael Craig Martin and Albert Irvin. She went on to study at the Royal College of Art and by the 1980s was exhibiting widely. Cooper is strongly committed to a part-time teaching career at the RA Schools, in addition to Central St Martins and the Royal College of Art.

An exhibition celebrating 40 years of Cooper's drawings, *Hide and Seek: Drawings by Eileen Cooper RA*, took place at the Royal Academy in May 2015. It has since gone on tour to Swindon Museum & Art Gallery, Swindon and is currently on show at The Mercer Art Gallery, Harrogate, until Sunday 15 January 2017.

Eileen Cooper RA comments, 'I was delighted and surprised to be invited to this wonderful event celebrating the achievements of women. I consider it a great honour and I am looking forward to it.'

This year's event will take place on Monday 17 October 2016 at the InterContinental London Park Lane Hotel.

Previous attendees of the Women of the Year Lunch have included: Nicole Kidman, Fern Britton, Professor Mary Beard, Mel Giedroyc, Nadiya Hussein, Sally Lindsay, Lindsay Lohan, Ellen MacArthur, Eimear McBride, Lulu, Dame Harriet Walter, Julie Walters CBE and Dame Jacqueline Wilson.

Women of the Year has recognised, celebrated and inspired women of all backgrounds since 1955 and continues to shine a light on extraordinary women through an annual Lunch and Awards ceremony, Lecture and on-going foundation work.

Sandi Toksvig, President of Women of the Year, said: 'I'm looking forward to welcoming all our guests and winners to the Women of the Year Lunch & Awards in London this October. I would love to show the room to every schoolgirl growing up in Britain today and tell them 'you can be whatever you want to be: just look at these incredible women.'

Exceptional women will receive special awards at the Lunch for being an inspiration to others, demonstrated by their courage, selflessness and dedication. These special Women of the Year Awards are sponsored by Barclays, DFS, *Good Housekeeping*, ITV's *Lorraine* and Prudential and will be announced on Monday 17 October 2016.

Recent Women of the Year winners include:

- **Kris Hallenga**, breast cancer awareness campaigner and co-founder of Coppafeel!
- **Jayne Senior MBE**, Rotherham sexual abuse whistle-blower
- **Baroness Doreen Lawrence**, campaigner for justice following the murder of her son Stephen
- **Fahma Mohammed**, anti-FGM activist
- **Christina Noble**, founder of The Christina Noble Children's Foundation
- **Dame Jocelyn Bell Burnell**, Astrophysicist
- **Katie Piper**, who set up a charity to help burns survivors after being victim of a brutal acid attack

Notes to Editors

The RA Schools, headed by the Keeper of the Royal Academy, Eileen Cooper RA, have been an integral part of the Royal Academy of Arts since its foundation in 1768 and is the longest established art school in the UK. The RA Schools offers the only free three-year postgraduate programme in Europe. Current Professors include Michael Landy RA, Chantal Joffe RA, Cathie Pilkington RA, Piers Gough RA, Humphrey Ocean RA, Gerald Libby, Tim Green and Roberto Cipolla.

Past students of the RA Schools include JMW Turner RA, William Blake and John Constable RA. More recent alumni include John Hoyland RA, Anthony Caro RA, Paul Huxley RA, Matthew Darbyshire, Rachael Champion, Toby Christian, Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, Lucy Williams, Hannah Sawtell, Catherine Story, Prem Sahib and Eddie Peake.

About the Royal Academy of Arts

The Royal Academy of Arts was founded by King George III in 1768. It has a unique position in being an independent, privately funded institution led by eminent artists and architects whose purpose is to be a clear, strong voice for art and artists. Its public programme promotes the creation, enjoyment and appreciation of the visual arts through exhibitions, education and debate.

The RA is undergoing a transformative redevelopment which will be completed in time for its 250th anniversary in 2018. Led by the internationally-acclaimed architect Sir David Chipperfield RA and supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), the plans will link Burlington House on Piccadilly and Burlington Gardens for the first time, uniting and revitalising the two-acre site. The redevelopment will

also reveal the elements that make the RA unique, sharing with the public the historic treasures in its Collection, the work of its Academicians and the RA Schools, alongside its world-class exhibitions programme. For more information on the RA visit www.royalacademy.org.uk/ra250#video

For more information about Women of the Year visit: www.womenoftheyear.co.uk/

For interview requests or for more information about Eileen Cooper RA and Women of the Year Lunch & Awards please contact, Four Colman Getty:

020 3697 4200 / Womenoftheyear@fourcolmangetty.com

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