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Press release: 18 December 2013

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS ANNOUNCED FOR PRIZE AS SEARCH BEGINS FOR MUSEUM OF THE YEAR 2014

• International Judging Panel to select Museum of the Year

• Global live feed of winner announcement on new Museum of the Year digital platform

• Winner of £100k Prize to be announced at National Gallery award ceremony on 9 July 2014

• International museums debate to be held at first ever Museums Summit

The Art Fund today announces new plans for the Art Fund Prize for Museum of the Year 2014 – the world's largest and most influential museum award, rewarding creativity and innovation.

The Prize identifies the finest museums in the UK and awards £100,000 to the very best – the 2014 Museum of the Year. In doing this, the Prize champions what museums do, encourages more people to visit them, and gets to the heart of their contribution to our national culture.

The shortlist of museums will be revealed on 23 April 2014, and on the same day specially-commissioned film and photography will be made public. The winner of the 2014 Museum of the Year will be announced at a ceremony on 9 July at the National Gallery, before an invited audience of leading figures from the UK and international arts and cultural scene. The announcement will be streamed live via the new Museum of the Year digital platform www.artfund.org/prize – bringing the prize to an

international audience. This event will be accompanied by the first ever Museums Summit – a conference looking at the ways in which museums today are contributing to the social, political and economic evolution of the societies they inhabit.

The Prize will be awarded to the museum or gallery that has reached the greatest heights or performed with most distinction during the calendar year of 2013. The judging criteria are that the shortlisted museums should have: undertaken projects that will provide a lasting legacy or have a transformative effect; been exceptionally innovative and imaginative; brought their collections to life for their audiences, inspiring their public; delivered original learning and outreach programmes; gained the support and enthusiasm of their visitors and users.

The Judging Panel, announced today, will be chaired by Stephen Deuchar, Director of the Art Fund, and, for the first time, includes an international museum director.

The Judging Panel:
Sally Bacon, Director of the Clore Duffield Foundation
Michael Craig-Martin, RA
Wim Pijbes, Director of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
Anna Somers Cocks, Chief Executive of The Art Newspaper

Stephen Deuchar, director of the Art Fund, said: “We are delighted to announce these developments today, which we believe will increase awareness – both here in the UK and internationally – of the exceptional quality and diversity of this country’s museums. We want to celebrate these organisations and at the same time create a platform for debate about their role today, which we regard as vital to a healthy society.”

Sally Bacon, director of the Clore Duffield Foundation, said: “I am delighted to be a judge for Museum of the Year 2014. Learning programmes are a vital component of any successful museum, and I am looking forward to seeing what our finalists are achieving in this area, particularly in terms of quality, vision, impact and their commitment to young audiences, as well as their wider communities.”

Michael Craig-Martin, said: “The Prize reminds us that the UK is blessed with an exceptional number of excellent museums covering an extraordinary range of collecting and display. Once we’ve been through the very difficult task of deciding on the shortlist, I look forward to visiting the finalists to see for myself the quality of work being done by today's most innovative and successful museums.”

Wim Pijbes, director of the Rijksmuseum, said: “I am looking forward to being a judge in this competition. Britain has a very long tradition in museums, as a phenomenon, as a place for people to go, as a place to explore and enjoy art. To get inspiration, Britain is one of the countries to go to.”

Anna Somers Cocks, editor in chief of The Art Newspaper, said: "I travel all over the world and have come to the conclusion that in UK museums there is greater creativity, greater sensitivity to the needs of the public, and greater pleasure in the story that objects can tell than in any other country. We judges will be choosing the best out of a very fine field indeed."

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Applications will open for the Prize from today, 18 December, and the Art Fund is inviting the public to say which museums they would like to see in the running – using #MOTY2014 via Twitter, Instagram and on Facebook/artfund.

Past winners of the award include the William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow (2013); the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter (2012), and the British Museum, London (2011).

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NOTES TO EDITORS

How museums can apply

The judges will award the single prize of £100,000 to the museum or gallery that, in the year of 2013, 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
- Demonstrated excellence, innovation and imagination
- Brought its collection to life for audiences – engaging, inspiring and extending public understanding
- Delivered an original learning and outreach programme
- Clearly won the support and enthusiasm of its visitors and users

Application materials to be submitted:

- A completed application form uploaded via artfund.org/prize/apply
- Endorsement of application from the museum or gallery director (see application form)
- Six high-quality photographs of your museum that best illustrate your application.
- A film or self-playing PowerPoint presentation of approximately three minutes in length which will demonstrate to the judges why your museum should be considered for the prize.
- Up to six pieces of print material that give evidence of your work in 2013. These could include annual reports, exhibition catalogues or guides, leaflets or any other marketing or corporate materials. Please note that we cannot return any materials provided.

The closing date for all application materials is **12pm on 10 February 2014**

The Art Fund Prize for Museum of the Year

The Museum Prize Trust was set up in 2001 to create a major annual prize for museums and galleries in the UK. Between 2003 and 2007 the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation was the sponsor of the prize, with the Art Fund taking over from 2008. Since 2013 the Art Fund has run as well as funded the prize. A full list of the winners, nominated museums and judges from the past 11 years can be found at **artfund.org/prize**.

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The Art Fund

The Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for art, helping museums to buy and show great art for everyone. Over the past 5 years we've given over £26m to help museums and galleries acquire works of art for their collections and placed hundreds of gifts and bequests, from ancient sculpture and treasure hoards to Old Master paintings and contemporary commissions, with 25% of grants going towards works by living artists. We also help museums share their collections with wider audiences through supporting a range of tours and exhibitions, including the national tour of the Artist Rooms collection and the 2013-2014 tours of Grayson Perry's tapestries *The Vanity of Small Differences* and Jeremy Deller's *English Magic*, the British Council commission for the 2013 Venice Biennale. Our support for museums extends to the Art Guide app – the comprehensive guide to seeing art across the UK, promoting a network of over 650 museums and galleries throughout the country, and the £100,000 Art Fund Prize for Museum of the Year – an annual celebration of the best of UK museums, won in 2013 by William Morris Gallery in Walthamstow. We are independently funded, the majority of our income coming from over 100,000 members who, through the National Art Pass, enjoy free entry to over 220 museums, galleries and historic houses across the UK, as well as 50% off entry to major exhibitions.

Find out more about the Art Fund and the National Art Pass at www.artfund.org.

For further information and high-res images: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/s9dqkmxrgiuavtf/09-Zip5njJ

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