

SOMERSET HOUSE PRESS RELEASE



Lauren Claire Gentry, *Running on Time*

Images 36: Best of British Illustration **A free exhibition at Somerset House, London** **3 – 28 October 2012**

Somerset House hosts Images 36: Best of British Illustration exhibition, organised annually by the Association of Illustrators (AOI), for the first time in its history.

Images 36: Best of British Illustration presents the winning work of over 50 artists from the length and breadth of the UK, who entered the AOI's flagship competition, *Images*.

The gold, silver and bronze award winners from each of the eight competition categories (Advertising, Books, Children's Books, Design, New Media, Editorial, Self-Promotion and New Talent) will be showcased in Somerset House's Terrace Rooms, providing a comprehensive overview of the creative range and varied application of illustration today in all its forms.

The exhibition features exciting new talent and established names such as Rod Hunt (*Where's Stig?*), Chris Haughton (Booktrust best new illustrator), Lizzie Mary Cullen (Design Week's 50 Hot people), Stephen Collins (Jonathan Cape/ Observer Graphic Short Story Prize, 2010), Steve May (shortlisted for British Animation Award, 2008) and Olaf Hajek (AA Directors Club, Europe Gold Award, 2003).

The winners are selected by a specially chosen jury who represent all aspects of the industry including agents, publishers and artists. Internationally acclaimed artists such as Noma Bar and David Foldvari are amongst this year's judges alongside Art Directors from Guardian G2, Granta Publications, Hodder & Stoughton and Random House, as well as Creative Directors from leading design and digital agencies.

To coincide with the exhibition, an accompanying book *Images 36: Best of British Illustration 2012* will also be launched. The book brings together the shortlisted 350 artworks and profiles from 240 illustrators, including those featured in the exhibition, as well as an editorial section with a series of specially commissioned essays by cultural commentators.

After Somerset House, the *Images 36* exhibition begins a national tour continuing into 2013. Venues confirmed so far include Blackpool & Fylde College, Swansea Metropolitan University, Middlesex University and University for the Creative Arts, Maidstone.

Images is the flagship programme for the promotion of contemporary British illustration produced by the AOI since 1976. It is the only independent, jury-selected illustration competition in the UK.

Images 36: Best of British Illustration is sponsored by Grant Thornton and Ted Baker.

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Learning and Participation

To accompany the exhibition, a comprehensive programme of learning events, workshops and activities will take place for families, adults and students, assisted by award-winning illustrators featured in *Images 36: Best of British Illustration*. Highlights include:

The Big Draw at Somerset House – 6 October

In partnership with the AOI and The Big Draw festival, Somerset House will be hosting *The Big Draw at Somerset House: The Big Thames Drawing Challenge* on 6 October. In an attempt to create London's longest drawing ever, award winning illustrator Marion Deuchars and three of the illustrators in the exhibition – Lizzie Mary Cullen, Lara Harwood and Emma Haines – will work with the public to make a drawing the length of Somerset House's River Terrace, inspired by the iconic Georgian building and riverside location. The public are encouraged to drop in for free and contribute to this exciting art project.

Mokita 2: Sentimentality Symposium – 16 October

Organised by the University of Brighton, Camberwell College of Arts, University of the Arts London and Kingston University London, Mokita's second one-day illustration forum will provide professional advice to students with a keynote speech from celebrated paper-cutting artist Rob Ryan on 16 October.

Family and Adult workshops – 6, 18 and 27 October

There will be family and adult workshops taking place throughout the exhibition run, led by the talent behind *Images 36 Best of British Illustration*. On 6 October, Booktrust's Best New Illustrator Chris Haughton will help children to create and decorate paper owls; Gail Armstrong will host a creative and challenging workshop for adults, teaching the technique of paper cutting using a variety of textures and colours on 18 October; and on 27 October, Yasmeen Ismail invites families to invent spooky characters for a special Halloween Family Workshop.

Talks – every Sunday in October

Every Sunday afternoon, one artist featured in the exhibition will give a free gallery talk, giving an insight into their work and their professional practice. Places are allocated on a first come first served basis.

For further details on times and prices, please visit www.somerset-house.org.uk/learning



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Notes to Editors

Images 36: Best of British Illustration

Opening hours: 3 – 28 October 2012, daily from 10.00 to 18.00
Address: Terrace Rooms, Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 1LA
Tel: +44 (0)20 7845 4600 www.somersethouse.org.uk
Admission: Free
Transport: Nearest Underground Stations are: Temple, Covent Garden, Charing Cross and Embankment

For the AOI press enquires and images, please contact Paul Smith on press@theaoi.com or 0207 613 4328.

For Somerset House press enquiries and images, please contact Josephine Rodrigues or Stephanie Lilley on press@somersethouse.org.uk or 0207 845 4638/4619

About Somerset House

Somerset House is a spectacular neo-classical building in the heart of London, sitting between the Strand and the River Thames. Since opening to the public in 2000, Somerset House has produced a distinctive public programme that annually draws over 2 million visitors to the site, providing a stimulating environment for exploration and relaxation. The varied, year-round programme includes an open air film and concert season and ice rink, as well as temporary exhibitions focusing on contemporary fashion, design, art and architecture, family workshops and free guided tours. In September 2009, Somerset House became the new home of London Fashion Week.

About The Association of Illustrators (AOI)

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. It publishes a quarterly magazine, 'Varoom!' and produces the annual 'Images' competition and touring exhibition, now in its 36th year, which celebrates the best in contemporary British illustration.