

Press Release

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Blind auction to raise money for Reading-based homeless charity, Launchpad Reading

Reading residents and visitors are invited to bid in a blind auction to buy a unique piece of artwork – one of the handmade 'lilies for Oscar Wilde', currently on display at Reading Museum. All proceeds will go to homeless charity, Launchpad Reading.

The 'lilies' are currently on display at Reading Museum and the blind auction is open now and runs until 12noon, Wednesday 7 February, 2018. Successful bidders will be contacted by 4pm, Thursday 8, 2018.

How to enter:

- Select your 'lily' from the display at Reading Museum.
- Check the minimum bid set by the artist.
- Make a bid (the highest bid wins) by completing the form at the Museum and placing in the drop box provided.
- Successful bidders need to collect and pay for their lily during Museum opening hours, 10am to 4pm, Friday 9 February and Saturday 10 February.
- If the winning bidder does not pay by this time, the second highest bidder will be contacted.

Ann Middleton, chairman of Friends of Reading Museum, said: "We are delighted to be working with the 'Lilies for Oscar Wilde' partnership. Artists across Reading have done an amazing job to create a superb installation at Reading Museum to commemorate the great talent of Oscar Wilde.

"We are really happy to play our part and organise a 'blind auction'. We do hope people will come to the Museum to see the 'lilies' in the box room and bid generously for their favourites for a very worthwhile cause."

Amanda McDonnell, marketing manager, Launchpad Reading, said: "It is great to have the support of Reading's artist community. Art is an

important part of our life, and part of the holistic support we provide at Launchpad. It's a way for our clients to express themselves without the need for words. We're so grateful to be chosen as the charity for the Oscar Wilde floral tribute auction."

Anthony Wilder, chairman of the Reading Guild of Artists, said: "Many people have visited the display at Reading Museum and we have overheard people saying that it would be lovely to own one of the 'lilies'.

"So, in partnership with all those involved in 'Lilies for Oscar Wilde', Reading Guild of Artists were thrilled that a 'blind auction' is taking place to enable people to buy a piece of history to enjoy for many years to come.

"Oscar Wilde faced much adversity and prejudices in his life as do many of Reading's homeless community, and therefore I am delighted that proceeds are going to Launchpad Reading. Please dig deep for this worthy charity."

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Contacts:

Therese Lawlor, publicity officer, Reading Guild of Artists

Tel: 07503156128

Helen Taylor, publicity officer, Reading Guild of Artists

Tel: 07720068972

Email: publicity@rga-artists.org.uk

Notes for Editors:

A poster advertising the sale of the lilies is attached

The auction is running until 12noon on Wednesday 7 February and the successful bidders will be contacted by 4pm on Thursday 8 February.

Launchpad Reading began as a soup kitchen in 1979 and was known as Reading Single Homeless Project until 2011. Now called Launchpad Reading. The charity provides accommodation, support and education to people in the town who need its help.