

## PRESS RELEASE

### Małgorzata Mirga-Tas 11 April – 7 September 2025

- Major solo exhibition of the celebrated Roma-Polish artist – free to enter for the first time
- More than 20 textile-based works, alongside three pieces chosen from the Whitworth's collection
- Artworks responding to the historic depictions of the Roma community in European Old Masters



*Małgorzata Mirga-Tas 'Out of Egypt' from the series 'Out of Egypt', 2021. © Małgorzata Mirga-Tas and courtesy of the artist.*

The Whitworth is proud to present the work of Romani artist Małgorzata Mirga-Tas. Born in 1978 in Zakopane, Poland, Mirga-Tas grew up in a Romani community in Czarna Góra, at the foot of the Tatra Mountains, where she continues to live and work today.

Organised in collaboration with Tate St Ives, the exhibition explores the key themes and methods across Mirga-Tas's practice. The artist creates colourful textile collages using materials gathered from family and friends. From elaborate compositions based on European Old Master painting, to striking individual portraits of community representatives, Mirga-Tas's work challenges stereotypical perceptions of Romani people and history. The artist's visual storytelling is pronouncedly feminist, foregrounding female labour and the deep connections of women across the Roma world.

The exhibition features more than 20 works, including some of the artist's largest works made especially for this touring exhibition. It presents her embroidered screens loaned from the Tate collection, alongside works from the celebrated Out of Egypt series. The Siukar Manusia series honours the Romani inhabitants of Nowa Huta, an area near Kraków in Poland, who moved to the area to work in the factories of this new post-war Communist 'ideal city'. Mirga-Tas re-imagines artworks from across the centuries that have presented Roma identity in negative ways, transforming them into vibrant images imbued with strength and dignity. The works combine realism with the building of a visual dictionary of Romani culture. The artist has also looked back to historical moments, including works commemorating victims of the Romani genocide during the Second World War.

Mirga-Tas's work connects deeply with the Whitworth collection. For the exhibition, the artist has selected examples of community fabric production from wider contexts. These include a British quilt by Mary Buchanan linked to the early industrial era of women's labour, and kelims (flat rugs) from the Qashqai people in Iran, inviting viewers to consider different types of nomadism and migration.

Małgorzata Mirga-Tas was selected to represent Poland at the 2022 Venice Biennale, the first ever Roma artist to be represented in a national pavilion in the Biennale's history.

**Valentin Diakonov, Curator at the Whitworth:** "This exhibition is a great chance to see one of the leading artists in the world tackle serious topics that relate to her own community as well as to the world at large. Moreover, the show presents Małgorzata in all aspects of her practice – as a historian of Roma and their troubled history and as an artist with an exceptional talent to transform the look and feel of community-sourced textiles".

## ENDS

### NOTES TO EDITORS

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### Image credit

Małgorzata Mirga-Tas 'Out of Egypt' from the series 'Out of Egypt', 2021. © Małgorzata Mirga-Tas and courtesy of the artist

### Listings information

Małgorzata Mirga-Tas

11 April – 7 September 2025

The Whitworth, The University of Manchester

Free entry

visit the [webpage](#)

## About Małgorzata Mirga-Tas

Małgorzata Mirga-Tas (b.1978 in Zakopane, Poland) studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków. Recent exhibitions of her work have been held at Bonnefanten Museum, Maastricht, The Netherlands, Kortrijk Triennale, Courtrai, Belgium, Västerås Konstmuseum, Sweden; Haefner Foyer Kunsthaus, Zurich; Andalusian Center for Contemporary Art, Seville; Brücke Museum, Berlin; Göteborgs Konsthall, Gothenburg; Zachęta, National Gallery of Art, Warsaw; and The Living History Forum, Stockholm. She has been awarded the Tasja Roma Cultural Heritage Prize, the Maria Anto and Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven Art Prize for a Young Polish Artist, the Laureate of Polityka's Passport for the best artist from Poland, and a scholarship from the Minister of Culture and National Heritage. In 2017 she co-founded the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC) in Berlin and she is co-author of multiple projects aimed at Roma communities including Romani Click and Jaw Dikh!

## Exhibition preview

Join us for the exhibition preview on Thursday 10 April, 6pm -8pm at the Whitworth. Enjoy live music performed by Roma artist Istvan Kate. Istvan Kate is a passionate violinist and dedicated music educator who began playing the violin at the age of four. Committed to preserving and passing down the centuries-old traditions of violin and piano, he now shares his love for music with both his students across Greater Manchester and his son, Istvan.

## Credits

The exhibition is organised by Tate St Ives, in collaboration with the Whitworth, The University of Manchester and curated by Anne Barlow, Director Tate St Ives, Valentin Diakonov, Whitworth curator and Victoria Hartley, Assistant curator. Interpretation is by Giles Jackson, Tate curator, and Valentin Diakonov.

The exhibition is supported by KaskoSan charity, the first global Roma brand online and the largest Roma social network. Find out more: <https://kaskosan.org/>

## Tour dates

The exhibition was previously presented at Tate St Ives, from 19 October 2024 – 5 January 2025, before being presented at the Whitworth from 11 April – 7 September 2025.

## About the Whitworth

The Whitworth is proudly part of The University of Manchester, operating as a convening space between the University and the people of the city. Founded in 1889 for "the perpetual gratification of the people of Manchester" it continues this mission today in new contexts. The gallery, its park and gardens are home to the collection of over 60,000 works of art, textiles, sculptures and wallpapers and provides a platform for artists from around the world. The Whitworth is driven by a vision to actively seek and manifest connections between art, creativity, and their role in developing a more resilient and caring society through its exhibitions and award-winning civic engagement programme.

## Gallery opening times:

Tuesday to Sunday 10am-5pm, Thursday late opening until 9pm

[www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth)