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## Press release: Patterns by John Finn



**First exhibition of visual arts by a Deafblind professional artist at Touchbase Pears (Sense).** John Finn presents his exhibition of prints called, “Patterns” at Touch Base Pears, Birmingham between 14 January – 31 January 2019.

John Finn will be artist in residence at Touch Base Pears in March, April and May 2019. Patterns introduces the artistic work of John Finn, with an exhibition of new work in June 2018.

Audiences are Tweeting, “Loving the exhibition – such gracefull, intricate images”  
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His patterns describe a secret life, of living with progressive sight loss in a Deaf world. The first half of the exhibition describes earliest memories of the analogue age; growing up in the country with a love of nature and of television. His family told him about the stories that he watched on television, this is how his love for stories began.

Finn, “My mother would encourage my older siblings to tell her the stories they had watched. These rivalries between the children for my mother’s love and attentions had spurred me to tell her a better story than my own siblings despite my disadvantage not able to understand the films due to lack of subtitles in the 1970s.”



Picture: John Finn Print: Analogue Age

His describes the Analogue Age, Finn, “My earliest memory is my father banging the television trying to get it to work. The zig zags took me days to perfect to create the sense of the fist bashing against the timber of the television..

The pictures Frogspawn and Spiders web describe Finn’s love of nature. He says, “We lived in a extreme part of rural countryside where we roamed about in the fields, woods and lakeside exploring. He says, “I was not born blind I grew up sighted, knowing that one day I would go blind, so I absorbed as much as I could before the fatal day.

Growing up in the country, I saw beautiful spiders webs. I love dew drops hanging off the spiders web, very beautiful. I can no longer see that anymore, what I see is a mess. The pattern is my interpretation of a spiders web from the perspective of a Blind Person.

The second half of the exhibition is Finn’s Blind world. He describes the process of going blind; finding clothes to wear that suit his taste.



Picture: John Finn Print: Wheels

Wheels is an expression of my biggest loss. The love of driving. I have always been a petrol head, began with roller skates, go-karts. I customised a 1956 Ford Popular, build two kit cars. With loss of vision I feel like I am going backwards to nothing. This why the pattern going backwards and down-hill.



The “Patterns” are about the process of going blind. Finn says, “I use to pick up clothes and wear them, I can’t do this anymore. I use a reading device to make sense of what I am wearing. When going out, it is a lot of pressure on me to wear appropriate and clean clothes.”

The “Patterns” are symbols about Finns life. It is informed by the recent loss of the father that he greatly admired and his daughter who will experience the same loss of sight in the digital age.

You can meet Finn at the exhibition on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2018 between 5 – 7 pm at Touch Base Pears Birmingham. At 6 pm, Finn talk about Patterns in BSL, with voice over for hearing. All welcome.

#### Artist biography

**Finn is West Midlands based (Ironbridge and grew up in Hope a village, near Shrewsbury)**  
**Finn is currently shortlisted for a National Arts Award for Deaf and Disabled artists called Unlimited – It’s a new installation - a full size fish tank exploring haptic technology.**  
**In 2018, Life & Deaf an artist residency at SENSE flagship building, leading to the first exhibition of visual arts by a deaf blind professional artist at Touchbase Pears.**  
**Birmingham Visual artist John Finn is a recipient of DASH mentoring project, Cultivate, for disabled artists in West Midlands. He studied at the London International Film School.**  
**With his passion for story- telling, he studied a Masters in computer animation. He directed “The Long Knife” which won Best Non-Narrative Film in 2007 at DeafFest, Deaf-Led Film & Arts Festival. In 2014 he made an award-winning documentary called, “The Big Decisions”.**

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