



TOWNER
Annual Review
2023/24

The Year in Numbers

We welcomed over **212,000** visitors



446K unique page views on our website

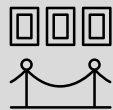


Our cinema held **492** screenings of **145** titles with **18,515** attendees



Over **900** Children attended the **28** Wriggle Room sessions at Towner and Willingdon Trees Community Centre.

18,360 tickets sold to our summer exhibition *Barbara Hepworth: Art & Life*



Social media accounts grew by **11%** as we welcomed over **6,000** new followers across our platforms



In addition to this, we welcomed over **2,400** year 9 students to experience the *Turner Prize*.



Press coverage on Towner recieved over **14 million** views

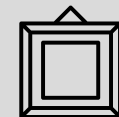
This included **453** articles on the *Turner Prize*



More than **14,000** people attended our public programme of events & workshops



29 new pieces of artwork acquired for our collection from **22** artists, **9** of whom are new to the collection.



This year has been a landmark period for Towner Eastbourne, marked by significant achievements and transformative cultural experiences. As we celebrated our centenary, Towner Eastbourne proudly hosted the prestigious *Turner Prize*, showcasing the best in contemporary British art and sparking vibrant public discourse.



Our Summer exhibition programme was headlined by *Barbara Hepworth: Life & Art*. The exhibition displayed some of Hepworth's most celebrated sculptures and was paired with the companion exhibition by Olivia Louvel, *The Sculptor Speaks*.

We continued to host community and artist events, including our first Ceramics Fair, a two-day event that celebrated the versatile artform in honour of Barbara Hepworth and her exhibition at Towner. We also celebrated the first year of our early years' programme, with *Wriggle Room: Open Studio*, which highlighted collaborative artist practice and creativity.



In September, we launched the 2023 *Turner Prize* at Towner, displaying the four exhibitions by Jesse Darling, Ghislaine Leung, Rory Pilgrim & Barbara Walker. The *Turner Prize* awards ceremony was hosted at The Winter Garden with Tinie Tempah presenting the award to Jesse Darling.

The arrival of the *Turner Prize* also signified the start of our ambitious wraparound project, *Eastbourne ALIVE*. Comprised of exhibitions, events and workshops taking place throughout the town, this project reached over 200,000 people and brought more than £16m of additional visitor spend supporting Eastbourne businesses.





Summer Exhibition Programme

Barbara Hepworth: Art & Life displayed some of Hepworth's most celebrated sculptures including the modern abstract carving that launched her career in the 1920s and 1930s, her iconic strung sculptures of the 1940s and 1950s, and large-scale bronze and carved sculptures from later in her career.

We opened the companion exhibition to *Art & Life*, a looped audio-visual work by artist and composer Olivia Louvel, *The Sculptor Speaks*. Based on an archival recording of a talk by Barbara Hepworth in 1961, Louvel designed a new soundscape, manipulating Hepworth's voice, repeating phrases and playing with its rhythm.

Key Stats from Art & Life:

18,360
tickets sold

Over **6,500**
people attended
the supporting
programme
of events,
workshops and
talks.

48 news pieces
that garnered
over **865K**
views

1,883 new
followers across our
social platforms

SKILL CUT WINNER



Turner Prize & Eastbourne ALIVE

One of the best-known prizes for the visual arts in the world, the *Turner Prize* aims to promote public debate around new developments in contemporary British art. We welcomed the *Turner Prize* as the centrepiece of our centenary celebrations, hosting work by nominated artists Jesse Darling, Ghislaine Leung, Rory Pilgrim and Barbara Walker.

Eastbourne ALIVE was an ambitious cultural programme coinciding with Towner Eastbourne hosting Turner Prize 2023 which presented partnerships, exhibitions and community projects all aimed at providing long lasting cultural change in Eastbourne, following the *Turner Prize*.

The project, the first of its kind funded by Arts Council England, encompassed a wide-ranging programme, including the reanimation of underused spaces through public art, dance, and music events as well as school visits to Towner Eastbourne, community events, screenings, commissions, and exhibitions.

Today, key findings from the project can be revealed and the 'effect' of the wide-ranging programme that took place.

More than
260,000
people attended

£16 million additional visitor
spend to Eastbourne economy

Over **300** artists
took part, supported
by **100** volunteers

Over **130** Eastbourne
businesses displayed
Eastbourne ALIVE
branding

Over **20,000**
hours of art engagement
opportunities available
for young people and
the wider community

20 high-profile public
art commissions placed
across the town

More than **2,400**
year 9s from local
schools visited

385 events,
exhibitions,
performances, and
workshops

Over
100
work and
volunteering
placements
provided for
young people
in Sussex

Press Highlights

We generated press coverage that received over 14 million views.

Barbara Hepworth: Art & Life

[Artlyst | *Barbara Hepworth Towner Gallery - A Personal Response - Jude Montague*](#)

[The Guardian | *An arty weekend in ... Eastbourne, East Sussex*](#)

[BN1 Magazine | *Barbara Hepworth: Art & Life*](#)

[See all coverage here](#)

Towner100

[The Argus | *Towner Eastbourne on turning 100 and hosting Turner Prize*](#)

[BN1 Magazine | *Towner at 100 and bringing the Turner Prize to Eastbourne*](#)

[See all coverage here](#)

Turner Prize

[BBC | *Turner Prize 2023 to be awarded at Towner Eastbourne*](#)

[The New York Times | *Turner Prize Goes to Jesse Darling, a Sculptor of Mangled Objects*](#)

[Artlyst | *Turner Prize 2023: A Regional Awakening – Towner Eastbourne – Sue Hubbard*](#)

[The Telegraph | *Witty, tricky, effervescent – why Jesse Darling is a worthy winner of this year’s Turner Prize*](#)

[The Independent | *Jesse Darling’s meditation on Britain’s borders is the right Turner Prize winner*](#)

[ArtReview | *Turner Prize 2023 Review: Coming Out the Other End*](#)

[See all coverage here](#)

Businesses speak of impact of Turner Prize on town



EVA EASTMAN
Towner Eastbourne said 60,000 people have visited the exhibition so far, including 3,500 school children

The New York Times

When the Turner Prize Came to 'God's Waiting Room'

The town of Eastbourne, England, hopes the contemporary art prize can help it shake off a geriatric image, and bring new attention to the seaside town.

Share full article

Turner Prize 2023: anarchic, dynamic Jesse Darling is this year's only true contender

Amid a shortlist that otherwise ranges from witty and original to plain awful, one Berlin-based artist stands out a mile

★★★★☆4/5
Alastair Sooke
Chief Art Critic
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FINANCIAL TIMES

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The Questionnaire Life & Arts + Add to myFT

Turner Prize winner Jesse Darling: 'I'm 43, and I'm just now ready to get some mentors'

The conceptual artist discusses his non-standard path to success and how our ancestors surround us in the shape of plastic bags



The Guardian
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He almost revels in our social collapse: Jesse Darling is a worthy Turner prize winner

Adrian Searle

Most viewed

- Live Boris Johnson says did not consider ignoring advice from scientists that locking down too soon would be a mistake - UK Covid inquiry live
- A moment that changed me: I was pregnant at 16 - a midwife said I was going to have a miscarriage. It was a real relief
- Derby man who stole friend's body in freezer jailed for two years
- Trump says he will be dictator only on day elected president

ArtReview

The intriguing Turner prize shortlist is a sign of the times

Adrian Searle

Politics is intimately tied up with the ways the four artists on this year's shortlist work, and in a divided world post-Brexit and Covid, this is reflected in their offerings

