

## PRESS RELEASE

January 2015

### **The Whitworth welcomes visitors to the newly transformed gallery with an exciting opening weekend of free events on 14 and 15 February, including artist and curator talks, a family art picnic and concert for children, and an evening party in the park**

The Whitworth, part of The University of Manchester, will reopen its doors on 14 February 2015 following a £15 million redevelopment project led by MUMA (McInnes Usher McKnight Architects), that will transform the 125 year old Whitworth into a 21st century gallery in the park. To celebrate the reopening, the Whitworth team will personally introduce the new spaces and exhibitions with an extraordinary schedule of events throughout the weekend of 14 – 15 February.

These free events will offer a chance to meet the people who have made it happen and hear the stories behind the Whitworth's eclectic and extensive collection of historical and contemporary fine art, textiles and wallpapers. Highlights of the programme include talks with Cornelia Parker, Jeanette Winterson and Stuart McKnight, performances in the new art garden including a live performance from the Hallè Youth Choir and an evening party on Saturday 14 February with a collaborative performance by Italian artist Nico Vascellari and French Musician, Ghédalia Tazartès.

The redevelopment, which has been supported by a major Heritage Lottery Fund grant, The University of Manchester and other funders, will double public space and create state-of-the-art new facilities including expanded gallery spaces, a learning studio, study centre and a collections access zone.

#### **Meet the Curators**

On Saturday and Sunday, the Whitworth invite you to join the curators in the gallery to learn more about the opening exhibitions:

#### **SATURDAY**

**11am Cornelia Parker**

Curator of Modern Art, Mary Griffiths, introduces Cornelia Parker's largest solo exhibition to date. BSL interpreted.

**12pm Outdoor Art Walk**

Join Exhibitions Curator, Bryony Bond and Cultural Park-keeper Francine Heyfron for a walk in Whitworth Park and explore the new and old outdoor works. Meet at the Parkside welcome desk. BSL interpreted.

**12pm Johnnie Shand Kydd**

Curator Helen Stalker will introduce Shand Kydd's *Hydra*, which documents the annual event on the island, hosted by Pauline Karpidas.

**1pm Textiles**

Deputy Gallery Director and Textiles Curator, Jennifer Harris will address the many meanings of green, referencing the gallery's own collection and the commissioned work from contemporary designers.

**2pm Cai Guo-Qiang**

Bryony Bond will introduce *Unmanned Nature*, the spectacular installation in the new Landscape Gallery.

**3pm Sarah Lucas**

Wallpapers Curator, Amy George will introduce Sarah Lucas' work and the Whitworth's renowned wallpaper collection.

**4pm Thomas Schütte**

Head of Collections, David Morris will introduce *Low Tide Wandering*, one of the most remarkable print installations of recent years.

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The University of Manchester  
The Whitworth

# the Whitworth

## SUNDAY

### 11am A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Gallery

Find out about the new building, its environmental credentials and how we will care for our collections with Nicola Walker, Head of Collections Care and Access. Meet at the Parkside welcome desk. BSL interpreted.

### 11am Watercolours

The Whitworth's earliest and greatest benefactor was John Edward Taylor, the owner of the Manchester Guardian (now The Guardian). Head of Collections, David Morris will introduce his legacy – the Whitworth's renowned collection of watercolours – including works by William Blake, JMW Turner and John Robert Cozens.

### 12pm Sarah Price

Landscape Designer, Sarah Price leads a tour of the new art garden. Meet at the parkside welcome desk.

### 12pm The Learning Gallery

Head of Learning and Engagement, Esme Ward explores how the Whitworth and its new spaces seek to encourage learning, engagement and wellbeing in all its visitors.

### 1pm Outdoor Art Walk

Join Head of Development, Jo Beggs and Cultural Park-keeper Francine Heyfron for a walk in Whitworth Park and explore the new and old outdoor works. Meet at the Parkside welcome desk.

### 1pm Portraits

Exhibitions Curator, Bryony Bond will bring to light stories of some of the key individuals and artists in our collection through this exhibition of biography and portraiture.

### 2pm New Acquisitions

Curator of Modern Art, Mary Griffiths, on the recent major gift of 90 contemporary works of art to the Whitworth from the Karpidas Foundation. BSL interpreted.

### 3pm 1960s

Curator of Fine Art, Helen Stalker introduces this exhibition of British artists' take on 1960s contemporary life. BSL interpreted.

## Study Centre Conversations

Throughout the weekend Whitworth curators and leading academics from The University of Manchester, and elsewhere, will reflect on themes triggered by works in the Whitworth's collection in the new Study Centre.

## SATURDAY

11am **War** David Morris and Dr Ana Carden-Coyne

12pm **Blue** Frances Pritchard and Prof Carol Mavor

1pm **Austerity** Amy George and Prof Mark Crinson

2pm **Victorians** Helen Stalker and Dr Colin Trodd

3pm **Collections** Jennifer Harris and Prof Helen Rees Leahy

## SUNDAY

11am **Nature** Bryony Bond and Dr Marion Endt-Jones

12pm **Wallpaper** Amy George and Prof David Lomas

1pm **Empire** Frances Pritchard and Dr Philip Sykas

2pm **Outsiders** Bryony Bond and Dr Charlie Miller

3pm **Hogarth** David Morris and Jennifer Harris

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## In the Grand Hall

Extensive refurbishment of the existing gallery building means that visitors will also be able to access the reinstated Grand Hall on the first floor through glorious Edwardian staircases returned to public use for the first time in over 50 years.

## SATURDAY

10am-12pm

### Brass Baby

Northern Brass celebrate the arrival of the new building with an interactive musical experience tailored to our youngest visitors.

1.30-2.30pm

### Cornelia Parker

The artist discusses her exhibition in conversation with the Whitworth's Director, Dr Maria Balshaw and Curator Mary Griffiths. BSL interpreted.

2.30-3.30pm

### Looking at Art

Jeanette Winterson and John McAuliffe discuss the Whitworth as a place where new thinking can happen. BSL interpreted.

3.30-4.45pm

### Carcanet Press

In partnership with Carcanet Press, emerging and established poets share their works in response to the Whitworth's reopening.

6.30-7.30pm

### Whitworth Young Contemporaries

Whitworth Young Contemporaries (WYC), our programme for young people, stage a performance and workshop in the Grand Hall in collaboration with Manchester Hip Hop band The Mouse Outfit.

7.30-8.30pm

### Video Jam

A five-act programme of musicians and film responding to the collection and the building.

## SUNDAY

9-11am

### Art Picnic

The Art Picnic will see the outdoors come in to the Grand Hall with drop-in activities for families using our new picnic basket resources.

12.30-1.30pm

### MUMA and the Whitworth

Stuart McKnight, of McInnes, Usher, McKnight Architects will tell the story of the design of the new Whitworth. BSL interpreted.

5-6pm

### Whitworth Letters

The reopening celebrations will close with the premiere of *Whitworth Letters*, an immersive work by Manchester Camerata's Composer-in-Residence of 2013-14, Laura Bowler, which will explore the lives of people who have contributed in various ways to the Whitworth. The programme features founder of the New Music Manchester group Peter Maxwell Davies whilst taking inspiration from artists associated with the Whitworth.

Programme to include:

Peter Maxwell Davies  
Ralph Vaughan Williams  
Laura Bowler

Fanfare for Lowry  
String Quartet No.2 in A Minor  
Whitworth Letters

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## The Art Garden

The new Art Garden and an Orchard Garden have been designed by Chelsea gold medalist Sarah Price, who co-designed the 2012 Olympic Park gardens in London. Price will give a guided tour of the new Art Garden at 12pm on Sunday. During the opening weekend the Art Garden will transform into a performance space in the early evening, including a live performance from the Hallé Youth Choir.

## SATURDAY

8.45pm

### Whitworth on Fire

Fire performance in the Art Garden from a team of young people who have come together to learn circus skills through Whitworth Young Contemporaries.

9pm

### Hallé Youth Choir

The Hallé Youth Choir perform songs inspired by William Blake's poems in the Art Garden, in collaboration with Two Tigers Fireworks. Please note that the Parkside entrance will close at 8.45pm.

## The Whitworth After Party - Saturday 9.30pm- 1am

At 9.45pm, the Italian artist Nico Vascellari revives his collaborative performance with French musician, Ghédalia Tazartès. Drawing on their close working relationship, the pair will create an exceptional, improvised performance that will resonate through the Grand Hall. The performance is free, but tickets are essential as capacity is limited. From 10.30pm the gallery is turned over to legendary Manchester DJ, Dave Haslam.

## Around the gallery

Further introductions will be held around the gallery throughout Saturday and Sunday.

10am-4pm

### Introduction to the Learning Programme, Clore Learning Studio

Meet the Learning and Engagement Team in the Whitworth's customised studio, to find out about our learning programmes and resources.

10am-4pm

### Introduction to *People's Choice*, Collections Centre

We have canvassed public opinion since January to create the *People's Choice* displays. See which objects have been chosen.

11am, 12pm,

### Meet the Conservators, Conservation Room

1pm & 2pm

Join conservators Ann French and Dan Hogger for a glimpse into how the conservation team makes the collection accessible for people to enjoy.

- ENDS -

For further press information and to request images please contact: **Rebecca Storey, Sutton PR** on + 44 (0)20 7183 3577 or email: [rebecca@suttonpr.com](mailto:rebecca@suttonpr.com)

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