

# the Whitworth

## **The Whitworth, The University of Manchester 2019/2020 exhibitions**

### **Elizabeth Price: A LONG MEMORY until Sunday 1 March 2020**

Bringing together many new and acclaimed works - including prints, sculpture and video - this exhibition engages with Price's pre-occupations of technology, history, politics and pop music. A new trilogy of video works, *SLOW DANS*, will be premiered and her Turner Prize winning *THE WOOLWORTHS CHOIR OF 1979*, remembering that fatal fire in Manchester, will be shown in the city for the first time.

*SLOW DANS* is a collaboration between Artangel, Film and Video Umbrella, Nottingham Contemporary, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis and the Whitworth, The University of Manchester.

### **Tapestries until Sunday 23 February 2020**

A tapestry is a coming together of people or things, usually thread, to make an intricate whole. This exhibition shows the breadth of the textiles at the Whitworth that are made with this method of weaving. Morris and Co., Grayson Perry, Marta Rogoyska and Eduardo Paolozzi hangings sit alongside thick kelims from Central Asia, fine silk kesi from China and early fragments from Peru and Egypt: the first known civilisations to have made tapestries. Sacrifice and celebration, hunting and the hunted, female ideologies and class, politics and taste are threaded through the many versions of this global technique.

A large mural in this space, commissioned by the Whitworth from Ibukun Baldwin, tells us a little about how tapestries are made. Baldwin is a multidisciplinary artist and founder of ethical fashion and textiles company [Bukky Baldwin](#), situated in the Whitworth workshop. The company offers training and opportunities to marginalised communities, gathering people to make things together at the Whitworth.

# the Whitworth

## **Standardisation and Deviation: The Whitworth Story** **Saturday 14 December 2019 to June 2021**

Founded in 1889 through Sir Joseph Whitworth's legacy, the Whitworth was established to honour one of Britain's greatest mechanical engineers. A proponent of standardisation, Sir Joseph revolutionised precision engineering through his development of interchangeable parts in machinery.

Standardisation is a theme that will be woven throughout the exhibition to tell the history of the gallery and the development of its diverse and internationally significant collections. Alongside this, the exhibition will demonstrate how the gallery has often deviated from standard models of practice, from its early collecting policies to its new vision; one that promotes the idea of the 'Useful Museum' and art as a tool for social change and education.

## **Utopias**

**Friday 31 January to Sunday 27 September 2020**

Utopia is, at its essence, about creating a perfect world, yet in this way, it is always in opposition with the present. This exhibition will bring together historic and modern and contemporary works in the Whitworth collection to examine how utopian strategies have been imagined, represented and tested. It asks how art has perpetuated the fantasy of an idealised national past in Britain and shaped how it looks. Combining myth, memory and nostalgia, the visual language of Britain's landscape and its deep connection with the nation creates distorted narratives of how

we have and should live. Utopia is about the future – it is the world we want to live in, yet it is always informed by the past.

Artists include Helen Allingham, Nathan Coley, John Constable, Walter Crane, Thomas Gainsborough, Gilbert & George, William Hogarth, Jenny Holzer, Michael Landy, Langlands & Bell, Margaret Nicholls, Samuel Palmer, Eduardo Paolozzi, Grayson Perry, Gwendolen Raveret, Paul Scott, JMW Turner and Eileen Young

# the Whitworth

## **The Office of Useful Art**

### **New space launched February 2020**

This February, the Whitworth will launch a new public space – the Office of Useful Art. A manifestation of the gallery's new strategic priority to 'make art useful'. We view art as a part of everyday life, not separate from it. Our ambition is to transform the way that art is seen and used. Art should address what matters in people's lives, respond to current urgencies and propose solutions to problems in the world.

The Office of Useful Art will be at the heart of this new way of connecting art and audiences. It will be free to use for staff, students and visitors – opening up the institution with a permanent workspace for individuals and groups. Historic gallery furniture will sit alongside new bookshelves and desks made from sustainably sourced local wood, creating a modular space able to be transfigured for small group meetings, or larger workshops and events. Rotating displays of the gallery's innovative acquisition - Arte Útil Archive – will act as a catalyst for displaying works of art from the collection through the 'usefulness'.

## **Other Transmissions: Conversations with Outsider Art**

### **Friday 14 February to Sunday 14 June 2020**

An exhibition of work initiated during a long artistic collaboration between the Whitworth, Venture Arts and Castlefield Gallery, *Other Transmissions* brings together a group of six artists - Joe Beedles, James Desser, Frances Heap, Andrew Johnstone, John Powell Jones.

It has been created in response to The Musgrave Kinley Outsider Art Collection (MKOAC), housed at the Whitworth. The MKOAC is the largest collection of Outsider Art in a public gallery in the UK and features work by artists who have been historically marginalised from the art world. Venture Arts is a Manchester based visual arts organisation that works to build the work and careers of learning-disabled artists. This project is the result of creative collaboration on equal terms between a mixed group of learning disabled and non-learning disabled artists. The artwork has developed from conversations around labelling, categorisation, the power dynamics of the art world and the meaning of collaboration. Each of the artists has selected a number of artworks from the MKOAC, which they have co-curated into a display alongside their own work. Some of the collection artists featured include Albert Loudon, Madge Gill, Ben Wilson and Michel Nedjar. The

# the Whitworth

exhibition supports a rich programme that will include presentations, sound and image, interventions, workshops, talks and new conversations.

*Other Transmissions* is supported by Venture Arts. The initial project *Conversations* was supported by Castlefield Gallery.

## **Suzanne Lacy: We Are Here** **Friday 27 March to Sunday 23 August 2020**

The Whitworth and Manchester Art Gallery will host the first UK retrospective of the work of Suzanne Lacy, a pioneer of socially engaged art and public practice. *Suzanne Lacy: We Are Here* is the first full retrospective of the Los Angeles-based artist. It encompasses the diverse range of mediums the artist has explored throughout her career including performance, photography, film, sculpture, video installation, drawing, artist books and archival ephemera.

At the Whitworth visitors can explore Lacy's entire career, from her earliest feminist work to her latest immersive video installations. This includes an in-depth focus on *The Oakland Projects* (1991–2001), a series on youth empowerment, media education, and policy, which will be revisited through a project working with local Manchester youth and *The Circle and the Square*, 2018, an installation bringing together the traditions of Shape Note singing and Dhirkr chanting as part of an exploration of the effects of the demise of the textile industry in Pendle, Lancashire on local communities.

Manchester Art Gallery's presentation highlights Lacy's major projects about women, activism and ageing, including a new work *Uncertain Futures* about changes to the pension age, made with local participants.

*Suzanne Lacy: We Are Here* is co-organised by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (YBCA), San Francisco.

At the Whitworth, *Suzanne Lacy: We Are Here* will include the museum premiere of *Across and In-Between* in association with 14-18 NOW: WW1 Centenary Art Commissions, which co-commissioned the artwork with Belfast International Arts Festival, with support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Arts Council England, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and the Government of Ireland through the

# the Whitworth

Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Reconciliation Fund).

*The Circle and the Square* was realised by local organisations in Lancashire: in-situ, Super Slow Way, The Free Spiritual Centre, Building Bridges Pendle and Brierfield Action in the Community.

## **Imran Perretta: the destructors** **Friday 8 May to Sunday 22 November 2020**

The Whitworth presents a new 2-screen film by London-based artist Imran Perretta. Drawing on the artist's own experience as a young man of Bangladeshi heritage, the film explores personal and collective experiences of marginalisation and oppression. Shot on location in Tower Hamlets, East London, it reconsiders the figure of alienated male youth, exploring the complexities of 'coming of age' for young Muslim men living in the UK.

The film is produced by Chisenhale Gallery, London and Spike Island, Bristol, and commissioned by Chisenhale Gallery; Spike Island; the Whitworth, The University of Manchester; and BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead and supported by Outset Contemporary Art Fund. It premieres at Spike Island on 27 September and continues until 8 December 2019, continuing onto partner venues throughout 2020.

## **New Collecting Award Winner**

**Uthra Rajgopal, Assistant Curator (Textiles and Wallpaper)** has received £38,600 to develop a collection of textile artworks by South Asian female artists from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh and from the North West diaspora for the Whitworth which will also benefit the collaborative network across the Manchester Partnership. The award provides funding for Uthra Rajgopal as an early-career curator to pursue this new avenue of collecting for the Whitworth and to build critical professional skills.

Celebrating its fifth year, the [Art Fund New Collecting Awards programme](#) supports focused projects by curators with the aim of developing museum collections into new areas or expanding existing collections.

# the Whitworth

Through the New Collecting Awards, the Art Fund aims to support the next generation of curatorial leaders across the UK. The awards offer 100% funding for focused collecting projects, enabling curators to expand museum and gallery collections into exciting new areas or deepen existing holdings in imaginative ways. Awardees also receive a generous funding allocation for research, travel and training, plus the support of a mentor, Art Fund staff and our trustees.

The New Collecting Awards are made possible by a number of generous individuals and trusts including the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, the Wolfson Foundation, the Ruddock Foundation for the Arts, the Headley Trust, the KMF Maxwell Stuart Charitable Trust, the Coral Samuel Charitable Trust and the Vivmar Foundation.

## **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

**The Whitworth** is proudly part of the University of Manchester and serves as a bridge between the University and the people of the city; a place to meet, play and learn in public.

Its mission is to use art for social change; founded in 1889 as The Whitworth Institute and Park in memory of the industrialist Sir Joseph Whitworth for “the perpetual gratification of the people of Manchester”, with clear practical aims to counteract the malaises of inner-city life and to educate and inspire a city of makers and manufacturing.

The Whitworth re-opened to the public in 2015 after a major £17 million redevelopment by architects MUMA. It has welcomed over one million visitors since re-opening, and more than doubled its previous annual records. The redevelopment doubled the public space and created state-of-the-art new facilities to house the collection of over 55,000 works of art and included expanded gallery spaces, a study centre, learning studio, and a collections centre. The gallery was crowned Art Fund Museum of Year 2015, nominated for the prestigious Stirling Prize and named Best Emerging Cultural Destination in Europe. [www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth)

The gallery has historically been at the centre of civic and cultural life and this is also its future.

**With thanks for our official paint sponsor Little Greene**  
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