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# Newsletter

THE  
HOLBURNE  
MUSEUM

FOR SUPPORTERS OF THE HOLBURNE MUSEUM    AUTUMN 2020

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CANALETTO: *Painting Venice*  
new exhibition opens January 2021

PRECIOUS AND RARE:  
*Islamic Metalwork from The Courtauld*  
new display opens January 2021



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Front cover images:

Above:  
Giovanni Antonio Canal,  
called Canaletto (1697 - 1768)  
*Campo Santa Maria Formosa*  
1730s, oil on canvas, © From  
the Woburn Abbey Collection

Below:  
Metalwork bag, Mosul,  
northern Iraq, 1300-1330.  
Brass with silver and gold inlay  
© The Samuel Courtauld Trust,  
The Courtauld Gallery, London

Right:  
Grayson Perry (1960 - )  
*Biker Pot*, 1992, glazed ceramic  
© Grayson Perry. Courtesy the artist  
and Victoria Miro, London/Venice



We are very pleased that our critically acclaimed and hugely popular exhibition, **Grayson Perry: The Pre-Therapy Years** has been extended, and is now on display until 3rd January 2021.

## Jonno's letter

*Dear Holburne Supporters all,*  
This year is proving to be a testing one for everyone in very many ways, to put it mildly.

The coronavirus is having a catastrophic effect in every field of life and human endeavour. Inevitably, the Holburne is not immune from the difficulties created by the lockdown and enforced closure of galleries and other public spaces.

However, the Museum is very fortunate to have strong and loyal support from our Friends, Patrons, Exhibition Circle Members, and beyond.

We are immensely grateful that so many people who love the Holburne and all that the Museum does, have stepped up and given very generously to help us in this time of crisis.

I would like to add my thanks to everyone who has helped in many ways this year, and I very much hope that your continued support will see the Holburne thriving once more.

Normally our Newsletter is brimming with events and day trips, but as you will understand, we have sadly had to postpone everything we had planned this year. I'm sorry that this has been necessary, however, we are looking forward to hopefully offering an array of beautiful and inspiring things to see and do in 2021-22.

Further details about these trips will be announced in the new year...watch this space!

In the meantime I hope you enjoy reading the articles and news updates inside.



Jonno Davis

As Christmas fast approaches we are planning to have our own mini Holburne sale on the evening of Friday 4th December - a chance to enjoy the festive atmosphere and buy fine quality secondhand books, lovely Christmas gifts, or something from our new produce stall and support the Museum at the same time. I hope you will come along, bring your friends and families too, and I look forward to seeing many of you then.

We are always looking for people to help us with such one-off events, (no need to join the committee or anything formal), so if you would be willing to offer a bit of spare time, we would love to hear from you. Do get in touch via the Museum.

Thank you all again for supporting the Holburne.

Jonno Davis  
Chairman, Holburne Supporters

## A message from Chris Stephens

Dear all,

It seems like such a long time since we've been able to send the regular supporters' Newsletter. For all of those not on email, I'm so pleased that we are able to finally write.

I cannot tell you how great it was to open up the Holburne again in July and to welcome our Patrons, Friends and visitors back to enjoy a day with us after fifteen long weeks of closure. We were one of the first museums in the country to reopen, and whilst attendance was low at the beginning, things really picked up in August. It has naturally quietened down a little since the holiday season ended and the changing situation continues to keep us on our toes. On the bright side, as people have noted in relation to other museums, with reduced attendance and our Covid-secure one-way system, in some ways **there has never been a better time to visit.**

More broadly, several positive things came out of the lockdown. While most of our team were furloughed, our small skeleton staff were brilliantly adaptable at working together to deliver digital programmes and protect the organisation

financially. At the same time, there has been a fantastic collaborative effort across the city with charities, businesses and attractions talking to each other like never before, and it feels like we all share the same ambition - to secure the future of our organisations and provide welcoming, therapeutic, inspiring experiences for everyone in Bath and around. Our core mission of **'Changing Lives Through Art'** has never felt more relevant.

It was also apparent that there was a national recognition of the importance of the Holburne as one of the country's most significant, and loved, small art museums. As you know, we had a wonderful response to our fundraising appeal and Arts Council England, the Paul Mellon Centre and the National Lottery Heritage Fund awarded a real **lifeline of emergency funding** to aid our recovery and test new ways of working. Over the past few weeks we have been sending out creative *Art & Wellbeing* packs into schools and hospitals in B&NES and Wiltshire thanks to the National Lottery Community Fund. We are also starting to develop new ways of

reaching local schools and the 2,500 children we would normally welcome through new digital resources. Restrictions of course mean that it is difficult to convene group activities like our pre-school groups, workshops and talks - we so miss the buzz that comes from the crowds gathering at the Holburne and we are always looking for ways to fill that gap. If anyone has any ideas do please get in touch.

As you know, the Holburne is an independent charity and receives no public funding from either national or local government: 56% of the Museum's income comes from our visitors - tickets, cafe, venue hire and shop, and 44% comes from fundraising and donations. We have been working hard to welcome everyone back safely and have felt particularly lucky to have a garden cafe during the gorgeous summer weather for visitors to enjoy a coffee outside. We are working on ways to maintain that facility even as autumn wraps us in its mists and mellow fruitfulness.

We were delighted to be able to extend **Grayson Perry: The Pre-Therapy Years** until

## A message from Chris Stephens continued

3 January 2021, and it's been brilliant to see the catalogue, plates, mugs and tea towels fly off the shelves. They have been amazingly popular (I even spent some of lockdown packing and posting dozens of boxes) so do make sure you secure yours before the end of the show.

Whilst we don't know what the future holds, we are planning as best we can. Most of the programme we had planned for this year has been moved into 2021. The whole year's programme will be announced very soon but I can tell you that it will include an exhibition of the most important set of **Canaletto** views of Venice, never shown together outside its usual

home at Woburn Abbey. It will be accompanied by a display of rare mediaeval **Islamic metalwork**, and a focused look at **Thomas Lawrence's** time in Bath as a child prodigy. We are grateful for the sponsorship and help given towards these displays to date in the circumstances, and would love to hear from you if you'd like to **join our Exhibition Circle of support**.

Everybody at the Holburne has been very moved by the loyalty of our supporters even when we were shut and could only offer activities online. Once again, thank you for being there and for sticking with us over the last difficult months and helping us through. Whilst we can't host

some of our normal events and activities, we hope to see you enjoying the galleries and garden. We are also aware that many of you remain at home, so if you would like to write and share something with us, we'd love to hear from you. Everybody - people and organisations - are in challenging and uncertain situations but the Holburne is especially fortunate to have such a committed and passionate group of Friends and supporters.

**Thank you all.**

With best wishes,  
Chris

*Dr Chris Stephens, Director*

Grayson Perry is one of the UK's leading artists. This exhibition focuses on his early work, from 1982 to 1988, when he employed vibrant, realistic and made his first works in clay. After a series of exhibitions in various small galleries, in 1988 his first major exhibition was organised by the establishment, securing what he describes as his distinctive identity as the 'maverick' potter.

Perry grew up in Epsom, Essex and taught pottery from a troubled childhood to an imaginary world ruled over by the teddy bear, Alan Mowbray. As Professorial Potter and artist, living in a London apartment, he was part of the Punk group of artists, musicians and performers, particularly the New Realists, a performance collective connected to the New Romantic



Chris Stephens, left, with Grayson Perry at the exhibition private view  
© Evoke Pictures



## Creativity at home

Over the past few months we have been creating and sending out art packs to members of the Museum's Recollection group, while we couldn't welcome any of our visitors or groups in person.

**Recollection** is a project offering relaxing, creative and enjoyable experiences in museum settings for people living with dementia and their

carers. Normally, the group would meet regularly with a member of the team and a specialist art psychotherapist to create work inspired by the Holburne's collection and exhibitions; for example, last year a display of the work of children's author and illustrator Lauren Child was the inspiration for some beautiful collaged pictures, and we also introduced a

theme 'Making Memories with Materials' where activities included a painted decoupage 'Box of Delights' and mosaic tiles inspired by the work of Candace Bahouth. Members tiled and grouted their own coasters in a variety of bold colours, reflecting Bahouth's vibrant works.



One of our Recollection groups at work in the Museum (NB the photo was taken before lockdown).

**“ We cannot thank you enough for your kindness. We have been so isolated during lockdown and your packs have kept us going. It is so hard with my husband not understanding why he can't go out and these activities help calm him down. We are so grateful to you. I don't know how we would have coped without them arriving each week. ”**



## Creativity at home continued

With the sessions on pause, we distributed bespoke art packs containing high quality paints and brushes, oil pastels, collage papers and an exciting array of craft materials to use at home. These were accompanied by a different creative activity each week, inspired by a museum object or artist, and additional supportive resources.

We are so happy to have been able to keep the group going in this way, and that everyone can all still feel connected, despite physically being apart.

“*Thank you sooooo much for the fantastic pack that you sent to mum and dad’s. We really appreciate it and it contained so many goodies!*”

**Recollection** is made possible each year thanks to a donation by a Holburne supporter.

If you are interested in helping, please get in touch.



## Museum profile: Monserrat Pis Marcos Curator at the Holburne Museum



In March 2020, the Holburne welcomed a new Curator, Monserrat (also known as Monse; pictured above) as the successor to Catrin Jones who moved to take up the position of Chief Curator of the V&A Collection at World of Wedgwood in Stoke on Trent.

Monse joined the Museum just a week before lockdown, and alongside colleagues is responsible for the planning and implementation of the Museum's programme of exhibitions and displays, while overseeing the care of the collection.

Monse shares a bit about her background with us:

I completed a BA in Art History at the University of Santiago de Compostela, followed by two MA's, one in Management of Cultural Heritage in Florence and another in Curatorial Studies at the Courtauld in London. In the last decade I have worked in five countries and across several museum departments, from conservation science to education and curatorial.

Before joining the Holburne I was a Curator at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, in Norwich. I chose art history as a career path, and museums in particular, because I love feeling that I am contributing to the care, study and preservation of a legacy that hopefully will exist long after I am gone myself.

Working on exhibitions that open new worlds to visitors, learning about objects that question my understanding and my perception of everyday life, having the honour – and responsibility – to look after a heritage that our forebears left behind is, to me, one of the most rewarding and beautiful

experiences that one can be entrusted with.

In my view, being a curator means keeping an open mind, listening, interrogating, learning and sharing. These are times of uncertainty and fluidity and I feel that flexibility (of people and institutions) will be key in the future.

The last few months since I started in this post have been a rollercoaster: new job, new city, new life... I joined the Holburne at a very difficult time (a week before lockdown) and since my first day I have been in awe of the passion and dedication of the staff, but also of you all: our community. Your support and generosity is keeping the Museum afloat, both financially and emotionally.

I firmly believe that a museum is made of objects as much as it is made of people, and I think that the Holburne is in the very fortunate position of possessing both.

I hope to have the chance to meet you at the Museum (or online) soon.

*Monserrat Pis Marcos*



# National Gallery Contemporary Fellowship



Nalini Malani,  
in her Bombay studio  
Photo: Johan Pijnappel  
© Nalini Malani

Earlier this year, we were delighted to receive the news that the Holburne had been selected as the inaugural partner of the new National Gallery Contemporary Fellowship with Art Fund - a pioneering, peer-to-peer collaboration between the Gallery and a non-London collecting institution. The recipient of the Fellowship, which is awarded to an artist of international standing with a major body of work that has significantly contributed to 20th and 21st century art, will be contemporary Indian artist Nalini Malani.

Although we are uncertain on the future impact of Covid, the two-year research, production, and exhibition programme is set to allow Malani to work in close collaboration with specialists from both the National Gallery and the Holburne Museum to study the institutions and their collections and to create new art for an exhibition in Bath and London during 2022-23.

The research and production process and final artworks will be documented in a publication and the Holburne

Museum will have the opportunity to acquire a work which has been created as part of the Fellowship.

Nalini Malani, born in 1946, lives and works in Mumbai, India. Graduating from the Sir JJ School of Art, Mumbai, in 1969, her practice began with experimental film and photography. For over five decades, her work has focused on human and universal aspects of conflict, giving a voice to the stories of those marginalised by history - particularly women. As a pioneer of video art in India, she creates immersive installations, theatre, ephemeral wall drawings, erasure performances and her signature 'shadow plays'.

**"It's a great honour to be selected, by this international committee, to become the inaugural National Gallery Contemporary Fellow.**

**This two-year programme, is a unique challenge to research and create in conversation with the collections and the teams of the National Gallery and the Holburne Museum."**

*Nalini Malani*

## Holburne Insights: an object I love

Animals have been a constant source of inspiration for artists and makers. The Holburne has several animal-shaped objects, some of which were created for specific purposes.

This creamer in the shape of a cow is a perfect example of the relation between form and function. The creamer was filled by opening the top lid, shaped as a fly, and was lifted by the animal's tail, with liquid pouring from the mouth, acting as a spout.

The rise in the consumption of tea, coffee and hot

chocolate created a need for specific equipment to prepare and serve such drinks. Cow creamers were first introduced in the Netherlands in the early 18th century and they soon became fashionable among the English elite. They were originally produced in stoneware from potteries located in Staffordshire, South Wales, Yorkshire, Tyneside and Scotland. Silver cow creamers appeared a few years later, in the 1750s.

This object was made by John Schuppe, a Dutch

immigrant who settled in London and entered his own mark in 1753. He specialised in this kind of vessel and produced some of the finest examples of the era. Cow creamers were made in sections that were later welded together: the sides of the body, the head, the legs or the tail were all modelled separately. It is a prime example of how silver can be manipulated to include tiny, delicate details. They became so popular that their production has continued until the present day!

*Monserrat Pis Marcos, Curator*



Cow creamer  
John Schuppe (active 1753-1777)  
Silver 1755/56  
Holburne Museum S44

## Planning a special day in 2021?

The Museum is now taking bookings for weddings and celebrations for summer 2021 onwards.

The Holburne is one of Bath's landmark destinations, and we normally host a wide variety of events, from movie and TV filming to birthday parties and beautiful weddings. We'd be delighted to speak to our Patrons and Friends about a special day or evening that you might be planning in the future.

Treat your guests to a celebration in our Ballroom Gallery overlooking Great Pulteney Street (we're revamping to remove the main table this autumn!), or a summer BBQ, fizz and music in the Garden. The Museum works with lighting designers, caterers and event companies to your specification.

*All bookings help to support the care of the Museum and our collection.  
For enquiries and bookings please contact [privatehire@holburne.org](mailto:privatehire@holburne.org)*



## An appreciation of Ann Hopkins-Clarke

On behalf of the Holburne's staff and trustees, past and present, I am very sorry to mark the death of one of the Museum's most loyal supporters. Ann Hopkins-Clarke (1931-2020) was involved with the Holburne Museum over many decades, in a uniquely varied number of roles. From 1986 to 1996 she was Chair of the Friends of the Holburne and from 1996 to 1999 she chaired the Board of Trustees. After that she served loyally as a volunteer and, in more recent years, participated in our *Recollection* workshops.

Ann, whose father Major Adrian Hopkins served three

terms as Mayor of Bath, was a loyal public servant more broadly: a Tourist Board guide and a popular NADFAS lecturer, she was a trustee of the Bath Postal Museum and worked tirelessly to restore Ralph Allen's Mausoleum.

As chair of the Friends of the Holburne, Ann's energy and fundraising helped the Museum through difficult times. She researched an exhibition of Ernest Cook's extraordinary collection, *Gift to the Nation*, 1991, drawing works from numerous different museums, and worked to raise the Holburne's profile, not least with an exhibition of highlights from the collection at Christie's in London in 1998.

Her short term as Chair of the Trustees radically changed the history of the Holburne as, in consultation with the Heritage Lottery Fund, she strengthened the Board and set in motion a process of redevelopment that would culminate in the opening of Eric Parry's extension in 2011. Having gracefully stepped aside from the Board, Ann continued as a Volunteer until 2018, enthraling visitors with her knowledge of the Picture Gallery in particular. Until very recently, she was

often to be seen in the galleries and café or on the terrace visibly revelling in the lively atmosphere of the Museum she had served with such loyalty and commitment. We shall miss her.

*Chris Stephens, Director*

*Memories of Ann from Sidney Blackmore (Chairman of the Friends 1999-2013):*

Ann's enthusiasm for art history and for Bath was infectious. Ann was greatly aided by her husband Mac, who died in 2011, who was vice-chair and then Chairman of the Friends 1996-1999. She was ever energetic in encouraging support for the Holburne.

One summer evening in 1999, over a drink in her garden, I was persuaded to take on the role of Chairman of the Friends. I look back on this as one of those unexpected and life changing moments. She was immensely proud that her father had been Mayor of Bath three times. In a photograph of Queen Mary's visit to the Assembly Rooms in 1938, Mayor Hopkins is shown inviting the Queen to sign the visitors' book, whilst in the background can be seen the small figure of Ann inspecting a sedan chair!



Left: photograph of Ann Hopkins-Clarke courtesy of David Wiltshire

## 60-second news update

A page to keep you up to date with recent news and fundraising developments.

The Museum has been awarded a lifeline emergency grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (£210,400) to support vital operational, maintenance and staffing costs post-lockdown. We are continuing to fundraise to support the Museum through the current pandemic.

80% of our wonderful team of volunteers have been able to return to help at the Museum, with others keeping in touch from home. We're also delighted to welcome a new cohort of students and graduates.

Our new acquisition of Bow porcelain, which is currently on display, will be publicly deinstalled and documented during opening hours from the 12th to 22nd October, for all to see.

Throughout lockdown we have been trialling new ways of creating digital content online – including our *Creativity4Wellbeing* art group supporting mental health through art, and a



Left: *Harrison's Walk* Thomas Loggan (1706-after 1754) Fan leaf, engraving and gouache on paper c.1749/50 Holburne Museum no.2017.1

number of new films to help promote *Grayson Perry: The Pre-Therapy Years*.

200 Art & Wellbeing packs have been made and distributed to schools and hospitals across Wiltshire, Bath and north east Somerset, thanks to funding from the National Lottery Community Fund.

To create a more flexible and exciting space for temporary exhibitions, sculpture and events, we will soon be starting the tricky task of removing the display case and long table in our Ballroom Gallery.



Above: We were delighted to welcome the BBC's *Bargain Hunt* team for filming over the summer.

Photograph courtesy of Sylvie Broussine

Two recently acquired fans, *Harrison's Walk* by Thomas Loggan c.1750 and *Allegorical Map of the Track of Youth, to the Land of Knowledge*, have been sent off for conservation thanks to funding from the Finnis Scott Foundation.

We don't know what the future holds, but we are continuing to work on exhibitions to the best of our ability. This includes three beautiful shows opening early in 2021: *Canaletto: Painting Venice*, *Thomas Lawrence: Coming of Age* and *Precious and Rare: Islamic Metalwork from The Courtauld*.

We have been working with partners Bath Festival, The Egg and House of Imagination to send out creative packs to local children and families impacted by Covid-19.





*You are invited to the Holburne  
Christmas 2020 evening sale!*

*Do come along to the Museum  
and support our special festive sale event,  
with all proceeds going to the Holburne.*

*We are planning to have stalls  
offering fine secondhand books,  
lovely gifts, tasty produce,  
delicious Christmas cakes,  
plus other goodies and surprises  
to buy and enjoy.*

*Do bring your family and friends -  
everyone is welcome!*

*Friday 4th December 2020  
6:00pm to 9:00pm*

### *Can you help?*

One of our fund-raising events on 4th December will be to have a 'fizz and sparkling' tombola...we would love to hear from you if you have some bottles you'd like to donate... anything from Champagne to Cava, Crémant or Prosecco would make Christmas sparkle! Please contact Olivia Eliot on 01225 462156 for collection or leave your kind donation at the Holburne's front desk. *Thank you* in advance!



## Exhibition Circle and Patrons

### Curator's talk

On the 12th and 15th October we're delighted to invite Exhibition Circle members and Patrons to hear more about the acquisition of the Holburne's new collection of Bow porcelain, which is currently on display in the Ballroom Gallery.

Founded in the mid-1740s, the Bow factory, located in Bow,

in east London, was the first English manufacturer to make porcelain on a commercial scale. Famous for its imitations of imported Chinese and Japanese porcelain, the factory also produced some of the earliest full-length figures in English porcelain; some of these were modelled after personalities of the day, either political or theatrical.

The objects on display are part of the Geoffrey Freeman Collection of Bow porcelain, which were transferred to the Holburne from the Pallant House Gallery, in Chichester, in 2019, substantially improving the Museum's holdings.

At the same time as deinstalling the exhibition, the team will be taking the opportunity to document the entire collection in public view. Museums carry out a wealth of activities that are key to the care and preservation of their collections, but many of these actions normally happen behind the scenes! We thought that this was a golden opportunity to allow visitors to see what it is like to deinstall a temporary display while documenting the objects at the same time.

For our Exhibition Circle and Patrons, the curatorial team will be speaking about the process of safely documenting over 300 pieces of porcelain including photography, conservation and provenance. In the current circumstances, spaces are limited, but please email Camilla Johns at: [c.johns@holburne.org](mailto:c.johns@holburne.org) if you'd like to join us.



Left, bottle, with *Kakiemon* decoration, Bow Porcelain Factory, soft-paste porcelain c.1755. Museum no. B.061. Image courtesy Pallant House Gallery.

Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769-1830) *Arthur Atherley*  
1791, oil on canvas © Holburne Museum 2016.1



New exhibitions at the Holburne Museum, opening in January 2021

## Thomas Lawrence

1780-1794:

### *Coming of Age*

A new *In Focus* exhibition

## Canaletto:

### *Painting Venice*

A stunning exhibition from the Woburn Abbey collections

## *Precious and rare:*

### *Islamic Metalwork from The Courtauld*

Masterpieces of medieval metalwork

We can only continue to create great exhibitions and bring the best art to Bath with your help. If you are interested in helping the Museum to **rebuild and recover** by **supporting a future exhibition** or **becoming a Patron** from £50 per month, we would love to hear from you. Donations, however large or small, will make a difference.

#### Holburne Supporters Committee

Jonathan Davis, Chairman; Newsletter Designer and Editor  
Olivia Eliot, Deputy Chairman and Foreign Tours  
Mary Jane Wilkinson, Honorary Secretary

#### Committee Members

Jennifer Bereska, Deputy Treasurer  
Will Darby, co-opted member; Patrons' Representative  
Richard Frewer, (former Holburne Trustee), Music  
Mark Hake, Galleries, Gardens and House Tours  
Tim Locke, Supporters' Web Pages  
Anton Young, co-opted member; Patrons' Representative

#### The Holburne Museum

Great Pulteney Street, Bath BA2 4DB

The Museum is open Mon-Sat: 10-5  
Sunday and Bank Holidays: 11-5  
Closed 24th-26th Dec and 1st Jan

*All Museum supporters enjoy free unlimited entry to the collections and special exhibitions*

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