



**High Life Highland Inverness Museum and Art
Gallery and the Creative Learning
Programme present subsidised school
visits to**

John Byrne: Sitting Ducks

1st – 29th November 2014.



Exhibition Background

John Byrne: Sitting Ducks, an exhibition by one of Scotland's most versatile and accomplished artists and writers, opens at Inverness Museum and Art Gallery on Saturday, 1st November. John Byrne was born in Paisley and studied at Glasgow School of Art - but he is no stranger to the Highlands. Sitting Ducks explores and celebrates his highly innovative and richly varied portraiture. It includes a rich selection of drawings, paintings and multi-media works from across his career, which depict friends and family as well as famous sitters, such as Tilda Swinton and Billy Connolly. Byrne has also produced many insightful and witty self-portraits which form a strong element of the show. The exhibition demonstrates the technical skill, brilliant draughtsmanship, versatility and inventiveness, fun and gravity that he has brought to the genre.

As well as being a painter Byrne is a successful playwright. He has written and directed for stage and television including the BAFTA award-winning *Tutti Fruitti* which starred Emma Thompson, Robbie Coltrane and Richard Wilson. Throughout his work in both genres he explores many facets of human nature, bringing out the unique qualities of each individual he portrays.

High Life Highland Creative Learning Programme

With this array of theatrical talent in mind, the High Life Highland Creative Learning Programme is looking to create a '**Highland Book of Byrne**' which will include Creative Writing pieces from school pupils across the Highlands. Whether poetry, short story or dramatic monologue, pupils who visit the exhibition are being asked to submit writing pieces inspired by the many different characters that feature in Sitting Ducks. The finished pieces will be selected for a special edition printed book which each school and published pupil will receive.

John Byrne has guided the selection of works on display in the exhibition. They not only represent some of his finest artistic achievements, but also celebrate some of his warmest relationships, being

for the most part, portraits of his friends and family, so there are plenty of characters to choose from when it comes to finding writing inspiration. Creatively written critical responses to the finished art work (such as poetry inspired by the style and technique) would also be welcome from senior pupils, however due to the nature of the finished book critical essays and reports would not be suitable.

For all schools participating in the writing activity, a 75% subsidy is available towards the cost of travel to and from the school. There are no limits to how many classes visit the exhibition from one school, although the amount of pupils/classes that may be taken at one time should be discussed with the exhibitions team directly when booking a visit.

How to Book, Participate and Claim for your School

Booking a visit in advance is highly recommended (a must really!). Inverness Museum & Art Gallery is open to the public Thursday – Saturday, 10am – 5pm with late night opening on Thursdays until 7pm and may therefore be busier on these days, especially if another school group is already in attendance. It may be possible for schools to arrange private viewings on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Please contact IMAG directly on 01463 237114 to enquire and arrange a booking.

The 'Highland Book of Byrne' activity is part of the High Life Highland Creative Learning Programme and not being run by IMAG directly. For more information on the project, to receive the writing templates and for more information on how to claim the 75% travel subsidy please contact Amy MacLeod on amy.macleod@highlifehighland.com or 01463 732651. **Please note that all travel subsidy claims MUST be arranged in ADVANCE of any visits. Claiming back of costs will not be honoured if the Creative Learning Leader was not informed in advance of the visit to the exhibition.**

Further Information

Sitting Ducks was first shown at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh in the summer of 2014 and is presented in Inverness in collaboration between the National Galleries of Scotland and High Life Highland. It runs until 29th November.

John Byrne will be in conversation with Gordon Brown of Brown's Gallery, Tain at Inverness Museum & Art Gallery on Friday 28th November at 6.30pm. Booking essential.