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Five museums across the UK shortlisted for Art Fund Museum of the Year 2019

Winner of £100,000 prize announced on 3 July 2019

High-resolution images available for download: <https://bit.ly/2GEkefp>

Art Fund today announced the five museums which have been selected as finalists for Art Fund Museum of the Year 2019, the world's most prestigious museum prize.

The shortlisted museums are:

- HMS Caroline, Belfast
- Nottingham Contemporary
- Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford
- St Fagans National Museum of History
- V&A Dundee

Art Fund annually shortlists five outstanding museums for the Museum of the Year prize, which, in the opinion of the judges, have shown exceptional imagination, innovation and achievement in the preceding year.

The members of this year's judging panel, chaired by Stephen Deuchar, Director of Art Fund, are: David Batchelor, artist; Brenda Emmanus, broadcaster and journalist; Bridget McConnell, Chief Executive, Glasgow Life; Bill Sherman, Director, Warburg Institute. The judges will together visit each of the finalists to help inform their decision-making, while each museum will make the most of being shortlisted through special events and activities for both new and current visitors.

The winning museum will be announced at a ceremony at the Science Museum in London on Wednesday 3 July 2019 and will receive £100,000. The other four shortlisted museums will each receive £10,000 in recognition of their achievements.

Speaking on behalf of the judges, Stephen Deuchar said: "Despite (or perhaps because of) the complex environment of our times, the UK's museums continue to challenge and inspire. The five shortlisted museums have each offered outstanding and different approaches to the vital task of engaging with the widest public in new *and adventurous ways*. *We congratulate all those who are on the shortlist and encourage everyone to go and visit them.*"

#museumoftheyear

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For downloadable press images, please go to: <https://bit.ly/2GEkefp>

Notes to Editors:

The shortlisted museums

HMS Caroline, Belfast

As the last remaining British light cruiser ship from the First World War and the Royal Navy's sole survivor from the Battle of Jutland, the largest sea battle of the First World War, HMS Caroline offers an extraordinary insight into naval history, maritime warfare and the story of the Irish sailor. After averting plans to scrap the ship, an ambitious £20 million project to rescue, conserve and restore HMS Caroline was completed in 2018. The ship now offers an inclusive and accessible space for everyone to enjoy. An innovative learning programme and an immersive introductory exhibition in the newly renovated Victorian pump house surrounding the ship brings HMS Caroline's long history and 90-year presence in Belfast alive.

Nottingham Contemporary

Since opening in 2009, Nottingham Contemporary has reached over 2 million people through its contemporary art exhibitions and engagement activities. Last year contained several watershed moments for the gallery, in which three critically acclaimed exhibitions shined a light on the work of women artists, and on overlooked and marginalised cultural practices. Virtual reality tours of the exhibitions allowed online visitors across the world to engage remotely. In 2018, the gallery also presented innovative performance art and ran educational programmes aimed at families, pupils, teachers and women in difficult circumstances, which saw a 25% increase in participation within these groups.

Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford

Showcasing one of the most important collections of anthropology and archaeology, the Pitt Rivers Museum is remarkable for its singular approach to the presentation of objects and its willingness to encourage new interpretations. In 2018, the museum embarked on a series of innovative programmes: 'Hope' asked radical questions about

their collection's colonial past, 'Making' examined the link between making objects and health, 'No Boundaries' worked with refugees to reinterpret collections, and 'No Binaries' encouraged queer responses to the museum's collections to celebrate diversity and challenge prejudices. The museum's 600,000 strong collection of objects and new creative programmes brought in a record-breaking 502,000 visitors last year.

St Fagans National Museum of History, near Cardiff

One of Wales' most popular heritage attractions, St Fagans explores the history and culture of the country. Last year the museum completed its Making History project, a £30 million redevelopment to become Wales' National Museum of History, opening new galleries and workshop spaces and transforming its visitor experience. Throughout the development, the museum remained open, welcoming 3 million visitors to enjoy recreated iron age houses, royal residences and a new craft centre, as well as engaging 720,000 people in shaping the museum's transformation through an imaginative public programme – reflecting the museum's aim to create history 'with' rather than 'for' the people of Wales.

V&A Dundee

In September 2018 V&A Dundee opened its doors after 11 years of planning and construction, becoming the UK's first design museum outside London. At the heart of Dundee's waterfront, the building designed by Kengo Kuma is both a striking intervention and a feat of engineering. The museum showcases international design alongside the outstanding achievements of Scotland in the museum's permanent Scottish Design Galleries and a programme of major exhibitions. Born from a unique partnership between the V&A, local government, universities, enterprise and communities, the new museum has helped regenerate the area, with 100,000 people interacting with the museum's pre-opening programme and over 500,000 people visiting since it launched.

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 151,000 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

The 2019 judging panel:

Stephen Deuchar (Chair)

Director of Art Fund since 2010, Stephen Deuchar has chaired the judging panel since 2013.

Before joining Art Fund, Stephen was the first director of Tate Britain (1998-2010), having previously spent 12 years as a curator then exhibitions director at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.

David Batchelor

Artist David Batchelor has exhibited widely internationally, with recent exhibitions in London, Tehran and Melbourne. Deriving from a long-term interest in colour and urbanism, his work comprises three-dimensional structures, photographs, paintings and drawings.

Brenda Emmanus

Broadcaster and journalist Brenda Emmanus has presented programmes and documentaries across BBC television and radio. Previously an arts and features editor for the Voice Newspaper Brenda has also been a facilitating judge for two anthologies commissioned by Penguin Books and the Creative Arts Awards for the Stroke Association.

Bridget McConnell

Chief executive of Glasgow Life, Bridget McConnell is the strategic lead ensuring Glasgow is a world-leader in culture and sport. Career highlights have included overseeing the £35 million refurbishment of Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum and the opening of the Riverside Museum, named European Museum of the Year in 2013. A fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Bridget was made CBE in 2015 in recognition of services to culture.

Bill Sherman

Bill Sherman is director of the Warburg Institute (University of London), one of the world's leading centres for the study of images, ideas and societies, and was previously director of research and collections at the Victoria and Albert Museum and founding director of the Centre for Renaissance & Early Modern Studies at the University of York. Active on editorial boards, trusts and councils on both sides of the Atlantic, he served as associate editor of Shakespeare Quarterly for over a decade.

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 shown how their achievements of the preceding year stand out, demonstrated what makes their work innovative, and the impact it has had on audiences. These achievements might include:

- Bold and imaginative exhibitions, collection displays or collection conservation projects
- Learning programmes that have developed the skills, knowledge and enjoyment of children, young people and adults in new ways
- Exceptional acquisitions that have had a real impact on the museum and its audiences

Art Fund_

- Audience engagement, diversity or access initiatives that have greatly broadened participation, and creative use of technology or digital media
- Substantial programmes of modernisation, reorganisation or reinterpretation that have had a transformative impact
- New building, refurbishments or reinventions of existing spaces that have had a strong impact on the museum and its audiences

Winners over the past seven years were Tate St Ives (2018), The Hepworth Wakefield (2017), 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).