



**National
Trust**

Dorothy Una Ratcliffe Artist Fellowship 2017 Acorn Bank, Penrith

Call for Applicants

Deadline: Thursday 16 February 2016, 11am



OVERVIEW

The National Trust is offering a 3-month artist residency and commission opportunity at Acorn Bank through its annual Dorothy Una Ratcliffe Artist Fellowship award. This is an opportunity for an emerging to mid-career artist to develop their practice in a unique and beautiful setting. Artists at any stage in their professional careers, working in any discipline (or across them), who are living and working in the UK and not currently studying are welcome to apply.

Now in its third year, this is a residential opportunity within a National Trust house in Cumbria, the former home of Dorothy Una Ratcliffe - author, poet and patron of the arts. The fellowship has previously been awarded to Chichi Parish and Freya Pocklington.

The residency will take place from May – July 2017, with an exhibition/presentation period from August – October 2017. The artist will be provided with accommodation and a studio on site. Indoor and outdoor locations across Acorn Bank can be considered for the final outcome.

Acorn Bank is keen to continue Dorothy Una Ratcliffe's ethos and commission an artist to spend time across the site and produce new site-responsive artwork. We are seeking applications that explore contemporary conservation in the context of Acorn Bank and Lake District through the natural and industrial heritage which can be found at this National Trust site and in the surrounding area. Artists need not apply with a fully formed project as the residency provides time and space to research and develop ideas.

There is an artist fee of £3500 and a production budget of £4000 to cover the residency period and delivery of the presented outcome. The outcome will be part of the Cumbria wide C-Art visual arts programme co-ordinated by Eden Arts.

This opportunity is delivered by the National Trust through Trust New Art in partnership with Cumbria University, Eden Arts and supported using public funding by Arts Council England.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Trust New Art

This commission will be part of Trust New Art, the National Trust's programme of contemporary arts inspired by our places. National Trust has been working with living artists since the 1980s, and in 2009 created Trust New Art through a partnership with Arts Council England. The programme makes contemporary arts available in National Trust properties; builds new and diverse audiences; and offers new opportunities to artists to work in new contexts.

Trust New Art has developed contemporary arts commissions & projects at 100 + places, reaching audiences of over 2.2 million. In 2015 we worked with 200 + artists nationally delivering new work by emerging to established artists across art forms including visual arts, literature and performing arts among others.

Trust New Art North is managed by Hannah Pierce, Contemporary Arts Programme Manager. Six properties across the North region delivered contemporary arts commissions during 2016, including new work by Matt Collishaw, Freya Pocklington, Liz West, Alice May Williams and Amanda Loomes. TNA extends to 10 North of England venues in 2017.

Acorn Bank

Acorn Bank consists of a small mansion house, an adjacent garden including a pond which is home to great crested newts and the surrounding estate land which comprises an orchard, a 13th century water mill and the remains of 19th and early 20th century gypsum mine.



Situated in the Eden Valley at the foothills of the Pennines the 17th century sandstone house has open views towards the Lake District and was built on the site of an earlier Knights Templar building. Acorn Bank is best known for its comprehensive herb collection of medicinal and culinary plants, and traditional fruit orchards which are home to more than 170 varieties of local apples.



Acorn Bank was the home of Dorothy Una Ratcliffe (b.1887), until she gave it to the National Trust in 1950. The 'lady of a million daffodils', Dorothy was responsible for planting the great sweeps of daffodils behind Acorn Bank House. She had a passion for the wild landscapes of the Yorkshire Dales and Westmorland and the birds and wildflowers within them.

Dorothy married three times, first as a young woman to Charles Ratcliffe, nephew of Lord Brotherton of Leeds. This

was not a happy marriage and Dorothy took to writing as a refuge, and wrote many books, poems, plays and stories about Yorkshire and Westmorland, often in dialect. She also wrote travel books and was a keen sailor and an early caravanner. She accompanied Lord Brotherton on his travels and assisted him in amassing his collection of art and medieval manuscripts, which are now in the University of Leeds's collection.



Dorothy Una Ratcliffe at the helm of Sea Swallow

Following a divorce Dorothy married her great love Captain Noel McGrigor Phillips. They bought Acorn Bank in 1934, renaming it Temple Sowerby Manor. They restored the house which Dorothy filled with her art collection and gardens, introducing a wildflower and bird reserve behind the house. Noel, who had been wounded during the Great War, died in 1946. Dorothy later remarried and lived on at Acorn Bank with her third husband for a few years until she relocated to Scotland. Her impressive collections of paintings, sculpture, glass and fans were bequeathed to the City of Leeds on her death in 1967.

The house was leased to tenants for the next 40 years; the last being the Sue Ryder Foundation who used it as a nursing home. The National Trust opened the gardens to the public and during 1990s began to open up the estate walks and started the restoration of the watermill. When the Sue Ryder Foundation closed the home in 1996, the National Trust took on management of the building.

University of Cumbria

The Fine Art Programme, from Foundation Year to PhD studentships, sits at the heart of University of Cumbria Institute of the Arts, in our Brampton Road Campus. Our state of the art studios provide a unique learning environment, as our light and generous studio spaces are versatile, enabling students to design their studio spaces according to need and for lectures to take place within the practical working environment – a literal integration of theory and practice.

Fine Art Resource Areas are staffed by expert practitioners and include a professional printmaking studio with facilities for etching, relief and screen-printing, a wet darkroom, a 3D sculpture workshop with dedicated woodwork, metalwork (including hot metal casting) and ceramic areas, an audio video suite for filmmaking and a computer suite (Macintosh) with dedicated workstations.

Brampton Road campus contains the Vallum Gallery which hosts exhibitions by contemporary artists and designers, as well as student, staff and alumni exhibitions.

Eden Arts

Eden Arts is an artist-led organisation based in Eden in Cumbria. Eden is England's largest and most sparsely populated district. At the intersection between development agency, producer and consultancy, Eden Arts has demonstrably produced cultural change in Cumbria, through both action and leadership. These are not huge leaps but nudges that shift perspectives, give permission to others and open new doors.

Eden Arts practice is Art(ful), Useful, Rural, Sociable and Fun.

C-Art

C-Art is Cumbria's countywide visual arts programme, co-ordinated by Eden Arts. C-Art exists to nurture contemporary art practice in Cumbria. For the past 6 years, C-Art has connected over 185,000 visitors to Cumbrian artists, and has seen over £665,000 in sales of Cumbrian art.

The aim is to encourage excellence and ensure that Cumbria has a regional platform for artists with contemporary practices in order to have a recognised place in the national art-ecology. By contemporary we mean artists who are experimenting, taking risks, challenging the traditional, developing innovative work and connecting with new audiences.

2 THE FELLOWSHIP

2.1 Commission aims, objectives and key themes

Aims:

- To offer an artist time and space to make new work in response to Acorn Bank and the surrounding area.
- To celebrate contemporary conservation in the context of Acorn Bank and the natural and industrial heritage of Cumbria.
- To 'teach, move and inspire' visitors through something unexpected to prompt new perspectives and understandings of Acorn Bank and the National Trust.

Objectives:

- To activate indoor or outdoor locations at Acorn Bank by creating engaging and accessible artwork/s that respond directly to Acorn Bank and the surrounding landscape.
- To engage visitors and online audiences through open studio sessions, social media, and maintaining a residency blog.
- To embrace the possibilities and restrictions of the sites to create an site responsive piece that meets National Trust's conservation requirements
- To deliver 2 x sessions with Cumbria University Fine Art students, Carlisle
- To deliver 1 x public artist talk
- To engage National Trust staff and volunteers in the development and process of the project through talks, informal meetings and updates.

Key Themes

The key messages the artist should draw upon are Acorn Bank as a unique site and context, and contemporary conservation in Cumbria. The artwork should reflect the National Trust's conservation work which responds to the threats of today, and communicate to visitors how conservation is relevant to their day to day lives

2.2 Key Dates

Residency and Exhibition Dates

Residency: May – July 2017.

Exhibition/Commission installation: Tuesday 8 August 2017

Exhibition/ Presentation Period: 10 August – 29 October 2017

De-install: 30 October 2017

Is it not expected that the artist will be at Acorn Bank for the full duration of the residency, although they are welcome to spend as much time as they want to on site. The minimum time commitment during the residency should equal 14 days researching/developing and making new work, engaging with Acorn Bank staff, volunteers, visitors and delivering events as below.

Events Dates

Launch event: Thursday 10 August 2017

2 x Session with Cumbria University students — Sessions to take place May 2017.

1 x Artist talk/workshop - TBC

2.3 Art form and resources

The project team are open to all art forms but are particularly keen to receive proposals from artists who are keen to develop engaging and accessible projects that are informed by and are sensitive to site. The artist need not have prior experience working in a heritage or outdoor context as they will receive support in developing a proposal that reflects the sites conservation needs throughout the residency.

The studio is in the main house and has natural light and electricity. There is limited ventilation, no running water or sink. This should be taken in to consideration by artists when making an application.

The artist will be provided with guest access to facilities – including fabrication area (metal/wood/ceramic/casting), print studio, dark room, Macintosh suite and AV equipment - at The University of Cumbria Institute of the Arts, Brampton Road Campus, Carlisle.

The artist will receive further support from Eden Arts who can facilitate relationships with artists living and working around Penrith, support public engagement and offer the artist access to their facilities and space at their Penrith Old Fire Station venue.

2.4 Community, Education and Participation

Engagement with National Trust staff and volunteers is vital to the success of the residency and commission and it is essential that the artist is open to discussing their ideas at all stages with Acorn Bank's staff community and visitors. Three informal presentations to staff/volunteers will be scheduled during the residency.

- 1 x introductory meeting
- 1 x mid-point project update
- 1 x exhibition launch pre-preview staff and volunteers tour.

20% of the artists' overall residency time will be dedicated to audience and community engagement activity. This should comprise 'open studio' activity engaging visitors at Acorn Bank, staff sessions as above, delivering the residency blog online, sessions with students at Cumbria University and a public talk/workshop. Volunteers can also be engaged by the artist in research, development and delivery of the project or accompanying activity.

3. BUDGET / TIMELINE / ACCOMODATION

Budget

Interview attendance

The National Trust will reimburse the travel costs of up to 5 artists to attend interviews at Acorn Bank on Wednesday 1 March 2017.

Artist Fee: £3500

The successful applicant will receive an artist fee of £3500 (paid in two instalments). This fee covers

- The residency period and delivery of the commissioned artwork
- 2 sessions at University of Cumbria
- 1 artist talk
- Engagement activity - as detailed in 2.4 Community, Education and Participation
- Guidance and sign off of interactive interpretation to be delivered by National Trust staff and volunteers

Travel Grant: £600

To reflect the travel that will be required to and from Acorn Bank and around the surrounding area there is a £600 travel grant to cover costs of the artists travel during the residency/exhibition/install and de-install period. This will be paid in a single payment to the artist to manage. No further travel expenses will be covered beyond this grant.

Materials: £4000

There is a budget of £4000 to be managed by the artist for the residency and commission delivery. This includes any costs that may be related to delivery of the commission and events including but not limited to: materials, sub-contractor fees, equipment, labour, installation, de-installation, packing materials and artwork transportation to and from Acorn Bank. An outline of how budget might be spent should be included in the application.

All budget figures stated above are inclusive of any VAT. Further budget will be managed by the National Trust for marketing, interpretation and documentation.

Timeline

Thursday 16 February 2017, 11am	Deadline for applications
Wednesday 22 February 2017	Artists shortlisted for interview informed
Wednesday 1 March 2017	Artist Interviews at Acorn Bank
Monday 6 March 2017	Artists informed of interview outcome
1 May – 31 July 2017	Residency period
May 2017	Introductory meeting and induction
June 2017	Commission proposal due to project team and signed off
Tuesday 8 August 2017	Exhibition installation

Thursday 10 August 2017
10 August – 29 October 2017
30 October 2017

Launch event
Exhibition
De-install and return shipping

Accommodation

Accommodation is provided on site and comprises a private, self-contained 2 bedroom apartment on the second floor within the main house at Acorn Bank. The flat had a bathroom, living area and small kitchen, it is currently only accessible by stairs. It could be suitable for a single artist or duo and could accommodate a partner and/or child.

If you have any specific access requirements please let us know prior to making an application so that we can discuss possible support. Please note that given the nature of Acorn Bank as a heritage site we cannot guarantee that we will be able to meet all requirements. Any information that you provide about your requirements will be handled separately from your application and in confidence.

4. PROJECT OVERVIEW

4.1 Artist Selection Process

Artists at any stage of their professional career (not currently studying) are eligible to apply for this residency. Up to five artists will be invited to Acorn Bank on Wednesday 1 March 2017 to discuss their application in more detail. The selection panel will be made up of the Project Team and guest selector, Freya Pocklington - 2016 Dorothy Una Ratcliffe Artist Fellow.

To make an application please send the following as ***a single PDF file*** to Hannah.pierce@nationaltrust.org.uk using the subject line **'Acorn Bank Fellowship 2017 Application'**

- A current CV (maximum two sides of A4).
- An initial response to this brief (maximum one side of A4) describing your current artistic practice, the reasons for your interest in this residency and how you would use the time during the residency.
- 5 examples of your recent work. Images of artwork should be provided with artwork details (title, year, materials, dimensions). Any film or audio work/documentation should be submitted as a link to a showreel uploaded to Vimeo or Youtube. Audio work should be submitted as a link to Soundcloud. Total Video/audio showreels should be max. 5 minutes in length.
- An indicative budget of how the materials budget would be spent and a project timeline.

**N.B Our email attachment limit is 10mb so anything larger will not be received.*

The project team will review and select artists for interview taking in to account

- The quality of your artistic practice and ideas.
- A considered understanding of the key themes and objectives outlined in this brief.
- Your interest in Acorn Bank and in making new work for this heritage site.
- Your willingness to share your ideas and engage with a wide range of people including visitors and volunteers.
- Realistic forecasting of budget and delivery timelines.
- A consideration of conservation requirements, and the limitations of infrastructure on site.

Please note that Acorn Bank is currently closed to the public, however free access is offered individual artists who wish to undertake a site visit for research prior to submitting an application. Please email Nicola Shilcock (as below) if you wish to take up this offer with details of when you wish to visit.

If you have any questions about the residency please email Hannah Pierce as below.

Project Team Members

Nicola Shilcock, Business Support, Acorn Bank, National Trust - Nichola.Shilcock@nationaltrust.org.uk
Hannah Pierce, Contemporary Art Programme Manager, National Trust – Hannah.Pierce@nationaltrust.org.uk
Clare Perry, Visitor Experience Consultant, National Trust

Supporting the project

Jane Topping, Programme Leader Fine Art, University of Cumbria Institute of the Arts
Adrian Lochhead, Director, Eden Arts
Georgina Lofthouse, General Manager, South-East Cumbria and Morecombe Bay, National Trust
Harvey Wilkinson, Curator, National Trust

The artist will receive further curatorial and conservation support and guidance from the wider National Trust team.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The National Trust is Europe's largest conservation charity and we believe in the importance of nature, beauty and history in people's lives. We care for 20% of the Lake District National Park, including England's highest mountain, Scafell Pike, its deepest lake, Wastwater, its precious wildlife, 90 tenanted farms, and the cultural heritage within a dozen historic buildings. We support 300 jobs in Cumbria and the Lake District and each year we work with local volunteers, who help us look after one of England's most inspirational landscapes. The Trust is dependent on the support of its members and the visitors we welcome to our special places each year: every penny we raise in Cumbria is invested in caring for this special place, for ever, for everyone. nationaltrust.org.uk

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In partnership with

