

PRESS RELEASE

Arts Council Collection Launches its National Partners' Programme of Exhibitions for 2017

The Arts Council Collection has today announced details of the exhibitions taking place throughout 2017 at its four National Partner galleries, the Walker Art Gallery, National Museums Liverpool; Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne; Birmingham Museums Trust and Yorkshire Sculpture Park. The forming of this partnership is one of the key strands of activity marking the Arts Council Collection's 70th anniversary.

Working with the Arts Council Collection team, the four partners have taken their own innovative approach to the works in the Collection and curated a range of exhibitions that reflect themes that are becoming ever more relevant to today's society, including the role of technology in art, and gender identity.

Speaking at the launch at the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool, Jill Constantine, Head of Arts Council Collection said: "Our 70th Anniversary year has been extraordinarily successful, our eight celebratory commissions have been seen and enjoyed across the country and now the launch of the National Partnership exhibition programme will allow even more people to see great work from the Arts Council Collection. It has been really rewarding to witness the excitement of the teams in each partner gallery whilst researching ideas, discovering new elements of the Collection and sharing their thoughts and curatorial proposals across the other partners. It promises to be really wonderful programme and I look forward to working with the partners to develop the next round of exhibitions."

Highlights from the 2017 National Partners' programme of exhibitions include:

- **Coming Out at Walker Art Gallery (28 July - 5 November 2017):** an exhibition exploring sexuality and gender identity in Britain since 1967, marking the 50th anniversary of the partial decriminalisation of male homosexual acts in England and Wales.
- **Tread Softly at Yorkshire Sculpture Park (27 May – 3 September 2017):** A group exhibition exploring childhood experience, memory and familial relationships including powerful works by Tracey Emin, Grayson Perry and many others.
- **I Want! I Want!: Art & Technology at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery (1 April – 1 October 2017):** A curated selection of artworks spanning the last 20 years, by contemporary artists working with new technologies, showing how artists have navigated and contributed to a social, cultural and technological revolution.
- **A Certain Kind of Light at Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne (21 January – 14 May 2017):** An exhibition exploring how artists have responded to the materiality and idea of light. Featuring contemporary artists that use artificial and natural light as essential artistic materials, alongside artists from whom the quality of light itself is the subject.

The Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool; Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne and Birmingham Museums Trust were invited to join the Arts Council Collection's existing partner Yorkshire Sculpture Park to mark the Arts Council Collection's 70th anniversary following an open call by Arts Council England.

Simon Mellor, Executive Director Arts & Culture, Arts Council England said: "2016 is a very big year for the Arts Council Collection. Not only is it the Collection's 70th birthday, but we've also launched the National Partners programme, appointing four exceptional partner galleries to present a series of exhibitions over the next three years, all drawn from the Arts Council Collection, one of the finest

collections of modern and contemporary British art in the world. Selection as a National Partner is recognition that each partner shares our ambition to ensure that the work of some of the most exciting names in British contemporary art is enjoyed by as large an audience as possible. Together, the Walker, Liverpool; Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne; Birmingham Museums Trust and Yorkshire Sculpture Park will be working with the Southbank Centre, London to ensure that people up and down the country get an opportunity to enjoy some of the very best art created in this country since the Second World War.”

The Arts Council Collection’s National Partners programme will encourage increased collaborative working between the partners and the Arts Council Collection with the ambition of exhibiting works from the Collection more extensively than ever before. The programme will also include educational and digital initiatives to make the Collection even more accessible to the public, with a particular focus on young people and children around the country.

The full National Partner exhibition programme for 2017 includes:

Walker Art Gallery



Christine Borland, *Simbodies Eargirl* (2009), Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London © the artist; Hananh Starkey, *Mirror - Untitled* (2015), Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London © the artist; Wolfgang Tillmans, *Gedser* (2004), Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London © the artist. Purchased with the assistance of the Art Fund. Partial gift of the artist and Maureen Paley, London.

ZOO LOGIC by Mark Leckey

9 September 2016 – 26 February 2017

The Walker Art Gallery presents two installations by Turner Prize-winning artist Mark Leckey. The installations represent the artist’s long-standing interest in moving image and broadcast technology, and specifically in Felix the Cat. As part of this exhibition, the gallery will display 'FEELINTHECAT', a 70th anniversary Arts Council Collection commission. This immersive installation consists of a large dome, shaped to resemble Felix’s head. Inside the dome, two screens play a film which shows Mark Leckey transforming into Felix.

Benedict Drew: KAPUT

28 October – 26 February 2017

In this major new acquisition for the Collection, Benedict Drew uses a combination of video, audio and sculptural elements to reflect on society’s ambivalent relationship with technology. Exploring the psychedelic potential of music and art, his often anarchic installations are intended as an escape route from and a critical response to what he calls ‘the horrors of the modern world.’

Looking North

28 October 2016 – 26 February 2017

Looking North is a new exhibition that presents work by artists from north-west England and highlights a selection of exciting recent additions to the Arts Council Collection. *Looking North* is a snapshot of some of the best contemporary art by artists from the north-west. The display includes drawings,

paintings, film and sculpture by the artists Mary Griffiths, Joe Fletcher Orr, Paul Rooney, Jason Thompson and Jesse Wine.

Transparency

24 March – 18 June 2017

Originally shown at Yorkshire Sculpture Park earlier this year, reconfigured and expanded, at the Walker this exhibition explores the notion of transparency and expands this by considering the multiple meanings of the word: from the property of transmitting light, being diaphanous and having clarity, to being free from pretence or deceit, of being readily understood, and characterised by visibility or accessibility of information. Including work by Christine Borland, Hannah Starkey and Wolfgang Tillmans, the exhibition considers how artists have investigated subjects such as truth to material, the everyday or ordinary, and material and psychological transparency.

Coming Out

28 July - 5 November 2017

The Walker Art Gallery will mark the 50th anniversary of the partial decriminalisation of male homosexual acts in England and Wales (1967 Sexual Offences Act) with a major exhibition drawn from both the Arts Council Collection and the Walker's own collection. The show will bring together a diverse range of artists who have used their work to explore sexuality and gender identity since 1967. The exhibition will reveal the findings of over two years of research by the Gallery into both these collections, LGBT history and visual culture, revealing hidden queer histories and institutional blind spots that will be addressed through the exhibition's programme of events and performances. The exhibition will include new acquisitions to the Walker's collection, generously funded by the Art Fund New Collecting Award scheme.

Lubaina Himid: Naming the Money

7 October 2017 – 18 March 2018

This exhibition addresses how Europe's moneyed classes spent their money and flaunted their power and wealth by using enslaved African men, women and children. Lubaina Himid's major artwork *Naming the Money* is the central installation to this exhibition and it shows how enslavement was disguised and glamorised; the enslaved were made to look like servants or dressed in the clothes of courtiers. Lubaina will select and interpret a group of works from the Arts Council Collection to show in dialogue with *Naming the Money*. *Naming the Money* was gifted by the artist to National Museums Liverpool's International Slavery Museum. The exhibition at the Walker coincides with the Museum's tenth anniversary in 2017.

Yorkshire Sculpture Park



Marion Coutts, *For the Fallen* (2001) Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London © the artist; Rana Begum, courtesy the artist; John Benton-Harris, *Maidenhead, Berkshire July 1975* (1975), Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London © the artist.

Tread Softly

27 May – 3 September 2017

Tread Softly presents works from the Arts Council Collection in which artists explore childhood experience and familial relationships, revisiting and reassessing pivotal moments and people within their lives. Many of the works exist in a place where fact and fiction blur and where fantasy melds with memory, affected by both time and distance. Negotiating and defining identity is a momentous journey, with early experiences leaving indelible marks on our characters, as fragile dreams are pitted against the sometimes painful ingress of the adult world. Powerful works by Tracey Emin and Grayson Perry reveal how art was ultimately a salvation amidst difficult circumstances. Other works consider the way in which fragments of experience linger in the memory, like a perfume that triggers highly personal reminiscences. Other artists featured include Fiona Crisp, Nigel Shafran, Mary Kelly, Mona Hatoum, Kathy Prendergast, Marion Coutts, Susan Hiller, Perminder Kaur, Bedwyr Williams, Dennis Morris and Jo Spence.

Kaleidoscope: Sequence and Colour in 1960s British Art.

A new Arts Council Collection touring exhibition

1 April – 18 June 2017

Co-curated with Sam Cornish, this Arts Council Collection touring exhibition explores British art of the 1960s is often noted for its bold, artificial colour, alluring surfaces and capricious shapes and forms, yet these exuberant qualities are often underpinned by a clearly apparent order, founded on repetition, sequence and symmetry. Bringing together exceptional examples of painting and sculpture from the Arts Council Collection, and augmented with major loans from important UK collections, *Kaleidoscope* examines the art of the 1960s through this fresh and surprising lens, one bringing into direct view the relationship between colour and form, rationality and irrationality, order and waywardness.

Rana Begum Curates the Arts Council Collection

15 July – 29 October 2017

Rana Begum is guest curator of a new exhibition from the Arts Council Collection as part of the National Partners Programme. Born in Sylhet, Bangladesh, in 1977 and now living in London where she studied at Chelsea College of Art and Design and the Slade School, Begum has established an international practice creating immaculately conceived and constructed abstract installations, which challenge the distinction between two and three-dimensional practice, sculpture and painting. With an exceptional understanding of composition, form and colour, Begum will curate a unique selection from the 8,000 works held in the Arts Council Collection alongside work by exciting young artists active in the UK. An artist book will accompany the exhibition

Birmingham Museums Trust



Rachel Maclean, *Feed Me* (2015) Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London © the artist. Commissioned by Film and Video Umbrella (FVU) and Hayward Touring for British Art Show 8. Supported by Arts Council England and Creative Scotland; Julian Opie, *This is Fiona* (2004), Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London © the artist; Toby Ziegler, *Portrait of C.L.* (third version) (2006), Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London © the artist

***Night in the Museum: Ryan Gander Curates the Arts Council Collection* *An Arts Council Collection Touring Exhibition* 26 November 2016 – 12 February 2017**

Ryan Gander has achieved international recognition for a prolific and diverse body of work. For *Night in the Museum*, he deliberately avoids a signature style, preferring instead to remain open to limitless possibilities, unpicking myths and creating new associations, all with a mischievous playfulness, a deadpan wit and a fascination for storytelling. The exhibition represents the work of over thirty major British artists, including Patrick Caulfield, Jacob Epstein, Roger Hiorns, Henry Moore, Ben Nicholson, and Rebecca Warren. In the Gas Hall, it will feature additional works from Birmingham's collection including a reconstruction of Jacob Epstein's famous *Rock Drill*, artworks by Sean Scully and Patrick Caulfield and *Dancer at Rest*, an original bronze ballerina by Edgar Degas on long-term loan.

***I Want! I Want! – Art & Technology* 1 April – 1 October 2017**

A curated selection from the Arts Council Collection with key loans from other major collections, this exhibition will present the work of contemporary artists working with new technologies. Work spanning the last 20 years shows how British and international artists have navigated and contributed to a social, cultural and technological revolution. The title is inspired by the print 'I Want! I Want!' by visionary artist William Blake, depicting a man reaching for the moon over two hundred years ago. From the use of surveillance and gaming technology to computer graphics and animation, CAD, digital art and the internet, artists have created films, sculptures, interactive games, photographs, and drawings. Artists represented include Rachel Maclean, Julian Opie, Ed Atkins, Rose Finn-Kelcey, Toby Ziegler, Thomson and Craighead.

***Coming out* November 2017 – February 2018**

Birmingham Museums is delighted to be collaborating with the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool to bring *Coming Out* to Birmingham in Autumn 2017. This exhibition will include work by David Hockney, Gilbert and George, Sarah Lucas, Gillian Wearing and Andy Warhol. A community-led series of activities, reflections and art creation will engage with a broad spectrum of sexuality, orientation and gender.

Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne



Anthea Hamilton, *Leg Chair (Jane Birkin)* (2011), Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London © the artist; David Batchelor, *Festdella* (2006), Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London. © the artist. Gift of the artist and Hayward Gallery; commissioned by the Hayward Gallery as the inaugural Christmas Lights project, 2006; Cerith Wyn Evans, "Diary: How to Improve the world (you will only make matters worse) continued 1968 (revised)" from 'M' writings '67-'72 by John Cage (2003), Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London. © the artist

***One Day, Something Happens* An Arts Council Collection Touring Exhibition 15 October 2016 – 8 January 2017**

One Day, Something Happens explores the everyday theatricality of the body. The artists in this exhibition approach figuration in very different ways and the people they depict are both imaginary characters and real people. Curated by Jennifer Higgin, editor of *Frieze* magazine, this fascinating selection of works from the Arts Council Collection, as well as works from Towner's Collection, teases out common themes across the decades: work, introspection and individuality, joy and loneliness. Featuring works by artists ranging from Walter Sickert, Lucian Freud and David Hockney to Rose Wylie, Steven Claydon and Lynette Yiadom-Boakye.

***A Certain Kind of Light* 21 January – 14 May 2017**

A Certain Kind of Light is an exhibition exploring how artists have responded to the materiality and idea of light. Bringing together works from the Arts Council Collection and Towner's Collection, along with an artist's commission in response to the selection of works, the exhibition will feature artists who use artificial and natural light as essential artistic materials, alongside artists for whom the quality of light itself is the subject. Featured artists will highlight the visual experience of light or take a conceptual approach of adapting light's energy into other forms. Works that use or represent light sources or engage with artificial light will be presented alongside works depicting transient light effects, contrasting the qualities of various types of illumination. Artists represented in the exhibition will include Cerith Wyn Evans, Raphael Hefti, Rachel Whiteread, Katie Paterson, Angela Bulloch, Rut Bles Luxemburg and Ceal Floyer.

***Art and Popular Culture* 22 July – 8 October 2017**

This exhibition of works selected from the Arts Council Collection will explore visual art's ongoing engagement with popular culture and how its ability to entertain, seduce but also confound us forms part of its continuing appeal to artists. Featuring work by artists including Phil Collins, Jeremy Deller, Mario Rossi and Anthea Hamilton the exhibition will consider highly idiosyncratic manifestations of how popular culture, its surprising combinations of images, materials and words, have influenced recent contemporary art.

For Further information about the Arts Council Collection National Partners Programme, please visit: artscouncilcollection.org.uk/npp

Social Media handles and hashtags:

[@A_C_Collection](https://twitter.com/ACCollection) / [@ace_national](https://twitter.com/ace_national) / [@artscouncilcollection](https://twitter.com/artscouncilcollection) /#ACCNationalPartners / #ACC70

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Notes to Editors:

The Arts Council Collection is a national collection of British art from 1946 to the present day and holds nearly 8,000 works which are available for loan to spaces across the UK. With more than 1,000 loans made to over 100 venues a year, it is seen by millions of people annually in public spaces from galleries and museums to hospitals, libraries and universities. Representing one of the most important collections of British modern and contemporary art in the world, it includes work from Francis Bacon, Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore to Lucian Freud, Antony Gormley and Grayson Perry. The Collection supports and promotes British art and British artists by buying art when they are in the early stages of their career, and continues to acquire new work and support emerging artists. The Arts Council Collection is managed by Southbank Centre, London and the Sculpture Centre is located at Longside in Yorkshire Sculpture Park. www.artscouncilcollection.org.uk

National Partner Programme

To mark the Arts Council Collection's 70th anniversary in 2016, Arts Council England invited applications from galleries in England to join existing partner Yorkshire Sculpture Park in a network of galleries to work with the Collection and host an innovative range of exhibitions alongside outreach and digital projects on a year round basis. These partnerships will deepen their long standing relationship with the Collection and enable it to reach out to new and existing communities. The four National Partner museums and galleries are the Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne, Birmingham Museums Trust, the Walker Art Gallery, National Museums Liverpool and the Collection's existing partner, Yorkshire Sculpture Park. The partners will provide a year-round home for art works within the Collection, hosting a special programme of 24 National Partner exhibitions over the between April 2016 – March 2019.

Arts Council England champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. We support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2015 and 2018, we plan to invest £1.1 billion of public money from government and an estimated £700 million from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country.
www.artscouncil.org.uk

Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre, occupying a 21-acre site that sits in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. Southbank Centre is home to the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and the Hayward Gallery as well as The Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. For further information please visit www.southbankcentre.co.uk. Arts Council Collection is managed by Southbank Centre on behalf of Arts Council England.

