

PRESS RELEASE

22 June 2021

## More treasures from national collections to be lent to UK museums and galleries through Weston Loan Programme with Art Fund

- Museums and galleries nationwide are invited to apply from today in the next round of loans of treasures from national collections and major lending institutions
- Hundreds of artworks lent to more than 50 exhibitions so far through the Weston Loan Programme with Art Fund



Left to right: Laura Knight, *Ruby Loftus Screwing a Breech-ring*, 1943; Lucian Freud, *Girl with Roses*, 1947-8.; Francesco Tuccio, *The Lampedusa cross 2*, 2015.\*

As museums and galleries across the UK re-open they are being encouraged to apply for loans of works of art from national collections and major lending institutions through the Weston Loan Programme with Art Fund. Museums and galleries have from today until 17 August to apply.

This is the sixth round of applications since the ground-breaking loan programme began in 2017. The scheme has dramatically boosted visitor numbers to smaller institutions - by an average of 40% pre-pandemic - and significantly widened the lending pool of objects from major collections. Hundreds of works have been lent so far including those by Edward Burne-Jones, William

Hogarth, Laura Knight, John Nash, Eric Ravilious, Rembrandt van Rijn, Peter Paul Rubens and George Stubbs, as well as treasures such as the 12th-century Becket Casket and the Lampedusa Cross.

Created by the Garfield Weston Foundation and Art Fund, this is the first UK-wide grant programme designed to directly fund and empower smaller museums to borrow outstanding works from national or major lending museums and galleries. Garfield Weston Foundation has generously provided funds totalling £1.56 million since its creation.

So far 52 exhibitions have been presented with Weston Loan Programme support which has funded costs such as transportation, conservation and training. A further three rounds of loans are planned across this year and next. Visitors to the shows have said how much they enjoyed seeing high-profile works with strong connections to the locality of the museum.

The programme has raised the profile of many of the borrowing institutions and provided an opportunity for museum teams to develop new skills that will enable ever more ambitious exhibitions in the future. MK Gallery in Milton Keynes said that their Weston Loan Programme exhibition helped extend their networks with renowned international museums, as well as private collections. The scheme has also given a boost to self-generated income. Southampton City Art Gallery, whose show on the Pre-Raphaelites was organised jointly with Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum, is one of many to record a significant increase in shop income.

Sophia Weston, Trustee, Garfield Weston Foundation said: "As museums and galleries across the UK reopen their doors, the Weston Loan Programme with Art Fund can help meet the costs of bringing a wide variety of famous and interesting art works to regional museums that can be seen by local communities across the UK. These loans build meaningful and often long-lasting partnerships between local and national museums, and a chance for many more people to see incredible works of art closer to home. We are looking for museums that have some brilliant ideas, and encourage them to be audacious and think big when considering what they would like to borrow as we know taking part in this programme can be transformational."

*A Rake's Progress*, which hadn't been hung on the walls at Pitzhanger Manor since 1810, was the centrepiece of *Hogarth: London Voices, London Lives* (September to December 2020). This would not have been possible but for the generosity of Sir John Soane's Museum through the Weston Loan Programme with Art Fund.

Clare Gough, Director of Pitzhanger Manor & Gallery said: "We are very grateful to the Weston Loan Programme with Art Fund which enabled Pitzhanger to borrow William Hogarth's celebrated series of paintings *A Rake's Progress*, which had been bought by John Soane in 1802 to hang at Pitzhanger. Hogarth's series still has great resonance today and it was very special to see them returned to Pitzhanger for the first time in 200 years, where they were displayed in the exhibition alongside contemporary works reflecting on life in London today."

The breadth of the Weston Loan Programme will continue to be seen at venues across the UK this summer.

- Works have been lent to *Freud, Minton, Ryan: unholy trinity*, opening in July at Bath's Victoria Art Gallery, the first exhibition to focus on the passionate intimacy that existed between Lucian Freud, John Minton and Adrian Ryan.

- The world-famous late 16<sup>th</sup> century portrait of Richard III has been lent by the National Portrait Gallery to Yorkshire Museum and Gardens to be shown alongside the finest group of objects associated with the king in the country (9 July to 31 October).
- Antony Gormley's monumental installation *Field for the British Isles*, comprising 40,000 small clay figures and last seen in the North East 25 years ago, will go on display at Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art in Sunderland from July to September.
- *Laura Knight: A Celebration* is at Penlee House Gallery and Museums until 11 September.
- A major exhibition of the work of Ben Nicholson is on display at Pallant House Gallery in Chichester until 24 October.

To view other exhibitions which have been supported by the Weston Loan Programme with Art Fund, please visit <https://www.artfund.org/blog/2021/01/26/weston-loan-programme-2021>

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For further information about Weston Loan Programme visit:  
<https://www.artfund.org/weston-loan-programme>

For images visit <https://bibli.artfund.org/web/733330102e4b0afb/weston-loan-applications-open/>

#### Notes to Editors

##### 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. In response to Covid-19 Art Fund has made £2 million in adapted funding available to support museums through reopening and beyond, including Respond and Reimagine grants to help meet immediate need and reimagine future ways of working. Art Fund is independently funded, supported by the 130,000 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. In a unique edition of the prize for 2020, Art Fund responded to the unprecedented challenges that all museums are facing by selecting five winners and increasing the prize money to £200,000. The winners are Aberdeen Art Gallery; Gairloch Museum; Science Museum; South London Gallery; and Towner Eastbourne [www.artfund.org](http://www.artfund.org)

## About Garfield Weston Foundation

Established over 60 years ago in 1958, the Garfield Weston Foundation is a family-founded, grant-making charity which supports causes across the UK and, in the most recent financial year, gave over £99million. Since it was established, it has exceeded donations of more than £1billion, of which well over half has been given in the past ten years.

One of the most respected charitable institutions in the UK, the Weston Family Trustees are descendants of the founder and they take a highly active and hands-on approach. The Foundation's funding comes from an endowment of shares in the family business which includes Twinings, Primark, Kingsmill (all part of Associated British Foods Plc) and Fortnum & Mason, amongst others – a successful model that still endures today; as the businesses have grown, so too have the charitable donations.

Known for its transparency, flexibility and straightforward approach, the Foundation supports a broad range of charities from small community organisations to large national institutions. Around 2,000 charities across the UK benefit each year from the Foundation's grants.

\*Images on this release

These works were part of the following exhibitions:

*Laura Knight: A Celebration* at Penlee House

*Freud, Minton, Ryan - unholy trinity* at Victoria Art Gallery

*A British Museum Spotlight Loan, Crossings: community and refuge* at Hastings Museum & Art Gallery

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