



PRESS RELEASE

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£200,000 INVESTMENT ANNOUNCED FOR 2020 ART FUND MUSEUM OF THE YEAR WITH LAUNCH OF NATIONWIDE CAMPAIGN FOR UK'S MUSEUMS.

Art Fund steps up fight for survival of the UK's museums and galleries as leading museums re-open

On the eve of the re-opening of museums around the UK, from nationals Tate and the V&A to Turner Contemporary and Yorkshire Sculpture Park, the UK's largest arts charity, Art Fund, today launched a campaign for museums, with the announcement of plans for a special edition of Art Fund Museum of the Year and a week celebrating museums, running from 12 October 2020.

The week will begin with the announcement on Monday 12 October of Art Fund Museum of the Year 2020, the biggest museum prize in the world. Recognising the challenges that museums face this year, the prize money awarded will go up to a total of £200,000, a 40% increase over previous years, and be equally divided between five winning museums, chosen for their achievements in the year 2019-2020.

The Judges for Art Fund Museum of the Year 2020 are: Jago Cooper, Curator of the Americas, The British Museum; Dame Liz Forgan (Chair), Trustee, Art Fund; Ryan Gander, artist; Melanie Keen, Director, The Wellcome Collection; and Jenny Waldman, Director, Art Fund.

The week will champion the UK's museum sector, amongst the largest and most vibrant in the world. It will put the spotlight on museums with a varied programme of Art Fund events, debates and social activity - giving an opportunity to get involved at a time when they need us most.

There are around 2,500 museums in the UK, large and small, national and local, many of them free, featuring everything from art and design to science, military and industrial heritage, and natural and maritime history. They have a vital role to play in the recovery of the country but even as they re-open across the summer and autumn their future is uncertain. While the immediate response of public and other funders and the UK government's rescue package for culture is welcome, museums' finances have been shattered by closures and by the social distancing measures currently in place. They still face huge challenges in the months and years ahead.

Art Fund has already recognised the crisis in the museums sector, announcing funding and resources of more than £2 million to support museums and galleries through reopening and beyond at a time when many museums will be losing more money by opening their doors than remaining closed. It

has also invited its members to come together to donate and support museums and galleries during the biggest challenge of our lifetime through the fundraising campaign #TogetherforMuseums.

Jenny Waldman, Director of Art Fund, said: "It's exciting that we can begin to visit our inspiring museums again, but just because the doors are reopening it doesn't mean they are ok. They can't survive long-term with a fraction of visitors and they're continuing to navigate the huge challenges of Covid-19. This exceptional edition of Art Fund Museum of the Year will shine a spotlight on the incredible value museums bring to communities across the UK."

St Fagans National Museum of History in Wales won the £100,000 Art Fund Museum of the Year prize in 2019. It plans to reopen in phases starting on 4 August 2020.

David Anderson, Director General, Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales, said: "When National Museum Cardiff opened in 1928 the world had not long moved on from the horrors of the First World War and a global flu pandemic. Over the last century, our contribution to the development of Wales and its cultural life has been almost beyond measure.

"Winning Art Fund Museum of the Year has helped us to fulfil our mission - to help people and communities in Wales to have a better and culturally richer life, to protect our natural environment, and to sustain and build our connections with peoples in Europe and across the world. Over the last few months we have had an extraordinary response to our 'Collecting Covid' project asking the people of Wales to be part of the story by sharing their experiences and feelings of living in Wales during the crisis, and on into the future. Already, over 1000 people have contributed personal and often deeply moving testimonies. This will form an important record of the pandemic for future generations."

Art Fund Museum of the Year will continue its partnership with the BBC in 2020, with more coverage to be announced in due course.

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Download press images: <https://artfund.getbynder.com/web/322b9ee4a514399c/moty-2020/>

Notes to editors:

Quotes:

Anne Barlow, Director, Tate St Ives, winner of Art Fund Museum of the Year 2018, said: "Winning the Art Fund Museum of the Year 2018 award was an incredible honour and recognised the transformative nature of the expansion of Tate St Ives. The deep relationship between art, place and community directly informed that project, and the recognition and prize enabled us to further embed this in our programme for the long-term benefit of Cornwall and our local audiences."

Simon Wallis, Director, Hepworth Wakefield, winner of Art Fund Museum of the Year 2017, said: "Winning Art Fund Museum of the Year came as we celebrated our fifth anniversary year. It was a great tribute to all the artists, staff and volunteers who work so hard and passionately to make the gallery such a success. It was a proud moment for Wakefield as it became the only city outside of London with two Museums of the Year to its name. The public recognition of the award also helped us achieve very significant audience growth. The prize

money enabled us to purchase an important sculpture by Helen Marten for our art collection and contributed to the transformation of our wider site into a beautiful landscaped garden designed by Tom Stuart-Smith, a project that has proved an absolutely vital resource for local people during lockdown. Three years on, as we prepare to reopen our doors for the first time in four months on 1 August, and enter into our 10th anniversary year, it is still an accolade we are extremely proud to have won."

Dr Tristram Hunt, Director, V&A, winner of Art Fund Museum of the Year 2016, said: "Art Fund Museum of the Year is an incredible initiative that celebrates the ingenuity of museums across the country. At a time when museums and galleries across the UK are grappling with the catastrophic effects of Covid-19, and some are beginning to reopen, this year's prize will be more vital than ever to help encourage visitors back into our wonderful cultural venues."

"Winning Art Fund Museum of the Year 2016 was hugely significant for the V&A. The prize money allowed us to refocus our founding principles in design education to kick-start V&A DesignLab Nation – a national education programme that has seen us bring together schools, industry and regional museums to support the teaching of the Design and Technology GCSE in Coventry, Sheffield, Sunderland, Blackburn and beyond. As the provision of creative subjects continues to be squeezed in our schools, we will continue to expand the programme, sharing our skills and collections to support and empower teachers and fire the imaginations of the next generation of designers, makers and creatives across the UK."

Liz Forgan, Chair of the judges, Art Fund Museum of the Year 2020, said: "My genius grandfather took me to museums before I could talk so they are among the joys of my life. Art Fund Museum of the Year rewards people and institutions who have that same genius and who use it to make their collections exceptionally understandable and inspiring for their visitors. They are to be found in every size and sort of museums and galleries and it is a delight to applaud them."

Ryan Gander, artist, said: "For me a museum is a safe haven for discovery, distraction and focussed attention. When I find myself in a museum I am a different person, I leave behind the repetition of the day to day and become an explorer of a cognitive treasure trove. Knowing that museums are there even when we are not physically in them, and knowing that at the drop of a hat we can go to a place that will provoke our imaginations and inspire us to have new and unusual thoughts, is essential for our wellbeing... like a gym for the mind."

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

Winners 2008 - 2019:

2008 - The Lightbox, Woking
2009 - Wedgwood Museum, Stoke-on-Trent
2010 - Ulster Museum, Belfast
2011 - British Museum
2012 - Royal Albert Memorial Museum
2013 - William Morris Gallery, London
2014 - Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield
2015 - Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester
2016 - Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), London
2017 - The Hepworth, Wakefield
2018 - Tate St Ives
2019 - St Fagans National Museum of History, Cardiff

Judges Profiles

Dame Liz Forgan

Liz Forgan is a former journalist and broadcaster for the Evening Standard and the Guardian, Channel 4 and the BBC. From 2003 to 2016 she chaired the Scott Trust, the parent company of the Guardian, and in 2009 was appointed the first woman to chair Arts Council England. Liz has also chaired the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Churches Conservation Trust and the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, and is currently chair of Aurora Orchestra and Bristol Old Vic. She was named Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire for services to broadcasting in 2006 and is an Honorary Fellow of the British Academy.

Jago Cooper

Jago Cooper is Head of the Americas at the British Museum and Director of the Santo Domingo Centre of Excellence for Latin American Research. Prior to this he was a professional archaeologist and heritage consultant before returning to academia in 2003 where he lectured at the City University of New York and University of Leicester. Jago has spent many years living and working in Latin America and currently works on several active museum projects in the region. He has also made several BBC documentaries highlighting the cultural diversity of Latin America.

Ryan Gander

Ryan Gander is an artist based in Suffolk and London and has exhibited widely across the UK and internationally. His work involves a questioning of language and knowledge, as well as a reinvention of both the modes of appearance and the creation of an artwork, using a wide range of media including sculpture, writing, graphic design, performance and film. In 2017 he was awarded an OBE for services to contemporary arts and in 2019 was awarded the Hodder Fellowship at Princeton University.

Melanie Keen

Melanie Keen joined the Wellcome Collection as Director in 2019, having previously been Director and Chief Curator at Iniva (the Institute of International Visual Arts), where she was instrumental in the revitalisation of Iniva's mission and vision. Melanie has worked as an independent curator and consultant, and as a senior relationship manager at Arts Council England. She is an independent advisor to the Government Art Collection, sits on the British Council's Visual Arts Advisory Group and was on the selection committee for the British Pavilion, Venice Biennale 2019.

Jenny Waldman

Formerly Director of 14-18 NOW, the UK's official arts programme for the First World War Centenary, Jenny Waldman joined Art Fund as Director in May 2020. At 14-18 NOW she oversaw a programme of commissions of over 100 new works from leading UK and international contemporary artists including Jeremy Deller, Peter Jackson, John Akomfrah, William Kentridge, Susan Philipsz, Yinka Shonibare CBE and Rachel Whiteread. Prior to this she was Creative Producer of the London 2012 Festival and Public Programmes Consultant to Somerset House Trust. Jenny is Chair of Trustees of Artangel and a member of the Barbican Centre Board. She was awarded a CBE in the 2017 New Year Honours for services to the arts.

About Art Fund

Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for art. It provides millions of pounds every year to help museums to acquire and share works of art across the UK, further the professional development of their curators, and inspire more people to visit and enjoy their public programmes. Art Fund is independently funded, supported by the 159,000 members who buy the National Art Pass, who enjoy free entry to over 240 museums, galleries and historic places, 50% off major exhibitions, and receive Art Quarterly magazine. Art Fund also supports museums through its annual prize, Art Fund Museum of the Year, which was won by St Fagans National Museum of History, Cardiff, in 2019, and through a range of digital platforms. www.artfund.org