

Art UK has today announced that artist Conrad Shawcross is the charity’s Patron for 2020. His appointment follows in the footsteps of Cornelia Parker in 2018 and Yinka Shonibare in 2019.

The artist has been appointed to raise the profile of the charity’s work, during the year in which their [ambitious sculpture digitisation project](#) comes to fruition.

2020 will be a landmark year for the cultural education charity, as focus turns to developing a [new curation tool](#) to foster active participation among Art UK’s users. Plans are also underway to build a [new portal](#) collating a range of learning resources. This will offer new ways to explore the website, aimed at those who are learning – in any capacity – or teaching.

Art UK’s three-year sculpture project will see [around 80,000 of the nation’s publicly owned sculptures join the website](#) – the largest sculpture cataloguing project ever undertaken in the UK. Most sculptures in the national collection have never been photographed before. The UK will be the first country in the world to create a free-to-access online showcase of its publicly owned sculpture, for everyone’s enjoyment, learning and research.

Shawcross’ sculptures explore subjects on the borders of geometry and philosophy, physics and metaphysics. He often appropriates different technologies and theories to create impressive structural and mechanical montages. He works with a wide variety of materials and media, often creating sculptures on an epic scale.

Conrad Shawcross, Art UK’s 2020 Patron, said, ‘Arts education is essential for fostering creative cross-disciplinary thought, leading to innovations across communities. Art UK brings the nation’s art collections into our homes via their growing online platform, and the artworks themselves into our schools. They are inspiring the next generation and expanding the educational possibilities of our unique, untapped collections. I am honoured to contribute to Art UK’s efforts as their 2020 Patron.’

Andrew Ellis, Art UK’s Director, added, ‘All of us at Art UK are delighted that Conrad Shawcross, one of the country’s leading sculptors, will be our Patron in 2020. We look forward to working with Conrad to encourage more people to explore the UK’s extraordinary collection of art in public ownership, and to discover what these artworks tell us about our history and culture.’

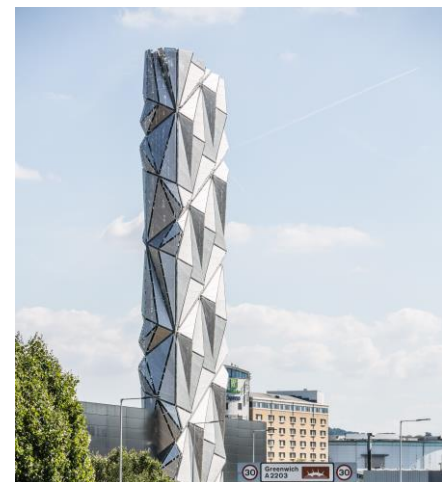
Rana Begum, Art UK’s Trustee, said, ‘I am a great admirer of Conrad’s work. Having known him for many years I believe he is the perfect Patron to support our ambitious sculpture digitisation project in 2020!’

A range of high-resolution images are available via Dropbox: <https://bit.ly/37J0mBQ>

###ENDS###



Conrad Shawcross. Photo: Marc Wilmot



The Optic Cloak, 2016. Image courtesy the artist and Victoria Miro, London/Venice. Photograph by Phillip Vile

Notes to Editors

About Art UK

Art UK is a cultural education charity on a mission to make the art in UK public collections accessible to everyone, for enjoyment, learning and research.

We enable global audiences to learn about the UK's public art collection. We [digitise artworks](#), tell the [stories behind the art](#) and create exciting opportunities for public interaction with art, both online and offline. We play a major role in supporting public art collections, by improving their accessibility and sustainability. Our platform is shared by over 3,250 UK art collections and almost 2.5 million people use our website each year.

Between 2003 and 2012 Art UK digitised over 200,000 oil paintings from locations across the UK – a unique national achievement. Since September 2016, works on paper – watercolours, prints and drawings – have been progressively added to the website.

Our current major project is documenting and digitising the nation's sculptures – both in collections and in public spaces. The [first of many thousands of sculptures](#) joined the site during February 2019.

The award-winning [Masterpieces in Schools](#) and [Art Detective](#) initiatives provide online and offline opportunities for learning and participation and contribute to collection knowledge.

Art UK is the operating name of the Public Catalogue Foundation, a charity registered in England and Wales (109685) and Scotland (SC048601).

www.artuk.org



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About Conrad Shawcross

Imbued with an appearance of scientific rationality, Conrad Shawcross' RA (b. 1977) sculptures explore subjects that lie on the borders of geometry and philosophy, physics and metaphysics. Inspired by different technologies, the artist's structures may retain in appearance the authority of machines – yet, they remain enigmatic, filled with paradox and wonder. Some have an absurdist melancholy feel, while others tend to the sublime, substituting the purely functional for phenomenological experience. In his work, Shawcross has paid tribute to some of the great pioneers and analysts, and considered specific moments or figures from the past. In the end, Shawcross' art questions what we take for granted and encourages us to see beyond the physical.

Shawcross has completed a number of major public commissions across the world, including *Paradigm* outside the Francis Crick Institute in London and the 18-metre tall *Exploded Paradigm* inside the atrium of the Comcast Technology Center in Philadelphia. He has exhibited at institutions across the world, including Palais de Tokyo in Paris, Mori Art Museum in Tokyo, the Museum of Old and New Art in Tasmania, Wadsworth Atheneum in Connecticut, USA, the National Gallery in London, and ARTMIA in Beijing. He is represented by Victoria Miro in London and Tucci Russo in Italy.

www.conradshawcross.com

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