

## **Arts by Offenders – Koestler Trust debut in the North West**

**Arts by Offenders** is an exhibition of artwork produced in prisons, special hospitals and by people on probation in the North West of England.

This evocative and thought-provoking collection of over 70 fine art and craft works as well as around 20 creative writing pieces, was selected from hundreds of the area's entries to the 2009 Koestler Awards – a charitable scheme which has been rewarding artistic achievement in the penal and secure sectors for over 45 years.

The Koestler Trust has held exhibitions in London since the sixties, but this is its first exhibition in the North West and the first time that entrants from the region have been eligible for additional awards. The opportunity to enter a prestigious awards programme, get feedback from experts, and be included in a public exhibition is a huge boost to the artists' self esteem and motivation, as well as improving their connection to home. These factors all help in rehabilitation and reducing reoffending.

The exhibition has been funded by The Co-operative as part of its wide-ranging community activity in the North West.



### **Exhibition details**

Monday to Saturday, 10am to 4pm

24<sup>th</sup> February – 16 March

Free entry

### **Press previews**

by appointment on 22 or 23 February – call 0776 075 1627

### **Address**

Holden Gallery  
Manchester Metropolitan University

Cavendish Street (off Oxford road)  
Manchester M15 6BR

**Free exhibition tours** During the exhibition the Koestler Trust will conduct free exhibition tours. Meet in the Holden Gallery at 2pm on Saturday 6 and Saturday 13 March. No booking necessary.

## Notes to editors

1. The Koestler Trust (charity no. 1105759) is the UK's best-known prison arts charity. The Trust runs the annual Koestler Awards which attract over 6,000 entries each year from prisons, probation services, secure hospitals, immigration removal centres and other establishments across the UK each year. In addition to new exhibitions focussing on work from Scotland and North West England, the Trust holds an annual exhibition held at Southbank Centre, London. This year's national exhibition was held from 21 October to 6 December 2009 and was curated by a group of female prisoners.

2. This exhibition is part of a two-year project to encourage rehabilitation and participation through the arts in Scotland and North West England, which has been supported by The Co-operative. As part of this project there has also been an exhibition of work from Scotland held in Edinburgh in August 2009, and there will be another exhibition in Scotland in 2010 and the North West in 2011.

3. The Co-operative supports a diverse range of community activity - in 2008 £11.5 million was awarded to communities throughout the United Kingdom and overseas, equivalent to almost 10% of pre tax profit. The Co-operative's community investment and campaigning focuses on areas that members, staff and customers really care about, ranging from climate change and global poverty, to inspiring young people and supporting local communities.

4. The Koestler Trust and The Co-operative are grateful to Manchester Metropolitan University for generously providing the exhibition space.

5. Any queries about the exhibition, or image requests, should be directed to The Koestler Trust on 020 8740 0333. Koestler Arts Centre, 168a Du Cane Rd, London, W12 0TX.