

Press Release: 28 March 2023

## **CROWDFUNDER AIMS TO TRANSFORM ARNOLFINI INTO A LIVING, BREATHING TEXTILE STUDIO**



Arnolfini Women's Craft Group. Photograph by Alice Hendy

Arnolfini has today launched its first ever crowdfunding campaign through [Art Happens](#) with Art Fund. With a target of £20,000, the month-long campaign aims to transform Arnolfini into a living, breathing textile studio for as many members of the community as possible. Celebrating textiles as an art form that can create important connections across cultures, the programme will include a gigantic weaving machine for visitors to use and new spaces for making and telling stories through textiles. This ambitious summer-long engagement programme will coincide with Arnolfini's major exhibition of textiles: *Threads* (8 July to 1 October 2023), featuring work from twenty-one contemporary international and intergenerational artists, co-curated by leading textile artist Alice Kettle.

Funds raised through the Art Happens Crowdfunder campaign will enable Arnolfini to:

- Build a gigantic, interactive weaving machine for everyone to use;
- Create a new textile workshop space open every day;
- Host weekly family activities throughout the summer holidays delivered by artists-in-residence Let's Make Art;
- Support Arnolfini's Resident Women's Craft Club – made up of refugee and asylum communities – to work with exhibiting artists and share their traditions and skills with visitors;
- Bring Celia Pym's Mending Project to Bristol to explore the visible mending and repair of textiles that carry personal stories and memories;
- Commission Farwa Moledina to create a Majlis (the Arabic term for a seated room for people to gather), to create a space using her bespoke textile patterns in which people can spend time and add their own stories to the work through embroidery.

Donations start at £5 with a range of exclusive rewards, including:

- Limited edition tote bag and sew-on fabric patches designed by Let's Make Art;
- Hand-embroidered cushions created by Bridges for Communities, Bristol with Alice Kettle and commissioned by Christopher Farr Cloth;
- An exclusive visit to artist Will Cruickshank's rural South Devon studio with Alice Workman, Director of Bo Lee and Workman Gallery;
- Curator-led *Threads* exhibition tour with lunch;
- A unique artwork by artist Alice Kettle.

Arnolfini has one month to raise the £20,000 needed and must achieve the full amount to receive the funding.

**Gary Topp, Director at Arnolfini said:**

"For over sixty years, Arnolfini has been dedicated to contemporary art and cultural engagement, bringing together diverse communities and fostering creativity and collaboration. We are thrilled to launch Arnolfini's first-ever crowdfunder campaign, working with Art Fund, to deliver this ambitious and exciting summer engagement programme inspired by the power of textiles. With just one month to reach our target, we are grateful to everyone who is about to support us to achieve our goal."

Help Arnolfini to create a new community of makers and bring thousands of people together to find common threads.

Please donate at [artfund.org/ArnolfiniThreads](https://artfund.org/ArnolfiniThreads)

#ArnolfiniThreads

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For further information please contact Sara Blair: [sara.blair@arnolfini.org.uk](mailto:sara.blair@arnolfini.org.uk)

Additional images are available **by clicking here.**

**@ArnolfiniArts** Twitter / Facebook / Instagram / [www.arnolfini.org.uk](http://www.arnolfini.org.uk)

Arnolfini, 16 Narrow Quay, Bristol BS1 4QA 0117 917 2300

[Arnolfini.org.uk](http://Arnolfini.org.uk) @ArnolfiniArts

Tuesday to Sunday, 11am to 6pm, bookable in advance. Free.

## NOTES TO EDITORS

### Campaign dates

The Arnolfini Art Happens Crowdfunder goes live from Tuesday 28 March until Sunday 30 April 2023. Donations are made at [artfund.org/ArnolfiniThreads](https://artfund.org/ArnolfiniThreads).

## About Art Fund

Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for art. It provides millions of pounds every year to help museums to acquire and share works of art across the UK, further the professional development of their curators, and inspire more people to visit and enjoy their public programmes. Art Fund is independently funded, supported by Art Partners, donors, trusts and foundations and the 135,000 ARTS members who buy the National Art Pass, who enjoy free or discounted entry to over 850 museums, galleries and historic places, 50% off major exhibitions, and receive Art Quarterly magazine. Art Fund also supports museums through its annual prize, Art Fund Museum of the Year. The winner of Art Fund Museum of the Year 2022 is Horniman Museums & Gardens.

[www.artfund.org](http://www.artfund.org)

## About Art Happens

Art Happens with Art Fund is the UK's only crowdfunding platform for museums and galleries. Since launching in 2014, museums have raised over £1 million for art and cultural projects across the country, ranging from the conservation of works of art to new exhibitions and commissions by leading artists. Previous campaigns include projects by: Charleston in East Sussex; Museum of London; Norwich Museum and Art Gallery at The Bridewell; Turner Contemporary, Margate; MK Gallery in Milton Keynes; West Highlands museum and Royal Museums Greenwich.

## About the exhibition

### *Threads: 'Breathing Stories into Materials'*

8 July to 1 October 2023, Tuesday to Sunday, 11am to 6pm, admission is free.

Arnolfini launches *Threads*, a major exhibition of textiles – co-curated by leading textile artist Alice Kettle – and featuring work from twenty-one contemporary international and intergenerational artists, whose work each engages with the idea that 'textiles remember'. Whether tangled and knotted or frayed and ready to unravel, *Threads* explores a multitude of visible and invisible memories, stories and histories, with work from Caroline Achaintre, Ifeoma U. Anyaeji, Olga de Amaral, Will Cruikshank, Monika Grasiene, Lubaina Himid, Young In Hong, Raisa Kabir, Alice Kettle, Anya Painstil, Anousha Payne, David Penny, Anna Perach, Celia Pym, Richard McVetis, Ibrahim Mahama, Farwa Moledina, Lucy Orta, Yinka Shonibare, Mounira al Sohl and Esna Su.

*Threads* includes a programme of talks, music, dance and film as well as family workshops and interactive activities. [arnolfini.org.uk/threads](https://arnolfini.org.uk/threads)

## About Arnolfini

Woven into the fabric of Bristol since 1961, Arnolfini is an international centre of interdisciplinary contemporary arts, presenting an ambitious and wide-ranging programme of visual art, performance, dance, film, and music.

Housed in a prominent Grade II listed accessible building (Bush House) on the city's harbourside, Arnolfini is a pioneering, inspiring public space for arts and learning, offering an innovative, inclusive and engaging experience for all. Bush House is also part of the University of the West of England, Bristol's City Campus with over 300 students and tutors onsite.

Arnolfini has welcomed artists from around world throughout its history – sharing works by Paula Rego, Jannis Kounellis, John Akomfrah, Grayson Perry, Rachel Whiteread, Peter Doig, Richard Long, Chantal Joffe, Sonia Boyce and Frank Bowling, to name just a few - as well as supporting talent from in and around Bristol.

Alongside its exhibition programme, Arnolfini is a centre of everyday creativity and learning, working with a wide range of community and artistic partners, while continuing to explore and develop new opportunities across the city and beyond. Spaces are used regularly by families, schools and colleges, health and wellbeing groups.

Through sharing a 60+ year archive of exhibition slides, publications and an extensive artist book collection, Arnolfini celebrates its heritage and the wide-reaching impact the organisation has had since its foundation.

From 2019, Director Gary Topp and team have sought to honour Arnolfini’s founder Jeremy Rees’ principle to ‘Enjoy Yourself’, welcoming everyone into the space, and inviting engagement, in any number of ways.

Arnolfini is an independent charity (CIO) and part of the University of the West of England, Bristol, supported by Arts Council England and the Ashley Clinton Barker-Mills Trust.

## About UWE Bristol

The University of the West of England (UWE Bristol) has a global and inclusive outlook, with approximately 36,000 students and strong industry networks and connections with over 1,000 employers. Research at UWE Bristol focuses on real world problems and the University plays a pivotal role in the regional economy. With over £300 million invested in infrastructure, buildings and facilities across all Campuses, UWE Bristol is creating a place for learning that is innovative, ambitious, connected, enabling and inclusive. UWE Bristol is ranked 24th in the Guardian university league table, as well as 4th in the South West of England for student satisfaction. [www.uwe.ac.uk](http://www.uwe.ac.uk)

## About Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. By 2030 we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences. Between 2018 and 2022, we will invest £1.45 billion of public money from government and an estimated £860 million from the National Lottery to help deliver this vision. [www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)

## About Ashley Clinton Barker-Mills Trust

Arnolfini has been supported by a linked charity, the Ashley Clinton Barker Mills Trust (ACBMT) for more than 60 years.

Arnolfini founders Jeremy and Annabel Rees were first introduced to the artists and benefactors Peter and Caroline Barker-Mill in 1963, by the London gallerist Lesley Waddington. It was a fortuitous meeting that was the catalyst in allowing Arnolfini to

develop from a small volunteer-run private gallery into a major international arts centre.

The Ashley Clinton Barker-Mills Trust (ACBMT) principle is to work with Arnolfini, primarily by making annual grants from the income earned on its investments, as well as funding modest, one-off capital grants to help the Arnolfini transition to its current financial model. In more recent years members of the ACBMT have become more involved working with Arnolfini to help plan its future.

[www.arnolfini.org.uk/about/ashley-clinton-barker-mills-trust](http://www.arnolfini.org.uk/about/ashley-clinton-barker-mills-trust)

**Art Fund\_**



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