

## FATHER AND SON COLLABORATE FOR LATEST ARTANGEL COMMISSION

*Natural Selection* by Andy Holden & Peter Holden

10 September – 5 November 2017

Artangel at the former Newington Library, 155 Walworth Road, London SE17

Press view: Friday 8 September 2017



Andy and Peter Holden presenting a nest. Still from *A Natural History of Nest Building*, three-screen video, part of Andy Holden & Peter Holden: *Natural Selection*, 2017. An Artangel commission.

Artangel's latest commission, *Natural Selection*, marks the culmination of a five-year collaboration between artist Andy Holden and his father, the well-known ornithologist Peter Holden. Their collaborative work explores the history of birds' nests and egg collecting and is on show in the former Newington Library, Elephant & Castle, from **10 September 2017**.

Andy Holden's work includes animation, video, sculpture, and music. The origin of this new commission lies in his father's authority in the fields of natural history and ornithology. Peter Holden worked for the RSPB for 45 years, building the Young Ornithologist Club, which Andy Holden joined as a boy, into the largest wildlife club in the world. He also regularly featured as 'the bird man' on BBC's *Blue Peter*.

The first part of the exhibition – *A Natural History of Nest Building* – looks at birds' nests, and how and why they exist in such an astonishing array of forms. In a new, three-screen video, father and son visit various nesting sites and observe the nest building habits of woodpeckers and weaver-birds, house martins and oven birds. Sculptures inspired by the elaborate structures made by bowerbirds are displayed alongside Andy Holden's private nest collection, as well as sculptures based on the wave-forms of bird song made by instrument-maker and wood-turner Geoffrey Leeson.

In the second section of the exhibition – *A Social History of Egg Collecting* – an animated crow tells the story of the development of the practice from aristocratic pursuit, to boyhood hobby, and to underground illegality following the Protection of Birds Act of 1954 which

banned the once popular activity in Britain. Laying bare the unstoppable urge of the collector, an extensive hoard of stolen eggs found in the home of notorious collector Richard Pearson in 2006 has been carefully recreated.

For further press information please contact Erica Bolton / Sim Eldem, Bolton & Quinn: [erica@boltonquinn.com](mailto:erica@boltonquinn.com) or [sim@boltonquinn.com](mailto:sim@boltonquinn.com) / 020 7221 5000.

Images can be downloaded at:  
<http://bit.ly/AndyHoldenimages>

### **Listings**

*Natural Selection* by Andy Holden & Peter Holden

Exhibition open Wednesday – Saturday; 11:00–19:00, Sunday 11:00–17:00

Sunday 10 September – Sunday 5 November

Free admission

Artangel at the former Newington Library, 155 Walworth Road, London SE17 1NH

<https://www.artangel.org.uk/project/natural-selection>

#andyholden

*Natural Selection* by Andy Holden and Peter Holden is co-commissioned by Artangel, Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, Leeds Art Gallery and the Towner Art Gallery with the support of Arts Council England, Bristol Green Capital 2015, the Henry Moore Foundation and Artangel's Guardian Angels.

*Natural Selection* by Andy Holden and Peter Holden is part of The Artangel Collection, an initiative to bring outstanding film and video works commissioned and produced by Artangel to galleries and museums across the UK. The Artangel Collection has been developed in partnership with Tate and is generously funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and The Foyle Foundation.

Artangel is generously supported using public funding by Arts Council England and the private patronage of the Artangel International Circle, Special Angels and The Company of Angels.

### **Notes to Editors**

**Artangel** produces and presents extraordinary art in unexpected places in London, the UK and beyond. For over 30 years Artangel has generated some of the most talked-about art of recent times, including projects with Clio Barnard, Jeremy Deller, PJ Harvey, Roger Hiorns, Michael Landy, Steve McQueen, Rachel Whiteread, and last year, Jorge Otero-Pailos's *The Ethics of Dust* at Westminster Hall, Houses of Parliament and *Inside – Artists and Writers in Reading Prison*. Appearing anywhere from empty prisons to underground vaults, daytime TV to the sky at night, Artangel produces art that surprises and inspires and wouldn't be possible within the confines of a gallery. [www.artangel.org.uk](http://www.artangel.org.uk)