

Call for Artist:

The Wordsworths' Moss Hut

The Wordsworth Trust is looking for an artist to create a new interpretation of the Moss Hut built by William Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy. This Moss Hut will be the centre of an exciting community arts engagement project that will inspire communities worldwide to explore their own creativity and love of nature.

We are looking for an imaginative response that brings alive the spirit of the original hut. This new hut should embody the creative, social and environmental spirit of the original building through the creation of a portable hut to be erected at the newly redeveloped Wordsworth Trust site in Grasmere, due to open in April 2020. This new Moss Hut, designed for a contemporary audience, will act as the catalyst and inspiration for a wide-ranging engagement project, supporting community groups, schools and organisations to make their own Moss Huts, wherever they are in the world. This is a unique opportunity to inspire communities to engage with and gain greater appreciation for nature, wellbeing and creativity and bring attention to Wordsworth's wish that people live in harmony with nature rather than destroying it.

What is a Moss Hut?

In autumn 1804, Dorothy and William built a Moss Hut at the top of the Garden Orchard at Dove Cottage, their home in Grasmere. It was inspired by rustic 'fog houses' they had seen during their travels in Scotland. Described by Dorothy as a 'little circular hut lined with moss like a wren's nest', the Moss Hut was Wordsworth's escape from the busy world, a place where he could write, reflect, talk with friends and enjoy the view over Grasmere to the lakeland fells. For Dorothy, the Moss Hut was 'the sweetest place on Earth', a study out-of-doors for creative and sociable pursuits.

The Wordsworth Trust are launching *Reimagining Wordsworth*, a project to celebrate William Wordsworth's 250th birthday in April 2020. We are looking for an artist to respond creatively to this project by developing a portable Moss Hut, inspired by, but not a replica of, the Wordsworths' original, and made from sustainable local materials. The prototype hut will be situated at Dove Cottage in Grasmere and will be taken on tour to events and festivals across Cumbria throughout 2020 to celebrate the positive and creative impact of the *Reimagining Wordsworth* project.

What parameters are set for the new Moss Hut?

The design of the hut will be in the hands of our chosen artist but needs to embody the purpose and spirit of the original, as a space for conversation, creativity, wellbeing and in which to share and encourage a love of nature. A number of principles and parameters have been set by the team to guide this creative process:

- The hut should be round in shape, in-keeping with Dorothy's 'wren's nest' description.
- It should be large enough to seat at least two people inside.
- It should have or create a 'view' to the outside.

- It must be safe for all ages to use.
- It must be mobile and able to be transported in a suitable vehicle around Cumbria.
- The materials used need to be sustainable and locally sourced, in accordance with the hand-made spirit of the original hut. Respect for and love of the natural world is a key feature of this project, so it is envisaged that it will be closely linked with the creation of the new Moss Hut.

How will the Moss Hut inspire mass engagement?

As part of the wider *Reimagining Wordsworth* celebration, the Moss Hut 2020 project aims to encourage community groups, schools and organisations worldwide to reimagine Wordsworth by creating their own Moss Huts using sustainable materials from their own local areas. This creative engagement project will bring people from all walks of life closer to nature, promote positive health and wellbeing and encourage creativity and appreciation for different landscapes around the world. Each Moss Hut built will be unique with endless possibilities and interpretations. Community groups, schools and other organisations will be supported to build their own Moss Hut ready for a 'mass reveal' event, to be held in the autumn of 2020, which will celebrate the achievements of the engagement project and those that have taken part. The portable Moss Hut, created by our chosen artist, will form the core inspiration and guide for groups around the country and the world to create their own huts.

What is the project hoping to achieve?

William Wordsworth wished for his poetry 'to console the afflicted, to add sunshine to daylight by making the happy happier, to teach the young and the gracious of every age, to see, to think and feel'.

Through this project, we are hoping to encourage people to be inspired by the Wordsworths' lives and writings, finding parallels between their concerns and the issues we face today while gaining greater appreciation for the natural world. The Moss Hut embodies the spirit that William and Dorothy brought to their work and lives during their time at Dove Cottage. It was a place that they built together from natural, local materials, inspired by the example of a bird's nest. It was a haven from busy family life to which they could retreat to find peace, creativity and wellbeing. It was a place for coming together with friends and loved ones for conversation and pleasure. The newly designed Moss Hut should seek to give form to these ideas and purposes and act as an inspiration for others, giving them a chance to create spaces in which they can share ideas with others, be creative and discover for themselves a love of the natural world.

In line with the broader goals of *Reimagining Wordsworth*, the Moss Hut project seeks to:

- Enable communities and organisations to actively engage with their local heritage and develop a connection to the Wordsworths and the contemporary relevance of their work.
- Allow people to develop new skills, have enjoyable experiences and learn about their heritage through engagement with the project.
- Encourage more people and a wider range of people to have the chance to engage with heritage and the arts.

What are we looking for from our artist?

We are looking for an artist with a commitment to sustainability and public engagement, the ability to communicate and share enthusiasm with a diverse range of groups and individuals, and an imaginative, creative response to our brief.

The chosen artist will involve and engage volunteers in the design and creation of the Moss Hut. The artist will meet and work with volunteers interested in the Wordsworths and their worldview, in order to immerse the artist in the ideas and motivations of that inspired the original Moss Hut and the great poetry and prose created there.

The artist will also be expected to have some involvement with the groups and organisations who take part in the engagement project: the manner of this involvement is open to suggestion. It could take the form of videos showing techniques or explaining the inspiration behind the prototype Moss Hut; it could be through artist-led sessions with selected groups; or through handbooks and manuals produced to work alongside the Moss Hut.

The prototype Moss Hut will be completed and installed by the end of May 2020.

A budget of £14,000 is available for the cost of this project. This breaks down into £8,000 of artists fees and £6,000 for materials and the creation of the Moss Hut.

The key dates for successfully submitting your proposal are;

Tuesday 1 st October 2019	Brief open for submissions
Thursday 31 st October 2019 (Optional)	Reimagining Wordsworth Open Day on site to welcome artists, answer questions about the brief and learn more about the project. This will be an informal drop in held between 2.00pm – 5.00pm at Dove Cottage, Grasmere, LA22 9SH.
Wednesday 27 th November 2019	Deadline for submissions

SUBMISSION DETAILS

Please create a proposal, including a statement of interest and examples of previous work, to hollie@culturesyndicates.co.uk by midnight on 27 November 2019.

Interviews will be held early December 2019.

ADMINISTRATION

In case of questions about submission timings or for further details regarding the Reimagining Wordsworth Open Day to be held on 31st October, please contact Marie Batty, (m.batty@wordsworth.org.uk) Senior Project Administrator, Reimagining Wordsworth Tel 07940031814