

Koestler Associates Newsletter - January 2023

Happy New Year!

Hello and Happy New Year from all of us at Koestler Arts. In this Associates newsletter we're sharing information about the 2023 Koestler Awards and upcoming exhibitions. The paperwork you'll need to enter the 2023 Awards is enclosed with this newsletter.

We hope you're keeping well and look forward to seeing more of your creative work this year! Below are some stand out entries from last year's awards to offer some inspiration.



A Little Bit of Personal Space, HM Prison Isle of Wight (Albany), Painting



Hug Myself, HM Prison Dartmoor, Bronze Award for Sculpture



Tin of Beans, HM Prison Oakwood, Painting



Lady in Blue, HM Prison Peterborough, Painting



Stick Head, HM Prison Littlehey, Simon Wethered Outstanding Debut Award for Woodcraft



A Collection of Blind Drawings: Finding Essence (Detail), HM Prison Shotts, Bronze Award for Drawing

Swarfega Soap

You bad boy!
Blue words spill forth with affluence,
Staining our ears and cheeks with undiluted pink.
Sandpapered violet.
Velvet couldn't soften this.
Swarfega soap could help.
But we've tried that,
And it seems he likes the taste.

Swarfega Soap,
HM Prison Perth,
Gold Award for Poem

2023 Koestler Awards

As a Koestler Associate we hope you'll be excited to enter our Awards again in 2023, and to encourage others to do so. Enclosed with this newsletter are the resources you will need. Thank you so much for helping us spread the word about our work, we really appreciate your continued support, and can't wait to start receiving your entries in the coming months!

If those you encourage to enter would like to become Associates too, they can tick the relevant box on their entry form and will be added to our mailing list.

Entrants can send visual artwork, writing and music to us from now until the deadline on **6th April 2023**. It is important that every entry is sent with a corresponding entry form, and that every entry form has been signed by a member of staff at your establishment or your probation officer.

The enclosed resources include:

- **Guidance notes** explaining the terms and conditions of entering the Awards: what you can enter, how to enter, our artform categories, and the awards cycle timeline.
- **Entry forms:** Each entrant can enter up to 5 pieces of work, in any of our artform categories. If you don't want to enter 5 pieces, you can always pass some of these forms on to someone else to use.
- **Poster:** We would be really grateful if you could help us to promote this year's Awards by displaying this on your wing, in your education department, or at your probation office, and telling someone who doesn't know about Koestler how to get involved.

These materials are also being sent to education departments in establishments, so you can suggest to others who are interested in entering to get entry forms from there, or to write to us to be sent them directly.

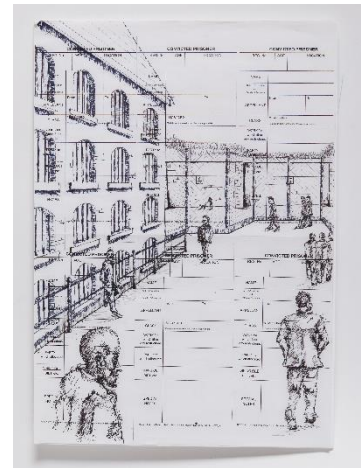
Themed Category

A reminder that for 2023, our themed category is 'A day in the life'. We're looking forward to seeing what you are inspired to create!

Koestler Voices Vol. 4

Every two years we publish a poetry anthology, *Koestler Voices: New Poetry from Prisons*, showcasing some of the best poetry entered into the Koestler Awards, and in 2023 we will be producing our fourth volume.

The featured works will be selected from poems entered into the 2022 and 2023 Koestler Awards, so if you'd like to be in with a chance of being featured in the book, consider entering our poetry categories this year!



Exercise, HM Prison Grendon, Sir Hugh Casson Gold Award for Drawing

2023 Exhibitions

National Exhibition, Southbank Centre, Autumn 2023

We are thrilled to announce that our 2023 national exhibition will be curated by award-winning poet, playwright and author Joelle Taylor!

In 2021 Joelle's fourth poetry collection *C+NTO & Othered Poems*, featuring passionate and nostalgic poems about butch lesbian subculture, was awarded the T.S. Eliot Prize, one of the UK's most prestigious poetry prizes.

Joelle is a poetry slam champion, founder and artistic director of The Poetry Society's national youth slam championships SLAMBassadors, and a tireless advocate of poetry's power to change lives. She has also previously judged poetry entries to the Koestler Awards. We're really looking forward to seeing her approach to curating the exhibition.

Joelle will spend time with us this summer looking at the visual artwork, music and writing entered into the 2023 Koestler Awards, and make a selection to be displayed at London's Southbank Centre in the autumn. Make sure you enter by 6th April to have your work considered for this exhibition.

On My Plate, South Hill Park Arts Centre, Bracknell 21 January - 5 March 2023

We are partnering with the University of Surrey to showcase artworks about food in women's prisons and secure settings, as part of their Department of Sociology's research project 'Doing Porridge: Understanding women's experiences of food in prison'. Their research involves interviews, observations, focus groups and art workshops in several UK women's prisons, and seeks to explore food practices and the social and cultural meanings of food for women in these settings.

On My Plate features around 60 works about food entered into the 2022 Koestler Awards by women, as well as pieces made in the research project's creative workshops in prisons. Together, they will reveal the many memories and meanings that food can hold.

South Hill Park is an arts centre in Berkshire, and home to two theatres, a cinema, art studios and gallery spaces, set within sprawling parkland.

"[I feel] privileged and honoured [to have my work included in this exhibition]. Getting creative with art is relatively new to me and I love it. I wish I had got into it long ago. I feel happy, inspired and encouraged to do more of it."

- Exhibited artist



Sunday Dinner at Mum's,
HM Prison and Young Offender
Institution Cornton Vale,
Sculpture



Banana, Victoria Gardens,
Themed Category: Taste

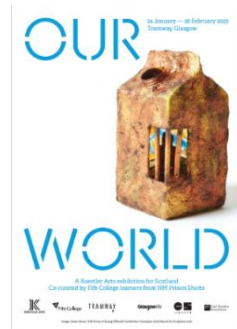
Our World, Tramway, Glasgow 24 January - 26 February 2023

We are delighted to be returning to Tramway for the first time since 2017, to showcase a selection of work made in Scotland for the 2022 Koestler Awards.

Around 60 pieces of visual artwork, writing and music will be displayed. These were selected during two curation sessions with a group of learners at HMP Shotts. The group used their artistic and design skills to shortlist artworks from hundreds of Scottish entries to last year's Awards.

The exhibition is shaped around four key themes identified in the selected works: nature, identity, current affairs and colour. The feeling that those who are confined remain deeply engaged with what is happening in the wider world came out strongly from both the selected works and the curators themselves, hence the exhibition title: *Our World*.

Tramway is an international contemporary arts hub in a former tram depot in the South Side of Glasgow. For thirty years, they have been supporting established and emerging artists who focus on experimental and contemporary dance, visual art and performance.



Diva With a Gold Earring,
Cupar Social Work Service,
Bronze Award for Portrait

“Initially it was quite daunting because we didn’t know where to begin... as time went on and the pieces started speaking for themselves it got easier to pick ones that told a story.”
- Co-curator from HMP Shotts

“Being creative is a way to focus on what is beyond the bars, to forget about the physical constraints of prison and let your imagination take you places where you are free.”
- Exhibited artist

Reminder

Please note that to remain an Associate you must enter the 2023 Koestler Awards. If for any reason you are unable to enter, or don't wish to this year, but would like to remain an Associate, please write to us and let us know. Please also let us know changes to your address or contact details, so we can ensure future newsletters, certificates, feedback, awards and sales money, and returned artwork reach you!

For this or any other queries, you can always:

- write to us for free at: FREEPOST Koestler Arts
- email: info@koestlerarts.org.uk
- call: 020 8740 0333



Alisha's Blue Moon,
HM Prison & Young Offender Institution Styal,
Outstanding Debut Award for Mixed Media