

PRESS RELEASE

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Rare Anglo-Saxon pendant is voted Britain's favourite work of art in Art Fund's 2018 poll

An Anglo-Saxon gold pendant, found in Winfarthing, Norfolk and acquired by Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery, is announced today as winner of Britain's favourite work of art acquired for a museum with Art Fund support in 2018. It is currently on display at the British Library as part of its Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms exhibition.

The pendant was voted the nation's favourite acquisition of the year from a shortlist of 10 works of art and objects that Art Fund helped UK museums to buy in 2018. 5,000 members of the public voted. The shortlist of works ranged from Grayson Perry's *Posh Art* at Victoria Art Gallery, Artemisia Gentileschi's *Self-Portrait as Saint Catherine of Alexandria* at the National Gallery, Yinka Shonibare's *Earth* at Wolverhampton Art Gallery, Leonora Carrington's *Portrait of Max Ernst* at National Galleries of Scotland to an unknown artist's *Am not I a man and a brother* at the International Slavery Museum.

Dr Tim Pestell, Senior Curator of Archaeology at Norfolk Museums Service, said: 'We are absolutely thrilled that the Winfarthing Pendant has been named as Britain's favourite work of art in the Art Fund's annual poll, especially so given the quality of this year's shortlist which contained some truly remarkable works. It's intriguing to think what the pendant's seventh-century creator would make of the lasting appeal of their masterpiece, well over a millennium after it was first crafted. We'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone that voted for this unique treasure and we're looking forward to it going back on display in the Anglo-Saxon and Viking Gallery here at Norwich Castle in spring 2019, after it returns from its loan to the British Library for *Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms: Art, Word, War.*'

Discovered in December 2014 by a metal detectorist, the seventh-century gold and garnet pendant is the highlight of a trove of artefacts unearthed in Winfarthing, near Diss. The excavation, carried out by Norfolk County Council's Find Identification and Recording Service, found the grave to belong to an aristocratic Anglo-Saxon lady who died between AD 650-675 and was buried among some of her most valued possessions.

The pendant was declared treasure under the 1996 Treasure Act and was purchased in 2018 by Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery with support from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, Art Fund and the Friends of Norwich Museums.

High resolution image of pendant can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/2UMTzSu>

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Media enquiries:

Emma Phillips, Press Relations Manager
ephillips@artfund.org / 0207 225 4804

Rachel Mapplebeck, Director of Communications
rmapplebeck@artfund.org / 0207 225 4820

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 also helps museums share their collections with wider audiences by supporting a range of tours and exhibitions, 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 139,000 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 and subscription to Art Quarterly magazine. In addition to grant-giving, Art Fund's support for museums includes Art Fund Museum of the Year (won by Tate St Ives in 2018) and a range of digital platforms.

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

Norfolk Museums Service

Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery is part of Norfolk Museums Service which comprises museums, collections study centres and countywide services relating to archaeology and education. The Service remains a unique partnership between Norfolk County Council and Norfolk's district councils, funded through council tax, earned income and grants. NMS is now regarded as one of the leaders in the museum sector and in 2017 was successful in its bid for continuing major investment from Arts Council England. In April 2018 NMS became a National Portfolio Organisation for Arts Council England, one of only 45 out of 845 heritage and arts organisations in England to be awarded the highest level of support. www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk @NorfolkMuseums