

For immediate release

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LAUNCH OF ILLUSTRATION AWARDS 2013

The Association of Illustrators (AOI) is set to announce details of its major annual competition for illustrators which has been rebranded as the Illustration Awards following 36 successful years as *Images*. With the AOI entering its 40th year in 2013 as an organisation that represents the artistic and commercial interests of illustrators, it remains as committed as ever to maintaining the integrity of the industry as well as showcasing a range of contemporary talent.

Heng Khoo, AOI's Managing Director says, "As the AOI approaches its 40th anniversary, we want our prestigious illustration awards to best reflect the scope and ambition of those working in the industry. After the successful launch of *Images 36* exhibition, I am delighted that the Illustration Awards Exhibition will be held at Somerset House in autumn 2013".

The Illustration Awards are produced annually by the AOI to recognise exceptional work by illustrators internationally and promote illustration as an essential contributor to global visual culture. They are open to all illustrators working across all sectors using any medium.

Louise O'Reilly, who is organising the Awards says, "Through *Images* the AOI has established itself as a producer of the most comprehensive illustration awards in the UK over the past three decades. The 36 years of the *Images* competition is a fantastic legacy to build on and the Illustration Awards are the natural part of its evolution".

There are eight categories for submissions which are Advertising, Books, Children's Books, Design, Editorial & Social Comment, Research & Knowledge Communication, Public Realm and Self-initiated Projects. Each category will be judged by a panel of three distinguished industry professionals. The chair for 2013 will be writer and *Varoom* editor, John O'Reilly.

Helen Thomas the AOI's Exhibitions and Events Manager says, "The exhibition and events programme that accompanied the awards this year introduced 17,000 members of the public to illustrations far reaching applications, its capacity to communicate and its potential to inspire. We look forward to building on this success next year with this exciting new chapter for the AOI and its awards programme."

In a marked contrast to previous years, two overall award winners will be announced in the categories of Professional Illustration which is open to all practicing professionals, and New Talent, which is open to students and recent graduates. These will be announced at a special award ceremony and exhibition launch at Somerset House in October 2013. This year's *Images 36: Best of*

British Illustration exhibition attracted a record number of viewers during its month-long run at Somerset House.

The call for entries will be announced during December

For further information please contact: Paul Smith

email: press@theaoi.com direct line: 020 7759 1014 www.theaoi.com

notes to editors

The Association of Illustrators (AOI) is a non-profit trade association with a membership that includes freelance illustrators, agents, clients, students and colleges. Established in 1973, it is the leading body to represent illustrators in the UK and campaigns for illustrators' rights, continually working to increase the professional standing of illustrators, commercially and artistically. The AOI works to improve contract content and contracting practice extended to illustrators by commissioners.

Association of Illustrators, Somerset House, The Strand, London WC2R 1LA

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