



## **HAYDON BRIDGE TO CELEBRATE JOHN MARTIN**

The Haydon Bridge Development Trust is delighted to announce that it has been awarded a grant of £48,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to celebrate the life and works of the community's most famous son. The John Martin Heritage Festival will run from March 2011 in venues in and around the village to coincide with major exhibitions of the artist's work at the Laing Art Gallery and Tate Britain.

The Festival will provide the opportunity for the local community and visitors to the area to learn more about Martin's early years in Haydon Bridge by taking part in a range of activities and events running throughout the year. These will include talks by Martin experts, guided walks by archaeologists, geologists and local guides, art, writing and photography workshops, storytelling for children and parents and the development of materials for a Martin Heritage Centre in the village.

The Development Trust is working in partnership with the National Trust, the Laing Art Gallery, the North Pennines AONB Partnership and Langley Castle Hotel as well as local schools and organisations to develop its programme. Many of the landscapes which so influenced the artist are now in the care of the National Trust and visitors will be able to explore the countryside around Allen Banks and Hadrian's Wall which has changed little over the years.

Mark I'anson, Chairman of the Haydon Bridge Development Trust, welcomed the HLF funding: "This award will enable us to ensure that the national recognition being afforded to John Martin can be properly celebrated in his birthplace, and we are delighted to have the

opportunity to involve both locals and visitors in a programme which will connect these spectacular pictures with their roots in the landscapes around our village.”

Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in the North East, Ivor Crowther, commented:

“John Martin was a prolific British artist and his work is still recognised and celebrated today. This project will help bring his work and his story to life for more people than ever before, encouraging them to get out into the local countryside, seeing the very scenes which inspired him. HLF is proud to be a part of such a worthwhile project that will bring John Martin’s work back to the place where it all began.”

John Martin was born in Haydon Bridge in 1789 and spent his formative years in the village before going on to become the most popular British artist of his age. The wild and spectacular Northumberland countryside and weather, the emerging mining industry and his family’s strong religious beliefs provided the influences which inspired Martin to produce the epic canvases on religious and apocalyptic themes which were so celebrated in Victorian Britain. John Martin – Heaven and Hell at the Laing Art Gallery will be the first major exhibition of his works for over 30 years and will bring many paintings back to the region which inspired them before taking to the national stage in September at Tate Britain.

The John Martin Heritage Festival will begin with an opening evening in Haydon Bridge Community Centre on 11 March 2011 entitled “John Martin and Friends – The Generation Who Stole The Future.” Events will continue throughout the year and on into 2012, and details of the programme will be available on [www.haydon-bridge.org.uk](http://www.haydon-bridge.org.uk), [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk) and on leaflets and posters available from the Laing Art Gallery and Tourist Information Centres in Northumberland.

The Festival and exhibitions form part of The Great British Art Debate, a programme designed to discuss our views on British art and just what it means to us in the run up to the Olympics in 2012. Here in Haydon Bridge, we hope it is going to mean a lot.

*For further details on John Martin Heritage Festival events in and around Haydon Bridge, and any other enquiries, please contact*

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Or visit:

<http://www.haydon-bridge.co.uk/martin.php>

-Ends-

### **Notes to Editors**

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported more than 30,000 projects allocating £4.5billion across the UK with £214 million in the North East alone. Website: [www.hlf.org](http://www.hlf.org)

### **Accompanying Photographs**

A choice of images is attached showing partners celebrating the award. Details below:

*Framing the landscape of John Martin Country – celebrating the award of Heritage Lottery funding to the John Martin Heritage Festival are: l-r Lesley Silvera (North Pennines AONB Partnership), Mike Parkin (Haydon Bridge Development Trust) and Eric Wilton (National Trust).*

### **Forthcoming Festival Events**

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|-------------|---|
| Fri 11 Mar  | John Martin and Friends: the Generation Who Stole the Future                  |
| Fri 16 Apr  | Art Workshop with Lionel Playford   |
| Fri 30 Apr  | John Martin Trail – Guided Walk   |
| Thu 12 May  | Evening Walk  |
| Sat 14 May  | Industrial Heritage Day at The Garden Station                                 |
| Sat 21 May  | The Art of Geology at Allen Banks with Dr Elizabeth Pickett and Henry Swaddle |
| Thu 26 May  | Genealogy Day   |
| Sat 28 May  | John Martin Trail – Guided Walk   |
| Sat 04 June | Igniting the Imagination - Linda France Poetry Workshop                       |
| Thu 9 June  | Evening Walk  |
| Fri 17 June | Barbara Morden and Andrew & Nicola Davison                                    |
| Sat 25 June | John Martin Trail – Guided Walk   |
| Thu 14 July | Evening Walk  |

Tue 19 July Creative Writing Workshop at The Garden Station

Sat 23 July John Martin Trail – Guided Walk