

The Clangers, Bagpuss & Co.

A major, new retrospective for Smallfilms' cult creations

19 March – 9 October 2016

FREE entry

The magical worlds of *The Clangers* and *Bagpuss* will be explored in a new exhibition opening at the V&A Museum of Childhood next spring. Created by Oliver Postgate and Peter Firmin, and filmed in a barn in rural Kent, these characters brought new life to children's television. *The Clangers, Bagpuss & Co* will be the first major retrospective of Smallfilms - Firmin and Postgate's influential and much-loved production company – and include films not seen for decades.

Oliver Postgate's voice and Peter Firmin's puppets and artwork are cornerstones of 20th century British culture and their quirky and inventive programmes shaped the childhood memories of millions. As well as telling the story of *Bagpuss* and *The Clangers*, the exhibition will go behind the scenes of some of their other creations: *Pogles Wood*, *Noggin the Nog* and *Ivor the Engine*.

From *Watch with Mother* in the 1960s to 21st century *CBeebies*, Smallfilm's endearing characters and captivating imaginary worlds have been staples of children's television across the globe. *The Clangers* returned to the small screen in 2015 and have been embraced by a new generation of fans.

Before the days of CGI, Smallfilms used detailed craftsmanship and bold ingenuity to create enchanting animations. Working in a barn and an adapted pigsty in rural Kent, the pair were able to maintain their creative independence and uniqueness of vision. The exhibition brings together the original puppets alongside archive footage, sets and storyboards, photos, scripts and filming equipment, all set in a playful recreation of Oliver and Peter's film studio.

Alice Sage, curator of the exhibition, said:

"We all hold a special place in our hearts for one or more of Smallfilms' creations. Beyond telling marvellous, captivating stories, Peter Firmin and Oliver Postgate's work encouraged children to look at the world with curiosity. Oliver's distinctive voice as narrator never spoke down to their young audience, and they weren't afraid of dealing with complex ideas in a

magical way. The stories have stood the test of time. As well as looking at how these programmes were made, we also hope to capture the spirit of these timeless gems.”

Visitors will be able to see Oliver Postgate’s stop-motion film camera, adapted using a small motor and bits of Meccano, learn why Bagpuss changed from orange to pink, and find out what Major Clanger was really saying from original shooting scripts. They can also try their hand at animating the characters using current technology and learn to speak ‘Clanger’.

There will be a series of film screenings, events, animation discussions and family-friendly workshops to accompany the exhibition.

For further press information please contact Rebecca Ward for the V&A Museum of Childhood: Rebecca@rebeccaward.co.uk, 020 7613 3306.

Press images can be downloaded, after registering, at <http://pressimages.vam.ac.uk>.

Notes to editors

The V&A Museum of Childhood aims to encourage everyone to explore the themes of childhood past and present and develop an appreciation of creative design through its inspirational collections and programmes. The Museum is part of the V&A, housing the national childhood collection. The galleries are designed to show the collections in a way which is accessible to adults and children of all ages.

V&A Museum of Childhood, Cambridge Heath Road, London E2 9PA.

Nearest tube: Bethnal Green. Open daily: 10.00 – 17.45, last admission 17.30.

Switchboard: 020 8983 5200 www.vam.ac.uk/moc

The Clangers, Bagpuss & Co is a FREE exhibition

The exhibition opens on 16 March 2016 and runs until 9 October 2016.

The curator

Alice Sage joined the V&A Museum of Childhood in 2012. Alice’s specialist interests lie in childhood, oral history and popular culture, and her academic research has focussed on 20th century cultural memory. She has curated *Small Stories: At home in a dolls’ house* (2014) as well as permanent gallery displays, *Mascots of the Olympic Games* (2012) and worked as part of the team on *Modern British Childhood* (2012).