

‘Under Her Eye’: women and climate change Summit

Ground-breaking global event unveils final programme

Friday 1st June 2018, 9:00am – 6pm, British Library, London

A global Summit and Arts Festival will take a fresh look at the environmental challenges of our age from a female perspective has unveiled its final programme.

‘Under Her Eye’ is headlined by critically acclaimed author and leading climate change advocate, **Margaret Atwood**, and is curated by Invisible Dust, an award-winning arts and science organisation. It is bringing together over 40 female key figures from arts, science, health, technology, finance, activism, leadership and policy together on 1st June at the British Library. On Saturday 2nd June the British Library Piazza will then come alive with the ‘Under Her Eye’ Arts Festival, including family workshops, [‘Microclimate’ a Sensory Banquet](#) with artist Gayle Chong Kwan, a Q&A with Margaret Salmon, the filmmaker behind ‘Shore’, and a live dance performance of [‘Human Sensor LDN’](#) by artist Kasia Molga.

Alice Sharp, Director and Curator, Invisible Dust said: “Invisible Dust has curated ‘Under Her Eye’ from our experience of focusing on environmental themes with artists and scientists for almost a decade and I am thrilled for us to headline with eminent author Margaret Atwood and world authority on climate change Christiana Figueres. UN figures indicate that 80% of people displaced by climate change are women, who are also far less likely to survive climate disasters. However, across the world women are also leading the climate challenge. This ambitious global event will shine a light on climate change from a distinctly female perspective.”

The event will be kicked off by the UN's top climate change diplomat **Christiana Figueres**, who delivered the groundbreaking Paris climate change deal in 2015 against all the odds, and is now dedicated to getting the world on track to beat climate emissions by the crunch date of 2020. She will be focusing on optimism and how empowering women in the urgent climate challenge is crucial - both as leaders and as agents of change within their communities.

Christiana Figueres firmly believes women can make a difference and says: "Climate change remains one of the greatest threats to achieving sustainable development, and its effects often fall hardest on women. Countering this reality is the gritty determination, boundless energy and unwavering spirit of women across the world whose knowledge, skills and leadership are being harnessed in delivering solutions."

Christiana will be talking more about her approach, ‘in conversation’ with **Swaha Pattanaik**, Global Economics Editor at Reuters.

The climax of the day will be a session with **Margaret Atwood**, ‘Under Her Eye’ Ambassador, prize-winning Canadian writer and environmental activist. Many of her novels grapple with issues of climate change, gender, capitalism and politics, offering compelling visions of a climate-impacted future that are both all too familiar and beyond our imagining, leading her to say: *“This isn’t climate change; it’s EVERYTHING change.”*

Atwood has inspired a whole new generation of ‘Cli-Fi’ writers exploring the power of science fiction and literature to engage the global public in this, our most pressing of challenges. She will be

discussing her powerful works and the wider climate challenge with journalist and broadcaster **Samira Ahmed**, presenter of TV and radio including BBC's Front Row and Newswatch.

The event will also focus on key themes championed by, or directly affecting women. Participants from a broad range of backgrounds including arts and science institutions, activists, NGOs, health, finance, technology, lawyers and politicians all coming together to tackling some challenging topics:

- **Why women and climate change, and why now - plenary session**

From the South Dakota pipeline protests, to the Anti-Fracking Nanas of Yorkshire and Kenyan Cli-fi cinematic activism, these are all frontline movements tackling climate change led by women.

This plenary session brings together four incredible women for a conversation about why women and climate change are so interconnected. Participants are:

- **Professor Joanna Haigh**, Co-Director of the Grantham Institute - Climate Change and the Environment, Imperial College London;
- **Caroline Lucas**, MP, Co-leader, UK Green Party;
- **Gabriela Salgado**, Argentine-born curator and artistic director of Te Tuhi Contemporary Art Trust, New Zealand;
- **Chair: Maria Adebowale-Schwarte**, author of 'The Place-Making Factor', Strategist and Director of Living Space Project, an urban place and green space think tank.

Other sessions include:

- **Health, wellbeing and future cities, including new artwork 'Human Sensor LDN':**

It is estimated that two billion more people will live in cities by 2035, and London's population could reach 9.8 million by 2025. Yet the world's cities are currently the largest sources of carbon emissions, with UK air pollution linked to 40,000 deaths a year. Scientists, city planners and artists discuss art's ability to engage the public's interest and commitment to transition from highly polluted 'death-traps', to the carbon neutral 'necropolis' of future living - less congested, healthier, cleaner and more energy efficient.

This session will also include an introduction to 'Human Sensor LDN' a large-scale digital and performance artwork from creative technologist Kasia Molga, which explores London inhabitants' daily exposure to air pollution through a combination of cutting edge wearable technology and performance; commissioned and produced by Invisible Dust in partnership with Euston Town BID as part of 'Under Her Eye'. The live performance will take place from 9.15pm on Saturday 2nd June on Drummond Street, Euston, with the finale at Regent's Place at 9.30pm.

- **Seas and oceans:** Every year about 8 million metric tons of plastic ends up in our oceans. Following on from Invisible Dust's 2017 'Offshore: Artists explore the sea' and *Sounding the Sea Symposium*, this session brings together international contemporary artists and leading marine experts, to explore the critical importance of ocean health to all of our futures and the part art can play in this.
- **Ending the plastic period - a Mooncup presented panel:** Across the UK and the globe people who menstruate still face economic, cultural, and environmental shame and difficulty when navigating their periods. This Mooncup presented panel of women championing cycle

support and menstruated empowerment for all, ask how we tackle Period Poverty and toxic plastic waste?

Kath Clements, Company Director, Mooncup says: “Mooncup Ltd are proud to support ‘Under Her Eye’. Since 2002, Mooncup®, the world’s first reusable medical grade silicone cup, has offered one simple solution that can help to dramatically reduce the waste we produce. With the Mooncup available in over 50 countries worldwide, Mooncup Ltd also collaborates with projects to improve menstrual health and environmental education globally, as well as being committed to busting the taboos around periods with shame-free communications. The opportunity to take part in a summit uniting women, the arts and climate change in a pioneering project was one the business simply wouldn’t miss.”

- **The nature of negotiation:** What are the working models that people are using around the world to bring about international, cross-disciplinary, intergenerational and transnational negotiated change?
- **Cash in, carbon out:** How do we move to ‘clean’ money, business and economics to create a future built on renewables and green investments?
- **Advocating for the planet:** The UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights works to protect the rights of human beings, but who and what protects the planet, our environment and non-human cohabitants that need standing up for?
- **Institutions and science communication:** Since April last year the climate-change denying Trump administration has increasingly censored reports and information on both national and international climate change, the US Environmental Protection was most radically affected. What impact is this having globally and what can be done? We take a look at some of the leading institutions raising awareness of and tackling climate change.
- **Many front lines: climate change in the Global South:** From solar-powered boats and cookers, to bamboo bicycles and off-grid hydro schemes, women in the Global South (Africa, Latin America, and developing Asia including the Middle East) are leading the way to environmentally progressive and sustainable futures. What can we learn from, and do about, climate change in the Global South?
- **Deeds not words: creative activism:** From Diana Simpson Hernandez’s Waste Lab processing scheme, to Maria Arceo’s Plastic Thames project, artists are raising awareness of climate change and are positively affecting our environments. Artists, curators, writers and activists discuss how the arts can be an empowering creative protest for urgent climate messages.

As well as the many talks and plenary sessions, there will also be a number of screenings, art installations and workshops as part of the event.

The day will end with a session called ‘Pledging the future’, as participants and audience members alike will pledge their actions, both large and small, to help tackle climate change in the future.

Alice Sharp, Director and Curator, Invisible Dust concludes: “We are invigorated by the range of speakers and participants who are taking part in this important global event, with women from a diverse range of backgrounds coming together to focus on ways to make a positive difference to the world’s future. We have set up a young women’s fellowship for ‘Under Her Eye’. This

multidisciplinary group of young women from Universities across the UK are developing ideas to ensure the Summit is the start of future international programmes. We see young women as leading our 'Under Her Eye' legacy. "

For full details of the Summit programme, and the diverse and impressive range of speakers visit <http://bit.ly/UHESumProg> .

Tickets for the Summit are sold out, however tickets are still available for events at the 'Under Her Eye' Arts Festival following the Summit, on Saturday 2nd June 2018 ([Box Office](#)). The Festival will take place across the wider King's Cross area, London, with three major Invisible Dust commissions from acclaimed artists which invite the public to consider and experience climate change through the themes of Air, Land and Sea:

- 'At the Crossroads: Microclimate sensory family workshops' 12 - 2pm and 'Sensory Banquet' 7 - 9pm with Gayle Chong Kwan
- 'Shore' by Margaret Salmon, 6 - 7pm
- 'Human Sensor LDN' by Kasia Molga, 9.15 - 10pm

- ENDS -

MEDIA CONTACTS

For more details, or to request images or interviews, please contact Firebird PR on 0125 835 297/ 07977 459547 or email Susannah Penn (sp@firebirdpr.co.uk), Kerry Marshall (km@firebirdpr.co.uk) or Jane Bevan (jb@firebirdpr.co.uk)

PRESS PREVIEW

Journalists are invited to attend a press preview to launch 'Under Her Eye' on Tuesday 29 May from 7pm at the Wellcome Trust this includes a special performance of 'Human Sensor LDN'. More details will be forthcoming, please register your interest with Firebird PR, contacts below.

LIVE-STREAMING

Some of the sessions will be available via live-streaming. For more information please contact Firebird PR, details above.

AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW

- Christiana Figueres
- Alice Sharp, Director and Curator Invisible Dust
- Other speakers – artists and scientists on request

NOTES TO EDITORS

Invisible Dust works with leading artists and scientists to produce ambitious contemporary artworks exploring our environment. Founded in 2009 by Director and Curator Alice Sharp, our mission is to create powerful art and engagement programmes that spark meaningful international conversations on pressing environmental issues. Women are at the forefront of climate change both as campaigners and as the majority of the world's poor dealing with its consequences. The 'Under Her Eye' Summit and Festival is curated from our experience of nine years interdisciplinary working between art and science. Previously our artists working with scientists from Oxford University, Manchester University and King's College London amongst many others. Our artists include Turner Prize winners Elizabeth Price and Jeremy Deller. In 2017 our Hull UK City of Culture exhibition 'Offshore: Artists Explore the Sea' included artists Tacita Dean, John

Akomfrah, Martin Parr, author China Miéville and Mariele Neudecker at Ferens Art Gallery and Hull Maritime Museum drawing a live audience of 400,000. We have attracted over 2 million people to our projects and 3.2 million online through regular coverage in national and international press. www.invisibledust.com

Margaret Atwood is the author of more than fifty books of fiction, poetry and critical essays. Atwood's highly acclaimed works of 'speculative fiction', including the *MaddAdam* Trilogy and *The Handmaid's Tale*, grapple with issues of climate change, science, gender, capitalism and politics and offer compelling visions of the future that are both all too familiar and beyond our imagining.

Her recent novels are *The Heart Goes Last* and the MaddAddam trilogy – the Giller and Booker Prize-shortlisted *Oryx and Crake*, *The Year of the Flood* and *MaddAddam*. Other novels include *The Blind Assassin*, winner of the Booker Prize; and *Alias Grace*, *The Robber Bride*, *Cat's Eye*, *The Penelopiad* --a retelling of the Odyssey -- and the modern classic *The Handmaid's Tale* – now a critically acclaimed award-winning television series. *Hag-Seed*, a novel revisitation of Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*, was published in 2016. Her most recent graphic series is *Angel Catbird*. In 2017, she was awarded the German Peace Prize, the Franz Kafka International Literary Prize, and the PEN Center USA Lifetime Achievement Award.

'Under Her Eye' Project Partners

The Wellcome Trust exists to improve health for everyone by helping great ideas to thrive. We're a global charitable foundation, both politically and financially independent. We support scientists and researchers, take on big problems, fuel imaginations, and spark debate. www.wellcome.ac.uk

Euston Town BID is a partnership working to protect the interests of the business and wider community as the area faces a long period of uncertainty. Our projects range from uncovering and promoting the unique local identity, to lobbying central and local government, to paving the way for real change in pollution levels. We're working to build a bright, economically sustainable future. www.eustontown.com

Arts Council England champion, develop and invest in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives, we support activities across the arts, museums and libraries, from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. www.artscouncil.org.uk

The British Library is the national library of the United Kingdom and the second largest library in the world by number of items catalogued. It holds well over 150 million items from many countries. www.bl.uk

Global Generation's Skip Garden and Kitchen is in the middle of the King's Cross development area. Among the cranes and cement mixers, it is an urban oasis with a twist - a portable garden that moves to different locations as and when land is sold and built on. It is built by young people and local business volunteers, together creating a new and sustainable community. www.globalgeneration.org.uk/skip-garden-and-kitchen-1/

Mooncup is the original, soft, medical-grade silicone menstrual cup designed by women as the convenient, safe and eco-friendly alternative to tampons and pads. Tried and trusted since 2002 by users around the world, the Mooncup menstrual cup offers an end to the waste, discomfort and expense of disposable sanitary protection. <https://www.mooncup.co.uk/>

The Francis Crick Institute is a biomedical discovery institute dedicated to understanding the fundamental biology underlying health and disease. An independent organisation, its founding partners are the Medical Research Council (MRC), Cancer Research UK, Wellcome, UCL (University College London), Imperial College London and King's College London. <https://www.crick.ac.uk/>

King's College London is one of the world's leading research and teaching universities based in the heart of London. The Environmental Research Group (ERG), part of the School of Population Health & Environmental Sciences at King's College London, is a leading provider of air quality information and research in the UK. www.kcl.ac.uk/lsm/research/divisions/aes/research/ERG/index.aspx

Seedlip - The world's first non-alcoholic spirits – Solving the dilemma of ‘What to drink when you’re not drinking’. <https://www.seedlipdrinks.com/>