

friends' perspective



SAVE THE DATE

Gallery re-opening October 2014

The news we have been eagerly awaiting

The Whitworth reopens on Saturday, 25 October, 2014 as an extended gallery in the park with new exhibition spaces, study zones, café, sculpture garden and orchard. The gallery has doubled in size.

The opening exhibitions are stunning!

Cornelia Parker has teamed up with Nobel Prizewinners from the University of Manchester to turn fragments of drawings by Picasso, Constable and JMW Turner into a new artwork. Kostya Novoselov, who with Andre Geim was awarded the Nobel prize for their work on graphene, the thinnest and strongest known material have collaborated with Parker.

Working with a paper conservator, Novoselov took microscopic samples of graphite from drawings in the Whitworth's collection by William Blake, Turner, Constable and Picasso and a pencil-written letter by Sir Ernest Rutherford (who split the atom in Manchester). He then made graphene from these samples and Cornelia Parker is incorporating this culturally significant graphene into a work of art. This will have its first showing on the opening night of the exhibition - expect a meteor shower! Remember the outstanding fireworks on closing night, then this will be as memorable.



Cornelia Parker



Cornelia Parker, Cold Dark Matter: An Exploded View, 1991.
Photograph: Hugo Glendinning

How brilliant and appropriate that the University of Manchester's art gallery should collaborate with outstanding, pioneering scientists from the University. This is a major solo exhibition from one of Britain's acclaimed contemporary artists. Cheshire born Cornelia's signature piece Cold Dark Matter; An Exploded View, 1991 (pictured) is in the show with recent additions to her ongoing series of 'Avoided Objects.'

With all that new space, there are many other opening shows. Work by Chinese-born contemporary artist Cai Guo-Qiang, known for his remarkable projects using gunpowder, including the firework displays for the opening and closing ceremonies of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. His installation Unmanned Nature (2008) is a 45 metre long, 4 metre high gunpowder drawing and will be the first exhibition in the new Landscape Gallery. The

Karpidas Foundation Gift: in memory of Konstantin Karpidas celebrates a recent major gift of contemporary works, including pieces by Laure Prouvost, Nathan Coley, Gillian Wearing and Gary Hume.

The textile gallery is going green as befits a new environmentally friendly gallery. It will celebrate the rebirth of the Whitworth and its new relationship with Whitworth Park. Highlighted artists are William Morris, Keith Vaughan, Lucienne Day and Michele Walker. Read more on the opening shows on page 8 - there is much to see.

The Gallery reopens to the public on 25 October, but the Gallery is organising many events prior to this date - Friends and family will be invited to 'Whitworth Reveal' on Saturday, 18 October (see your events information) - more details nearer the date.

A huge thank you to our President

Elizabeth (Lizzie), Lady Bromley-Davenport is retiring as President of the Friends of the Whitworth.

Lizzie became our president in 1991 but she loved the gallery long before that, having been introduced to it by amongst others, her mother-in-law who was a life long supporter. Lizzie was involved in a number of special events at the gallery during the 1980s.

Since becoming our President she has encouraged four chairmen and the Friends in general, most graciously and generously but saw the approach of an exciting new era for the Gallery and Friends as an appropriate time to hand over to a new president. We are particularly grateful to her for getting our capital development appeal off to such a good start with the Gala Evening at Capesthorpe Hall.

Caroline Jaycock (for many years secretary of the Friends) adds her thoughts: *"Lizzie was a great support to the Tuesday team. She really appreciated the time and effort the volunteers put into all the administration and activities that ensured the Friends of the Whitworth ran smoothly."*

She very kindly invited staff at the Gallery and volunteers to lunch at Capesthorpe every May as a way of saying 'thank you.' This was a real treat. She was always very interested in everything that was going on at the Whitworth and enjoyed speaking to everyone involved in all aspects of the organisation. She is a delightful, relaxed and charming person and was an excellent president."

Lizzie was born in New Jersey and studied at the Italian Art Academy in Rome. She is the artist E.B. Watts whose delightful colourful work reflects her personality. She and her husband have travelled widely and this is a great source of inspiration (see the painting Taj Mahal with rose ringed parakeets) and more of her work on a new website www.ebwatts.co.uk.



Stuart Halsall, chairman of the Friends presents Lady Bromley-Davenport with a token of Friends' appreciation

She and Sir William will keep in touch with the Friends as honorary members. Picture shows Stuart Halsall, chairman of the Friends presenting Lizzie with a piece of Kosta Boda art glass designed by Anna Ehrner in recognition of all she has done for us. Lizzie is a hard act to follow and we will miss her, but am sure she will be an enthusiast of the new Gallery in the Park.



Taj Mahal with rose ringed parakeets. © E.B. Watts.

*** Lizzie is delighted with her gift** – *'it will be a constant reminder of the Friends of the Whitworth and our family's long and lasting friendship with so many wonderful people in the Gallery. I have enjoyed every minute of being your President and shall never forget what an honour it has been. The Gallery has gone from a very Victorian interior/exterior to an explosion of art and architecture!'*



Share your passion for the Gallery

A positive advantage of being an FOW is that you can be actively involved in your society. We would love as many Friends as possible to join us as 'ambassadors' for the Friends of the Whitworth when the Gallery reopens this autumn.

More than 23,000 came to the closing Whitworth Weekending – we expect many more for the reopening – you can cope! At the closing, volunteers in snazzy T shirts worked with Gallery staff to make sure visitors enjoyed their visit to the Gallery and Whitworth Park. We can't promise snazzy T shirts (you may be relieved), but as a bigger and better experience is forecast we are hopeful you'll enjoy being part of an exciting and stimulating time.

Please see the information in this FOW mailing for joining details.

Pop Ups are all the rage

To think we didn't know what they were a few years ago... unwanted ads on the internet and the charity shop on the High Street perhaps, but now it's Pop Up cupcake sellers, pop up bars, pop up coffee vendors, jewellery makers and so on.

So the Whitworth got in on the act (as it's closed of course) and as the label conscious shopped for a fashionable handbag, Genesis was watching.

Pop Up Whitworth was part of the Festival of the Imagination at Selfridges in Manchester, where not just Jacob Epstein's Genesis was on display, but choice work by Picasso, Freud, Emin and Turner.

Another Pop-Up was at the home of Dr Susan Brown with a fund-raising venture selling work by Eric Gill, Paula Rego, Liam Spencer and Cheshire artist Alison Murdoch in aid of the Gallery's fund-raising effort.



Yes, that is Genesis in Selfridges



Mim Butler and Susan Brown-
and spot the cat



Artist Alison Murdoch with Susan Brown and
Whitworth Gallery Director Maria Balshaw



Stuart and Mirren Halsall with centre l.
Cecile Elstein and Alison Murdoch



Artist Alison Murdoch talks about
her work to Niall O'Shea

Friends' trip to the Turner Prize

Adèle Jennison – mark my words she will have taken your photograph! – won her own prize – a visit to the Turner Prize... this was her second glimpse of the event of the moment as she and husband Richard had joined the Friends on their Northern Ireland break a few weeks previously. This time she took daughter Holly, who works in the London art world (previously at Manchester's Castlefield Art Gallery).

It isn't every day that you share your hotel lift with the eccentric artist David Shrigley, bump into lovely Willie Doherty at his own exhibition, or find yourself hugging Turner prize nominee Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, but such things became quite normal in Derry-Londonderry, UK City of Culture 2013 when the art world juggernaut rolled into town. As a keen but very amateur lover of contemporary art, I had won a competition (more of a lottery really) to attend the Turner Prize Awards Ceremony at the converted Ebrington Barracks just across the River Foyle via the soaring Peace Bridge from the beautiful, walled city. You probably shouldn't mix Baileys cocktails, champagne and Guinness, but it all added to the fizzy atmosphere in the enormous marquee, where Nicholas Serota, Tate Director, plus 1,400 art groupies gathered for the announcement we had all been waiting for.

The shimmering Lauren Laverne was presenting LIVE for Channel 4 and suddenly there was chic and grown-up Irish actress Saoirse Ronan (the previously naughty little girl in Atonement) on stage, telling us that bonkers but brilliant Laure Prouvost had won!!!

Her intriguing film, an 'homage' to artist Kurt Schwitters, who settled in England's Lake District when he fled Germany in World War 11 charmed and beguiled the judges as it had me. She was a popular winner. Bubbling with disbelief in her unique and quirky French accent at the result, her baby (Celeste) was thrust into her arms by Saoirse seconds after her shocked but grateful speech: a first on such an occasion methinks!



Adèle & Holly Jennison at the Turner Prize Awards Ceremony, Derry-Londonderry

The contemporary art scene (in Derry-Londonderry) is every bit as cutting edge and exciting as any other important UK city. We'll be back.
Holly Jennison

Finalist Tino Sehgal even appeared at the shindig, which was a big surprise as he and his work are noted for, well, an evanescent 'nothingness' really. He and the others were gracious losers, but they all had their profiles raised, plus £5,000, so who's complaining?

A reflective walk back across the sculptural bridge joining the two sides of the river in more ways than one, gives us all hope that the troubles of this jewel of a city are in the past and it can face a new and optimistic future with culture at the heart of its renaissance.

Report by Adèle Jennison

The Turner Prize is awarded to an artist under 50 and is named after JMW Turner, the most daring and visionary artist in the history of British art. The Ulster Museum's Turner The Dawn of Christianity (The Flight into Egypt) 1841 was in the William Scott exhibition as a formative influence on the artist when he was a student in Belfast. It is the only publicly owned painting by Turner in Ireland.
Ulster Museum



Friends gaze in awe in Belfast City Hall



Ulster Museum, Belfast

What did the Windmill Theatre say?

We Never Closed...

As you see the same is true of the Friends even though the Gallery is being extended – our programme continues. We've been to Northern Ireland, Salford, Stalybridge, Manchester Central Library, hard hat tours of the Whitworth and Knowsley Hall, and the future this summer is promising!

Two UK tours – Oxford, Durham and Northumbria and day visits to Eyam, Haddon Hall, Lyme Park, Dalemain, Abbot Hall (for Barbara Hepworth exhibition), a private garden and art collection and Platt Hall to meet director Dr Miles Lambert and a memory lane look at wedding dresses.



Friends studying the fabulous early Renaissance masterpieces. Astley Cheetham, Stalybridge



FoWs equipped for the Hard Hat Tour of the gallery



The Hard Hatters getting an exciting peep of the new Café in the Trees!



Art Auction

Don't miss a chance to bid for works of art in the art auction. Boom Boom by Michael Brennand-Wood is one original work for sale to the keenest bidder. Go to www.whitworth.manchester.ac.uk to bid.



A plug on a blog...

The spotlight was on the Friends on a recent blog from Nicola Walker, who regularly updates everyone on the new development.

Nicola is Head of Collections Care and Access and keeps us in touch either on hard hat tours, talks in the gallery and her blog: capitaldevelopmentwhitworth.wordpress.com.

She told of the Friends' extensive programme of events, our fund-raising expertise, our aim to have 'something for everyone' and our vision to be recognised as friendly and open to all who want to share their curiosity about and enthusiasm for art at the Whitworth.

Your new gallery still needs you!

Join an exciting venture

We keep saying it is never too late to become a Volunteer Access Assistant and it still holds true. Many Friends are already on the team, but do think about joining in – your enthusiasm and interest will be valued and you'll have fun... and all will be taking part in a new venture in a new build! Friends are funding the fit-out of this area so it's extra special to us.



Volunteer Collection Access Assistant in the Collections Access Area may be not be a snappy description, but behind the dour titles is a lively job description. (It may become the Insight Zone or Showcase – we'll wait and see – but if you have any bright ideas let us know). The role is now more clearly defined – the volunteers

will be in the space to help visitors find out more about the selection of works on display (works from the collection and handling items), how art and design objects are made and perhaps encouraged to gain even more in depth experience of the Whitworth collection by using the new Study Centre. The area will also host talks by curators, artists, students, academics, critics and writers – from short lively introductions to collections to in-depth specialist talks.

Fiona Cariss (Volunteer Coordinator) is the person to contact for more information at fiona.cariss@manchester.ac.uk. Fiona has worked with volunteers at the Manchester International Festival and the Olympics 2012.

Public Programme post-opening

A look ahead to the programme in the Autumn

The Whitworth may be closed but its work continues, with major works popping up in Selfridges, Art Baby sessions at Bridgewater Hall and a series of art events in some of the city's best-loved watering holes. It certainly doesn't feel the Whitworth is hibernating. Amid all this excitement, it's nice to take the time to look ahead at what will be in store for the public programme within our spaces, old and new, when the gallery reopens in the autumn.

Popular, well loved events such as Tuesday Talks and After Hours will continue and new activities will grow from audience feedback and consultation. Social will continue to be at the heart of the programme, promoting the gallery as a space that brings art, people and ideas together.

It's exciting times, with new spaces such as the Collections Access Area, Study Centre and Grand Hall, not to mention a large scale projector to enjoy film and artworks projected across our new art garden whilst enjoying a drink in our elegant new café space. Practical activities, such as water colour painting inspired by the likes of Turner, will also be available thanks to our new Clore Learning Studio, where we can work with wet, messy materials without any risk to collections.

The park will also play a vital role within our new programmes, with more art in the park, activities and art gardening volunteer opportunities will be available. If you're interested to hear more about what family and adult events will be on offer contact Ed Watts, in the gallery's Learning & Engagement department (ed.watts@manchester.ac.uk).

Fund-raising events with the Friends...

Friends are so supportive of our wonderful gallery and quite a few of you have held parties, art shows, garden openings in aid of the new build – when you experience it in October you will be so inspired

If you would like to hold an event – a lunch, brunch, afternoon tea party, fizz and fancies party, coffee morning, cheese and wine (very dated, but if we called it retro!), art sale, exhibition – every little helps.

If you are slightly interested please contact fow@manchester.org.uk – and hopefully we'll encourage you to support a good cause and have fun.



FRIENDS
OF THE
WHITWORTH

More on the opening exhibitions...

The Whitworth is the home of an internationally renowned collection of British watercolours. The greatest benefactor was John Edward Taylor, owner of the Manchester Guardian, who presented and bequeathed 266 watercolours and drawings to the gallery between 1892 and 1912. Highlights from Taylor's collection will be on display, including 22 by J.M.W Turner, seven by William Blake and four by John Robert Cozens.

You will see the sculpture court as you have never seen it before, but we expect and relish challenging and uplifting work. The area will be covered with Sarah Lucas Tits in Space (2000) in which multiple pairs of cigarette-encrusted orbs float against a pitch black background. The use of cigarettes to suggest breasts (as well as planetary bodies) reflects Lucas wider use



J M W Turner's *Sunset on Wet Sand* 1845. Presented in memory of John Edward Taylor by his nephews in 1912

of found objects – whether food, furniture or cars – as loaded metaphors for the body and for the formulaic ways in which we visualise it. This wallpaper will also be the backdrop to sculptures by Sarah Lucas. She is to represent the UK at 2015 Venice Biennale.

People important in the Whitworth story will be displayed as though in conversation – think the people who acquired and presented collections to the institution, the curators and the people who feature in the works themselves. This exhibition is entitled simply Whitworth People.

Your appetite has been whetted – there is indeed much more. See you there.



Sarah Lucas, *Tits in Space*, 2000.
© Sarah Lucas and Sadie Coles HQ, London

Thomas Schütte, *Low Tide Wandering* promises to be one of the most remarkable print installations of recent years. After drawing in sketchbooks as a form of visual diary for several years, in 2001 Schütte changed his practice and began to use etching. For *Low Tide Wandering* he has produced 139 images that range from views of the sea, through quirky portraits of friends and acquaintances, to flower studies – all everyday subjects. World events of 2001, including the attack on the Twin Towers in New York, also intrude into these personal preoccupations. Etchings will be suspended just above head height from taut wires persuading the viewer to move around the space in an unfamiliar way – as they follow the meanders of Schütte's states of mind.



Thomas Schütte, *Low Tide Wandering*, 2001. Courtesy the artist and Frith Street Gallery, London

Why not take this once in a lifetime opportunity to really make a difference to the Whitworth? All donations, large or small are welcome – please send cheques payable to the Friends of the Whitworth at the address below...

Chairman, Friends of the Whitworth, The Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M15 6ER.

Editor: Gill Crook. If you have any ideas for Friends' Perspective I would be pleased to hear from you. Contact me at fow@manchester.ac.uk