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Five museums win major new objects at leading international craft fair

- £75,000 fund split between National Museum of Scotland, Whitworth Art Gallery, Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery, Museums Sheffield and Touchstones Rochdale in the fifth year of Art Fund Collect
- Four Japanese artists acquired by UK museums, together with first UK museum acquisition of rising British star

The Art Fund and the Crafts Council have today announced the five museums which have successfully won a share of £75,000 and each acquired an outstanding work of contemporary craft through Art Fund Collect, the scheme which offers UK museums the chance to enhance their contemporary craft collections.

The winning museums were each represented by a curatorial expert. The following objects will now be added to the winning museums' permanent collections:

National Museum of Scotland, represented by Rosina Buckland: *Crane Dance* by Suiko Buseki (Japan), represented by Yufuku Gallery – Cost: £11,250

This woven bamboo sculpture was selected for the conspicuous visibility of the artist's considerable technical skill. The National Museum of Scotland has extensive holdings of Japanese art but this is the first work of bamboo to be added to the collection, and the first UK museum acquisition of this acclaimed Japanese maker.

Whitworth Art Gallery, represented by Jennifer Harris: *P: Kasuri 206* by Jun Tomita (Japan), represented by Katie Jones – Cost: £9,000

This work, a painted textile piece, is a new addition to the Whitworth's collection of Japanese textiles, some of which date back to the eighteenth century. Treated threads are bound together and sections are dyed before being woven. The addition of paint adds extra depth, creating a highly meditative tone.

Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery, represented by Francesca Vanke: *Flight Take Off* by Geoffrey Mann (UK), represented by Joanna Bird – Cost: £30,000

The first work by 32-year-old Scottish artist Geoffrey Mann to be acquired by a UK museum, this glass sculpture represents in abstract form the flight path of a bird. Digital cameras recorded from various angles the motion of a bird in flight, which were then processed by a computer and rendered into a form that was then cast in glass. The artist was selected for the complex relationship of his work to both fine art sculpture and craft traditions.

Museums Sheffield, represented by Lucy Cooper: *Hope* by Kyoko Kumai (Japan), represented by Katie Jones – Cost: £5,500

Three objects of woven stainless steel, each entitled *Hope*, were acquired for their connection to Sheffield's industrial heritage, and the centenary of the invention of stainless steel in the city in 2013. The intricate mesh-like objects are made by a textiles artist, illustrating in an oblique and unusual way the potency of the material. The work also relates in its imagery to the museum's Ruskin collection of art relating to the natural world, offering multiple contexts for interpretation within the collection.

Touchstones Rochdale, represented by Yvonne Hardman: *Super Jumbo Nigella*, *Wave* by Junko Mori (Japan), represented by Clare Beck at Adrian Sassoon – Cost: £17,300

A large-scale forged mild steel sculpture coated in wax, this intricate object evokes both floral imagery and wave-like motion. With no definitive orientation or setting, the object has a wide array of display possibilities. The works strikingly bleak palette connects to the museum's collecting interest in uses and absences of colour in contemporary craft, while the imagery has a context within the museum's fine art collection of landscapes and seascapes.

Curators from nine museums in total were selected to attend the special preview of COLLECT, Europe's leading fair for international contemporary objects on Thursday 10 May. Each curator was given just one hour to explore the fair and select the object they most wanted to add to their museum's collection, finally making the case for their choice in a presentation to a panel of experts. The panel then selected the five objects that they felt had been most persuasively argued for, and allocated the £75,000.

Three of the five winning curators (Rosina Buckland from National Museum of Scotland; Lucy Cooper from Museums Sheffield; Yvonne Hardman from Touchstones Rochdale) had never previously participated in Art Fund Collect. This is the first time Touchstones Rochdale has participated in the programme.

The full 2012 Art Fund Collect shortlist:

- **Aberdeen City Art Gallery:** Alison Fraser
- **Beane Art Museum and Library, Canterbury:** Krystyna Matyjaszkiewicz
- **National Museum Wales, Cardiff:** Rachel Conroy
- **National Museums Scotland, Edinburgh:** Rosina Buckland
- **Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter:** Tony Eccles and Holly Morgenroth
- **Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester:** Jennifer Harris
- **Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery:** Francesca Vanke
- **Museums Sheffield:** Lucy Cooper
- **Touchstones Rochdale:** Yvonne Hardman

Art Fund Collect was set up jointly by the Art Fund and the Crafts Council in 2008 as a way of boosting public collections with contemporary craft, and developing curatorial expertise and networks within the museum sector. From 2008 to 2012 Art Fund Collect will have enabled the purchase of £350,000 of contemporary craft objects to go directly into the UK's public collections.

Art Fund Collect took place on Thursday 10 May 2012, the preview day of COLLECT, organised by the Crafts Council and which is now in its ninth year. COLLECT 2012 takes place at London's Saatchi Gallery and is open to the public 11 – 14 May 2012.

The judging panel for this year's Art Fund Collect was:

- **Anthony Griffiths**, Chair, Art Fund Trustee and former Head of Department of Prints & Drawings, the British Museum
- **Stephen Deuchar**, Director of the Art Fund
- **Sir Nicholas Goodison**, Former Chairman of the Crafts Council and former Chairman of the Art Fund
- **Rosy Greenlees**, Executive Director of the Crafts Council
- **Tanya Harrod**, writer and Associate Research Professor at Bath School of Art and Design
- **Jonathan Marsden**, Art Fund Trustee and Director of the Royal Collection

Stephen Deuchar, Director of the Art Fund, said: "The presentations from the curators were all impressive and persuasive. It is a privilege to be supporting the winners and their institutions and we are delighted with the extraordinary acquisitions they selected."

"The Art Fund Collect scheme has again illuminated the ambition and curatorial talent within UK institutions. We feel the winning objects will greatly enhance the collections they have been chosen for, and look forward to how the public will respond to them," said Rosy Greenlees, Executive Director, Crafts Council.

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Notes to Editors

The Art Fund is the national charity which helps museums and galleries to buy, show and share art for the enjoyment of all. Over the past five years, the Art Fund has given over £24 million towards art of all kinds, from Old Masters to new media, and supported a range of programmes which share and show art to wider audiences, including the national tour of ARTIST ROOMS, the Art Fund Prize for Museums and Galleries, and Art Guide, a pioneering smartphone app offering the most comprehensive guide to seeing art in the UK. The Art Fund is independently funded and the majority of its income comes from 90,000 supporters who purchase a National Art Pass, costing from £50, which gives free entry to over 200 museums, galleries and historic houses across the country as well as 50% off many major exhibitions.

Find out more about the Art Fund and the National Art Pass at www.artfund.org.uk. The press office can be reached on 020 7225 4888 or media@artfund.org

The Crafts Council's goal is to make the UK the best place to make, see, collect and learn about contemporary craft. The Crafts Council believes that craft plays a dynamic and vigorous role in the UK's social, economic and cultural life and everyone should have the opportunity to make, see, collect and learn about craft.

The Crafts Council is supported by Arts Council England who work to get great art to everyone by championing, developing and investing in artistic experiences that enrich people's lives. For more information on the Crafts Council contact Jill Read, Press Officer, Tel 020 7806 2549 Email media@craftscouncil.org.uk or visit www.craftscouncil.org.uk