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mima shortlisted for share in £75,000 scheme for contemporary craft

The Art Fund and the Crafts Council today announce that mima has been shortlisted for the fourth time running for Art Fund Collect, a £75,000 scheme bringing outstanding pieces of contemporary craft to museums and galleries across the UK.

mima Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art is one of eight museums and galleries in the running this year.

Art Fund Collect is a joint scheme run by the Art Fund and the Crafts Council. It offers curators the chance to pick a unique piece of craft at COLLECT, the Crafts Council's international art fair for contemporary objects. Successful curators win a share of £75,000 to buy their chosen object outright on behalf of their museum or gallery.

James Beighton, curator, will take part in the scheme on behalf of mima for the fourth time. He has competed each year since the scheme started in 2008, and has twice been a winner. He will be joined this year by Vicky Sturrs, Education Officer at mima.

James Beighton said: "When the value of culture is being questioned from so many angles it is reassuring to know that the Art Fund is able to recognise how essential it is for museums to continue to collect today's culture and preserve it to become tomorrow's heritage. Art Fund Collect is one of our only opportunities to acquire important works for our craft collection, but more than that it proves to be one of the most important dates in our calendar, giving us the opportunity to see the very best of contemporary craft assembled in one place."

The other shortlisted curators and their seven respective institutions are:

1. Fiona Slattery and Martin Ellis, Curators of Applied Arts at **Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery**
2. Rachel Conroy, Assistant Curator at **National Museum Wales - Amgueddfa Cymru**
3. Penny Sexton, Curator & Holly Morgenroth, Assistant Curator of Natural History at **the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter**
4. Polly Putnam, Assistant Curator of Decorative Arts at **Leeds Museums & Galleries**
5. Francesca Vanke, Curator of Decorative Arts at **Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery**
6. Pamela Wood, Keeper of Decorative Arts and Deborah Dean, Visual Arts and Exhibitions Manager at **Nottingham Castle Museum & Art Gallery**
7. Alison Cooper, Assistant Keeper of Art at **Plymouth City Museum & Art Gallery**

Stephen Deuchar, Director of the Art Fund, said: "It's fantastic to see that Art Fund Collect continues to draw some of the UK's most talented curators, and we're pleased that this year's shortlist includes past competitors as well as some new names. This is a fantastic opportunity to snap up outstanding pieces from international makers at the top of their field, on behalf of the public collections across the UK. We wish all competitors the best of luck, and as ever encourage them to be bold and ambitious in their choices."

Rosy Greenlees, Executive Director of the Crafts Council, said: ""Art Fund Collect is such a significant scheme for contemporary craft in the UK. As the Crafts Council celebrates its 40th anniversary this year by focusing on, and developing, our own collection it is heartening to see the desire of curators across the UK to collect world-class contemporary craft for their institutional collections."

Art Fund Collect takes place on 5 May 2011, the preview day of COLLECT which is being held at the Saatchi Gallery for the third year running.

James Beighton and the other shortlisted curators will access the fair ahead of private buyers and VIPs, and one day before doors open to the public. They will have just one hour to go around the 37 international galleries represented at COLLECT and pick one object they wish to add to their museum or gallery's public collection.

Curators are then required to justify their choice in a verbal presentation to the panel of judges. Winners are selected according to the vision and ambition they demonstrate. The Art Fund buys the winning objects on behalf of each successful museum or gallery.

At Art Fund Collect in 2009, James Beighton won the intricate gold *Bracelet* by Giovanni Corvaja, worth £27,750. In 2008 he snapped up the dramatic, large-scale pot, *Monumental Vase V* by Julian Stair, worth £25,263.

Art Fund Collect was set up by the Art Fund and Crafts Council in 2008 as a way of boosting public collections with the best of international contemporary craft**.** To date, the scheme has contributed £200,000 towards the purchase of unique works for the public to enjoy.

A total of 18 institutions applied and the judging panel met on 23 March to draw up the shortlist. In 2010, five curators won an object for their public collections at Art Fund Collect. The winners were: Aberdeen Art Gallery; the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; the Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery, Exeter; Shipley Art Gallery, Gateshead; and the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester. A total of eleven museums and galleries were shortlisted.

Ends

Notes to Editors

The **Art Fund Collect judging panel** is chaired this year by Anthony Griffiths, Art Fund Trustee and Keeper of the British Museum's Print Collection. The other Art Fund Collect judges are: Stephen Deuchar, Director of the Art Fund; Sir Nicholas Goodison, Ex Chairman of the Crafts Council and the Art Fund; Rosy Greenlees, Executive Director of the Crafts Council; Tanya Harrod, author and craft expert and Jonathan Marsden, Art Fund Trustee and Director of The Royal Collection.

COLLECT: the international art fair for contemporary objects, Saatchi Gallery, 6-9 May 2011 COLLECT is one of the most important annual fairs for contemporary craft in Europe, presented by the Crafts Council, showcasing work by 400 artists represented by 37 international galleries. Visit www.craftscouncil.org.uk/collect

The Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for works of art and plays a major part in enriching the range, quality and understanding of art in the UK. It campaigns, fundraises and gives money to museums and galleries to buy and show art, and promotes its enjoyment through its events and membership scheme. Current initiatives include sponsoring the UK tour of the ARTIST ROOMS collection, and running a major campaign in partnership with the National Trust to raise £2.7 million to save Brueghel's *The Procession to Calvary* for Nostell Priory. The Art Fund is funded by its art-loving and museum-going members and supporters who believe that great art should be for everyone to enjoy. Find out more at www.artfund.org. Press contact | 020 7225 4888 | media@artfund.org

The Crafts Council's goal is to make the UK the best place to make, see, collect and learn about contemporary craft.

- We believe that craft plays a dynamic and vigorous role in the UK's social, economic and cultural life.
- We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to make, see, collect and learn about craft.
- We believe that the strength of craft lies in its use of traditional and contemporary techniques, ideas and materials to make extraordinary new work.
- We believe that the future of craft lies in nurturing talent; children and young

people must be able to learn about craft at school and have access to excellent teaching throughout their education.

- 12% of the UK population visited a craft exhibition in 2009/10, and 18% participated in craft activity in the same year (DCMS/ACE Taking Part data update August 2010). (Taking Part is an ongoing survey being carried out by Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Arts Council England (ACE)
- More than 2.8 million visits were made to the Crafts Council website in 2009. To find out everything you need to know about where to make, see, collect and learn about contemporary craft visit www.craftscouncil.org.uk
- The Crafts Council is supported by Arts Council England. Arts Council England works to get great art to everyone by championing, developing and investing in artistic experiences that enrich people's lives.

mima Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art

mima is one of the UK's leading galleries for modern and contemporary art and craft. The landmark building designed by Erick van Egeraat Architects is situated in the heart of Middlesbrough. mima opened to international critical acclaim in January 2007. Hosting temporary exhibitions of fine art and craft from 1900 to the present, mima showcases work by internationally acclaimed artists. Exhibitions change throughout the year and admission is free**.** mima is a partner of Tate, and exchanges programmes, ideas and skills with the Plus Tate network of visual arts organisations.
www.visitmima.com

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Gallery and shop opening times

Tues, Wed, Fri & Sat

10.00am–4.30pm

Thurs 10.00am–7.00pm*

Sun 12noon–4.00pm

Closed Mon

Please note that mima is now closed on Bank Holidays.