

ART AT HMP SPRING HILL, 2024-2025



Every Prison Should Be An Art School (2023). Photograph by Dean Kelland.

Ikon is pleased to announce a new artist residency funded by the Rothschild Foundation and in partnership with HMP Spring Hill, Buckinghamshire.

Part of Ikon's *Art in Prisons* programme, the gallery will establish an art studio within the grounds of the prison. The facility will enable a professional artist and group of prisoners to explore creative practice through weekly workshops in an art school-inspired setting. With a focus on the development of artistic expression and technical skills – in painting, printmaking, photography, sculpture and textiles – the project complements the prison's education scheme in supporting health, wellbeing and transition into the workplace.

HMP Spring Hill is a men's open prison in Buckinghamshire. It is jointly managed with HMP Grendon, a Category B, therapeutic prison, where Ikon has produced an artist residency since 2014. Working with the Rothschild Foundation and HMP Spring Hill, Ikon will invite Buckinghamshire partners to provide creative briefs for the residency. The work produced will form the basis of seasonal exhibitions and events, curated and hosted by the resident artist and prisoners, providing an opportunity for professional engagement with the local community.

"The innovative new partnership with the Rothschild Foundation will provide a unique opportunity for prisoners at Spring Hill to work with a professional artist. Members of the prison community have already started to prepare a space which will be renovated as an art studio, in the same mode as our sister project at HMP Grendon. We look forward to seeing where the next year of partnership with the Rothschild Foundation takes this project, with ambitions to create further links to education providers and businesses in the local Buckinghamshire community."

Olivia Phelps, Governor, HMP Grendon and Spring Hill

"The Rothschild Foundation is delighted to support this collaborative project through our Buckinghamshire grants programme. Ikon's groundbreaking work at HMP Grendon has provided an innovative basis to expand their creative practice into HMP Spring Hill. We're especially excited that Ikon will enable new opportunities for artists – both in and outside prison – and provide a platform for their work. As well as encouraging the creative skills of prisoners, the artist-in-residence will curate and share their work for public display. Working in an open prison affords potential for the arts to reach out into the community and draw in the next generation of audiences." Leona Forsyth, Senior Grants Manager, Rothschild Foundation

"Ikon has been running the artist residency at HMP Grendon for 10 years and, in that time, we have staged multiple exhibitions and symposia at the gallery and the prison. Through the residency, the prisoners work with an artist and producer to create, curate, install and write about art. The studio is not simply a place to pass the time of day, or indulge in a new hobby, rather it is geared towards the development of professional practice. A similar ethos is built into the Spring Hill studio, where the prisoners will work on creative briefs set by a professional artist and community-based organisations. For Ikon, this presents an exciting period of learning about working in an open prison and how to adapt our model to best suit this environment."

Linzi Stauvers, Artistic Director (Education), Ikon

About HMP Spring Hill

HMP Spring Hill is a category D men's open prison, jointly managed with HMP Grendon, located in the village of Grendon Underwood, in Buckinghamshire. Originally known as Grendon Hall, the main building at Spring Hill was constructed in 1872. In 1953 the site was converted by the Prison Service, becoming the first open prison in the United Kingdom. Almost a decade later, in 1962, HMP Grendon opened on an adjacent site.

About Art at HMP Grendon

In 2022, with a focus on the development of the prisoners' artistic practice, Ikon opened the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Studio at HMP Grendon – a dedicated art school-inspired space used for weekly workshops and biannual exhibitions featuring artwork by prisoners and professional artists. This space was made possible with the support of the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust and the senior team at HMP Grendon. Ikon has managed several artist residences at HMP Grendon, by Edmund Clark (2014 – 2018), Dean Kelland (2019 – 2023), James Lomax (2024) and, current Artist in Residence, Simon Harris (2024 – 2025), resulting in major exhibitions at Ikon Gallery.

IKON/60

Ikon Gallery
1 Oozells Square Brindleyplace
Birmingham B1 2HS
0121 248 0708 / ikon-gallery.org
free entry / donations welcome
Registered charity no. 528892

For more information, press appointments, high-res images and to request interviews please contact Zara Doshi by email zara@pelhamcommunications.com or call Pelham Communications on 020 8969 3959.

Social Media Handles - Instagram, Twitter and Facebook: @ikongallery #IkonGallery
@ace_national @aceagrams @ace_midlands @bhamcitycouncil @RothschildFoundation

Notes to Editors:

1. **Ikon** is an internationally acclaimed contemporary art gallery, situated in Birmingham's city centre. Established in 1964 by a group of artists, Ikon celebrates its 60th anniversary in 2024. It is an educational charity with free entry for all, and works to encourage public engagement with contemporary art through exhibiting new work in a context of debate and participation. The gallery programme features artists from around the world and a variety of media is represented, including sound, film, mixed media, photography, painting, sculpture and installation. Ikon's off-site programme develops dynamic relationships between art, artists and audiences outside the gallery. Projects vary enormously in scale, duration and location, challenging expectations of where art can be seen and by whom. Education is at the heart of Ikon's activities, stimulating public interest in and understanding of contemporary visual art. Ikon aims to build dynamic relationships with audiences, enabling visitors to engage with, discuss and reflect on contemporary art. ikon-gallery.org
2. **Ikon** is open Tuesday – Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays, 11am-5pm. Free entry, donations welcome. Ikon is supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England, and Birmingham City Council.
3. **The Rothschild Foundation** is a charity supporting arts and heritage, the environment, and social welfare by awarding grants, fostering dialogue and debate, and through our support of Waddesdon Manor. The Foundation is Chaired by Dame Hannah Rothschild DBE, and managed by a board of Trustees, including other members of the Rothschild family. The Rothschild Foundation offers grants for the benefit of Buckinghamshire delivering our commitment to address the needs of local communities. Beyond Buckinghamshire, the Foundation supports major initiatives which encourage enjoyment of the UK's rich cultural heritage. Visit rothschildfoundation.org.uk or follow on Facebook or LinkedIn.
4. **Arts Council England** is the national development agency for creativity and culture. ACE have set out their strategic vision in *Let's Create* that by 2030 they 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. From 2023 to 2026 ACE will invest over £467 million of public money from Government and an estimated £250 million from The National Lottery each year to help support the sector and to deliver this vision.
5. **Birmingham City Council** is the local government body responsible for the governance of the City of Birmingham, UK. It is the most populated local council area in the United Kingdom (excluding counties) with 101 elected councillors representing over one million people, in 69 wards. The council headquarters are at the Council House, Victoria Square in the heart of the city centre. The council is responsible for running nearly all local services, with the exception of those run by joint boards. For more information visit

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