



Press Release

**Press Embargo until 10pm,
Thursday 5th July**

In the competition to be crowned Art Fund Museum of the Year 2018, Glasgow Women's Library wins with the public but is a runner up with the judges

Glasgow Women's Library (GWL) had to be satisfied to be a runner up in the competition to become Art Fund Museum of the Year 2018. Shortlisted alongside Brooklands Museum, Weybridge; Ferens Art Gallery, Hull; The Postal Museum, London; and Tate St Ives, it was Tate St Ives who took home the award – and the £100,000 prize money – at the award ceremony at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Art Fund Museum of the Year is awarded annually to one outstanding museum, which, in the opinion of the judges, has shown exceptional imagination, innovation and achievement in the preceding 12 months. As a finalist, GWL has been awarded £10,000.

Adele Patrick, Lifelong Learning and Creative Development Manager, said:

'We would like to congratulate our museum colleagues at Tate St Ives who are very worthy winners and would also like to thank Art Fund for their support and recognition. We are so proud to have been shortlisted as Finalists along with Tate St Ives.'

In a year that has witnessed the #metoo and #timesup movements, a surge of activity around the Centenary of the Representation of the People's Act, and intensified global debates on equality and feminism, GWL continues to experience unprecedented increases in public, media and press interest. With the announcement that we were a finalist for Art Fund Museum of the Year 2018, we were delighted to see another spike in interest around the records, artefacts, representations and stories of contemporary and historical activism around women's lives and intersectional feminism.

Ahead of the announcement, Glasgow Women's Library received an outpouring of public support from organisations and individuals sharing stories and memories, under the Social Media hashtag #MyMuseum, of what GWL means to them and the impact it has had on their lives. This response was overwhelming, and we would like to thank everyone who supported us.

There is momentum gathering for museums to be much more representative and accessible, and GWL is playing a leading role in this area. Our unique voice as a 'critical friend' to the sector is exemplified in the recent release of our ground breaking research, Equality in Progress. We are proud to be in the vanguard of a groundswell of cultural projects that are rooted in our core values of equality, diversity and inclusion. We aim that everyone visiting us feels the impact of its purpose, innovative governance, through our public events programming and the way we make accessible our outstanding collections.

The selection of Glasgow Women's Library as a Finalist was an acknowledgement of the profound role that museums can play in changing people's lives for the better; and that museums can offer more than just a good day out'.

Glasgow Women's Library is the only Accredited Museum in the UK dedicated to women's lives, histories and achievements and is a Recognised Collection of National Significance. Items in the collection are all donated, making them a rich, diverse and coherent assemblage of artefacts and archives exemplifying the lives of women, charting their historical and contemporary achievements and contributions. From knitting patterns, recipe books and Girls' Annuals, to Suffragette memorabilia and contemporary campaigning materials such as the recent Repeal the Eighth campaign in Ireland, the constantly growing collection contextualizes the linkages across the many spheres that women inhabit within the 'personal' and the 'political.' With items that date from the early nineteenth



century, our collection champions, celebrates and teaches us how women have shaped lives, families, communities and the country.

The judges for Art Fund Museum of the Year 2018 were: Stephen Deuchar, Art Fund Director and Chair of the Judges; Ian Blatchford, Director of the Science Museum Group; BBC's Arts Correspondent, Rebecca Jones; Artist Melanie Manchot; and Monisha Shah, Art Fund trustee and Chair of Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance.

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Notes to Editors:

Glasgow Women's Library

Glasgow Women's Library is the only Accredited Museum in the UK dedicated to women's lives, histories and achievements, and is a designated Recognised Collection of National Significance with a lending library, archive collections and innovative programmes of public events and learning opportunities. It is a change maker in the Library, Archives and Museum sectors, delivering ground breaking work on equalities and public engagement linked to its inspiring collections. In 2017 Glasgow Women's Library launched Equality in Progress, a programme of research and events drawing on its own ground breaking work with the aim of addressing issues of exclusion evident in the cultural and museum sectors.

Open to all, it is multi award-winning, grown from the grass roots, and impacting on its neighbourhood whilst attracting partnerships and visitors from around the world. GWL is located in the heart of Glasgow's regenerating East End neighbourhood, in the top 5% most deprived areas of Scotland. It delivers public events across Scotland and in a range of outreach settings, including H M Prisons. GWL is loved, visited and used by people from around the world and around the corner. Involving creatives since launching in 1991, GWL commands recognition and respect for the quality of its environment and its pioneering participatory programmes. GWL is now an exemplar of an enterprising museum resource.

www.womenslibrary.org.uk @womenslibrary

Art Fund

Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for art. In the past five years alone Art Fund has given £34 million to help museums and galleries acquire works of art for their collections. It also helps museums share their collections with wider audiences by supporting a range of tours and exhibitions, and makes additional grants to support the training and professional development of curators. Art Fund is independently funded, with the core of its income provided by 139,000 members who receive the National Art Pass and enjoy free entry to over 320 museums, galleries and historic places across the



UK, as well as 50% off entry to major exhibitions and subscription to Art Quarterly magazine. In addition to grant-giving, Art Fund's support for museums includes Art Fund Museum of the Year (won by The Hepworth Wakefield in 2017) and a range of digital platforms.

Find out more about Art Fund and the National Art Pass at www.artfund.org

About Art Fund Museum of the Year

Art Fund Museum of the Year is awarded each year to a truly visionary organisation – one that readily rethinks established ways of working, and offers great quality and ingenuity in all its activities. Art Fund has supported Museum of the Year since 2008. Its forerunner was the Prize for Museums and Galleries, administered by the Museum Prize Trust and sponsored by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation from 2003-2007. The prize champions what museums do, encourages more people to visit and gets to the heart of what makes a truly outstanding public facility. The judges present the prize to the museum or gallery that has shown how their achievements of the preceding year stand out, demonstrated what makes their work innovative, and the impact it has had on audiences. These achievements might include:

- Bold and imaginative exhibitions, collection displays or collection conservation projects
- Learning programmes that have developed the skills, knowledge and enjoyment of children, young people and adults in new ways
- Exceptional acquisitions that have had a real impact on the museum and its audiences
- Audience engagement, diversity or access initiatives that have greatly broadened participation, and creative use of technology or digital media
- Substantial programmes of modernisation, reorganisation or reinterpretation that have had a transformative impact
- New building, refurbishments or reinventions of existing spaces that have had a strong impact on the museum and its audiences

Winners over the past seven years were: the Hepworth Wakefield (2017); V&A (2016); the Whitworth (2015); Yorkshire Sculpture Park (2014); William Morris Gallery (2013); Royal Albert Memorial Museum (2012); and the British Museum (2011).