

PRESS RELEASE

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Jerwood Open Forest Commissions Announced

Two major commissions totalling £60,000 awarded to artists

Semiconductor (Ruth Jarman and Joe Gerhardt) and Chris Watson collaborating with producer Iain Pate to realise proposals

Semiconductor (Ruth Jarman and Joe Gerhardt) and **Chris Watson** collaborating with producer **Iain Pate** have been awarded two major commissions totalling **£60,000** through the inaugural **Jerwood Open Forest** initiative. The announcement was made at Jerwood Space, London on 11 February 2014 by selector and artist, **Tania Kovats**. The selected proposals will be produced and realised within England's Public Forest Estate, continuing a national conversation about how contemporary visual artists engage with the environment today. **Jerwood Open Forest** is a new initiative in the **Jerwood Visual Arts** programme, launched by **Jerwood Charitable Foundation** and **Forestry Commission England**, with additional support of public funding by the National Lottery through **Arts Council England's** Grants for the arts programme.

During the research and development period, shortlisted artists **Juan delGado; Adam James; Amanda Loomes; Semiconductor (Ruth Jarman and Joe Gerhardt);** and **Chris Watson** collaborating with producer **Iain Pate** expanded on the concept of their initial proposals, engaging with forest sites across England, from Northumberland to Kent. They produced new bodies of work comprising sculpture, film, audio, and performance for the inaugural **Jerwood Open Forest** exhibition; a multisensory experience that examines art in the environment and what it has the potential to be in its broadest definition.

The commissions were selected by a panel comprising leading practitioners and project partners: **Michaela Crimmin**, Co-director, Culture+Conflict; **Dan Harvey**, artist, Ackroyd & Harvey; **Tania Kovats**, artist; **Shonagh Manson**, Director, Jerwood Charitable Foundation; and **Hayley Skipper**, Curator of Arts Development, Forestry Commission England.

Semiconductor (Ruth Jarman and Joe Gerhardt) will produce their first ever public sculpture based on a year's worth of data collected from the top of a flux tower at Alice Holt Forest in Surrey. The work considers scientific data as a means of understanding the environment, and explores the relationship between how science represents the physical world and how we experience it. Through a process of re-contextualising the data, it will become abstract in form and meaning, taking on sculptural properties.

Chris Watson and Iain Pate will produce a multi-channel, spatialized, sound installation featuring the remarkable, and seldom witnessed, conversations of ravens returning to roost. Hrafn; Conversations with Odin will take place in Kielder Forest in Northumberland in September 2014. Speakers high in the forest canopy will immerse the audience in sound starting with calls of distant ravens and concluding with several thousand birds arriving overhead. The work anticipates and celebrates the return of these powerful voices to the forest, making a connection back through history and folklore to the present day.

The **Jerwood Open Forest** exhibition continues at Jerwood Space, London until 23 February. An exhibition catalogue is available with newly commissioned texts by **Richard Mabey** and **Michaela Crimmin**.

For further details about Jerwood Open Forest, and to follow the development of the commissions please visit: jerwoodopenforest.org. For further information about the Jerwood Visual Arts programme please visit: jerwoodvisualarts.org or follow Jerwood Visual Arts on Twitter: [#JerwoodJVA #JOF14](https://twitter.com/JerwoodJVA)

-Ends-

Exhibition Information:

Title: Jerwood Open Forest
Dates: 15 January – 23 February 2014
Address: Jerwood Space, 171 Union Street, London SE1 0LN
Opening Times: Mon–Fri from 10am–5pm, Sat & Sun from 10am–3pm
Admission: Free
Nearest Tube: Southwark, London Bridge or Borough
Website: www.jerwoodvisualarts.org / www.jerwoodopenforest.org
Twitter: @JerwoodJVA #JOF14

Jerwood Visual Arts will host a series of evening events to accompany the exhibition. All events are free - advanced booking is required. For more information please check the website: www.jerwoodvisualarts.org

Notes to Editors:

Jerwood Open Forest is a new initiative in the **Jerwood Visual Arts** programme launched by **Jerwood Charitable Foundation** and **Forestry Commission England**, now with additional support from **Arts Council England**. Artists were invited to submit bold, broad-thinking proposals for a major £30,000 commission to be realised anywhere within England's Public Forest Estate, exploring the potential for forests as a site for art.

Since 1968 the Public Forest Estate has been the testing ground for a diverse range of projects across artforms that explore our relationship with the environment. **Jerwood Open Forest** is the first time that a national open call invited artists working in any discipline to respond to the possibilities presented by these incredible, diverse landscapes.

From an exceptional response of strong and diverse proposals, five projects were selected for a six-month research and development period. The artists each received a £2,000 research and development fee and support from Jerwood Visual Arts and Forestry Commission England to expand on the concept of their proposal and explore potential sites through this phase. Following this research phase, and now with additional support of public funding by the National Lottery through **Arts Council England's** Grants for the arts programme, two projects have now been selected to be fully commissioned.

Jerwood Visual Arts is a contemporary gallery programme of exhibitions, awards and events at Jerwood Space, London and on tour nationally. Jerwood Visual Arts supports and showcases the work of talented emerging artists, and aims to make connections and provoke conversations within and across visual arts disciplines. It is a major initiative of the Jerwood Charitable Foundation. www.jerwoodvisualarts.org

Project Partners:

The **Jerwood Charitable Foundation** is dedicated to imaginative and responsible revenue funding of the arts, supporting artists to develop and grow at important stages in their careers. The aim of their funding is to allow artists and arts organisations to thrive; to continue to develop their skills, imagination and creativity with integrity. It works with artists across art forms, from dance and theatre to literature, music and the visual arts. For more information visit www.jerwoodcharitablefoundation.org

Forestry Commission England is recognised and respected as an international leader in sustainable forestry. Working with others we look after the country's trees, woods and forests for the good of everyone - today and for the future. Our reputation has been built on our expertise and our ability to achieve results that benefit people's lives. These benefits include the unique Public Forest Estate where millions of visitors enjoy a wide range of recreational activities every year. www.forestry.gov.uk/visit

We believe that **Forest Art Works**. Since 1968 England's Public Forest Estate has played host to artworks and initiatives across artforms. We believe that woodlands and forests are vital places for contemporary artists to engage with, to make and present new work. Forest Art Works is a new partnership between Arts Council England and Forestry Commission England to support achieving great art and culture for everyone in England's public forests. www.forestry.gov.uk/forestartworks

Supporter:

Arts Council England champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. We support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2010 and 2015, we will invest £1.9 billion of public money from government and an estimated £1.1 billion from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country. www.artscouncil.org.uk

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