

IMI

What's New? Collecting for Manchester

Large print guide
Gallery 11

What's New? Collecting for Manchester

This new display explores the different ways artworks enter the collection and showcases many new works which haven't yet been on show. Acting as a companion to What is Manchester Art Gallery? in Gallery 3 which examines how the collection was originally formed, this display will look at how we collect today.

The collection is owned by the people of Manchester. In our 200th anniversary year, we are reflecting on how the collection has been formed, how we can best use it and how it might grow in the future. Our collection development policy, available to read on our website, outlines our current collecting priorities and is regularly updated. These are:

- to collect artwork which relates to Manchester or our existing collections
- to focus on artists under-represented in our collection including women, LGBTQIA+ and black and Asian artists.

Decisions are currently taken by the Acquisitions and Disposals committee comprising members of gallery staff but we are exploring how we might include other people in the process. We do not accept everything we are offered. Applications are assessed on whether they meet our collecting priorities, quality, conservation and storage needs, potential for learning and engagement work and an artwork's ability to tell new stories and develop new connections with our communities.

Some artworks on display reflect or respond to challenging contemporary issues, such as conflict and displacement. These are marked with a red dot on the label, so that you can choose whether or not to engage with these works.

Panel 2

Whilst the gallery collects with intention, we also take advantage of opportunities which arise. We benefit from the generosity of gifts and bequests to the collection – this includes from individual patrons, artists and artists' estates. When we purchase artworks, we rely on external sources of funding and raise money through The Friends and Patrons of Manchester Art Gallery and trusts and foundations like the Art Fund. We also take part in specific acquisition schemes with the Contemporary Art Society and the Manchester Contemporary Art Fund. We also once mounted a crowdfunding campaign.

It is difficult for the gallery to raise enough money to buy historic artworks due to their large price tags but we do receive works from the Acceptance in Lieu and Cultural Gifts Scheme which enables taxpayers to transfer important works of art into public ownership as part of their inheritance tax bill.

When an artwork comes into the collection, it is catalogued and given an identifying number. This is the year that the work entered the collection, followed by a number which indicates what number acquisition it is of that year. So 2023.13 means that it was the 13th work to be accessioned in 2023. You will see this on all collection labels.

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Bestie 2014

Joana Vasconcelos 1971-

Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro acrylic painted faience, Azores
crocheted lace

Joana Vasconcelos is a Portuguese artist who reappropriates domestic objects and artisanal techniques associated with female labour. Bestie is a playful take on equestrian statues. Using a ceramic horse's head from the factory of 19th century Portuguese artist Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro (1846-1905), Vasconcelos covers it in crochet from the Azores. Does this covering act as protection or imprisonment of the object? The title is a play on the word beast and relates to George Best, the celebrated Manchester United footballer. Vasconcelos plays with contrasts of hand-crafted/industrial, hard/soft, public/domestic, tradition/modernity and feminine/masculine.

Purchased with a grant from the V&A Purchase Fund with generous assistance from Jack Livingstone and Ken Johnson 2015.4

We acquired this work following Vasconcelos' major solo exhibition at the gallery in 2014. At the time our collection development priorities were contemporaneity, crossing boundaries (blurring the boundaries between fine art and craft) and celebrating Manchester (referencing Manchester as a textile city). We were the first UK museum to acquire a work by Vasconcelos.

Jar (Dandelions, after DH Lawrence) 2021

Simon Bayliss 1984-

Terracotta, coloured slips, oxides, clear and honey glaze

Simon Bayliss references traditional ceramic and studio pottery practices (which links to the gallery's own Craft & Design collection). He employs contemporary imagery on these traditional ceramic forms, drawing on issues such as sexuality to subvert or queer the tradition. The imagery here is based on a DH Lawrence watercolour, Dandelions, which features a man urinating on a patch of dandelions. Bayliss explains "it's an odd painting with an odd title – erotic and voyeuristic, and also something that speaks of freedom and connection to nature. I particularly like the shadow on the wall. It's a motif that I use partly as a way to quietly queer the tradition of slipware and studio pottery."

Purchased by The Manchester Contemporary Art Fund
2022.89

The annual grant from The Manchester Contemporary Art Fund provides funding at a time of fierce competition for grants and other sources of support. It is a rare opportunity to bring contemporary work into the collection and support the arts ecology of the city.

With thanks to Christian Anderton & Sarah Maskell, Lisa Ashurst, Jo & Tom Bloxham, Netanya Clixby, James & Katie Eden, Mark Garner, Mark & Toni Hawthorn, Thom Hetherington & Sophie Helm, Alison Loveday, David Blake & Lucy Noone Blake, Jeremy & Jane Roberts, Howard Ratcliffe & Melissa Ratcliffe, Jon Sharples and Martyn & Valerie Torevell.

One Unforgiving Minute 1985

Edward Allington 1951-2017

Wood, Steel, Plastic Vases – Top Part Steel, Polystyrene, Plaster, painted vases

Edward Allington made an important contribution to British sculpture since the 1980s. This gravity defying sculpture engages with important themes in Allington's work – classicism, beauty, kitsch and reproduction. He said "If someone asked me what my work was about ... I'd say it was about memory. That is why I find the Classical, as it is found in the modern world, fascinating... It keeps being remembered and copied, in the same way that people reiterate stories and develop collective memories – all of which are warped versions of some original occurrence. This is precisely what Classicism is. Strange ideas are reproduced endlessly in it and people speculate on what they mean: it is a folk story retold and retold."

Gift of the estate of Edward Allington, presented by the
Contemporary Art Society, 2020 2022.78

After Allington died, his estate placed important works in museums to ensure the artist's work was cared for and to safeguard his legacy. Allington was a research fellow in sculpture at Manchester Metropolitan University (1993-96) so has an important connection to Manchester and artists in our city.

Winifred, Nancy and Eric, children of Mrs. James Brown
1927

James Durden 1878-1964

Oil on canvas

James Durden was born in Manchester, studied at Manchester School of Art and later made his home in Keswick. He specialised in painting society portraits. This work was painted at Millbeck, near Keswick and depicts the three children of Katharine Brown whose husband James had died in 1920. The two girls, Winifred and Nancy, sit in chairs whilst Eric plays cards on the floor. The interior includes blue and white ceramics, prints, a Japanese screen and a rug, demonstrating the fashions and tastes of the middle classes in the 1920s. The painting was exhibited at the Royal Academy, London in 1928.

Gift of Mr and Mrs Alan Mathewson 2016.19

This painting was passed down the family. Sadly Winifred and Eric died prematurely, Winifred from cancer in 1959 and Eric killed in action at Arnhem in 1944. So it went to Nancy and then her son Alan and his wife Christine, who generously donated it to the gallery. It joins another Durden painting, Summer in Cumberland, one of the most popular works in the collection.

Above desk case:
Marker V 2019
Louise Giovanelli 1993-
Oil on canvas

Louise Giovanelli isolates elements from historical painting and modern imagery, removing them from their origin and repeating and restating them throughout a sequence of paintings. Marker V is one of seven paintings of the same subject. It references an iconic photograph of Elizabeth Taylor from 1963 when she was cast to play Cleopatra. Giovanelli's inclusion of Taylor's scar (at the time often blurred out in publicity shots), a pink line through the neck and refusal to show the full face, references the practice of marking up photographic images to crop them and 're-touch' imagery to remove 'imperfections'.

Gift of Martyn and Valerie Torevell 2022.80

Through their relationship with the Patrons of Manchester Art Gallery, Martyn and Valerie Torevell have supported artists that live or work in the city, allowing them to focus on developing their practice and produce new work. They have kindly supported the purchase of a number of new artworks by artists that are based in Manchester.

In desk cases left to right:
Profile Solid 383.078 1975
Linda Stein 1943-
Acrylic on paper

Growing up in 1960s America, Linda Stein was acutely aware of the stigma attached to being gay and she developed intense feelings of shame and guilt. In the early works from her Profiles series, Stein felt the need to avert the gaze of her own drawings and paintings staring critically back at her. She said “At the time, I was drawing and painting frontal faces. In diary notations, I wrote ‘some of these faces I am drawing look back at me with disdain, even disgust. I need to make sure they can’t see me. I have to leave the eyes out altogether and begin just below the eyes’.”

Over the last five decades Stein’s work has addressed issues of persecution and protection, focussing on the oppression of the ‘other’ through the lens of anti-bullying and social justice.

Raymond J Learsy Gift 2022.82

A selection of Linda Stein’s works were generously donated by American art collector Raymond Learsy, through Have Art: Will Travel! (HAWT) a non-profit, collaborative arts organisation founded in 1972, which delivers programmes that foster social change, equality and diversity.

Marker 213 and Marker 210 2019

Nina Chua 1980-

Marker pen on paper

In her meditative drawings, Nina Chua uses a ruler and pen to repeatedly inscribe lines of colour onto the surface of the paper. She intentionally limits gestures to their most fundamental form, leaving line, colour and support to assume a pivotal role. The drawings forge a symbiotic relationship between image and process and are free of any narrative.

Purchased by The Manchester Contemporary Art Fund 2021.3 and 2021.4

The gallery is gifted an annual sum to acquire artworks from The Manchester Contemporary Art Fair. The fund is supported by local businesspeople who are passionate about artists, their city and its cultural heritage.

With thanks to Christian Anderton; James & Katie Eden; Pablo Flack & David Waddington; Mark Garner; Mark Hawthorn; Thom Hetherington & Sophie Helm; Alison Loveday; Jeremy & Jane Roberts; Howard Ratcliffe & Melissa Ratcliffe; Andrew Spinoza; Martyn & Val Torevell

The Goatherd about 1640-83

Nicholaes Berchem 1620-83

Oil on canvas

Nicholaes Berchem was a highly regarded Dutch painter of Italianate landscapes. In spite of the golden light, weather and mountainous landscape depicted, there is no evidence that he ever visited Italy. The goatherd in the foreground, which provides the subject, feels almost incidental. The focus is the

idealised landscape in the background with its blue hazy view of mountains and wide flowing river.

Accepted by HM Government in Lieu of Inheritance Tax and allocated to Manchester Art Gallery 2020.61

Historic paintings and other outstanding artworks from private collections enter public collections through the Acceptance in Lieu of tax scheme (AIL). The scheme enables taxpayers to transfer significant artworks to museums and galleries to off-set inheritance tax. It was allocated to the gallery due to our significant holdings of Dutch art and because the painting was once owned by Rev. John Clowes (1777-1846), Fellow of the Collegiate Church at Manchester, of Broughton Hall, Lancashire. Other AIL donations have included paintings by Frank Auerbach (from Lucian Freud's estate) and Albert Irvin.

Beauty and the Beast 1863-5

Arthur Hughes 1832-1915

Oil on canvas

Arthur Hughes, an associate of Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, loved fairy tales as an antidote to Victorian materialism. The subject is the 18th century enchanted story La Belle et La Bête. Beauty was granted a week of freedom from the Beast's castle to spend with her cherished father. On waking, she found a chest of exquisite gowns, a gift from the Beast. She choose the plainest one so she could give the others to her sisters but the chest disappeared. After the Beast insisted that she keep them herself, and the chest reappeared. Hughes emphasises the importance of humility and a lack of vanity but also celebrates childlike innocence and purity.

Long term loan from Estelle Price LI2022.39.1

The gallery was recently approached out of the blue and offered this painting on long term loan prior to it being bequeathed to us in the owner's will. Sometimes people do

kindly leave us their art and we use our collection development criteria to decide what we will accept. We immediately agreed to this offer as the work is of exceptional quality and strongly relates to our collection – we have a number of works by Hughes, including Ophelia.

Miss Monter-Descendre 2016

Boris Nzebo 1979-

Acrylic and posca pen on canvas

Boris Nzebo explores how people maintain their identity whilst negotiating urban life. He portrays the back of a woman's head layered on top of a bustling street scene in Douala, Cameroon's economic and cultural capital. Ever since his first job painting shop signs for local hairdressers to entice customers, Nzebo has been fascinated by African hairstyles. Each style expresses a fashion choice, a sense of identity and a social status. Nzebo finds his models at a local crossroads busy with both sex workers and hair salons. It is a neighbourhood torn between disillusionment (its nickname is 'the crossroads of broken dreams') and the pursuit of official respectability (its real name is 'the Nelson Mandela intersection'). Nzebo questions society's moral judgements regarding different types of commerce.

Purchased with the support of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and the Jack and Janice Livingstone Trust 2022.79

Following Nzebo's 2015 solo exhibition here, we looked to buy a new a work for the collection. With the generosity of our patrons, the artist's commercial gallery and some remaining money from a Paul Hamlyn grant, we were able to purchase this painting.

To Dance like your Dad 2009
Hetain Patel 1980-
Film: 6 minutes

Hetain Patel uses language and physical movement to challenge assumptions about identity. This film shows Patel's father speaking about his work in his coach building factory in Bolton. Patel then restaged it, performing his father's words, accent, mannerisms and movements in an empty studio. Patel is a skilled mimic and physical performer, but this work goes beyond mere imitation. It speaks of family relationships and expectations, different generational opportunities, inheritance, work and labour, the loss of industry and skills and father/son relationships.

Presented by the Contemporary Art Society with the support of Tara Lal and Mortimer Chatterjee 2023.1

Every four years, the Contemporary Art Society buys its member museums a work of fine art and a work of craft. We chose Patel's work as it has strong local relevance and connection to the histories and lives of people in Greater Manchester.

Albert Square, Manchester (after Valette) 2015
Emily Allchurch 1974-
Transparency on LED lightbox

Emily Allchurch was inspired by the gallery's painting of Albert Square 1910 by French Impressionist Adolphe Valette. Valette lived in Manchester for many years and painted atmospheric views of the conurbation. He captured the essence of the early 20th century city in transition from an Edwardian era to a modern metropolis. Allchurch took hundreds of photographs in Albert Square and digitally collaged them together to re-create

Valette's cityscape. She reveals Manchester as the 21st century multi-cultural city it is today, resonant with echoes of its historic past.

Funded through Art Happens, the Art Fund's crowd-funding platform 2015.5

With the support of the Art Fund's crowdfunding scheme Art Happens, we mounted a campaign in which subscribers received rewards for their donations. Thanks to our supporters and the help of the Art Fund to produce the rewards and help publicise it, we met our target and commissioned Allchurch to make this work for the collection.

Top:

Self Portrait Study c.1912

Adolphe Valette 1876-1942

Oil on canvas

Adolphe Valette was born in St. Etienne, France. On winning a travel scholarship, he chose to follow in the footsteps of Degas and Monet and come to England. Initially in London, Valette moved to Manchester and enrolled in the Municipal School of Art in 1905, becoming Art Master there in 1906 – a post he held until 1920. From 1908 to 1913 Valette produced the paintings which have made him famous locally. He applied his knowledge of Impressionist painting techniques to the fog and drizzle of industrial Manchester. This unfinished self-portrait, painted in his 30s, shows Valette as a dapper, intense young man with a fashionable waxed moustache. Dramatically lit from behind, it conveys the image of a romantic artist.

Purchased with assistance from The Friends of Manchester City Galleries 2000.22

The Friends of Manchester Art Gallery have supported the purchase of numerous important works of art, craft and design.

Their annual membership is an important source of funding for the gallery, supporting our programmes.

Bottom:

Cakebread Street (sunshine after rain) 1998

Liam Spencer 1964-

Oil on board

When Liam Spencer painted this, his studio was near Cakebread Street, a cul-de sac in Ardwick Green. From his 6th floor studio, Spencer was able to enjoy the changing Manchester weather, here sunshine after rain. The work is one of many of the same view which were painted over a number of years, at different times of the day and night, and in different weather conditions. Spencer was inspired by Adolphe Valette who created well-known Impressionist style paintings of Manchester in the early 20th century. You can see Valette's self-portrait above and more of his paintings in gallery 16 on this floor.

Purchased with financial assistance from the Friends of Manchester City Galleries 2002.1

The Friends of Manchester Art Gallery is an annual membership scheme, which helps to fund the work of the gallery in return for exclusive events and other benefits. You can find out more in the gallery shop.

Head of Desmond Haughton 1991

Nahem Shoa 1968-

Oil on board

This painting depicts Nahem Shoa's childhood friend, the artist Desmond Haughton. It was exhibited in his degree show at Manchester School of Art. Shoa painted the portrait from life in

Haughton's studio in Hulme, Manchester during 12 two-hour night-time sittings, after the college day ended. After finishing his degree, Shoa returned to London where he did one final sitting with Haughton to bring out more subtlety and presence from the portrait.

Gift of the artist 2022.72

Shoa has generously donated many of his portraits of black or dual heritage people to British museums and galleries to rebalance the lack of positive imagery of black Britons in their collections. He has a long term commitment to representing people of colour, striving to capture the unique skin colour that is individual to the sitter and not a racial stereotype. Shoa's goal is to paint black skin as intensely as Lucien Freud painted white skin.

Above desk case:

Top left to right: Case 872, Case 873 2016

Bottom left to right: Case 863 2015, Case 874 2016

Linda Stein 1943-

Wood, metal, fabric and mixed media

Linda Stein is an American feminist artist whose work focuses on themes of protection and otherness. These works are part of a series Displacement from Home. Stein was displaced from her own home for eight months following the terror attack in New York on 11th September 2001: "9/11 was a whole day of running and seeking safety and protection. My experience, though traumatic for me, seems inconsequential in comparison to the wider displacement of some 60 million other peoples around the world, including migrants, refugees, and internally displaced people currently fleeing discrimination and violence."

These works contain fragments and remnants which have been carefully and methodically re-contextualized into new surroundings: the safe home.

Raymond J Learsy Gift 2022.85, 86, 87 and 88

A selection of Linda Stein's works were generously donated by American art collector Raymond Learsy, through Have Art: Will Travel! (HAWT) a non-profit, collaborative arts organisation founded in 1972, which delivers programmes that foster social change, equality and diversity.

In desk case:

Thomas Frangenberg Bequest

Thomas Frangenberg (1958 - 2018) was both a historian of Renaissance art and a collector of conceptual art. From the kitchen to the landing, there wasn't a bare piece of wall in his small London flat. For over 30 years he collected contemporary art with a passion, focusing on conceptual artworks from mid 1970s to 2017 including the Young British Artists (YBAs), providing much needed support as they were starting out on their careers. He became friends with many artists, as interested in conversation with them as with buying their work. Using his academic salary carefully, he would pay for work in instalments until the debt had been paid off. He bought modestly but shrewdly and with integrity is still held in affection by those who knew him.

Donated by The Estate of Dr. Thomas Frangenberg through the Contemporary Art Society, 2018/19

In 2018 Manchester Art Gallery was gifted a large number of works from the Thomas Frangenberg Estate donated through the Contemporary Art Society. His collection was divided between the Tate, Wolfson College Cambridge and the

Contemporary Art Society who distributed the majority of the works to Leeds and Manchester.

Top row left to right:
List of Names 1992 Edition
Douglas Gordon 1966 -
Ink on A4 paper

2020.11

The back of someones head (Flight FR2966)
William Mackrell 1993 -
Black and white digital photographic print with etching detail

2020.17

The Kiss 2003
Rut Blees Luxemburg 1967 -
Photograph

2020.36

Middle row left to right:
Photographic Print
Anya Gallaccio 1963 -
Colour photographic print

2020.42

Postcards from the series 'Never Eat Shredded Wheat'.
Sold as part of a blind auction at RCA, London 1997.
Mariele Neudecker 1965 –

2020.38 and 2020.39

Untitled 1995
Gavin Turk 1967 –
C-type photographic print

2020.16

Curly gumstrip/ straight gumstrip/ 1997
Dean Hughes 1974 -

2020.7

Bottom row:

The pataphysical possibility of life in the mind of someone dead
George Melly 1926-2007
Ink on postcard

2020.37

Sea Fruit 2020

Jamie Holman 1973-
A series of 23 hand cast cockles in Victorian lead,
presented in a wall mounted case

This work commemorates the 2004 Morecambe Bay tragedy that took the lives of 23 Chinese workers. One cockle remains displaced from the group representing Dong Zin Wu who is still missing. The title is taken from a translation in a Chinese news article on the disaster - in translation the French name for seafood, fruit de mer, was used. Jamie Holman dug up cockles from the inshore beds at the location the cockle pickers were working on the night of the disaster. He poured molten lead into

the 23 moulds he made that day. The picking and processing of the cockles into lead was an unwitnessed performance.

Purchased by The Manchester Contemporary Art Fund
2022.90

The annual grant from The Manchester Contemporary Art Fund provides support for rising artists, offering a platform through which to achieve critical acclaim and greater popularity by having their work in a public institution.

With thanks to Christian Anderton & Sarah Maskell, Lisa Ashurst, Jo & Tom Bloxham, Netanya Clixby, James & Katie Eden, Mark Garner, Mark & Toni Hawthorn, Thom Hetherington & Sophie Helm, Alison Loveday, David Blake & Lucy Noone Blake, Jeremy & Jane Roberts, Howard Ratcliffe & Melissa Ratcliffe, Jon Sharples and Martyn & Valerie Torevell.

The Undertaker 1926
Marie-Louise von Motesiczky 1906-1996
Oil on canvas

Marie-Louise von Motesiczky trained in her native Vienna, The Hague, Frankfurt, Paris and Berlin. This early work shows a hard-edged realist style of the 1920s in contrast to the more poetic and looser style of her later work. It was created before her and her mother fled Vienna after the Nazis annexed Austria in 1938. Her brother stayed behind and was able to send Motesiczky's paintings to the UK before he was betrayed and sent to Auschwitz. She was taught by German Expressionist painter Max Beckmann who remained a life-long friend. The influence of his style of dark outlines is apparent here.

Gift of Marie-Louise Von Motesiczky Charitable Trust 2018.91
The Charitable Trust was set up after Motesiczky's death to distribute her work. We had previously purchased a painting of the artist's mother, and in 2018 the Trust invited us to apply for further works to be gifted. We received four paintings and one drawing.

After All It's Always Somebody Else Who Dies 2017
Adeela Suleman 1970-
Repoussé sheet steel (hammered from behind)

Adeela Suleman lives and works in Karachi, a city in which up to 12 people a day die in gangland and politically motivated killings. Her work responds to this violence through techniques traditionally used for arms and armour. The delicate sparrow is a symbol for Karachi's murder victims. Suleman says "the birds are dead. They make a pattern, a simple pattern, that silently repeats itself. Silence haunts you. Silence is disturbing."

Purchased with support of the Art Fund and the Arts Council England/V&A Purchase Grant Fund 2020.62

The gallery exhibited this work in the 2017 display South Asian Design and we subsequently raised the money to buy it through these two grant giving bodies. At the time our collection development priorities were contemporaneity, crossing boundaries (blurring the boundaries between fine art and craft) and celebrating Manchester (referencing the craft skills of Manchester's large South Asian population).

Central plinths:
CAPTCHA NO.41 – Dyson 2015
Matthew Darbyshire 1977-
Multiwall polycarbonate and stainless steel armature

Matthew Darbyshire explores the concept of collecting to ask what the objects we amass for the home, shop or office say about us. He critically examines the language of design and sculpture and unravels the symbolism attached to objects by studying and re-creating them as sculptural works using 21st century techniques. Here, he has referenced industrial prototyping and 3D digital printing to create layers of hand-cut, multi-coloured polycarbonate that are then assembled layer upon layer to create a monumental sculptural form. The colours replicate the fade from the Photoshop Colourwheel to create an object that almost seem to evaporate into air.

Gift from the artist and Herald Street Gallery 2022.92

Darbyshire created this artwork for the gallery's entrance hall during his solo exhibition here in 2015. It connects to our design collection and another work we own by Darbyshire Doryphoros, made using the same technique.

Superarchimoon light 1999

Designed by Philippe Starck 1949-

Manufactured by Flos, Milan

Cast and spun aluminium, glass, cotton light shade

The sleek, super-sized Superarchimoon light can be adjusted to suit different room heights, using the principle of an Anglepoise desk lamp. The scaling up of such a familiar office accessory, with the unexpected addition of an elegant, pleated shade, is an ironic take on the traditional standard lamp.

Phillippe Starck has worked on a huge range of projects from luxury hotel developments to homewares and his designs are distinctive and always surprising. He is known for the stylish Juicy Salif lemon squeezer and the transparent Louis Ghost chair.

Purchased by the Contemporary Art Society Special Collection Scheme on behalf of Manchester City Galleries with funds from the Arts Council Lottery, the Corporate Patrons of Manchester City Galleries 2018.15

This is one of several acquisitions made as part of five-year collecting programme that provided funding to develop contemporary fine art and design collections in 15 regional galleries. It greatly assisted our long-standing aim to build contemporary collections equal to the celebrated historic holdings.