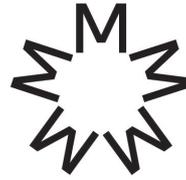


Art Fund\_



Art Fund\_  
Museum of  
the Year 2017  
Winner

PRESS RELEASE  
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## The Hepworth Wakefield is winner of £100,000 Art Fund Museum of the Year 2017

This evening, The Hepworth Wakefield was announced as Art Fund Museum of the Year 2017, the largest and most prestigious museum prize in the world. The £100,000 prize was presented by broadcaster and member of the judging panel Jo Whiley at a ceremony in the spectacular setting of the Great Court at the British Museum, London.

The winner was chosen from five finalists: Lapworth Museum of Geology (Birmingham), National Heritage Centre for Horseracing & Sporting Art (Newmarket), Sir John Soane's Museum (London), Tate Modern (London), The Hepworth Wakefield. For the first time this year, each of the other finalist museums receives a £10,000 prize in recognition of their achievements.

Among the 470 guests at the dinner hosted by Stephen Deuchar, Art Fund director and chair of the judges, were:

Artists: Mat Collishaw, Edmund de Waal, Richard Deacon, Jeremy Deller, Tom Ellis, Maggi Hambling, Lubaina Himid, Charles Jencks, Chantal Joffe, Michael Landy, Langlands & Bell, Lawrence Lek, Peter Liversidge, Melanie Manchot, Christian Marclay, Polly Morgan, Paul Noble, Marc Quinn, Yinka Shonibare MBE, Bob and Roberta Smith, Georgina Starr, Mitra Tabrizian, Gavin Turk, Gillian Wearing, Bill Woodrow.

Arts leaders: Maria Balshaw, Director, Tate; Gabriele Finaldi, Director, National Gallery; Hartwig Fischer, Director, British Museum; John Glen, MP & Parliamentary Under Secretary for Arts, Heritage and Tourism; Tristram Hunt, Director, V&A; Diane Lees, Director, IWM; Charles Saumarez-Smith, Chief Executive, RA; Sir Nicholas Serota, Chair, Arts Council England; Lord Smith, Chair, Art Fund; Ed Vaizey, MP.

Art Fund awards the Art Fund Museum of the Year annually to one outstanding museum, which, in the opinion of the judges, has shown exceptional imagination, innovation and achievement across the preceding 12 months. It is the biggest museum prize in the world and the largest arts award in Britain. This year it

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recognised that, though these are difficult times for many museums, facing a perpetual challenge to secure the funding they need, this is also a moment for mass celebration of the extraordinary diversity of UK museums and all they are doing.

The judges for Art Fund Museum of the Year 2017 were: Richard Deacon, artist; Stephen Deuchar, Director, Art Fund (chair); Hartwig Fischer, Director of the British Museum; Munira Mirza, advisor on arts and philanthropy; Jo Whiley, Radio DJ and television presenter.

Stephen Deuchar said: 'The Hepworth Wakefield was a powerful force of energy from the moment it opened in 2011, but it has just kept growing in reach and impact ever since. David Chipperfield's building has proved a perfect stage – both for the display of collections and as the platform for a breathtaking sequence of special exhibitions (including a retrospective of Stanley Spencer and a major Martin Parr commission in 2016), curated with determined originality by the talented curatorial team. The Hepworth serves its local community with unfailing flair and dedication and contributes centrally to regional tourism too, bringing 210,275 visitors in 2016, up 21% on the previous year. 2016 also saw the launch of The Hepworth Prize for Sculpture, which earned instant national status, and there are plans on the horizon for an ambitious garden project in the year ahead. It's the museum everyone would dream of having on their doorstep.'

Jo Whiley said: 'For me personally - museums and galleries are an infinite source of creative inspiration. Travelling around the country and discovering places that were completely new to me has really opened my eyes to the incredible work that UK museums are doing. Any one of the short-listed museums could have been Art Fund Museum of the Year, and the pressure was on in making this tough decision, but in the end we all agreed that The Hepworth Wakefield is a worthy winner.'

#### The Hepworth Wakefield

Set in a David Chipperfield designed building overlooking the River Calder, The Hepworth Wakefield is an art gallery, museum and creative space as unique as the artist who inspired it – Barbara Hepworth (1903-75). 2016 saw an ambitious programme to celebrate their fifth birthday. Visitors increased by 21% and 26,000 people took part in learning and outreach programmes. The Hepworth Prize for Sculpture was launched to ignite debate and engagement with contemporary sculpture and reaffirm Yorkshire's position as the home of modern British sculpture, with Helen Marten winning the £30,000 prize. An acclaimed programme of exhibitions included major retrospectives of both Martin Parr and Stanley Spencer, and an installation by contemporary artist Anthea Hamilton. In the last year art collector Tim Sayer has gifted 50 works to the gallery and also bequeathed his entire collection and London townhouse. The Hepworth Wakefield also announced their plans to create an inspiring, free public garden designed by leading international designer, Tom Stuart-Smith.

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For downloadable press images, please go to: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/wsdtfjjhvhbnlqi/AACXfO-y-znrAHEk2t5iVuxma?dl=0>

Notes to Editors:

Art Fund

Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for art. In the past five years alone Art Fund has given £34 million to help museums and galleries acquire works of art for their collections. It works with over 700 museums and galleries across the UK and helps museums share their collections with wider audiences by supporting a range of tours and exhibitions, including ARTIST ROOMS, and makes additional grants to support the training and professional development of curators.

Art Fund is independently funded, with the core of its income provided by 123,000 members who receive the National Art Pass and enjoy free entry to over 240 museums, galleries and historic places across the UK, as well as 50% off entry to major exhibitions. In addition to grant-giving, Art Fund's support for museums includes the annual Art Fund Museum of the Year, a publications programme and a range of digital platforms.

Find out more about Art Fund and the National Art Pass at [www.artfund.org](http://www.artfund.org)

The Art Fund Museum of the Year 2017 finalists were:

Lapworth Museum of Geology, Birmingham

Dating back to 1880, The Lapworth Museum of Geology is one of the leading geological museums in the UK, with the largest collection of its kind in the Midlands. The museum re-opened in June 2016 after a £2.7 million redevelopment and expansion which transformed an academic university museum into a major new public attraction for Birmingham and beyond. It has helped bring to life internationally-significant scientific collections of over 250,000 specimens, ranging from dinosaur skeletons to volcanic rocks. The Museum's core is now restored to its original 1920s grandeur and three new galleries have been unveiled, while beautifully designed, interactive displays and new visitor facilities have been created, including a state-of-the-art education room. Since re-opening, the museum has expanded its volunteer programme, diversified its audiences and education offering, and doubled visitor numbers.

### National Heritage Centre for Horseracing & Sporting Art, Newmarket

This centre combines three attractions in one: the National Horseracing Museum, the Fred Packard Museum and Galleries of British Sporting Art, and a flagship yard for the Retraining of Racehorses charity. 2016 was an exceptional year for the National Heritage Centre, seeing the completion and formal opening by their Patron, Her Majesty The Queen, in November. The project has created a cultural hub in the heart of Newmarket which combines the history, science, art and culture of horseracing with the finest examples of British sporting art, together with an opportunity for visitors to meet former racehorses in the restored stables and newly-built arena. The redevelopment project, which has brought the royal palace and stables originally built for Charles II back to life, also involved an imaginative public engagement programme which aimed to place the museum at the heart of the local community in the town and surrounding areas.

### Sir John Soane's Museum, London

This magical museum in Lincoln Inn Fields was designed by the great neo-classical architect Sir John Soane (1753-1837) to house his outstanding collection of art and artefacts. Given to the nation upon his death and preserved in accordance with his wishes as an 'academy of the arts' for the inspiration and education of all, it has been welcoming visitors, for free, for over two centuries. 2016 saw the completion of a £7million restoration of 'lost' Soane interiors so that, for the first time in 160 years, the Museum looks as it did when Soane died. A third more space is open to the public, 10% of the art collection has been put back on display and the entirety of his collection of 40,000 items is now available online. For the first time, there is full step-free access to all public areas of the Museum, and the launch of Explore Soane has allowed people from around the world to visit from the comfort of their own homes thanks to the latest 3D scanning technology. Exhibitions last year included celebrations of the lives of Shakespeare and Charlotte Bronte, an examination on the work of Robert Adam, and Sarah Lucas: Power in Woman saw Sarah Lucas exhibit work from her British Pavilion at the 2015 Venice Biennale within the Museum's Georgian interiors.

### Tate Modern, London

Opened in 2000, Tate Modern is the national gallery of modern and contemporary art. Last year the Switch House opened, a new ten-storey building designed by Herzog & de Meuron, which welcomed 143,000 visitors in the first three days and 6 million in total since then. Displays in the Switch House range from sculpture and installation to performance and collaborative work, reflecting the radical evolution of Tate's collection. In the original Boiler House, completely new displays offer four different approaches to the last 100 years of art history, emphasising international perspectives and showcasing many more women artists. In the past year a wide range of major exhibitions has included: Robert Rauschenberg, The EY Exhibition: Wifredo Lam, The Radical Eye: Modernist Photography from the Sir Elton John Collection, Mona Hatoum, Bhupen Khakhar and Georgia O'Keeffe. 2016 also saw the launch of Tate Exchange on level 5 of the Switch House, providing a platform for other organisations from around the country to programme activities, and allowing visitors to participate in the creative process of the gallery and discuss art and its value to society.

### About Art Fund Museum of the Year

Art Fund has supported Museum of the Year since 2008. Its forerunner was the Prize for Museums and Galleries, administered by the Museum Prize Trust and sponsored by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation from 2003-2007. The prize champions what museums do, encourages more people to visit and gets to the heart of what makes a truly outstanding museum. The judges present the prize to the museum or gallery that has best met some or all of the following criteria:

- Undertaken projects that will provide a lasting legacy or have a transformative effect on the museum
- Brought its collections to life for audiences in exceptional ways – engaging, inspiring and extending public understanding
- Delivered an innovative programme of audience development, learning or outreach
- Clearly won the support and enthusiasm of its visitors and users.

Winners over the past six years were the V&A (2016), The Whitworth (2015), Yorkshire Sculpture Park (2014), William Morris Gallery (2013), Royal Albert Memorial Museum (2012) and the British Museum (2011).

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