

Manchester Art Gallery  
Collection Development Policy  
2021-2024

Name of museum: Manchester Art Gallery  
Mosley Street, Manchester M2 3JL  
Platt Hall, Rusholme, Manchester, M14 5LL

Name of governing body: Manchester City Council (Art Galleries Committee)

Approved by governing body: Art Galleries Committee meeting 17 February 2021.

Policy Review Procedure:

Our Collection Development Policy is reviewed, revised and published every three years. Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the Collection Development Policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of Manchester Art Gallery's collections.

Date of next review: 1st September 2022

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Scope and Objective

This Collection Development Policy sets out our statement of intent regarding the purpose, use, development and rationalisation of Manchester Art Gallery's collection over the next three years. It outlines the 200-year history of the collection and introduces how we collect, what we collect and why. It states our collection development priorities over the next three years in accordance with our mission and vision and in line with the objectives and priorities of our stakeholders and constituents.

This policy is used by Gallery staff to guide all our decisions regarding Manchester Art Gallery's acquisition, transfer and disposal activity between 2021 and 2024. All such collecting activity follows procedures set out in our Collection Management Procedures Manual, to ensure the responsible and ethical acquisition and disposal of all objects. This policy guides Gallery staff in support of applications for grant aid to demonstrate how a potential acquisition meets Manchester Art Gallery's collecting priorities.

This policy also assists potential donors to decide whether Manchester Art Gallery is an appropriate civic cultural institution for their gifts and bequests.

The Collection Development Policy sits within Manchester Art Gallery's Collections Management Framework, which also includes our Collections Access Policy, Collections Information Policy, Collections Care and Conservation Policy, Loans Policy and Due Diligence Policy.

## 1.2 Our Vision and Who We Are

Our vision is to be an inclusive art gallery for the people of Manchester and the wider world; opening minds to the essential role of creativity in making a healthy society and contributing to social change.

Manchester Art Gallery, a Grade I listed building in the heart of the civic quarter of the city, was initiated in 1823 by artists and industrialists as an educational institution to ensure that the city and all its people grow with creativity, imagination, health and productivity. The gallery is free and open to all people as a place of civic thinking and public imagination, promoting art to achieve social change. It has been at the centre of city life for nearly 200 years and part of Manchester City Council (MCC) since 1882.

Platt Hall has been an integral part of Manchester Art Gallery since 1926. This Grade II\* listed Georgian building is situated in Platt Fields Park in Fallowfield, approximately two miles south of the city centre. Together Manchester Art Gallery and Platt Hall are home to the city's public collections of fine art, craft and design and dress. Manchester Art Gallery and Platt Hall are accredited museums. In addition, we have an ancillary site in Queen's Park, Harpurhey, housing our conservation studios and stores. Our collections have been Designated as being of national significance since 1997.

The collection belongs to the people of Manchester, with Manchester City Council as sole trustee, under the terms of the Greater Manchester Act 1981. This Act safeguards the collection. It stipulates that no objects can be sold from the collection by the City Council for any purpose other than to purchase other works for the collection. Therefore, any funds raised from sales are ring-fenced solely for the purchase of new acquisitions. We are governed by MCC's Art Galleries Committee who meet annually in February to review our activity report, approve any new policies,

agree to disposal proposals, and sign off our budget for the following year. We sit within the Libraries, Galleries and Culture service as part of the Neighbourhoods Directorate of Manchester City Council.

The core aim of MCC's Our Manchester Strategy is to make Manchester a great place to live – a thriving and connected city, full of talent where everyone has a chance to contribute and benefit. We care for, develop and share our collections to tell stories, inspire learning, ignite conversation, enhance personal wellbeing and contribute to positive cultural and social change. We do this through our wide-ranging public engagement programme of projects, exhibitions, displays, loans, creative workshop activities, tours, talks and events. We work with and for our constituents to ensure art, creativity, care and consideration are embedded in all aspects of the way we live. We develop the collection as a unique resource that can be enjoyed by people now and in the future.

Alongside core funding from Manchester City Council, we raise commercial and fundraised income and, with our university partners the Whitworth and Manchester Museum, we receive an NPO grant from Arts Council England. This enables us to share funding, staff and expertise to make something greater than our individual parts – a uniquely Mancunian art gallery and museum service for the city.

### **1.3 Statement of Purpose**

*'What does one do with all the things of the world?'*

Barbara J. Black, *On Exhibit: Victorians and Their Museums* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000) p.15.

Understanding and putting to good use the collections we hold underpins this collection development policy. What does it mean, at this moment in the 21st century, to hold in trust for society the accumulated material wealth of two centuries of civic collecting? In the context of the 'useful museum', what is the usefulness of this wealth? How can we make the most of our collections –with all the complex power dynamics they represent – to better understand the past, interrogate the present, inform and inspire the future? These are the key questions we wish to address during the lifetime of this policy.

The aftereffects of the Covid pandemic of 2020 will be felt for decades. Cultural organisations have been hit especially hard. Facing an unpredictable future of reduced resources and a world in recovery, all are having to fundamentally rethink priorities and working practices. In the same year, and in the context of a global climate emergency, Manchester City Council has committed to halving the city's emissions by 2025. Sustainability, reducing consumption, and making the most of what you have got has never been so important. Alongside this, the global surge of anti-racist demonstration following the murder of George Floyd has shone a critical spotlight on the role museums have played in shaping and reflecting history, culture, identity. The call for cultural institutions to interrogate their own histories has been much debated within the sector in recent years and has reached a moment of critical urgency now. Our stated aim as a civic institution, to use art for social good, takes on a sharpened focus in this context. The city's collections, our unique asset that makes us who we are, are key to this.

As with all museums, Manchester Art Gallery's collections evidence the never-ending tension between the human desire for order and tendency to chaos. They are wide-ranging and eclectic, shaped over 200 years through shifting ideologies and the competing influences of idealism and

realism, opportunity and frustration. Today, the resulting body of approximately 47,000 artworks and objects represents both a creative resource of infinite potential, but also a significant challenge in terms of sustainability. And herein lies the challenge – to make the most of the unique richness of a collection that is full of surprises and unexpected discoveries, to safeguard this richness for the future, while also maintaining a responsible and ethical approach to custodianship in the context of limited resources. Our priority for the next three years is therefore to make the most of what we already have in relation to the organisational values we espouse and the business priorities we have identified as critical to survival in a post-Covid world. This means prioritising the acquisition of understanding over the acquisition of things.

Our business priorities for 2021-2024 focus on infrastructure improvements that will enable better access to and understanding of the existing collection, in order to make informed decisions about what to do with it and ensure its safekeeping for future generations. These include:

- Development of Platt Hall as a co-produced neighbourhood museum and creative space – a 21st century version of the branch gallery model with collections at its heart.
- Rethink and re-display of the Manchester Art Gallery's collection galleries, activating the collections as agents of creative thinking and collective action around social and cultural topics that matter most to the city now.
- Programme of capital development, collection review, and consolidation/reorganisation of storage at all three sites (Manchester Art Gallery, Platt Hall and Queens Park Conservation Studios) to improve collections care, housing and accessibility.

These priorities will enable us to rethink the way we house, organise, describe, research, interpret, experience, share and respond to the collections in our care. They will enable us to:

- Develop co-productive and constituent approaches to research, knowledge generation and storytelling through improved access to objects and archives.
- Interrogate inherited approaches to classification and categorisation that determine hierarchies of value. To ask questions, acknowledge complexity, and be honest about what we don't know.
- Make best use of limited space – at a premium since the Gallery's foundation - and make informed and pragmatic decisions about disposal of material that might be better used/cared for elsewhere, with a focus on addressing longstanding issues related to former historic house branch galleries.

Over the period of this policy, acquisitions will be restricted to those things which actively deepen or extend our understanding of the collections we already hold, and that enrich and extend the stories that matter to us and our constituents. Our aim is for a dynamic collection in terms not just of physical material but also the stories, knowledge, relationships and ideas that surround it. To achieve this requires an infrastructure of care and management that generates and supports curiosity, creativity and debate; that makes it fit for purpose in the 21st century. The period of this policy prioritises key tasks that will take us towards meeting this aim.

## **1.4 Key Principles**

The Art Galleries Committee as our governing body will ensure that both acquisitions and disposals are carried out openly and with transparency.

By definition, Manchester Art Gallery has a long-term purpose and holds its collection in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to its stated objectives. The Art Galleries Committee therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items in our collection.

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

Manchester Art Gallery recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of the collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Standard. This includes using SPECTRUM primary procedures for collections management. We will consider limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

Manchester Art Gallery will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

Manchester Art Gallery will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons.



## 2 History of the Collection

The history of Manchester Art Gallery's collection is intrinsically entangled with the histories of the city – the social, political and economic shifts that have shaped its expansion, ambition and identity over two centuries. Intention and accident, opportunity and frustration, idealism and realism, along with individual and collective aspiration, have all shaped the rich and multi-faceted material legacy that is today's collection. There are many histories woven through this fabric. To summarise, however, key themes can be identified, each corresponding with an approximate time period, each with their own flavour and underpinning philosophy.

### 2.1 1823-1902: Commerce into culture – From Institution to Art Gallery

It begins with the Royal Manchester Institution for the Promotion of Literature, Science and the Arts (RMI), founded in 1823. A catholic institution embracing art, education and commerce, it reflected the wealth and aspiration of the burgeoning industrial city. Exhibitions, concerts and lectures, picture and sculpture galleries, a natural history department, and from 1838-49 the newly formed Manchester School of Design were all housed within its handsome Greek Revival building commissioned from architect Charles Barry. Collecting formed a cornerstone of the RMI mission, bringing together art, natural history, archaeology and science as a means of understanding the rapidly changing world and asserting the city's place within it. The art collection, comprising paintings, sculpture, prints and plaster casts, was formed through purchases from the RMI annual exhibition and gifts from its Governors, a mix of artists, politicians and industrialists. It reflected the RMI's desire for Manchester to be taken seriously as a place of high culture, focusing on literary, mythological and biblical themes in epic history paintings such as William Etty's *The Sirens and Ulysses* (1837) and James Barry's *The Birth of Pandora* (1791-1804) or more intimate subjects such as James Northcote's *Ira Aldridge as Othello, the Moor of Venice* (1826).

By 1882, however, the RMI's finances were in decline, while the dehumanizing effects of life and work in an industrial city were becoming impossible to ignore. Inspired by the writings of John Ruskin, in 1877 social reformer and philanthropist Thomas Crogan Horsfall formed a committee to establish an art museum for the city's workers and their children. In 1886, the Manchester Art Museum opened in the industrial district of Ancoats, aimed at bringing beauty and spiritual enlightenment into the lives of some of the poorest in the city. In the meantime, however, the RMI also offered its city centre building and collections to the city, for the formation of a public art gallery. One hundred and fifty artworks, including paintings, works on paper, and sculpture, were given into public ownership, on condition that the Manchester Corporation spend a minimum of £2000 per year for the next 20 years purchasing new work. The new Manchester City Art Gallery was intended as an antidote to industrial life as much as a celebration of its success, providing respite and moral education for the city's working classes through exposure to beauty. It duly opened to the public in 1883, offering free entry for all.

Over the next two decades, the newly-formed Art Galleries Committee continued to follow the RMI model, adding contemporary moral subjects and social commentary to the purchase of high-profile narrative, landscape and history subjects. Purchases were also made from the annual exhibition of the Manchester Academy of Fine Arts, an RMI tradition since 1869. And the Committee received gifts from industrialists, politicians, art dealers and artists working in the city, forming a substantial collection of High Victorian art that reflected the tastes and interests of the city's most influential citizens during the period of its greatest prosperity. As in other industrial centres, the radical energy, jewel-like colours and moral symbolism of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood struck a particular chord, and the Gallery is renowned for its outstanding collection of Pre-Raphaelite

paintings, especially Ford Madox Brown's Work (1852-65) which still sits at the heart of the collection as a pictorial comment on the social conditions of the time. In 1883 the Bock Collection of textiles was acquired via the South Kensington Museum on the advice of William Morris, as the start of a study collection for trainee designers, but by 1898 had been transferred to the new Manchester School of Art as a more suitable setting. Design collecting was subsequently left to the Art School for the next two decades, with the exception of a small purchase of contemporary Minton art pottery, and two gifts of ancient Greek and Etruscan pottery and 18th century Dutch delftware, between 1884 and 1887.

## **2.2 1902-1940: Collecting the world – The Art Galleries Committee**

As the new century unfolded, however, the scope and scale of collecting increased dramatically. Unlike cities such as Birmingham and Liverpool, Manchester did not have a combined museum and art gallery service; in 1902 the Corporation proposed a new civic complex comprising a gallery, museum and free library in what is now Piccadilly Gardens. The new complex would unite the city's diverse cultural bodies and enable the Gallery to expand its remit to encompass the whole field of human creative endeavour. The Art Galleries Committee broadened the scope of its collecting in anticipation, imagining new departments of handicrafts, industrial design, ethnography and history, as well as expanding the fine art collection to include historic and contemporary European art. Wealthy patrons offered their own collections to lever support for the scheme, and a host of gifts and bequests flowed in.

Between 1900 and 1940 the collection expanded from a total of 695 objects to over 15,000. It included British, European and Asian ceramics, glass, metalwork, textiles, furniture and wallpaper; Asian and African jades and ivories; objects of domestic life, childhood, local and natural history and archaeology; British clothing and accessories; as well as the growing collection of historical and contemporary painting, sculpture and works on paper. Much of this was given by wealthy collectors and donors with a Manchester connection – people such as Thomas Tylston Greg of Quarry Bank Mill in Cheshire, who in 1907 summed up the vision for the new museum as:

*".....a public building containing under one roof natural objects, objects of art and objects of handicrafts of by-gone times, neither wholly artistic nor wholly scientific - a museum where men and women of multifarious interests, and of no interests at all, might have their sense of wonder, which is the protoplasm of education, aroused and quickened".*

However, by 1940, the new museum had not materialised. Two world wars and a depression repeatedly frustrated attempts to secure funding, and the Committee finally abandoned the scheme. Instead, between 1906 and 1939, seven sites across the city were acquired as temporary housing for the growing collections. Four of these – Heaton Hall in the north and Platt Hall, the Old Parsonage and Wythenshawe Hall in the south – had previously been private homes. Another – the Manchester Athenaeum – was a gentleman's club situated next to the RMI building. And the final two – Queens Park Museum in Harpurhey and Thomas Horsfall's Manchester Art Museum in Ancoats – were already established museums with collections of their own, some of which was absorbed into the Art Gallery. Although conceived as a temporary solution, the 'branch galleries' gradually became policy in their own right. They remained part of the Galleries' portfolio until the end of the 20th century, taking aspects of the collections out of the city centre and into residential neighbourhoods, which in turn was to influence how those collections subsequently developed.

### **2.3 1915-1945: ‘Art like charity begins at home’ – Curator Lawrence Haward**

This period also saw the increasing professionalisation of curatorship, and with it the appointment in 1914 of Manchester’s first, and arguably most influential, professional art curator. Lawrence Haward was of a younger generation than the Art Galleries Committee, and had strong views about collecting. ‘A decision as to any specific work’ he claimed, ‘requiring, as it does, expert knowledge and taste, should never be made a matter of collective judgement’. He attempted to bring ‘order and controlling will’ to the development of the collection, centred on the bringing together of art and daily life. The role of a civic gallery, Haward believed, was to awaken within its citizens ‘that latent sense of beauty’ that all people possessed, empowering them to demand beauty in every aspect of their lives.

Thus, in 1925 he secured the gift of 800 works of modern and contemporary British art from Bradford businessman Charles Rutherston, in order to provide a picture loan scheme for schools and colleges. Including works by all the major artists of the period, such as Augustus and Gwen John, Duncan Grant and Vanessa Bell, Wyndham Lewis and Paul Nash, the Rutherston Collection formed the basis of the Gallery’s modern painting collection. This was added to by the commissioning and collecting of war art from both world wars, including from the 1939-45 programme established by the War Artists Advisory Committee. Meanwhile, the Gallery hosted a series of exhibitions of everyday objects, from wallpapers to saucepans, while manufacturers were invited to donate examples of their wares for the formation of an Industrial Art Collection. Crockery, glass and furniture for the home, furnishing and dress fabrics, billboard posters and typography were all acquired as an object lesson in the principles of affordable good design for everyday life. A smaller number of hand-made and artist-designed textiles and ceramics were also acquired, primarily from the annual Red Rose Guild exhibitions, as part of an exploration of the role of art and craft in the development of industrial production. During the same period, and with support from his wife, Haward also built up the small collection of historic fashion and dress, soliciting donations of clothing and accessories from multiple donors including members of the Art Galleries Committee. His last act before retirement in 1945 was to secure the 4,000 strong collection of 19th century dress assembled by husband-and-wife collectors Drs Cecil Willett and Phillis Cunnington, purchased through a public fundraising campaign. Two years later the Platt Hall branch gallery was relaunched as the Gallery of English Costume, the world’s first dedicated museum of clothing and fashion.

### **2.4 1945-1978: ‘Filling the gaps’ - Chronology and connoisseurship**

The post of Art Galleries Director was instituted in 1948 and the postwar decades saw the gradual decline of the Art Galleries Committee until its merger with the wider Cultural Committee in 1967, from which point it ceased to have an active role in collection development. National grant funding bodies also began to replace private donors as the source of new acquisitions, and this period is increasingly characterized by one-off purchases of high-profile items. The postwar break up of landed private estates shaped the market for historic artworks with the sale of country house art collections, while the extension of the Government Acceptance in Lieu scheme enabled regional galleries to capitalize on the offsetting of inheritance tax by the donation of artworks and objects to public collections.

From 1945 a noticeable shift in collecting occurred, informed by the interests of successive directors in filling gaps in the art historical narrative told by the collections to date. A connoisseurial approach saw a succession of individual grant-funded purchases of British and European Old Master paintings, from Italian Renaissance artists Bernardo Daddi and Ridolfo Ghirlandio, to European Baroque artists Sir Peter Lely and Jacob van Ruisdael, and Royal Academicians Sir Joshua Reynolds and Thomas

Gainsborough. Prestigious and luxury goods characterized a similar direction in decorative art collecting, primarily through private donations including Worcester and Meissen porcelain, Battersea and Staffordshire enamels, and a substantial collection of 14th-18th century British and European silver. Similarly, a change of direction in the treatment of Manchester's branch galleries saw the transformation of Heaton and Wythenshawe Halls from neighbourhood art galleries into country house museums. Historic furniture and accessories appropriate to the period of the house were purchased from the break-up of other important houses, used as set dressing along with objects from the Galleries' antiquarian collections to provide an insight into gentrified life in the past. The Old Parsonage at Fletcher Moss housed the Galleries' local history collection and regional furniture, while Victorian furniture made by local designers and manufacturers James Lamb, Henry Ogden and Edgar Wood was acquired to complement the displays in the City Art Gallery, which increasingly adopted a chronological hang.

At the same time, the modern collections were similarly developed through grant-funded purchases and subscription schemes focused on contemporary British artists and high-value examples of modern European avant-garde art and design. Capitalising on the personal art networks of successive directors David Baxendall (1945-52) and Loraine Conran (1962-76), works by British artists including Ben Nicholson, Graham Sutherland, Lucian Freud and Bridget Riley, and European artists including Max Ernst, Fernand Leger and Alberto Giacometti were acquired in this way, alongside examples of iconic 20th century design including Tiffany and Lalique glass, and Soviet porcelain.

Manchester in the 1960s was a city of housing clearance and building boom, of football, fashion, music and glamour – but also declining industry. By the '70s it was gripped by labour strikes, factory closures and mass unemployment. Yet this was when the Galleries' connoisseurial collecting reached its peak, with the 1970 purchase of George Stubbs' Cheetah and Stag with Two Indians. Joint-funded by the Victoria & Albert Museum Purchase Grant and the Art Fund, this key image in Britain's colonial history was, at the time, the most expensive painting ever bought by a British art gallery. This mode of collecting, based on the high-profile acquisition of nationally significant individual artworks, harked back to the RMI in its positioning of Manchester as a city of high cultural credentials, though without the underpinning civic prosperity of earlier times. It reached its apogee with the Directorship of Timothy Clifford (1978-84). On his arrival in 1978, his first project was the restoration of the City Art Gallery entrance hall and first floor suite to an RMI scheme from the 1840s, complete with richly coloured stencilled and gilded walls, rugs and potted palms, and a densely displayed 'salon' style hang.

## **2.5 1978 -1997: Strategies for survival – private and public support**

1978 was also the year of the 'winter of discontent' and a national recession that hit Manchester particularly hard. Between 1972-1984 the city lost over 200,000 manufacturing jobs, large parts of the city fell into dereliction, the population decreased, and unemployment rose to 20%. Conservative policy under Margaret Thatcher cut public spending and privatized public services; in 1986 the Greater Manchester County Council was abolished as a locus of leftwing opposition, and the survival of the city became increasingly dependent on private sector partnership. In 1978 Clifford established the Friends of Manchester City Art Galleries, a paying membership scheme, part of whose remit was to 'save works of art of national importance threatened by export' and to help 'augment the contemporary holdings'. A year later, the Patrons and Associates was established, with its own loan collection, soliciting corporate sponsorship and financial support from the city's business community. In their first years of existence, the Friends and Patrons supported several key additions to the collection, including artworks by Buonsegno di Duccio, Alessandro Algardi,

Bernardo Bellotto and Claude Lorrain. In apparent defiance of the city's otherwise straitened circumstances, in 1982 (the Galleries' centenary year) Clifford boldly likened the scope of Manchester's collection to 'the National Gallery, Tate Gallery and Victoria and Albert Museum combined'.

Three years later, and under new director Julian Spalding (1984-1989), there was a marked shift in direction. The Arts Council 'Glory of the Garden' scheme, set up to address funding inequities between London and the regions, enabled the establishment of a dedicated exhibitions team. A loan-based exhibitions programme focusing primarily on modern and contemporary fine art, craft and design became the Galleries' driving force, with smaller thematic displays from the collections, while the chronological historic galleries remained more or less static. Collecting became a way to build legacy from the programme, while also maximising opportunities to acquire. Works by Tony Oursler, Mark Francis, Glenys Barton and Kate Malone were acquired in this way, alongside the Contemporary Art Society's annual allocation through its art and craft distribution schemes. Reflecting wider societal debate, identity politics became an increasingly prominent strand of programming, leading to key acquisitions by artists such as Keith Piper and Derek Jarman. Two major loan exhibitions, *The New Look* in 1991, and *Whitefriars Glass* in 1996, prompted a renewed focus on design for the home, building on the interwar Industrial Art Collection with the acquisition of postwar British and Scandinavian ceramics, glass, metalwork and furniture, and the grant-funded purchase of a substantial private collection of Whitefriars glass. Two further boosts came in the mid-90s: the 1995 Bernstein Bequest of 33 British and European modern paintings by artists including Alfred Wallis, Christopher Wood, Amadeo Modigliani and Yves Tanguy, and in 1997 the launch of the Contemporary Art Society's five-year Special Collecting Scheme, a consortium of regional galleries funded to develop collections in specific areas. Manchester's focus took a two-part fine art and design focus – photography and sculpture, and furniture and lighting – and over the next five years built up significant holdings in both areas.

The history of Manchester art and design continued to be collected through opportunistic purchases and donations including Pilkingtons art pottery and Victorian pressed glass. The Manchester Academy of Fine Arts continued to hold its annual members' exhibition, a popular and unbroken tradition since RMI days, and a series of exhibitions and displays focusing on aspects of Manchester's creative history included *Mr Lowry at Home* (a recreation of the artist's studio), Manchester 'impressionist' Adolphe Valette, and *Inspired by Design and Design for Living*, exhibitions that celebrated the Manchester School of Art Design Collection and the Art Galleries' Industrial Art Collection respectively.

## **2.6 1947-1997: From everyday dress to high-end couture: The Gallery of English Costume**

From 1947 the establishment of a dedicated venue at Platt Hall provided the growing costume collection with its own distinct identity – it effectively became an independent museum, forging a different path to that of the main Art Gallery. The Cunnington collection of 19th century women's and children's dress had been assembled to illustrate socio-cultural patterns of dress and clothing, rather than individual choice, high fashion or 'good design'. It was a social history collection, informed by a scientific interest in mass social psychology and contextualised by a substantial accompanying archive of magazines, journals, prints, fashion plates and photographs detailing aspects of dress in everyday life. The Gallery of English Costume continued in this vein under the pioneering leadership of its first Keeper, Anne Buck (1947-71). Like the Cunningtons, Buck saw the collection primarily as a research and study resource, and continued to focus on the acquisition of

‘middling’ examples of dress typical of general fashion trends and clothing movements, extended to include the 20th century, menswear and earlier periods where possible. High fashion was not within this scope, and indeed Buck came close to rejecting the only couture to be acquired for the collection before 1970 – the Manchester-based Cotton Board collection – because it had only been worn on the catwalk.

As in the interwar period, donations were sourced largely from local people; some donors, mainly women, established long-lasting relationships with the Gallery through successive donations over many years that built up a history of middle-market local fashion trends, retail and manufacture. A small amount of archive material related to the history of Platt Hall was also acquired, including in 1954 a trunk of clothes previously owned and worn by Thomas Carill-Worsley, who lived at the Hall from 1764-1808. And Platt Hall remained home to several smaller collections acquired prior to the Gallery of English Costume’s foundation: a study collection of world textiles amassed by Arts and Crafts designer and Manchester School of Art tutor Lewis F. Day, domestic textiles, lace, and household implements given by collector of everyday handicrafts Mary Greg, and fabrics made in Lancashire for the West African export market, given by textile manufacturer Charles Sixsmith. By the end of her tenure in 1971, Buck had secured an international reputation for the Gallery of English Costume as a foundational site for the study of dress history.

The curators that followed continued in this vein, increasingly accepting virtually all donations offered as having their own story to tell. The vast influx of ordinary material – homemade, mass-manufactured and often in worn or poor condition – was far removed from the tenets of high culture and ‘good design’ that dominated within the main Art Gallery. Such items were not intended for display, but as contributions to a material history of everyday clothing in Britain. The Gallery’s reputation centred around its holding of middling, working class, occupational, every-day and ordinary clothing - it was left to other collections to acquire high-end couture. However, by the early 1980s this approach had resulted in hundreds of items being accepted every year, presenting a huge administrative challenge and storing up significant management issues for the future.

The mid 1980s saw a change of curatorial staff and with it a change of direction. A more focused collecting regime was introduced, responding to the growth of personality-based culture and increasing interest from designers and fashion students. Collecting shifted towards garments and accessories by celebrated designers and couturiers, and from the 1990s designer material was sought from a range of sources - occasional donors, judicious purchases, and post-auction sale offers. In addition, responding to the culturally diverse population of Platt Hall’s local neighbourhood, South Asian textiles and garments began to be acquired, building on the earlier textile collection. Closer ties were developed with the fashion and textile departments at Manchester School of Art, and in 1997 the Gallery celebrated its 50th anniversary with an international dress history conference. In the same year, the word ‘English’ was removed from its title, to become simply the Gallery of Costume.

## **2.7 1998-2011: Renewal and Renaissance – Manchester Art Gallery**

In 1997, Manchester’s collections received national recognition through the Museums & Galleries Commission Designation scheme. But space to house and show the collections remained a critical issue. With the launch of the Heritage Lottery Fund and greater support for the arts from a new Labour government, the scheme for a new gallery was revisited. In 1998, almost a century after the proposal had first been made, the Gallery closed its doors for the building of a £35 million extension. Four years later it re-opened in time for Manchester’s 2002 hosting of the Commonwealth Games. Rebranded simply ‘Manchester Art Gallery’, the original RMI building and

adjacent Athenaeum had been refurbished, extended and linked by the addition of a new wing, doubling the amount of available display space.

Over a century of accumulated material had been packed up, re-located, and subsequently re-settled within a physically and politically changed environment. The 2001 DCMS report *Renaissance in the Regions* identified the cultural value of the UK's regional museums but also the impact of long-term under-investment. It yielded substantial funding from central government, but in return expected demonstrable social impact. The wholesale expansion of audience development and learning programmes followed, with a variety of metrics through which to measure their success. In 2005 the Museums Association report *Collections for the Future* took a similar cost-benefit approach to the problem of underused and poorly managed collections. It marked a turning point in museum philosophy towards the 'dynamic collection', continually reviewed and refined according to contemporary relevance and fitness for purpose.

In Manchester this coincided with a growing sense of self-reflection. In 2002, the new Gallery of Craft & Design included a focus on past collecting practices, celebrating both individual collectors and institutional initiatives. Opening exhibitions included *Free Trade*, by artists Neil Cummings and Marysia Lewandowska, a critical examination of the relationship between commerce and collecting in the 1940 George Beatson Blair bequest. Discussions around rationalisation prompted the project *Mary Mary Quite Contrary*, exploring aspects of value in the 1922 Mary Greg Collection. The interwar Empire Marketing Board poster collection formed the subject of a collaborative PhD with Manchester School of Art, and in 2007, *Revealing Histories: Remembering Slavery*, a partnership between eight Greater Manchester museums, began the process of unpicking the legacies of the transatlantic slave trade within the region's cultural institutions.

Active collecting during this period slowed. Acquisitions from temporary exhibitions continued, with works by Michael Craig Martin, Tom Hunter and Jim Partridge, but most new material came through gift and bequest. CAS gifts included sculpture by Alison Wilding, photography by Steven Pippin, and glass by Koichiro Yamamoto. Private bequests and gifts included glass from the Lady Evelyn Barbirolli bequest, Chelsea-Derby porcelain given by Major General David Egerton, and ceramic design prototypes by Lucienne Day. From 2002-2008, the Patrons and Associates dedicated an annual sum of £10,000 to the purchase of contemporary works for the Patrons Loan Scheme, with a particular focus on support Manchester-based artists. These were not accessioned, although works by Catherine Yass and Marcus Coates for example are now being considered. Chair of the Manchester City Galleries Trust Jack Livingstone was also instrumental in securing two major acquisitions for the permanent collection, of figurative sculpture by Anthony Gormley and a ceramic vase and print by Grayson Perry. At the Gallery of Costume, an incipient couture collection was emerging, alongside two major acquisitions, the Filmer Collection of 17th century dress given by James Filmer-Wilson in lieu of tax, and the HLF grant-funded Meredith Collection of over 100,000 buttons. Closer ties to the Art Gallery were developed through a complementary exhibitions programme and the occasional acquisition of dress-related artworks such as Susie MacMurray's sculptural *Widow*.

While city centre display space had increased, however, storage capacity had not. *Up Close: A Guide to Manchester Art Gallery*, published in 2002, made no mention of the six other sites that formerly made up Manchester City Art Galleries. In fact, the Gallery had been withdrawing from its branches for some time. The Horsfall Museum had closed in 1953, and Queens Park and the Old Parsonage in the mid-1980s. Wythenshawe Hall and Heaton Hall remained under Gallery management, but eventually they too passed back into wider local authority control. By 2008, only Manchester Art Gallery and the Gallery of Costume at Platt Hall remained as public venues. Shortly after this Platt

Hall closed for much-needed refurbishment, re-opening in 2010 in time for the centenary of Platt Fields Park. Queens Park now housed the Galleries' conservation department and the only other site for collections storage. A range of temporary off-site solutions have been in play ever since to house the remainder of the collections.

In 2010, the formation of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition, on the heels of the 2008 financial crisis, ended a period of enlightened government support for culture that had transformed Manchester Art Gallery and seen an exponential rise and reach in visitors. Public spending in the arts was slashed, along with local authority budgets, and at Manchester Art Gallery staffing was reduced by a third. In a bold and historic move, Maria Balshaw, Director of the University of Manchester's Whitworth Art Gallery, added the Directorship of Manchester City Galleries and the role of Director of Culture for the city to her portfolio, ushering in a new era of strategic partnership, new political affiliations and determined cultural ambition.

## **2.8 2011-2021: Manchester in the world and the world in Manchester**

The first half of the last decade saw cultural regeneration become a key priority for the city, with the devolution of spending power and responsibility through Chancellor George Osborne's Northern Powerhouse strategy, and a raft of major projects, from the opening of new arts venue HOME to the growth of the Manchester International Festival. Manchester Art Gallery under Maria Balshaw (2011-2017) played its part with an ambitious programme of high-profile international exhibitions. It included solo exhibitions by major artists such as Jeremy Deller and Joana Vasconcelos, and landmark ensemble shows such as *We Face Forward*, a multi-venue exhibition of 33 artists from nine West African countries and *Eastern Exchanges: East Asian Craft and Design*, comprising historic and contemporary craft from Japan, China and Korea. Fashion was incorporated into the city centre programme for the first time, with *Cotton Couture* celebrating the history of the Manchester Cotton Board. And responses to the permanent collection formed part of the programme, with works by Raqib Shaw, *Spartacus* Chetwynd and Emily Allchurch animating the historic displays. Thomas Horsfall's *Gift to Manchester* continued the growing interest in investigating the Gallery's own collecting history.

Capitalising on this programme, collecting received a new boost with a similarly international scope that focused on three identified themes: contemporaneity, crossing boundaries, and celebrating Manchester. Acquisitions included works by Susan Hiller (US), Joana Vasconcelos (Portugal), Pascale Marthine Tayou (Cameroon), Waqas Kahn (Pakistan) and Mike Nelson (UK). Design collecting increasingly focused on leading British and international makers such as Kim Buck (Denmark), Arihiro Miyake (Finland/Japan) and Adeela Suleman (Pakistan), emerging designers including Cheikh Diallo (Mali) and Cobalt Designs (India), and makers with a Manchester connection such as Halima Cassell and Ian McIntyre. At the Gallery of Costume, a programme of solo exhibitions celebrating iconic fashion designers paralleled the growing couture collection, supported from 2015 by a major HLF Collecting Cultures grant that enabled the acquisition of 50 new pieces by designers including Schiaparelli, Westwood and McQueen. Artist commissions and responses to the historic dress and textile collections also resulted in new works by Alice Kettle, Lubaina Himid and Cornelia Parker.

In 2016, the publication of MCC's *Our Manchester* strategy explicitly set out the city's core commitment to improving the lives of its residents. It has provided a key driver for the Gallery's activities ever since. The arrival of Alistair Hudson as Director in 2018 also introduced the concept of 'Useful Art' to the institution's thinking. It proposes the use of artistic practice for social good – to challenge modes of thought and action, to replace passive spectators with active users, and to have practical and beneficial outcomes for those users. Under Hudson's tenure, projects have focused on



the exploration and challenge of societal attitudes and behaviours, including *Get Together and Get Things Done*, an exploration of the potential of collective action in the bicentenary year of the Peterloo Massacre, and *Trading Station: How hot drinks shape our lives*, which uncovers the complex power dynamics in the production of tea, coffee and chocolate. In both cases, the historic collections have played a pivotal role in shaping the contemporary conversation.

The collection is increasingly integral to all the Gallery's activities. Performative commission *Six Acts* by Sonia Boyce (2018) and collections exhibition *Speech Acts: Reflection – Imagination – Repetition* (2018-19) both explored how public museums shape and influence the stories we tell about ourselves through the collecting and display of art. *Speech Acts* was inspired by Manchester's involvement in the Black Artists & Modernism audit, which documented the presence of artists of African, Caribbean, Asian and MENA Region descent in British public collections – Manchester's collection was found to contain 67 artworks by 35 Black or Asian British artists. *Out of the Crate* (2019-21) uncovers the 'back of house' work involved in caring for the city's sculpture collection, inviting visitors to contribute to the ongoing process of research and knowledge generation around it. The new Creative Families Learning Space, developed in partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University, Sure Start and health visitors, addresses contemporary issues around early years and healthy eating along with histories of colonialism through the inclusion of 18th century enamel bonbonnières from the collection. The collection continues to grow, shaped as it has always been, by a combination of intention and opportunity. Recent gifts include a group of works by Edward Allington and a painting by Louise Giovannelli, both artists with a Manchester connection. Purchases depend on a patchwork of funding from public and private bodies. The Art Fund, V&A Purchase Grant and Contemporary Art Society are key supporters, and private support includes individual patrons and the Manchester Contemporary Art Fund, formed to fund purchases from the annual Manchester Contemporary Art Fair.

But many of the challenges which have troubled Manchester Art Gallery over its two centuries of collecting remain problematic today: historic buildings that are expensive and complex to maintain, insufficient and inappropriate storage for the collections in our care. In 2017, the combination of diminishing budgets, leaking roof and a moth infestation prompted the closure of the Gallery of Costume at Platt Hall after 70 years. Collections which once dressed the branch galleries sit unused in rented off-site storage. Through the Manchester Museums Partnership, a series of collections transfers have taken place, with the aim of maximizing capacity and expertise. These include textiles and wallpapers from the Industrial Art Collection, now held at the Whitworth, and archaeological artefacts from the Old Manchester Collection, at Manchester Museum. There is more work to be done to determine the most responsible and ethical course of action for areas of the collection that are not currently in use, along with a programme of improvements and upgrades to existing storage capacity across all sites.

There is also the question of how the collection can best be activated for social good, and by whom. Museums incorporate the multiple layers of their own histories; their collections embody not just the material evidence of their particular subjects, but also the sedimented remains of their own changing attitudes and identities. How does one 'decolonise' an institution founded on colonial ideologies? What does it even mean? The significance and meaning of an object or artwork is never fixed. It is complex, nuanced and shifting. How do we unpick the systems and structures that have worked to fix meaning in the past, so that our collections may achieve their full potential? These questions are at the heart of current projects. At MAG, a wholesale rethink of the collection galleries is underway, working with residents and communities to explore how the collections can contribute to creative thinking around some of the most pressing issues we currently face. A new

Fashion Gallery is in development that will bring the clothing collection into the heart of the city for the first time. At Platt Hall, meanwhile, funded by the Esmee Fairbairn Collections Fund and Paul Hamlyn Foundation, the project Platt Hall In-between has begun the process of re-imagining the last of Manchester's branch galleries as a new creative and collections hub serving the needs and interests of its local neighbourhood.

As this history shows, the richness of the collection lies not just in the breadth and depth of its content, but in the changing political, social and cultural ideas of the city that has shaped it, and in the new ideas, conversations and actions it can - and does - inspire. It is our unique asset that makes us who we are. But without people to care for it, explore it, share it, respond to it and make sense of it, it is nothing.

### 3 Overview of the Current Collection

The public collection is an accumulation of over 47,000 objects spanning six centuries of fine art, craft and design, costume and more, collected by purchase, gift, bequest and transfer from 1827 up to the present day. These three core areas are how Manchester Art Gallery's collection has been defined in terms of greatest strength and pre-eminence and are the basis on which the Gallery was awarded Designated Status by the Department of National Heritage in June 1997. They are acknowledged as outstanding collections in a non-national English cultural institution for their quality and significance.

This overview is a work in progress whilst we work to better understand the variety of ways in which the collections have been categorised, valued and used over the last 200 years. By continuing to summarise the collection using a system of traditional categories, we smooth out British history and overlook anything that does not fit. Traditional attempts to apply order here only serve to diminish the collections' richness. The fact they are varied, and broad ranging is key. Rather than continually repeat and therefore reinforce the tip of the collection 'iceberg', the so called 'highlights', a wider more inclusive history of objects is needed so those currently consigned to long term storage can feel like they belong. This is an ongoing piece of work, which this overview begins.

#### 3.1 Fine Art

14,000 items

The fine art collection principally comprises paintings, sculpture, watercolours, drawings, prints, and photography and is characterised by both its scale and variety. The earliest works are two Egyptian portraits from the 2nd or 3rd century BC, the most recent is Untitled, 2018, a paper collage by Deborah Roberts. Though there are some important individual and groups of European works, the majority of the fine art items are British, dating, with a few notable exceptions, from the 18th century to the present day. Examples of the great achievements of European art was historically acquired to provide some idea of the evolution of western visual arts and give British art context. Artists represented in the collection include those born elsewhere though educated and working in Britain as well as British-born artists working and travelling abroad. This transnationalism expands our understanding of the collection and though acknowledged here, the entanglement of British identities within the collection are not yet defined. Also woven into our collection are many artworks by artists who have worked in the city, from the RMI's first purchase in 1869 to the gift of Dead Powder Series: Yellow by Nicola Ellis in 2019.

##### 3.1.1 Paintings

c. 2,3000 items

The largest section of the fine art collection, many by the most prominent British artists of the day. Rather than isolated examples, artists are often represented by more than one work. There is a wealth of paintings by lesser-known artists too, artists overlooked and forgotten in art history, particularly women. Paintings span the four main traditional sections of landscapes, portraits, narrative pictures and still life.

There was special emphasis put on collecting landscape paintings and they are a striking feature as a result. There are many depictions of the natural landscape in a wide variety of styles – scenic views of trees and forests, rivers and the coastline, mountains and valleys, sunsets and dawns. Whilst some are classical in style including paintings by Claude Lorrain and JMW Turner, many are wild and

romantic with stormy seas, floods and harsh weather. Many others reference or include the presence of people or animals. There are scenes of historic Manchester and the surrounding area as it grew from rural roots into the industrial 'Cottonopolis'. The Edwardian paintings illustrate the rural nostalgia and urban glamour of the early 1900s and the early modern paintings include artists working in all the main networked societies and groups including the New English Art Club who protested the methods and doctrines of official art like the earlier Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Early modern pastoral paintings from between the wars depict a nation worth fighting for. Later, during World War II, paintings record the bomb damage. There are European landscapes that reflect British artists' travels and bring a sense of the wider world into the city. There are also landscapes by French artists living in Britain and Manchester including Lucien Pissarro and Adolphe Valette. The landscapes span both the real and imagined and a wealth of styles including academic, realistic, impressionist, expressive and surreal. For a landlocked industrial city like Manchester, the beauty and power of nature brought much needed respite from everyday industrial life and they continue to provide a valuable means of escapism and mindfulness today.

Our narrative paintings tell stories from history, literature, religion, myth and legend. There is a group of earlier 16th and 17th century Italian and north European paintings including small-scale genre paintings of scenes of everyday life by Dutch and Flemish artists of the Dutch Republic. The Victorian narrative paintings are perceived to dominate the collection due to their often-vast physical scale. Greek gods and goddesses, heroes and femme fatales all loom from the gallery walls, larger than life. Paintings convey significant events in British history too, especially war. Some express imagined events such as a Roman chariot race or Viking burial. Others convey pure fantasies. Characters in poetry and fiction, especially Shakespeare, are depicted by the Pre-Raphaelites as an antidote to industrialisation. There are biblical scenes, ones with moral implications and many episodes from daily life. The everyday life subjects of ordinary people include a small group of 19th century French genre paintings.

A focus on the narrative tradition continues in many of our 20th century paintings whilst there are significantly fewer abstract paintings that sought to remove the need for storytelling completely. There is a strong strand of social documentary in the English style Impressionism and Post-Impressionism including Walter Sickert and the Camden Town Group. There is a large group of Edwardian painting as well as many traditionally modern works from between the wars. There's a strong post war figurative presence with 'the London School' artists, Neo-Romantics and the industrial townscapes of LS Lowry. From the 1960s there are a few works of British Pop Art followed by a resurgence of figurative paintings preferred over minimalism and conceptual art of which there is none. From the 1970s to the present day the lack of abstraction is addressed including paintings by Bridget Riley, Edwina Leapman and Callum Innes. Our contemporary narrative paintings such as *Homesick 2017* by Benoit Aubard tell a more intimate yet universal story that many visitors respond to.

Portraits feature many persons of interest in British imperial history, figures of local historic interest and many artists' portraits especially self-portraits. They include old master portraits of the 16th century such as Elizabethan Mary Cornwallis by George Gower and 18th century commissioned portraits of aristocrats like Sir Gregory Page-Turner on the Grand Tour, and naval officer Admiral Lord Hood during the America Wars. There are portraits of local aristocrats too as well as politicians, clergy and scientists. There are portraits of unknown sitters, and everyday people both named like David Hockney's Peter C and anonymous like the portrait miniatures. Many self-portraits show the ways artists choose to represent themselves, constructing real or imagined identities. Some are

bold public declarations, others more personal means of self-exploration. Some artists like William Etty and Wyndham Lewis depict themselves in the context of art history while Manchester-born Louise Jopling portrays herself in 1877 as a modern woman. Contemporary paintings like *Queer* by Derek Jarman expand self-portraiture. Others blur portrait with landscape as with *Miss Monter-Descendre*, 2016, by Boris Nzebo.

Our earliest still life paintings are those of the 17th and 18th century by Dutch artists including Willem Kalf, Jan van Huysum and Jan de Heem. Luxury foods or flowers in opulent tabletop arrangements are painted in minute detail and allude to the vanity of earthly pleasures or the fleeting nature of life. Several still lifes by Henri Fantin-Latour painted between 1870 and 1879 recall the lustrous realism of the Dutch genre. *The Hundred Flowers*, 1938, by Malcolm Milne is similarly true to life, this time in the British Realist painting traditions of the 1920s and 1930s. "Still Life with Guitar" c.1925 by Louis Marcoussis is Cubist in style and our many modern British still lifes include works by Gwen John, Gluck, Robert MacBryde, Ben and Winifred Nicholson, Gwen John, Ivon Hitchens, Vanessa Bell, Mary Potter, John Nash and Anne Redpath. Contemporary works include the surrealist style *Still Life by the Sea*, by Stephen Mckenna, 1980, and *Still Life with Fish*, 1982, by Marie-Louise von Motesiczky.

### 3.1.2 Sculpture

c. 400 items

The collection ranges broadly from antiquity to the present day and is largely figurative and representational. It ranges from bronze medals and table-top sculptures to relief panels and large-scale free-standing works. There is a variety of media including marble, bronze, wood, stone, glass, ceramic and paper and a range of different techniques that reflect the fashions of the day. The first was a series of plaster casts including sections of the Elgin Marbles gifted to the RMI by King George IV in 1823 to commemorate its opening. The first purchase was an ancient Greek statuette of Artemis as a Huntress in 1885. There are many commemorative portrait busts with the most recent a gift in 2010 of Sir Thomas Potter, first mayor of Manchester. There are numerous groups of sculptures by 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century artists including Giovanni Battista Foggini, James Harvard Thomas, Sir Alfred Gilbert, Joseph Swynnerton, John Cassidy, Alfred Stevens, Auguste Rodin, Sir Jacob Epstein, Eric Gill, Frank Dobson, and Henry Moore. Women sculptors are represented by a single work such as *Doves*, 1927, by Barbara Hepworth and *Lying Down Horse*, 1971, by Dame Elisabeth Frink. Modern British figurative sculpture includes works by Maurice Lambert incorporating the suggestion of movement; angular figurative artworks by Bernard Meadows from the 1950s; an assemblage of reclaimed furniture and doors representing a mother and child by George Fullard and a broken torso by Reg Butler. A sculpture by William Tucker is the only abstract work.

Works from the 1980s and 90s expand or play on the nature of sculpture: A human head made from burnt matchsticks with thermos flask by David Mach, the outcome of a performance; a stone carving inscribed with the text *In Revolution Politics Become Nature* by Ian Hamilton Finlay; a seated, blue-horned guardian by Dhruva Mistry; *Dumb Bell* by Richard Deacon and the painted bronze cast of an apple core by Gavin Turk.

Since the 2000s there are works that play with and blur the boundaries of fine art and craft - a squashed teapot by Cornelia Parker; metal and terracotta clay vessels by Naoki Takeyama and Halima Cassell respectively; a ceramic thrown conceptual sculpture by Thomas Schütte, a vase by Grayson Perry and a horse's head by Joana Vasconcelos. There are also works that expand the boundaries of sculpture. Those that do this digitally - a digital video projection installation by Tatsuo Miyajima; an interactive digital artwork by Rafael Lozano Hemmer; and a mixed media installation

by Haroon Mirza. There are those that do this in new and inventive ways – a diverse collection of objects made by Des Hughes displayed in a frame; Kelley Walker’s Twelve Parts Installation combining sculpture with painting, print, and found objects; an etched glass box with a ghostly photograph of a condemned tower block by Alex Hartley; a screenprinted canvas bear costume by Brian Griffiths; an installation of found and handcrafted objects made from a variety of materials by Helen Marten. The most recent addition is a bronze statue of Portrait of a Young Man Standing 1962-63, by Leonard McComb.

### **3.1.3 Watercolours and Drawings**

c. 3,800 items

For the most part British landscapes with some intimate portraits, narrative scenes and still life. There are multiple works by certain artists too. They range in date from around c.1750 to 2015 with the most recent being *Paradise Lost* by Jai Redman, a comment on consumerism and the environment painted using only the artist’s sweat and tears.

There are major gaps in the 18<sup>th</sup> century group which are otherwise magnificently represented at the Whitworth. After 1800 there are fine examples of nearly all the great watercolourists of the 19<sup>th</sup> century including strong groups by John Sell Cotman, David Cox the Elder and Peter de Wint. There are 37 watercolours by JMW Turner ranging in date from 1795 to 1843. The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is represented by a few examples of the Pre-Raphaelites and their successors. There are scenes of Manchester including a series by Henry Tidmarsh and *A Manchester Alphabet* series by Roger Oldham. The landscapes range in style from the classical, architectural, romantic and expressionist, concerned with capturing the fleeting nature of weather, atmosphere and light. There are nature studies too including flowers by Emily Gertrude Roberts from c.1880 and birds by John Gerrard Keulemans c.1912.

The strength of the 20<sup>th</sup> century collection is 400 early modern British figurative watercolours and drawings by artists including Wyndam Lewis, Paul Nash, and Edward Wadsworth. World War I is represented by works by artists including William Rothenstein and George Clausen. There is also a significant group of works presented by the War Artists Advisory Committee in 1947 including John Piper, Graham Sutherland and Henry Moore. Works from between the wars include Edward Bawden, Eric Ravilious and Medusa c.1938, Edward Burra’s comment on the horror of the Spanish Civil War. There are only a couple of abstract works dating from the 1960s by Terry Frost and Bryan Winter. Many works relate to our sculptures and paintings too including drawings of casts, figure studies, and preparatory sketches.

### **3.1.4 Prints**

c. 7,000 items

A large collection of British prints complemented by some small European, American and Japanese groups features notable works from the 16th century to the present day. It represents all printmaking techniques including etching, engraving, mezzotints, woodcuts, linocuts, lithography and modern screenprinting. It spans a print history of reproduction, distribution, fine and industrial art. The most recent addition is a portfolio of text-based risographs - *Some Questions About Us*, 2019, by Mark Titchener.

Important print groups include 16th century engravings by Albrecht Dürer; late 18th century etchings by Francisco de Goya; 19th century Japanese colour woodcuts; JMW Turner and Pre-

Raphaelite prints. Prints in the Old Manchester Collection record the city at the end of the 19th century, a time of sudden and significant change.

The collection also comprises a large group of English late 18th and 19th century engraved interpretations of portrait paintings, many of them proofs or rare states, featuring aristocracy, politicians and historic figures. The group includes prints by many eminent engravers of the day. Other engraved interpretations of painting include groups after Rembrandt, Van Dyck, Raphael and Guido Reni used to reveal the roots of a western art tradition.

Important 20th century print groups include the Senefelder Club; lithographs of the First World War; the 1920s woodcut revival; 1930s Grosvenor School linocuts; 1930s modern European lithographs; post-war British prints and fine art prints from the 1960s and '70s print renaissance led by a small number of printers, publishers and galleries including Curwen Press, Kelpra Studio, Editions Alecto, the ICA, St George's Gallery and Zwemmer's. British and American Pop Art is one of many features here. The collection also includes print series intended for wide public distribution and display including The Great War: Britain's Efforts and Ideals; Contemporary Lithographs 1936-38; CEMA prints 1942-45; and School Prints Ltd. 1946-49. An Industrial Art group of lithographic and letterpress printing, book illustration and posters feature a large group from the Empire Marketing Board.

Contemporary prints include *Rough Times*, 2010, by Susan Hiller, that borrows from 1800s seascape paintings and old hand-coloured postcards of rough seas to explore relationships between painting, print and photography.

### **3.1.5 Photography**

c. 520 items

A small collection exploring some of the different ways contemporary artists and photographers working from the late 1970s onwards use the camera in their work. Landscape is explored in works by Boyd & Evans, Tom Hunter and Emily Allchurch while works by Denis Masi, Ron O'Donnell, Peter Fraser and Mat Collishaw reinvent still life.

Portraits by Berni Searle, Steven Pippin, Pushpamala N and Mona Hatoum combine photography with performance. A series of conceptual photograms of feathers by Cornelia Parker highlight associations carried by objects of people. Craigie Horsfield's large portrait of a rhinoceros printed from a negative made five years early comments on the passing of time. James Casebary references architectural studies in his large C-type photograph of a model modern institution while Thomas Demand's photograph of a modern public housing project is a nod to the history of documentary photography.

A series of ten photographs by Martin Parr document Manchester people and places in 2018 and a small series of studio photographs by Hamidou Maiga record Malian society in the 1970s. Roger Ballen photographed residents from *The Boarding House* series. Nyaba Léon Ouedraogo's *The Hell of Copper* and Nyani Quarmyne's *We Were Once Three Miles from the Sea* document the impact of consumerism on landscape and lives.

## 3.2 Craft and Design

c. 11,700 items

In the established hierarchy of the arts, the so-called 'decorative' or 'applied' arts always come second. Historically, this category has been defined by omission rather than inclusion – it comprises all items of manufacture that do not fit the accepted categories of fine art, but nonetheless are regarded as having artistic properties. Categories within the decorative arts tend to be determined by the earth-bound characteristics of function or material, further embedding their secondary position to what has been conventionally regarded as the more intellectual, functionless realm of fine art. What is now called the craft and design collection at Manchester has previously been known at different times by several different titles, including both decorative and applied art. Given the institution's history, and its thwarted early 20th century ambitions to extend its scope, it is not surprising that the content of the collection is so very broad. Here, material that elsewhere might be categorised as social history, archaeology or world cultures, has traditionally come under the heading of decorative art.

### 3.2.1 Ceramics

c. 4,200 items

The ceramic collection dates from the Roman period to the present day. Pre-20th century holdings were mainly donated or bequeathed by private collectors including Alderman Philip Goldschmidt (1887), Thomas Tylston Greg (1920), Leicester Collier (1917), Dr. David Lloyd Roberts (1920), George Beatson Blair (1940), F.C. Dykes (1948), Harold Raby (1958) and Drs. Frederick and Erna Lacks (1981). The earliest acquisitions include a small collection of monumental and domestic contemporary Minton porcelain (1884) and the F. T. Palgrave collection (1885) of Ancient Greek red and black figure vases (200 objects), which includes key historic items such as an amphora painted by the Towry-White painter and a cup by the Brygos painter. Both acquisitions predate the intentional development of a decorative art collection, and the Palgrave collection sits more comfortably within the context of the Gallery's then interest in the wider arts of classical civilization.

The nucleus of the historic collection is provided by approximately 1000 items of domestic pottery tracing the development of British pottery design and manufacture from the Roman period to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century Staffordshire industry. It includes fine examples of 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century slipware, including two rare dishes by Thomas Toft, British delftware, salt glazed stoneware, early industrial earthenware and plain, painted, and transfer-printed creamware. European pottery is represented with smaller groups of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century German stoneware, Dutch delftware, and Italian maiolica. British porcelain holdings are dominated by a significant collection of painted and transfer-printed Worcester and smaller groups of Bow, Chelsea and Derby, while European porcelain is represented by small groups of German, French and Italian wares, including an important group of early Meissen.

There are around 500 historic Chinese pieces, mainly underglaze blue and enamelled porcelain from the Ch'ing dynasty made during the reigns of K'ang-hsi (1662 - 1722), Yung-cheng (1723 -1735) and Ch'ien-lung (1736 - 1795). There are also 20 early ceramics from the Han, T'ang, Sung, Yuan and Ming dynasties. The Chinese collection was built up from a series of bequests, primarily from Leicester Collier in 1917 and George Beatson Blair in 1947, with additions from Sir John Scurrah Randles in 1953, and Harold Raby in 1958.

The 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century collection features both mass-produced and handmade ceramics, including domestic and ornamental wares, with a key theme throughout of the relationship



between studio and factory. Early 20th century experiments with glaze chemistry and kiln technology, much of it inspired by East Asian ceramic traditions, are represented through small groups of art pottery from Staffordshire manufacturers Doulton and Bernard Moore, the smaller scale experimental Midlands-based Ruskin Pottery, and an exceptional collection of 284 Royal Lancastrian Pottery vessels and tiles by the internationally significant Manchester-based Pilkington's Tile & Pottery Company. Early 20th century studio pottery by WB Dalton, Katherine Pleydell-Bouverie and Norah Braden also explore glaze chemistry in experiments with wood ash glazing, and studio ceramics from the other end of the century by Derek Clarkson and Kate Malone continue this theme with a focus on crystalline glaze technology.

The collecting of industrially produced everyday domestic ceramics begins in the interwar period, with tableware by Gray's Pottery, Susie Cooper, Denby, Doulton, Poole, Pountney and Wedgwood, to which have been added mid-century products by design-conscious manufacturers including Midwinter, Hornsea Pottery, Poole, Wedgwood and J&G Meakin. Artists designing for industrial production include the Circus Dinner Service designed by Dame Laura Knight and produced by AJ Wilkinson (1934), Edouardo Paolozzi's Wedgwood Kalkulium Suite (1987) and Robert Dawson's take on the traditional Willow Pattern also for Wedgwood (2005). Artists and makers who play with traditions of British domesticity also feature, as in Paul Scott's Cumbrian Blues series and Ian McIntyre's Re-engineered Brown Betty Teapot. The smaller craft pottery collection includes early-to mid-century vessels by iconic figures in the studio pottery movement Bernard Leach, William Staite Murray, Michael Cardew and Katherine Pleydell-Bouverie, and a small group of sculptural works by postwar potters of the 'new ceramics' generation including Val Barry, Elizabeth Fritsch, Colin Pearson and Glenys Barton. Further relationships between studio and mass production are explored in one-off studio pieces, prototypes for production and batch produced tableware by ceramicists of the 1980s and 90s including Janice Tchalenko, Stephen Dixon and Kate Malone. More recently collecting has included unique vessels, sculptural and figurative works by Claire Curneen, Jin Eui Kim, Leah Jensen, Kate Haywood and Halima Cassell.

### **3.2.2 Glass**

c. 1,300 items

The core of the glass collection is the outstanding and comprehensive collection of 220 18th century English drinking glasses bequeathed by David Lloyd Roberts. This group is complemented by 17th and 18th century European glass also from Leicester Collier in 1917 which features a 17th century German goblet diamond-engraved with St. Francis. 264 pieces of 19th century English glass were bequeathed by Professor Frank Edward Tylecote. The 19th and 20th century purchases include a peacock vase by Tiffany and an important rare documentary group of Arts and Crafts glass by James Powell & Sons of Whitefriars dating from the 1880s and 1890s. The collection also includes 19th century mould-blown and press-moulded table glass and ornaments, mostly from Manchester, which was an important glass-making centre in the late 19th century.

The 20th century collection includes pieces by Monart, Whitefriars, Webb Corbett, and Stevens and Williams acquired during the 1930s as part of Lawrence Hayward's Industrial Art Collection scheme. The latter includes an outstanding group of designs by Keith Murray. As with ceramics there is dual focus on both handmade and machine-made products. Acquisitions in the late twentieth century include pieces dating from the 1930s to the 1980s, such as a firebird lamp by René Lalique; an extremely rare enamelled vase from 1947 by the Czech designer, Stanislav Libensky; Italian, Swedish, Finish and Danish glass and British glass by firms such as Chance, Ravenhead, Sherdley and Whitefriars, as well as individual makers. Since 2010, acquisitions have focused on contemporary

studio glass with acquisitions from Suresh Dutt and Ayako Tani and on enriching the collection of 19th century Manchester glass, via a gift locally made pieces from Peter Beebe.

### **3.2.3 Metalwork**

c. 2,000 items

The metalwork collection dates from the 1350's to the present day and includes important pre-Restoration silver-gilt vessels such as the Waterbeach Cup (1557-58), and the Mostyn Flagon (1601-2) The collection is dominated by 17th and 18th century tableware and the most important group was acquired from Mr. and Mrs. Assheton Bennett who collected English domestic silver (398 objects).

Most of the 350 makers are English, but there are some Scottish and Irish pieces, notably an important gold teapot by the Scot James Ker of 1736-37. Huguenot silversmiths are well represented with the collection, with work by Peter Archambo, Paul de Lamerie, Anne Tanqueray, and David Willaume. The 18th century and 19th century collections include pieces such as candlesticks designed by Robert Adam (1767), a silver and glass cruet set by Daniel Pontifex (1791-92), a double salt by the French silversmith, Jean-Baptiste-Claude Odier (1809-15), and works by Barnards, Digby Smith and Benjamin Scott, and Elkington & Co.

The collection includes a notable group of English 18th and early 19th century enamels (493 objects) bequeathed by Harold Raby. They mostly originate from South Staffordshire in the late 18th century but include several rare early pieces made at Battersea during the 1760s. The metalwork collection also includes two important Chinese cloisonné enamels dating from the Ming dynasty which were bequeathed by Sir William Boyd Dawkins in 1920.

The modern collection contains significant late 19th and 20th century metalwork designers including Christopher Dresser, W.A.S. Benson, Archibald Knox, F. Newland Smith and Leslie Durbin. Makes include Liberty, Tiffany, and the Keswick School of Industrial Art. Recent collecting has focused on craft makers like Junko Mori, Takahiro Yede, Claire Malet and Kim Buck.

### **3.2.4 Furniture and lighting**

560 items

This is a diverse group of seating, lighting, tables, and sideboards collected since 1908 by the gallery. The collection dates from the sixteenth century to the present day and reflects a variety of organisational and sector-wide influences that has shaped the collection. The diverse collection includes a pair of ornate Boule pedestals (1700-1725); wooden panelling designed by the nineteenth century architect George Frederick Bodley, acquired to commemorate the untimely death of Stuart Platts, (Assistant Keeper, Heaton Hall) and Joe Colombo's functionalist 'Combi Center' (c.1963). The collection incorporates art, craft and industrial design and in general can be grouped into five broad groups:

- period eighteenth and nineteenth century country house furniture collected for display at Heaton Hall
- period domestic sixteenth to nineteenth century furniture collected for Wythenshawe Hall
- key pieces of historic furniture design for display in the gallery spaces such as the Arts and Crafts escritoire by William Burges and the baroque seventeenth century parade chairs
- the work of nineteenth and twentieth century Manchester makers, James Lamb, Edgar Wood and James Sellers

- important examples of twentieth and twentieth-first century craft and design such as the Giraffe Cabinet by the Omega Workshop (1915-1916), the Campana brothers' Favela Chair (2003) and Shiro Kurumata's Cabinet (1970).

### **3.2.5 Arms and Armour**

450 items

Earl Egerton of Tatton's arms and armour collection, bequeathed in 1910, is rated by specialists as one of the most important in the country. It includes 253 objects: 89 swords, 76 daggers, 14 muskets, 10 shields and 9 axes. 143 pieces are from the Indian subcontinent with the remainder from Japan, Iran and selected pieces from Malaysia and Borneo. The other important collection in this area is the 120 decorative Japanese sword guards, or tsuba, which were transferred from the Ancoats Art Museum in 1918.

### **3.2.6 'Bygones'**

c. 2,000 items

A large section of the decorative arts collection has traditionally come under the now archaic heading of 'bygones'. A combination of social history and folk art, it includes a wide range of domestic everyday objects and handicrafts, primarily of the 18th and 19th centuries, and was given to Manchester by collector Mary Hope Greg in phases over a twenty-year period between the wars. Intended as an illustration of the role of creativity in everyday life, the collection is broad in scope, and evades easy categorisation. However, it has previously been at least partially organised into generic ethnographic subcategories which loosely include: lighting and firemaking equipment; keys, locks and hinges; cutlery and cooking utensils; basketwork, strawcraft and papercraft; souvenirs, gems and medals; archaeological finds; charms and ornaments; seals and writing implements; sewing and needlework equipment; pipes, snuff and tobacco boxes; weights and measures; dolls and dolls' houses; toys and games; miniatures and ornaments; household textiles, lace and embroideries.

Also included under the bygones heading is Thomas Tylston Greg's collection of Dutch 18th century brass tobacco boxes, 47 items celebrating the exploits of Frederick, King of Prussia. A large collection of coins (2081 objects) is now on long term loan to the Manchester Museum. A group of watches and scientific instruments (104 objects), including the Francis Buckley gift of 1929, completes this section of the collection.

### **3.2.7 Jades and Hardstones**

200 items

John Edward Yates bequest of 1934 was the source of the collection of Chinese jades and hardstones. The collection dates from the 17th to early 20th century, and include rose quartz, rose crystal, pink coral and lapis lazuli as well as several types of jade of the highest calibre in terms of materials and craftsmanship. This collection also includes a rare jade and silver bowl and stand designed by Henrik Wigstrom for Carl Faberge.

### **3.2.8 Antiquities**

370 items

The Galleries' antiquities collections contain important Egyptian and Greek material, (the latter already referenced in ceramic section) as well as archaeology and artefacts relating to the history of

Manchester. Local finds include Saxon coins from the Cuerdale and Hexham hoards (on loan to the Manchester Museum); fragments of Roman stone, pottery and bronze, including a bronze statuette of Jupiter Stator from the Ellesmere bequest; and a Viking brooch. The Egyptian collections (128 objects) were mainly formed from the John Yates bequest of 1934 and consist of bronzes; vessels made of alabaster, granite, porphyry, schist and earthenware, dating from the Pre-Dynastic to Roman period; and a collection of ushabti, beads and scarabs.

### **3.3 Dress**

The Designated dress collection is extensive, covering all aspects of the history of dress, dress care and dress making, as well as aids to the appearance, ranging in date from around 1600 to the present day. Numbers are particularly hard to calculate in this area of the collection as many items may be accessioned under one number (for example the Meredith button collection of over 100,000 buttons). In addition, there are probably over 1000 unaccessioned items used for study and handling collections.

#### **3.3.1 Clothing and Fashion**

c. 15,000 items

Although Manchester Art Gallery had accumulated a collection of clothing and textiles before the Second World War, including the collection of Mary Greg, it was the purchase of the Cunnington Collection in 1947 which resulted in the foundation of the Gallery of [English] Costume, as the first specific costume museum in the UK, and also fostered the subsequent development of the costume collection. The collection was remarkable in the range of its 19th century women's dress and related material and the purchase included the Cunningtons' research library of fashion plates, magazines and shop catalogues, forming the basis of our excellent specialist library and archive.

The Gallery's collecting policy, established by the first curator, Anne Buck during the later 1940s, was socially very broad, but with a specific remit to collect clothes worn in Britain. Within these parameters, there was a clear bias towards what was significant and widely worn, rather than examples of the highest quality design or manufacture, even though the costume collection was positioned in an art gallery context. Highstreet retail and home dressmaking were substantially collected as well as occupational dress.

The source of acquisitions since 1947 has been predominantly through a multitude of small donations and bequests, many from local residents. From the 1950s to the 1990s, active collecting concentrated on areas which complemented rather than duplicated the Cunnington Collection, including early 17th century items; post-1930 material; menswear; occupational clothes; 'streetwear' and designer outfits.

There have been a few significant large-scale donations, such as the Cotton Board collection of catwalk pieces which were given during the 1950s. There were also focused purchases such as the vast Meredith button collection in 2008; and there were negotiated inheritance-in-lieu items such as the Filmer collection of some sixty 17th century pieces in 2004.

In more recent years the clothes of major British and European designers have been actively collected in response to requests from students, researchers and our users at large. Although this has skewed the long-established tradition of only collecting 'middling' and working dress, it has also necessarily broadened the whole collection to embed within it the cutting-edge design which has influenced the whole of the fashion industry. This evolution was consolidated by a substantial NHLF grant, awarded in 2015, to enable the acquisition of a capsule, sample-selection of some 50 major

couture pieces, ranging from Charles Frederick Worth, through Poiret, Schiaparelli, Balenciaga and Dior, to YSL, Lacroix, McQueen and Galliano.

### **3.3.2 Objects of Personal Use and Adornment**

c. 4,000 items

The OPUA collection includes 4,000 items, not all of which are worn but are crucial for social interaction and the construction of a personal appearance, including accessories to dress such as jewellery, hair accessories, spectacles, purses and bags, belts, shoe buckles, fans, umbrellas and canes. The Meredith button collection, acquired in 2008, includes over 100,000 buttons. It also includes equipment for dress and household use, including sewing, knitting and darning implements, clothing-related equipment such as glove stretchers and shoe horns, goffering irons and slickstones, and aids to appearance such as dressing table, cosmetic, vanity and manicure sets, perfume bottles and hair curlers.

### **3.3.3 Textiles**

c. 2,500 items

Flat textiles in the collection come from four main sources. Collector Mary Greg gave a substantial group of mainly British and European 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century domestic textiles and dress fragments including tea towels and household cloths, embroidered pictures and samplers, domestic patchwork and lace, some of which dates back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This was significantly expanded by the addition of the Lewis F Day collection of world textiles, a study collection including flat textiles, dress fragments and full garments primarily from East and South Asia, Eastern Europe and North Africa. During the 1930s a large collection of contemporary dress fabrics was amassed primarily from Manchester-based cotton manufacturers, alongside furnishing fabrics from progressive design companies across Britain and Ireland as part of the Industrial Art Collection. These are complemented by a small group of West African fabrics collected by 'Africa merchant' Charles Beving in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and a large archive of fabrics made at Manchester-based Bentinck Mill for export to West Africa during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **3.3.4 Dolls and dolls' clothing**

c. 400 items

The doll collection originally formed part of a wider collection of childhood objects given by Mary Greg during the 1920s and 30s, but was later transferred to the Gallery of Costume as a resource for the study of dress. It includes 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century wooden dolls through 19<sup>th</sup> century composite, wax and porcelain dolls, mostly female but with a very small number of male dolls. There is a distinct category of occupational dolls from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century including fishwife, washerwoman, and pedlar dolls, the latter with trays of miniature household goods for sale.

## **3.4 Rutherston Loan Scheme and Corporate Members Loan Scheme Collections**

In addition to the accessioned collection, the gallery holds a collection of unaccessioned works which were acquired for the Rutherston Loan Scheme which operated in various forms between 1928 and 1996, and for the Patrons Loan Scheme which subsequently became known as the Corporate Members Loan Scheme, which operated between 1996 and 2018. Some of this material has been accessioned into the main collection but much remains unaccessioned.

## 4 Themes and priorities for future collecting

Rather than seeking first and foremost to grow the collection through the acquisition of more work, we will focus primarily on better understanding the collection we already hold. We want to uncover the connections between objects in the collection, across artform, media, place and time.

The urgent decolonising work will include deconstructing notions of hierarchy, value and outdated connoisseurship. This affects not just historic collections but will inform how we collect in future. We want to reflect on how and why we collect? What do our collections do? What are they for? How do they operate in the world? And in this context, how will they evolve in future? We want to unpick what we mean by international. In our globalised world, artists can live transnational lives. The country where they were born might be the place in which they have spent least time, working in many different countries and cultures. Artists in the collection used to be categorised as either British or Foreign, but this distinction is no longer helpful. We want to ask who gets to be called British and why? We aspire to be international in our outlook to increase the diversity and richness of the collection, whilst moving away from othering to inclusivity, recognising and celebrating difference. We will continue to develop partnerships with other organisations like Iniva and the Decolonising Arts Institute, University of the Arts London and their Decolonising Collections research and their 20/20 Commission to Collection project.

When we do collect, acquisitions will speak to the historic collections, extending, deepening or challenging narratives that emerge from them, particularly in relation contemporary social themes and issues. Above all we want the collection to be more representative of the populations we serve. Issues of identities and representation are fundamental to developing the collection so that it is more inclusive and more people can find themselves in the collection.

The focus for new acquisitions will be to address inequalities including those around gender, race and sexuality. We will explore what it means to decolonise the collection to inform how we deal with various questions of identity and representation in future collection. All acquisitions should support our educational and health programmes and have social impact and promote the role of art in shaping social change. This resonates with our civic function, developing new forms of education and ways of living through art and championing the role that culture plays in shaping society.

We will also continue to collect works which deepen and enhance our understanding of our existing collection where a very strong case can be made to acquire the material.

Our priorities for collecting over the next 4 years are:

- Work from British artists, makers and designers of colour following the Black Artists and Modernism audit which identified the limited number of artworks in the collection made by British artists of African and/or Asian descent.
- Increasing the number of women artists, makers and designers in the collection and those who identify as LGBTQI+.
- As an institution which has been at the heart of the cultural life of Manchester for almost 200 years, we will focus on art and design which connects to our city, its history and future, and the role of artists in our city.

## 5 Themes and priorities for collection review and disposal

Manchester Art Gallery recognises that the principle on which priorities for rationalisation and disposal are determined will be through a formal review process that identifies parts of the collection which are included and excluded from the review. The outcome of the review and any subsequent rationalisation will not reduce the quality or significance of the collection and will result in a more useable, well managed collection.

The procedures used will meet professional standards. The process will be documented, open and transparent. There will be clear communication with key stakeholders about the outcomes and the process.

During the lifetime of this policy, the main strands of Collection Review will support our key business priorities. The areas for review, in priority order, are:

- Furniture and other material which was either purchased or donated with the intention of being displayed in a historic house setting, including accessioned and unaccessioned material. As Heaton Hall and Wythenshawe Hall no longer operate as branch sites and responsibility for these buildings passed back to wider Manchester City Council control, the purpose and benefit of retaining material formally used to dress these buildings has been called into question. Most of this material was decanted from Wythenshawe Hall in 2012 and Heaton Hall in 2015 and is currently in temporary off-site storage. The review will also incorporate a small amount of furniture, textiles and Fine Art currently still in situ at Heaton Hall which was not removed during the main decant.
- Accessioned and unaccessioned furniture with a Town Hall provenance which may sit more appropriately within the Town Hall collection and have greater public benefit as part of the Our Town Hall project.
- Accessioned collections and archive currently held at Platt Hall to determine what will remain at the Hall in the longer term and what will be relocated to new storage at Queens Park. We will identify the range and scope of the collections currently held, the intrinsic relationships between different groups of material, and the relevance and potential of this material to Platt's future development.
- Wider collections with a historic or content-based association with Platt Hall and/or relevance to the Hall's development. This includes the Mary Greg Collection and associated material, items with a local history relevance or direct connection to the history of the Hall, and items that connect with the themes of Platt's redevelopment as it evolves.
- Unaccessioned material including garments, textiles and accessories, acquired for study or handling purposes, as set dressing for displays, and items made through creative and community projects that have not been accessioned.
- Collections currently stored at Queens Park Conservation Studios, typically with minimal documentation, are currently underused and in many cases need storage improvements. This accessioned and unaccessioned material includes works which were part of the Rutherford Loan Scheme and Patrons Loan Scheme, posters, graphic print and other reproductions, local history material, the Simpson Study Collection, other miscellaneous material of uncertain provenance.

## 6 Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal

Manchester Art Gallery recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.

### 6.1 Collecting Policies of Other Museums

Manchester Art Gallery will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas and will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

Specific reference is made to the following museums:

- The Whitworth
- Walker Art Gallery
- Tate Liverpool

On occasion Manchester Art Gallery will enter into joint acquisition agreements with other institutions. These will be covered by formal agreements, and where necessary, approved by the relevant funding bodies.

### 6.2 Archival holdings

Manchester Art Gallery holds a collection of archival material, including documents, photographs and printed ephemera which relate to the collection. Decisions about the development and management will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom, third edition, 2002.

### 6.3 Acquisition

Acquisitions, including those promised as gifts for future acquisition, are proposed, assessed and approved at quarterly Acquisitions and Disposals Meetings, subject to final approval by the Director. Details of new acquisitions valued at more than £50,000 are reported to the Art Galleries Committee for information.

Manchester Art Gallery will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws.

In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention of the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, Manchester Art Gallery will reject any items which have been illicitly traded. The Art Galleries Committee will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.

All decisions regarding acquisitions will take into account the needs of the collection; the condition of the work and the costs of conserving and storing the work; the potential for display; and that any purchase has been negotiated to represent the best possible price to Manchester Art Gallery. No work will be acquired which puts other works in the collection at risk. Collection management procedures for acquisitions are detailed in the Manchester Art Gallery's Collection Management Procedures Manual.



Manchester Art Gallery will make every effort not to acquire material with conditions attached. Where this cannot be avoided, Manchester Art Gallery will consider whether the conditions can be accepted and if so, ensure the conditions are documented in the collection management system so that they are fulfilled.

When Manchester Art Gallery acquires works of art from contemporary artists it will seek information from the artist on any specific display, technical, storage or conservation requirements. This information will be recorded in the collection management system to support future display planning.

Manchester Art Gallery recognises that by their inherent nature some objects may have a time limited lifespan. This will be considered at the point of acquisition taking into account the future display potential and whether the deterioration or degradation of materials is acknowledged by the artist as being acceptable. We will assess this type of material from the point of view of storage, migration, emulation, reinterpretation or reconstruction and take the most appropriate route. We will also discuss this with the artist prior to acquisition. We will acquire this type of material if the Director and Acquisitions and Disposals panel consider a work so important that a high risk of deterioration is acceptable. Where parts can be replaced without impacting on the authenticity of the work, Manchester Art Gallery will take steps to ensure that such parts are replaceable either by a part of a similar nature or equivalent. Where an object is at high risk of deterioration or loss of functionality the significant of the work will be documented, and a disposals plan recorded where appropriate.

#### **6.4 Human remains**

Manchester Art Gallery does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains.

#### **6.5 Biological and geological material**

So far as biological material and geological material is concerned, Manchester Art Gallery will not acquire by direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold, or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

#### **6.6 Archaeological material**

Manchester Art Gallery will not acquire any archaeological material.

#### **6.7 Exceptions**

Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because Manchester Art Gallery is:

Acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin

Acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin

In these cases, Manchester Art Gallery will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority. Manchester Art Gallery will document when these exceptions occur.

## 6.8 Spoliation

Manchester Art Gallery will use the statement of principles: 'Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period', issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

The Art Galleries Committee, acting on the advice of Manchester Art Gallery's professional staff may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by the DCMS in 2005), objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 16.1-5 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

## 6.9 Disposals Procedures

All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal and in full compliance with the Museums Association Disposal's Toolkit (updated 2014). Disposals procedures are outlined in Section 7 of Manchester Art Gallery's Collection Management Procedures Manual.

The Art Galleries Committee will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be considered.

When the disposal of a museum object is being considered, Manchester Art Gallery will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if an item is disposed of by sale.

When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons, the procedure outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal will be by gift, sale or as a last resort – destruction.

The decision to dispose of material from the collection will be taken by the Art Galleries Committee only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Key factors, including public benefit, the implications for the museum's collection and collections held by museums or other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.

A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collection or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the Art Galleries Committee, acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.

Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it in the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.

If the material is not acquired by any Accredited museum to which it is was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, an

announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites.

The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, Manchester Art Gallery may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.

In compliance with the Greater Manchester Act 1981 any monies received by Manchester Art Gallery will be transferred to the Manchester Art Gallery's Art Fund and will only be used to fund new acquisitions. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of these items will be applied in the same way. (this is slightly different to the standard wording to take account of our unique circumstances)

Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangement made for the preservation and /or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.

The museum will not dispose of items by exchange.

If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the Art Galleries Committee may decide to destroy it.

It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common specimens which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.

Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has associated high health and safety risks or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.

Where necessary, specialist advice will be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.

The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, e.g. the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.

Manchester Art Gallery does not normally accept unsolicited gifts. Objects deposited anonymously will be retained for a period of 3 months to allow for collection, after which we reserve the right to dispose of the objects as we see fit.

## Greater Manchester Act 1981

**149.**—(1) In this section “the art gallery” means the Manchester Central Art Gallery being the land and building described in Schedule 2 to the Manchester Corporation Act 1882, and the land and building adjacent thereto known as the Athenaeum Annexe. Manchester Central Art Gallery. 1882 c. cciii.

(2) The art gallery and all works or other objects of art therein shall be held upon trust by the Manchester council for the benefit of the citizens of Manchester and shall at all times be kept in fit and proper order.

(3) Notwithstanding anything in subsection (2) above, the Manchester council may from time to time sell or exchange any works or other objects of art for the time being acquired by them for the art gallery but the money arising from any such sale shall be applied in the purchase of other works or other objects of art and for no other purpose and any such works or objects received in exchange shall take the place for all purposes of the works or objects given in exchange:

Provided that where any work or object has become vested in the Manchester council by virtue of a gift or bequest—

- (a) the Manchester council shall, if reasonably practicable, consult with the donor or with the personal representatives or trustees of the donor before exercising the powers of this subsection; and
- (b) the powers conferred by this subsection shall not, during a period of twenty-one years commencing on the date on which it became vested, be exercisable as respects that work or object in any manner inconsistent with any condition attached to the gift or bequest, except with the consent of the donor or the personal representatives or trustees of the donor.

(4) The Manchester council may from time to time accept by way of gift or bequest any works or other objects of art which they consider to be desirable acquisitions and all such works or objects shall belong to and form part of the art gallery.

(5) The Manchester council shall continue to administer the fund established under section 14 of the Manchester Corporation Act 1882 and they shall devote the same at their discretion to the purchase of works or other objects of art to be held in trust for the benefit of the citizens of Manchester and all such works or objects shall belong to and form part of the art gallery.