



THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS CELEBRATES FRIENDS WEEK WITH THE APPOINTMENT OF HRH THE DUCHESS OF CORNWALL AS NEW PATRON

After almost forty years, The Duke of Edinburgh will pass the patronage of the Friends of the Royal Academy of Arts to The Duchess of Cornwall. The appointment of Her Royal Highness as Patron will take place during the annual Friends Week from 16 – 22 May 2016. The Duke of Edinburgh has been patron of the programme since it was founded in 1977.

Christopher Le Brun, President of the Royal Academy, said: ‘HRH The Duke of Edinburgh has been a loyal Patron of the Friends for almost 40 years. We would like to express our thanks for his contribution and are delighted that this support continues with the appointment of HRH The Duchess of Cornwall who we look forward to welcoming in the near future. Her Royal Highness joins us at a high point in our history with Friends membership now at almost 100,000.’

Charles Saumarez Smith CBE, Secretary and Chief Executive of the Royal Academy, said: ‘The Friends provide vital support to the Royal Academy, assisting in its fundamental purpose of promoting a wide and valuable participation in the arts. They continue to provide the largest single contribution to the RA’s income, for which we are most grateful. We are very excited to reveal to them the revitalised RA site in 2018 in time for our 250th anniversary.’

Friends Week is a week of events dedicated to the Friends to thank them for their continued support of the Royal Academy. Highlights this year include:

- 16 – 22 May: Behind-the-scenes at the RA, from the Red Collars to the RA Magazine
- Monday 16 May, 6.30 – 8pm: Opening Reception with Tim Marlow, Artistic Director and Charles Saumarez Smith, Chief Executive
- Tuesday 17 May, 11am – 12pm: RA250 – Hard hat tour of the building redevelopment site
- Tuesday 17 May, 6.30 – 8pm: A talk with Christopher Le Brun, the Royal Academy’s President
- Wednesday 18 May, 6.30 – 8pm: RA250 – Discover the RA Collections
- Wednesday 18 May, 6 – 8pm: In Conversation with the RA Schools
- Thursday 19 May, 7 – 9pm: Private view and talk with Tess Jaray RA
- Thursday 19 May, 7 – 9pm: Italian Supper Club and Wine Pairing
- Thursday 19 May, 6 – 9pm: Urban Photography Workshop with John Nassari
- Friday 20 May, 8.30 – 10am: Art at Breakfast – 30 Years of Cockpit Arts Craft Business Incubation
- Friday 20 May – Sunday, 22 May: Friends of the RA Lounge at Art16 Art Fair

For the full programme of events, visit www.royalacademy.org.uk/friendsweek. The RA is a registered charity that relies upon funds from its activities and on the support of sponsors, donors and its loyal Friends to continue its work.

Notes to Editors

About Friends of the RA

The Friends of the RA is the Royal Academy's membership programme which was founded on 1 January 1977 by Royal Academician and President of the RA, Sir Hugh Casson (1910-1999). Casson was most notably Director of Architecture of the 1951 Festival of Britain. A year later, in 1952, he created the interiors for the Royal Yacht *Britannia* for Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip, with whom he built a life-long relationship. Casson was one of the most loved and respected Presidents of the Royal Academy from 1976 to 1984 and he greatly rejuvenated the institution, above all as founder of the Friends with HRH The Duke of Edinburgh becoming its first Patron. The Friends of the RA are governed by a Board of Directors and the current Chairman is Denise Wilson, CEO of the Davies Review for Women on Boards.

About Friends membership

Friends of the Royal Academy membership is a unique way to experience the RA's vibrant artistic programme of leading art, design and architecture. Friends of the Royal Academy enjoy priority and free entry to world-class exhibitions at the Royal Academy for a year, and other priority benefits and services including:

- Priority booking for all RA events
- All-day access to the Keeper's House, a café, restaurant, bar and garden
- Friends Previews before the exhibitions open to the public
- Exclusive Friends private views and events
- A programme of inspiring talks and events from leading artists at the RA
- Being the first to know about RA news and events through the RA magazine and Friends e-newsletters
- RA Shop savings

Standard Friends membership is £97 Direct Debit (£107 one off payment). Young Friends (16 – 25 years) membership is £45 Direct Debit (£50 one off payment). Joint membership is £140 Direct Debit (£150 one off payment). You can buy membership online www.royalacademy.org.uk/friends, by telephone 020 7300 8090, or by visiting the Friends Desk at the Royal Academy.

About the Keeper's House

In 2013 the Keeper's House opened to the public following a major redevelopment. The £6.5 million project was led by award-winning architects Long & Kentish, with interiors designed by David Chipperfield Architects and the garden designed by leading landscape designer Tom Stuart-Smith. The catering is managed by restaurateurs Peyton & Byrne. Works of art by Royal Academicians and from the RA Collection are on display throughout the building. The space includes a restaurant, cocktail bar, garden and lounges. Located in the eastern wing of the Academy's historic Burlington House building, the Keeper's House was built in the 1870s as the central London home for the Keeper of the Royal Academy.

Social Media

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#RAFriends

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 further press information, please contact the Press Office on 020 7300 5615 or press.office@royalacademy.org.uk

For public information, please print 020 7300 8000 or www.royalacademy.org.uk
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