



PRESS RELEASE – for immediate release

13th October 2022

Brilliant landscape painter David Downes exhibits ‘Under the Sun: A selection of London and coastal landscapes’, with associated events at Open Door Berkhamsted this October & November



The Gathering Storm by David Downes

David Downes is a brilliant landscape painter who amplifies the sense of place and time through the lens of autism.

David’s upcoming exhibition at Open Door, entitled ‘Under the Sun: A selection of London and coastal landscapes’ will showcase works of our nearby capital city such as ‘View of the City overlooking Parliament Hill’, ‘Back Lane Hampstead’, contrasting with coastal pieces such as ‘Cliff Walk at Portgain’, in medium such as acrylics, pen and ink.

After graduating with an MA from the Royal College of Art in Communication Design in 1996, David was commissioned by the BBC to record the Corporation’s most important architecture at the turn of the century. In 2012, David was commissioned by the Savoy to paint the Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant from the Roof of the Savoy. In 2019, David was commissioned by ITV to create a giant mural for the launch of a new period drama depicting the fictional coastal town of Sanditon based on Jane Austen’s last and unfinished novel.

David is an active supporter of the National Autistic Society and was made a Vice President of the Society in 2012. David regularly speaks on behalf of the charity and paints live at fundraising events. David recently returned from California where he was working for three years under a US artist's visa and he now lives and works not too far away from Berkhamsted in Manningtree Essex with his partner Rachel, daughter Talia and their dog Winston.

Joan Fisher, Manager at Open Door Berkhamsted says:

“Open Door is a creative and community hub in our town, known for its excellent exhibitions of varied arts and crafts work. We are delighted to welcome David's talent, and for the people of Berkhamsted to experience his stunning artwork, as well as hear what inspires him.”

Downes comments:

“My work focuses on the juxtaposition of history and modernity; graveyards lie next to modern offices; ageing churches stand in built up areas and in remote country-sides. I often paint my scenes from an aerial position, imagining the way the landscape would look when viewed from that angle. In this way my work is a meeting of realism and imagination. I am focused and can capture architecture and landscapes in vivid detail.”

The late Justin Philips, Head of Heritage for the BBC said

“I gave David the near impossible task to record for posterity a sense of the scale and majesty of some of the BBC's finest buildings. David is adding a new dimension to the BBC's heritage and building up our collection for the future.”

Under the Sun: A selection of London and coastal landscapes will be on display at Open Door from **Monday 24th October - Saturday 12th November**, with the exhibition and café open Monday – Friday 10:30-3:30pm & Saturday 10:30-1pm. For more information visit

www.opendoorberkhamsted.co.uk/exhibitions

David will also be hosting a **Private View on Sunday 23rd October** between 12noon and 3pm – for more information and to RSVP please see

<https://tockify.com/opendoorberkhamsted/detail/76/1666526400000>

In addition, to complement the exhibition, we are pleased to host art historian and critic Estelle Lovatt FRSA for a **special talk, on Tuesday 25th October, 7-8:30pm** where she will share her vast knowledge of the artist who inspires Downes the most. More information and tickets at

<https://tockify.com/opendoorberkhamsted/detail/82/1666720800000>

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

Contact anna.foster@opendoorberkhamsted.co.uk and sally@exceptionalagency.com for interview and image requests.

Open Door Berkhamsted is a community arts space and café set on Berkhamsted High Street, set up to tackle social isolation and inequality. It encourages people to be active, creative and social, whatever their circumstances, through a range of art and wellbeing activities, a donations café, exhibitions and volunteering opportunities.

www.opendoorberkhamsted.co.uk

info@opendoorberkhamsted.co.uk

David Downes - Agent

Represented by Sally Vaughan, Exceptional Agency Ltd

Contact: sally@exceptionalagency.com, 07500906493