

Press Release

16 November 2011

Gallery Educators recognised for excellence

On Tuesday 15 November, four exceptional individuals were recognised for their dedication to making the visual arts more accessible. The inaugural **Marsh Awards for Excellence in Gallery Education** were presented at a special evening event run by engage, the National Association for Gallery Education.

Jane Sillis, Director of engage, said:

'We're delighted to be able to celebrate the achievements of colleagues in our sector. Gallery educators are essential to making sure the widest possible audience can get involved with art and artists. The volume and standard of nominations for these awards show just how dedicated people working with audiences in galleries across the UK are.'

This year's recipients are:

Karen Eslea, Head of Learning at Turner Contemporary, Margate, who has been working closely with local people to create this new organisation for over ten years in the run up to the opening of their new building in 2011. She says 'my role has been to ensure that local people feel involved in the gallery's development, and see it as a valuable resource'. Over 690,000 people saw the organisation's work or were involved in its programmes before the new gallery building opened in April this year, with another 300,000 people visiting since the opening.

Artist and educator **Tom Goddard**, who received nominations from Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Swansea and Oriel Myrddin Gallery, Carmarthen, for having shown 'outstanding dedication and tireless commitment to identifying, establishing and facilitating numerous community engagement programmes for schools, groups and individuals'. His work has enabled the galleries to reach out to vulnerable young people and those who had previously not been involved with galleries or artists, and to participate in national projects with organisations including Tate and engage.

engage in the
visual arts



engage

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engage

works through its members to promote access to, understanding and enjoyment of the visual arts.

engage members include gallery educators, artists, curators, students, teachers, youth and community workers, policymakers and others involved in learning and the visual arts.

We are the UK's most effective advocate for gallery education

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Image: Students viewing Santiago Mostyn's work exhibited in *Nothing in the World But Youth* at Turner Contemporary. Photo © Alexander James.

Former Primary School Teacher **Sylvia Jones**, who has volunteered for 25 years for National Museums Liverpool. She was nominated by the Walker Art Gallery for her 'enthusiasm and dedication in ensuring every visitor she encounters has an enjoyable experience'. During her ten years at the gallery she has devised a series of successful tours. She says 'I have met such interesting people and, I hope, added to their enjoyment of the Walker.'

Artist and educator **Laura Wilson**, who was nominated by Chisenhale Gallery, London, for her energy and commitment to her part-time role of Education Organiser. Her nominator says she has shown 'remarkable commitment, enthusiasm, unwavering flair and good humour in what is a challenging role operating on a shoestring budget... Over the past two years Laura has increased attendance at the gallery and secured its position as a 'go to' local resource.'

Notes to Editors:

engage, the National Association for Gallery Education, is passionate about increasing access to, enjoyment and understanding of the visual arts. engage supports gallery education through professional development for artists, educators and gallery staff and through a wide range of research. engage projects range from supporting galleries in their work with young people to developing partnerships between schools and galleries and advocating to policymakers.

The Marsh Christian Trust was founded in 1981, and makes approximately 300 donations per year to small registered charities. It has a growing awards scheme consisting of 55 awards. The trust works in partnership with various organisations, such as engage, to identify the best candidates and deliver these awards.

The Marsh Awards for Excellence in Gallery Education are new annual awards aiming to recognise those working in Gallery Education who have shown dedication or innovation in their work. Nominations were judged by a panel of experts from the sector and Brian Marsh, Chair of the Marsh Christian Trust.

