



ARTS COUNCIL COLLECTION AT
**SOUTHBANK
CENTRE**

11 May 2016

**ARTS COUNCIL COLLECTION ANNOUNCES 2015-2016
ACQUISITIONS**



Rachel Maclean, *Feed Me*, 2015, HD video, colour and sound; Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London © the artist

The Arts Council Collection announces this week that it has acquired more than 40 works in 2015-2016 – spanning video, photographs, installations, paintings, computer animation and sculpture – from 23 artists including Dan Holdsworth, Rachel Maclean, Hannah Starkey and Matt Stokes.

The Arts Council Collection, which is celebrating its 70th anniversary in 2016, is one of the largest national loan collections of modern and contemporary British Art. With more than 8,000 works, the Collection supports and promotes British art and British artists by buying art when they are in the early stages of their career, and continues to acquire new work and support emerging artists annually. These works are then available for loan to galleries and public institutions across the UK.

The acquisitions are made by a committee and the members in 2015-2016 were: Maria Balshaw (Chair), Director of the Whitworth, University of Manchester and Manchester City Galleries; Jill Constantine, Head, Arts Council Collection; Peter Heslip, Director, Visual Arts, Arts Council England; Natalie Rudd, Senior Curator, Arts Council Collection; and Ralph Rugoff, Director, Hayward Gallery; and the external advisers were Ann Bukantas, Head of Fine Art, National Museums Liverpool; Martin Herbert, art critic and writer; Alex Farquharson, Director, Tate Britain; and Bedwyr Williams, Artist. The external advisers,

usually an artist, a writer and a curator, are appointed for a fixed two-year tenure and make recommendations to purchase innovative works of art that reflect artistic practice in Britain at the time.

In addition, the Arts Council Collection commissioned eight new works to mark its 70th anniversary. The Anniversary Commissions are by: John Akomfrah, Hurvin Anderson, Marvin Gaye Chetwynd, Ryan Gander, Mark Leckey, Katie Paterson, Heather Phillipson and Keith Piper. Opening at different venues across the UK throughout the year, the works will then become a permanent part of the Arts Council Collection where they will be available for loan to museums, galleries and other spaces nationally and internationally. Half of the artists selected for the commissions – John Akomfrah, Hurvin Anderson, Katie Paterson and Heather Phillipson – will be joining the Collection for the first time, the others contributing major new works.

Jill Constantine, Head of Arts Council Collection, said: "This anniversary year has been an exceptional one with 47 new works by 23 artists entering the Collection alongside eight new commissions. 21 of these artists were not previously represented. I am delighted that we have also been able to acquire work from artists living as far apart as Hereford, Liverpool, Glasgow and Newcastle ensuring that the Collection represents the very best of artistic practice across the UK. I am delighted to welcome these artists into the Collection particularly in its 70th year."

Peter Heslip, Director, Visual Arts, Arts Council England, said: "It looks to me like a vintage year. Our Collection neatly complements Arts Council England's grant giving activities, providing artists with validation and safeguarding their work for future generations. It is also an extremely lean and effective means of getting great work out to benefit everyone, everywhere in England. In turn the Collection benefits from the generosity of so many artists who gift work and lend their expertise to help grow this public resource."

The list of works acquired are:

Ivor Abrahams

Wall (1972), Gift of Contemporary Art Society 2015

Ivor Abrahams is best-known for his large-scale sculptures of owls, as well as his stylised paintings, prints and sculptures of green spaces. Abrahams first became occupied with gardens in the early 1970s, producing a body of prints, reliefs and sculptures that featured shrubbery, hedgerows and lawns. Ranging in scale and produced from a variety of materials, these green spaces were usually uninhabited, giving the viewer the impression of glimpsing into a secret realm.

Caroline Achaintre

Todo Custo, 2015

In her hand-tufted textiles, Achaintre tries to capture a moment when the thing that she is creating is 'not one thing any more, and not the other yet.' Drawing on the tradition of carnival or tribal masks, she experiments with what small amount of visual information is needed to conjure a face, emotion, or character.

Bjørn Falch Andersen

Untitled, 1965–69, Gift of the artist 2016

Bjørn Falch Andersen's series of untitled photographs were taken during an intensive, five-year period during the late 1960s when the Norwegian artist was training to be a dentist in Bristol. The black and white photographs capture everyday life on the streets of the city: in one a glamorous young woman in a headscarf eats food from a paper napkin while behind her, her back to the camera, another woman reads a newspaper mid-stride.

Aaron Angell

Shoe Chew (2014) and *Bread Knives* (2015)

Choosing to treat clay as a 'versatile and democratic' sculptural medium, rather than one reserved for craft, Angell constructs small-scale ceramic tableaux whose amateur appearance belies the highly-skilled processes involved in their production. *Shoe Chew* (2014) is a steel sculpture based on a rawhide dog-chew, which Angell describes as 'a joke for humans, disguised as a joke for dogs', while *Bread Knives* (2015) was influenced by the work of 18th-century architect Capability Brown, as well as ceramic artist Gillian Lowndes.

Michael Armitage

Kariakor (2015), like many of his paintings, was painted on Lubugo, a traditional cloth from Uganda which is made by beating, softening and stretching bark. In his expressive, figurative paintings Michael Armitage draws on multiple sources including current events, the internet and his upbringing in Kenya.

Cornelia Baltes

Untitled (bottle), 2015; *Untitled (foot)*, 2015; *Untitled (penguin)*, 2015; *Untitled (stalker)*, 2015
Turner #9, 2015; *Turner #12*, 2015

Cornelia Baltes's playful, minimal works are inspired by her observations of everyday life. Representing the shape or outline of familiar objects in bright blocks of colour, she creates striking, abbreviated visual narratives.

Benedict Drew

KAPUT (2015) is a multifaceted installation that explores the concept of 'space tourism'. A large day-glow image of Richard Branson, with orange cables protruding from his eyes, adorns a large banner. Below him, Virgin space-crafts soar across two monitors, a foil backdrop flickers and the room buzzes with the sound of feedback and the intermittent screeching of a saxophone. The result is a dark, dystopian environment that seems to have been projected straight from the artist's imagination.

Stefan Gec

Following Genesis (Ferrybridge – Scammonden Bridge) (2004), Gift of Arts Council England
This work is a two-channel animation that focuses on two locations: Ferrybridge Power Station – situated just north of Pontefract – and Scammonden Bridge in the Pennines, just 30 miles west. Both of these man-made landmarks are well-known to Gec – a familiarity born of driving past them over many years. Gec offers us slow, aerial views of the two landmarks as the wireframe animation translates the highly sculptural industrial forms of Ferrybridge Power Station and Scammonden Bridge into subtle drawings.

Lawrence Abu Hamdan

The All-Hearing, 2014, Edition 1 of 2

Lawrence Abu Hamdan's audio investigations expose and attempt to define the politics of listening. Refusing to admit a distinction between aesthetics and politics, he has produced work in the form of advocacy and legal testimonies, as well as performances in galleries and theatres. His film *The All-Hearing* (2014) is concerned with noise pollution and freedom of speech in Cairo, a city where average noise levels sit at a deafening 85 decibels.

Andy Holden

Beerbottle Stalagmite (Original Multiple), (1–6), 2014–15, Gift of the artist 2015

Holden's *Beerbottle Stalagmites* are multiples or 'souvenirs' constructed from leftover plaster mixed to form his larger sculptures, such as *Totem for Thingly Time* (2014–15), which Holden has described as 'part cake, part stalagmite, part pastel hangover'. Commenting on the relationship between these 'souvenirs' and the larger works, Holden has stated that 'the souvenir itself is something, but it's also a nothing, an empty vessel that points somewhere, signifying a larger event that can't be consumed by the object'.

Dan Holdsworth

Blackout 21, 2010, Edition 2 of 3 + 2AP

Dan Holdsworth creates large-scale photographs and digital images that explore both real and imagined landscapes. His series *Blackout* (2010) examines the other-worldly *Sólheimajökull* glacier in Iceland. In these prints, as in X-rays, light and dark are reversed: a pale sky becomes pitch-black, while the ground is a strange, chalk-white terrain. Calming and unsettling in equal measure, Holdsworth's prints recall geological survey maps, images of Earth taken from space and eerie lunar-landscapes.

Des Hughes

Des Hughes's sculptural practice is influenced by primitive art and surrealism, as well as the history of British modernist sculpture. *Small Adult* (2014) was created using a mixture of resin, copper and plaster. Short and stout, it resembles a cheerful, stationary sock-puppet. Hughes will often preserve found objects – such as pebbles and crisp packets – in clay or plaster, and is very much concerned with the process of making, considering it just as important as the finished work.

Mikhail Karikis

Karikis's film *Children of Unquiet* (2013–14) is set in an area of Italy known as the Devil's Valley, home to the world's first geothermal power station. In the late 1970s many of the plant's workers lost their jobs due to technological developments, and the villages built to house them were left abandoned. In the film, local children reanimate these silenced villages through play, and recreate the noises of the volcanic landscape that they grew up in the sound of bubbling water, the whisper of geysers and the roar of the factory's pipes.

Rachel Maclean

Feed Me, 2015, Edition 6 of 6

Produced by Film and Video Umbrella, Maclean's film *Feed Me* is a parable of the pleasures and perils of indulgence, with swipes at the commercialisation and sexualisation of childhood and a growing infantilisation in adult behaviour. As we continue to feed the monster of contemporary consumerist desire, Maclean's film is an indelible reminder of all the little monsters that are born in its wake.

Text provided by Steven Bode of FVU. Rachel Maclean's *Feed Me* was commissioned by FVU and Hayward Touring. Supported by Arts Council England and Creative Scotland.

Nathaniel Mellors

Hippy Dialectics, 2010, Edition 2 of 2

Mellors's *Hippy Dialectics* (2010) is a sculpture featuring two animatronic heads joined together by a shared clump of hair. As the heads jerk from side to side they deliver lines belonging to Daddy, the central character from *Ourhouse*. Their bizarre, repetitive conversation brings to mind the circular plots of Samuel Beckett's plays, as well as the work of the surreal comedy group Monty Python.

Paul Noble

Large S, 2015

Noble's recent pencil drawings feature bare legs detached from their owner, ornate doors, solitary eggs and walking sticks. In *Large S* (2015) a miniature leg stands sentry outside a tall, narrow door whose handle has morphed into a hand, raised as if to gesture 'no entry'. The image calls to mind a shrunken Alice trying to navigate Wonderland, as well as the ill-fated characters that populate the works of Hieronymus Bosch.

Margaret Organ

Loop, 1978/2014

In the late 1970s, Margaret Organ began to create a unique body of work by layering paper onto shaped wire. The resulting expressive, abstract pieces occupied both walls and floors. While an injury in the early 1980s prevented Organ from continuing with this demanding work, in 2014 she was able to reconstruct her 1978 work *Loop*, which currently features in the Arts Council Collection touring exhibition *Making It: Sculpture in Britain 1977 – 1988*.

Kelly Richardson

The Last Frontier (2013) features a pulsating, globe-like construction set within a barren landscape. As in all of Richardson's work, the film's narrative is calculatedly ambiguous: it is unclear whether the dome is a place to shelter from impending disaster, or the threat itself.

Hannah Starkey

Mirror – Untitled, September 2015 (2015)

In this work, Starkey captures herself in the act of taking a photograph. Her reflection, as well as those of two young women and the anonymous street they stand in, is presented to the viewer fractured and distorted in the mirror's multiple planes.

Matt Stokes

Jubilee Dancer (2011) features footage filmed on a night-vision camera during a 'cave rave' near the town of Barrow-in-Furness, in 2002. Situated on local farmland, the event was organised as an alternative to celebrations marking the Queen's Golden Jubilee. In Stokes's film the rave's original soundtrack has been replaced by a traditional folk 'reel'. A close-up of a pair of dancing feet, momentarily syncing with the cheerful tune, helps to root this 21st-century event in a rich history of counter-culture celebrations and rural revelry.

Jason Thompson

Mirror Sun Cloud, 2015, Gift of the artist 2015

Jason Thompson's paintings are influenced by mechanical, botanic and anatomical diagrams. Each work begins as a series of improvised marks, which are then 'repeated, copied and overlaid' to form part of a larger complex pattern. Thompson avoids planning his paintings. Rather, he prefers them to emerge from an organic process of trial and error – a way of working that the artist feels is analogous to natural evolutionary processes.

Bedwyr Williams

The Burn (2012), Acquired 2014–15

This work – a shell-encrusted metal barbecue – is inspired by the artist's memories of 1970s jewellery boxes and hairbrushes. 'I have always been fascinated and slightly repulsed by sea shells', comments Williams. 'They seem absurd and beautiful at the same time, and when they are used in shell art or craft the crash between the beauty of the shapes and the crassness of the kitsch object is interesting.'

Scottie Wilson

Free Hand Pen Drawings by Scottie, 1935; *Temple of the Beloved Goddess*, c.1941; *Untitled*, c.1947; and *Untitled*, c.1950

The drawings and paintings of self-taught artist Scottie Wilson (1890–1972) often focus on the struggle between good and evil. His striking images – many of which were created using a fountain pen found in the second-hand shop that he once owned – feature botanical forms,

birds and animals, as well as characters that the artist referred to as 'greedies and evils'. Wilson created many of his drawings and paintings in a semi trance-like state – a situation that led the artist to comment that 'when I wake up they're all waiting for me.'

The Arts Council Collection's eight 70th Anniversary Commissions are:

John Akomfrah, *Tropikos*

Katie Paterson, *Totality*

Mark Lecky, *feelinthecat*

Heather Phillipson, *TRUE TO SIZE*

Hurvin Anderson, *Is it okay to be black?*

Ryan Gander, *As old as time itself, slept alone*

Keith Piper, *Unearthing the Banker's Bones*

Marvin Gaye Chetwynd, *Here She Comes*

For more information about Acquisitions and the Anniversary Commissions, the link to the pdf versions of the brochure are:

<http://www.artscouncilcollection.org.uk/collection/acquisitions>

For press inquiries about the Arts Council Collection and images, please contact:

Filipa Mendes | SUTTON | +44 (0) 207 183 3577 | filipa@suttonpr.com

For press inquiries about the Arts Council England, please contact:

Alison Millar, Media Relations Officer, Arts Council England,

Alison.Millar@artscouncil.org.uk, 020 7268 9648

NOTES TO EDITORS

The Arts Council Collection is a great national collection of British art from 1946 to the present day and holds over 8,000 works which are available for loan to spaces across the UK. With more than 1,000 loans made to over 100 venues a year, it is seen by millions of people annually 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 holds important work from Francis Bacon, Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore to Lucian Freud, Antony Gormley and Grayson Perry. The Collection supports and promotes British art and British artists by buying art when they are in the early stages of their career, and continues to acquire new work and support emerging artists. The Arts Council Collection is based at Southbank Centre, London and the Sculpture Centre at Longside in Yorkshire Sculpture Park. www.artscouncilcollection.org.uk

The Arts Council Collection's 70th anniversary

The is celebrating its 70th anniversary during 2016 with eight new commissions that will go on display across the UK throughout 2016; two new touring exhibitions, *Night at the Museum*, curated by Ryan Gander, and *Drawn from Life: People on Paper*; and the newly-launched National Partners programme, which will deepen the Collection's longstanding relationship with four key museums and galleries around the country: the Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne; Birmingham Museums Trust; and The Walker Art Gallery, National Museums Liverpool; and the Collection's existing partner, Yorkshire Sculpture Park.

Arts Council England champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. We support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2015 and 2018, we plan to invest £1.1 billion of public money from government and an estimated £700 million from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country. www.artscouncil.org.uk

About Southbank Centre

Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre, occupying a 21-acre site that sits in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 *Festival of Britain*. Southbank Centre is home to the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and the Hayward Gallery as well as The Saison Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. For further information please visit www.southbankcentre.co.uk. Southbank Centre is carrying out vital restoration work on the Hayward Gallery, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Purcell Room to make the buildings fit for future generations to enjoy, more information can be found here: letthelightin.southbankcentre.co.uk.