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Michael Rosen announced as curator of Barbican Box

Children's author **Michael Rosen** has been announced as a **Barbican Box** curator by **Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning** today. Following in the footsteps of previous Barbican Box contributors including Benedict Cumberbatch, world beatbox champion Bellatrix and leading theatre company Complicité, Rosen has curated a beautiful Box filled with ingredients designed to inspire pupils to create art – in this case poetry and animation.

Michael Rosen's Barbican Box has been designed by **Tina Bicat** to look like an old-fashioned school desk and every object included within refers to one of Rosen's poems about his life, specifically his childhood, including the classic *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*. The box also features a newly commissioned poem by Rosen written especially for the project, entitled *The Toenail*. The Box is part of the Barbican's 2018 season, **The Art of Change**, which explores how the arts respond to, reflect and potentially effect change in the social and political landscape.

All of the schools participating in the programme are primary schools located in east London, in areas with typically lower levels of cultural engagement. The schools are Shapla Primary School, Tower Hamlets, Sir John Cass's Primary School, City of London, Riverley Primary School and Greenleaf Primary School both in Waltham Forest. All participating schools receive a six-month package of support as part of the Barbican Box programme that includes teacher training, learning resources and an artist mentor.

In total, 180 pupils from east London primary schools aged 5-10 will be supported to write poetry and create an animation inspired by the contents of *Michael Rosen's Barbican Box*, which they will then perform at a special showcase event at the Barbican in February.

Michael Rosen said: "It is absolutely vital that children explore the arts while at school. Learning to think creatively is a hugely valuable life skill that helps us to interpret and respond to the world around us. Having the opportunity to share whatever you have created with others is also a brilliant way to develop confidence, and this is why I was thrilled to be invited to curate a Barbican Box. Poetry can be anything you want it to be; it can be poignant or playful and everything in between but perhaps most importantly, writing it can also be outrageously fun."

Jenny Mollica, Head of Creative Learning for the Barbican and the Guildhall School of Music & Drama said: "As a passionate champion for arts in schools Michael Rosen is the ideal person to curate a Barbican Box. One of our aims at Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning is to help embed arts and creativity across the curriculum by turning world-class arts into unforgettable learning experiences. Barbican Box is our flagship schools programme and has supported thousands of primary and secondary school pupils to turn their creative ideas into reality. We are really looking forward to seeing what wonderful work the children have created this time around."

Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning supports people of all ages and backgrounds to engage with world-class arts for free and is jointly run by the Barbican, a leading international arts centre and the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, one of the world's leading conservatoires and drama schools.

Last year, Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning reached almost 80,000 people.

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Notes to Editors

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All Barbican Centre press releases, news announcements and the Communications team's contact details are listed on our website at www.barbican.org.uk/news/home.

About the Barbican

A world-class arts and learning organisation, the [Barbican](#) pushes the boundaries of all major art forms including dance, film, music, theatre and visual arts. Its creative learning programme further underpins everything it does. Over 1.1 million people attend events annually, hundreds of artists and performers are featured, and more than 300 [staff](#) work onsite. The architecturally renowned centre opened in 1982 and comprises the Barbican Hall, the Barbican Theatre, the Pit, Cinemas One, Two and Three, Barbican Art Gallery, a second gallery The Curve, foyers and public spaces, a library, Lakeside Terrace, [a glasshouse conservatory](#), conference facilities and three restaurants. The City of London Corporation is the founder and principal funder of the Barbican Centre.

The Barbican is home to Resident Orchestra, [London Symphony Orchestra](#); Associate Orchestra, [BBC Symphony Orchestra](#); Associate Ensembles the [Academy of Ancient Music](#) and [Britten Sinfonia](#), Associate Producer [Serious](#), and Artistic Partner [Create](#). Our Artistic Associates include [Boy Blue Entertainment](#), [Cheek by Jowl](#), Deborah Warner, [Drum Works](#) and [Michael Clark Company](#). The [Los Angeles Philharmonic](#) are the Barbican's International Orchestral Partner, the [Australian Chamber Orchestra](#) are International Associate Ensemble at Milton Court and [Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra](#) are International Associate Ensemble.

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The Art of Change

The Art of Change season explores how the arts respond to, reflect and potentially effect change in the social and political landscape. The season sees the Barbican present bold artistic responses to vital global issues including feminism, climate change and human rights, while providing a platform for voices currently underrepresented in the arts. The season includes world-class music, theatre, dance, film, visual arts and learning and runs throughout 2018. barbican.org.uk/whats-on/series/the-art-of-change.

Barbican Box

Innovative arts education programme Barbican Box supports schools and colleges to create new theatre, music and visual art with a six-month package including teacher training, an artist mentor, learning resources, a professional performance space and a special 'box' of creative inspiration curated by celebrated international artists such as Benedict Cumberbatch, Soweto Kinch, Deborah Warner and Michael Rosen.