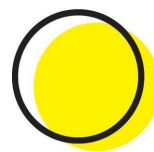


Press release



Arts Council Collection

Date: Friday 14 May 2021, 09:30am

Images: Downloadable from [HERE](#)

NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL COLLECTION CELEBRATES 75 YEARS OF SUPPORTING EARLY CAREER ARTISTS ACROSS THE UK



Credits (L-R); Abigail Reynolds, *Universal Now: St Michael's Mount 1928 / 1949, 2020* © the artist. Image courtesy of the artist; Gabriella Boyd *Blessing iii*, 2020 © the artist. Image courtesy of the artist; Shawanda Corbett, *Now go around the corner and get your brother*, 2021 Image courtesy of the artist, Salon 94, New York and Corvi-Mora, London. Photo: Marcus Leith.

Arts Council Collection, the UK's largest national loan collection of modern and contemporary art, celebrates 75 years of supporting early career artists. Despite the global pandemic the ongoing commitment to supporting artists has seen 60 works by 21 artists acquired for the nation. This year's acquisitions mark the 75th anniversary of the Arts Council Collection and the artists' works selected truly reflect the diversity and the strides towards inclusion in modern Britain.

Arts Council Collection, which manages the national loan collection on behalf of Arts Council England, supports and promotes artists living in Britain today by buying their work at an early or critical stage in their career, making it immediately available for loan to the nation's museums and public institutions including schools, universities, hospitals and charitable associations.

Deborah Smith, Director of Arts Council Collection, commented: *"It's been an unprecedented year, and throughout the pandemic we've actively continued to collect and support artists. As we celebrate the Arts Council Collection's 75th anniversary, I'm delighted, together with the Acquisitions Committee, to announce our new acquisitions for 2020–21 which reflects the entire breadth of British art and artists working in the UK today."*

Artists whose work has been acquired this year hail from many recognisable cities and counties across the UK including **Gabriella Boyd** from Glasgow whose paintings are influenced by psychoanalysis, literature and theatre. Boyd seeks to communicate things that are difficult to say or show – how it feels to live in a body, for instance, or the unexpected intimacy of everyday encounters. **Liv Preston** is heavily influenced by the material language

and attitudes of West Yorkshire, where she grew up. With an obsessive interest in video games and the subterranean, her practice combines sculpture with conceptual gestures.

London born, **Shezad Dawood** works across film, textiles, print, painting and sculpture to explore how different systems of language, site and narrative can exist within and between these forms. His work often involves collaboration and is particularly concerned with acts of editing and re-staging.

From Cardiff, **Merlin James**'s paintings include land and seascapes, figures, architecture, interiors and erotic scenes. Cornwall-based **Abigail Reynolds** uses a process based on collage, bringing found materials into new contexts. *The Universal Now* is an ongoing body of work created by splicing together photographs of a place, taken from the same angle by different photographers, often decades apart.

The new Acquisitions Committee this year includes artist Simeon Barclay and Alistair Robinson, Programme Director, Northern Gallery of Contemporary Art. The Committee researches artists and makes recommendations from within and beyond established gallery networks and are responsible for including the most innovative and progressive works, ensuring a broad range of artists are considered each year.

The external advisers to the Acquisitions Committee for 2020–21 were: Ryan Gander, artist, James Green, Director of Newlyn Art Gallery & The Exchange, Martha Barratt, writer and editor and Dr. Zoé Whitley, Director of Chisenhale Gallery. The internal members of the Acquisitions Committee are Deborah Smith, Director, Arts Council Collection, with Ralph Rugoff (Director, Hayward Gallery), and Peter Heslip (Director, Visual Arts, Arts Council England). Sir Nicholas Serota, Chair of Arts Council England, acts as Chair to the Committee.

FULL LIST OF ARTISTS WITH WORK ACQUIRED BY ARTS COUNCIL COLLECTION 2020–21

Olivia Bax, Oliver Beer, Gabriella Boyd, Lucy Clout, Shawanda Corbett, Shezad Dawood, Adam Farah, Miranda Forrester, Ryan Gander, Andrew Pierre Hart, Merlin James, Rachel Jones, Lindsey Mendick, Hannah Perry, Liv Preston, Abigail Reynolds, Prem Sahib, Libita Sibungu, Magda Stawarska-Beavan, Rosa-Johan Uddoh, Caroline Walker.

For more information on the artists and works listed, please go to the Collection webpage [here](#).

ENDS

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Arts Council Collection is managed by the Southbank Centre on behalf of Arts Council England.

Arts Council Collection

1946 – 2021: Celebrating 75 Years of Arts Council Collection

Arts Council Collection is the most widely circulated national loan collection of modern and contemporary British art spanning paintings, sculpture, prints, drawings, performance and moving image. With over 8,000 works and more than 1,000 loans made to over 100 venues a year, the Collection has been connecting art with people for 75 years. It supports and promotes British artists by acquiring art at an early stage of their careers and is seen by millions of people in public spaces from galleries and museums to hospitals, libraries and universities. Representing one of the most important collections of British modern and contemporary art in the world it includes work from a diverse range of artists from Barbara Hepworth, Tracey Emin, Anish Kapoor and Henry Moore to Mona Hatoum, Anthea Hamilton, Lubaina Himid, and Grayson Perry. Arts Council Collection was founded in 1946 and is managed by the Southbank Centre, London and includes Longside Gallery located at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. www.artscouncilcollection.org.uk

Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. By 2030 we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high quality cultural experiences. Between 2018 and 2022, we will invest £1.45 billion of public money from the government and an estimated £860 million from the National Lottery to help deliver this vision. www.artscouncil.org.uk

Following the Covid-19 crisis, Arts Council England has developed a £160 million emergency response package, with nearly 90% coming from the National Lottery, for organisations and individuals needing support. Find out more at www.artscouncil.org.uk/covid19

Southbank Centre

The Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre occupying a prominent riverside location that sits in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames.

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