

For immediate release 10 April 2012

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Nine museums in the running for share of £75,000 contemporary craft fund

The Art Fund and the Crafts Council have today announced the nine museums in with a chance of acquiring an outstanding work of contemporary craft through Art Fund Collect, the £75,000 scheme which offers UK museums the chance to develop their contemporary craft collections.

Each museum is represented by a curator or curatorial team, who will attend a special preview of COLLECT, Europe's leading fair for international contemporary objects on Thursday 10 May. In just one hour each curator must explore the fair and select the object they most want to see added to their museum's collection, finally defending their choice in a presentation to a panel of experts. The successful curators will then be able to purchase the object outright, from a fund worth a total of £75,000.

The nine museum curators chosen to take part in Art Fund Collect are:

- **Aberdeen City Art Gallery:** Alison Fraser
- **Beane Art Museum and Library, Canterbury:** Krystyna Matyjaszkiewicz
- **National Museum Wales, Cardiff:** Rachel Conroy
- **National Museums Scotland, Edinburgh:** Rosina Buckland
- **Royal Albert Memorial Museum , Exeter:** Tony Eccles and Holly Morgenroth
- **Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester:** Jennifer Harris
- **Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery:** Francesca Vanke
- **Museums Sheffield:** Lucy Cooper
- **Touchstones Rochdale:** Yvonne Hardman

Art Fund Collect was set up jointly by the Art Fund and the Crafts Council in 2008 as a way of boosting public collections with contemporary craft, and developing curatorial expertise and networks within the museum sector. From 2008 to 2012 Art Fund Collect will have enabled the purchase of £350,000 of contemporary craft objects to go directly into the UK's public collections.

Art Fund Collect will take place on Thursday 10 May 2012, the preview day of COLLECT, organised by the Crafts Council and which is now in its ninth year, with the winners to be announced at 7pm that evening. COLLECT 2012 takes place at London's Saatchi Gallery and is open to the public 11 – 14 May 2012.

The judging panel for this year's Art Fund Collect is:

- **Anthony Griffiths**, Chair, Art Fund Trustee and former Head of Department of Prints & Drawings, the British Museum
- **Stephen Deuchar**, Director of the Art Fund
- **Sir Nicholas Goodison**, Former Chairman of the Crafts Council and former Chairman of the Art Fund
- **Rosy Greenlees**, Executive Director of the Crafts Council
- **Tanya Harrod**, writer and Associate Research Professor at Bath School of Art and Design
- **Jonathan Marsden**, Art Fund Trustee and Director of the Royal Collection

Of the nine shortlisted museums, six have previously been shortlisted, with Beaney Art Museum, National Museum of Scotland and Touchstones Rochdale completely new to the scheme. Five of the six previous participants have gone on to be successful in acquiring work through Art Fund Collect (please see Notes to Editors for more details).

Stephen Deuchar, Director of the Art Fund, said: "The calibre of applications to this edition of Art Fund Collect was exceptional, and the final shortlist speaks superbly of the range and sophistication of curatorial talent in the UK working on the collection and interpretation of contemporary craft. We can't wait to see how each curator will respond to the opportunity presented by the scheme."

"We are really pleased with another strong shortlist of institutions wanting to acquire through Art Fund Collect. The scheme has had a great impact on the aspiration of curators in acquiring contemporary craft for collections across the UK. We look forward to their selections on what it always a very exciting day at COLLECT," said Rosy Greenlees, Executive Director, Crafts Council.

In 2011, eight curators each won an object for their public collections at Art Fund Collect. The winning institutions were: Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery; Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery; National Museum Cardiff; Leeds Art Gallery; Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery; Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter; Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art; and Nottingham Castle Museum & Art Gallery.

For more information about Art Fund Collect please contact:

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Notes to Editors

Of the nine shortlisted museums for Art Fund Collect 2012, the following have acquired work in previous editions of the programme.

- Aberdeen City Art Gallery
 - 2010, £5,600 for *Spin* by Japanese maker Ritsue Mishima, a highly original hand-blown, spiralling glass piece
 - 2009, £26,550 for *Neckpiece* by Umbria-based British jeweller Jacqueline Ryan. Made from 18-carat gold, enamel and garnet, the piece displays the artist's interest in natural formations.
- Cardiff, National Museum Wales
 - 2011, £7,150 for *Homura I (Inferno)* by Takahiro Yede. This organic, sculptural piece of metalwork is made from nickel-silver and bronze strips, painstakingly intertwined and hammered into place. Because it resembles the licking of flames, he chose the title Inferno after the making process
 - 2009, £6,500 for *Red Stripe* by British glassmaker Rachel Woodman. Dramatic in its use of colour, the work consists of eight glass tubes on a slate base.
- Exeter, Royal Albert Memorial Museum
 - 2011, £10,524 for *Secret Life of Plants* by Steffen Dam. The delicate, hand-blown objects are encased within a glass panel and inspired by half-decayed bulbs and fungi.
 - 2010, £17,000 for *Golden Fields of Rice*, an intricately crafted, multi-lacquered lidded object with gold motifs by Mutsumi Suzuki.
- Manchester, Whitworth Art Gallery
 - 2010, £12,750 for *Untitled (Long Indigo Hanging)* by Shihoko Fukumoto. This large textile piece is striking in its combination of vivid indigo and paler tones. The material itself comes from a traditional kimono, originally used for every day work.
 - 2008, £4,800 for *Shadow of the Wall, Gaza* by Norma Starszakowna. This textile work is based on a wall of a building in Gaza. It is hung away from the wall to create a shadow as the silk organza allows for areas of translucency and opacity, and the creation of filtered light and shadows.
- Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery
 - 2011, £8,500 for *Kangaroo and Emu Lost in Chintz* by Robin Best. This pair of vases by Australian ceramicist Robin Best is inspired by traditional, Oriental ceramic work as well as modern Western design, and the painting technique was developed at the renowned Meissen porcelain centre in Germany.

The Art Fund is the national charity which helps museums and galleries to buy, show and share art for the enjoyment of all. Over the past five years, the Art Fund has given over £24 million towards art of all kinds, from Old Masters to new media, and supported a range of programmes which share and show art to wider audiences, including the national tour of ARTIST ROOMS and the Art Fund Prize for Museums and Galleries. The Art Fund is independently funded and the majority of its income comes from 90,000 supporters who

purchase a National Art Pass, costing from £50, which gives free entry to over 200 museums, galleries and historic houses across the country as well as 50% off many major exhibitions.

Find out more about the Art Fund and the National Art Pass at www.artfund.org.uk. The press office can be reached on 020 7225 4888 or media@artfund.org

The Crafts Council's goal is to make the UK the best place to make, see, collect and learn about contemporary craft. The Crafts Council believes that craft plays a dynamic and vigorous role in the UK's social, economic and cultural life and everyone should have the opportunity to make, see, collect and learn about craft.

The Crafts Council is supported by Arts Council England who work to get great art to everyone by championing, developing and investing in artistic experiences that enrich people's lives. For more information on the Crafts Council contact Jill Read, Press Officer, Tel 020 7806 2549 Email media@craftscouncil.org.uk or visit www.craftscouncil.org.uk