

## Press releases

### *Artistic tribute to Alan Turing unveiled at Paddington Central*

07 SEP 2016



British Land has unveiled an artistic tribute to pioneering mathematician and computer scientist Alan Turing at its [Paddington Central](#) campus.

The public artwork, 'Message from the Unseen World', celebrates the life and work of Turing, who was born in Paddington and is best known for the leading role he played in breaking the enigma code during the Second World War.

The piece, which spans the width of Bishop's Bridge Road, was curated by Futurecity and devised by United Visual Artists ("UVA"), in collaboration with Hackney-based poet Nick Drake.

Matt Clark of UVA conceived a living artwork, with a poem as the centrepiece. He approached Nick Drake to write the verse, which depicts Turing speaking posthumously about his life.

The installation comprises aluminium panels perforated by holes and LEDs which display extracts from Turing's ground-breaking 'Computing Machinery and Intelligence' in patterns based on Baudot code. As the LEDs are illuminated they reveal words and verses from Drake's poem, with the display controlled by an algorithm which experiments with different combinations of letters and words.

'Message from the Unseen World' is located close to the canalside entrance to Paddington Underground Station under Bishop's Bridge Road, at the entrance to the 11 acre Paddington Central campus.

**David Lockyer, Head of Office Asset Management at British Land**, said: "British Land has a long association with art. We are proud to present 'Message from the Unseen World', which not only celebrates one of Paddington's most famous sons, it speaks to the area's evolution into a hub for innovation, technology and creative disruption."

**Rachael McNabb, Curator, Futurecity**, said: "The project is an example of how large-scale, digital art and design can work successfully in public places, enlivening unseen parts of the city. It's with exactly this sort of creative vision – which is increasingly led by the private sector – that London can continue to be a world-class city of culture."

**Matt Clark, United Visual Artists** said: "The artwork itself is a continuously evolving machine; an 'engine' that uses basic principles of artificial intelligence to endlessly interpret Drake's work. The result is a literal in memoriam for Turing, a dynamic artwork that reminds us of the complementary relationship between people and technology, how it has changed from the 20th to early 21st Century, and how this relationship will continue to develop."

**Nick Drake** said: "To take poetry and make it a collaborative project has been hugely exciting. We are not simply presenting the poem, rather we are exploring the idea of a machine thinking poetically – or perhaps more accurately – appearing to write like a poet while thinking like a machine, which goes to the very heart of Turing's explorations on artificial intelligence. I hope the piece makes people more aware of Turing's remarkable life and ground-breaking work."

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## Media

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## Notes to Editors

### About British Land – all figures as at last valuation date of 31 March 2016

We are one of Europe's largest publicly listed real estate companies. We own, manage, develop and finance a portfolio of high quality commercial property, focused on retail locations around the UK and London offices. We have total assets in the UK, owned or managed, of £20.0 billion (of which British Land share is £14.6 billion) as valued at 31 March 2016. Our properties are home to over 1,200 different organisations ranging from international brands to local start-ups. Our objective is to deliver long term and sustainable total returns to our shareholders and we do this by focusing on Places People Prefer. People have a choice where they work, shop and live and we aim to create outstanding places which make a positive difference to people's everyday lives. Our customer orientation enables us to develop a deep understanding of the people who use our places. We employ a lean team of experts, who have the skills to translate this understanding into creating the right places, and we have an efficient capital structure which is able to finance these places effectively.

Retail assets account for 50% of our portfolio. As the UK's largest listed owner and manager of retail space, our portfolio is well matched to the different ways people shop today. We are focused on being the destination of choice for retailers and their customers by being the best provider of spaces and services. Comprising over 20 million sq ft of retail space across multi-lets, superstores, department stores and leisure assets, the retail portfolio is modern, flexible and adaptable to a wide range of formats.

Our Office and Residential portfolio, which accounts for 48% of our portfolio, is focused on London. We have an attractive mix of high quality buildings in well managed environments and a pipeline of development projects which will add significantly to our portfolio. Increasingly, our Offices are in mixed-use environments which include retail and residential elements. Our 7.5 million sq ft of high quality office space includes Regent's Place and Paddington Central in the West End and Broadgate, the premier City office campus (50% share).

The remaining 2% of our portfolio is at Canada Water where we have a 46 acre redevelopment opportunity in our medium term pipeline.

Our industry-leading sustainability strategy is a powerful tool to deliver lasting value for all our stakeholders. By supporting communities, improving environments and growing economies, we create Places People Prefer and enhance long term returns.

In April 2016 British Land received the 2016 Queen's Award for Enterprise: Sustainable Development as part of Her Majesty The Queen's 90th birthday honours. The Award is the UK's highest accolade for business success and is given to companies which bring major economic, social and environmental benefits through their own business success. It was awarded to British Land for continuous achievement in all these areas over the last five years.

Further details can be found on the British Land website at [www.britishland.com](http://www.britishland.com)

### **About Futurecity**

Futurecity develops cultural visions for the urban realm. It creates the partnerships, research and projects that invigorate public space, and shape our cities for the future. Founded by Mark Davy in 2007, Futurecity works internationally to connect clients with artists, curators, galleries and cultural institutions. From commissioning major art works to delivering cultural programmes for entire districts, Futurecity operates between art and other disciplines, whether science, architecture or technology. As curators delivering major projects from inception to completion, Futurecity is interested in "galleries without walls" and championing artists who are changing the way culture is presented in an urban context. [futurecity.co.uk](http://futurecity.co.uk)

### **About United Visual Artists**

United Visual Artists is a London based art practice founded in 2003 by Matthew Clark, Chris Bird and Ash Nehru. UVA's work encompasses large-scale temporary and permanent installations, small-scale artworks and live performance based projects.

The studio's lines of enquiry include the tension between real and synthesised experiences; the questioning of our relationship with technology, and our perceptual experiences of natural phenomena such as space and time.

UVA have been commissioned by institutions including Victoria & Albert Museum, Royal Academy of Arts, Barbican, The Serpentine Gallery, Manchester International Festival and YCAM Japan. Their work has been exhibited at galleries including The Royal Academy, The Wellcome Collection, Blain | Southern, Riflemaker and the British Library.

The studio has an open approach to collaboration, which has led to a diverse range of projects including with choreographer Benjamin Millepied and the Paris Opéra Ballet, filmmaker Adam Curtis and musicians Massive Attack, Battles and James Blake.

Visit [www.uva.co.uk](http://www.uva.co.uk) or contact [Dionne@uva.co.uk](mailto:Dionne@uva.co.uk)

### **About Nick Drake**

Nick Drake is a poet, screenwriter, and playwright living in London.

His first screenplay, an adaptation of Raimond Gaita's Romulus, My Father, directed by Richard Roxburgh, Released in 2007, it won Best Film at the Australian Film Awards, and the screenplay was shortlisted for Best Screenplay. It was the highest grossing domestic film of that year.

Nick's first poetry collection, The Man in the White Suit (Bloodaxe 1999) was a Poetry Society Recommendation and won the Waterstones/Forward Prize for Best First Collection. It was followed by From The Word Go (Bloodaxe 2006).

Theatre work includes: To Reach the Clouds, an adaptation of Philippe Petit's account of his walk between the Twin Towers (Nottingham Playhouse 2007); Success for National Theatre Connections (2009); All The Angels (Wanamaker Playhouse, Globe Theatre 2015).

Nick collaborated with United Visual Artists on the award-winning installation High Arctic (National Maritime Museum 2011).

For further information please visit <http://www.nickdrake.com/>