

Four Scottish artists' work acquired by Government Art Collection

- Four contemporary Scottish artists are among 45 visual artists whose work has been acquired by the UK Government Art Collection
- The £230,000 acquisition project, developed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, celebrates and supports the diversity of creativity across the whole of the UK
- Works will be displayed in Government buildings around the country, and internationally in British Embassies and Residences

Award-winning artist Alberta Whittle and Glasgow-based painter Rabiya Choudhry are among four Scottish artists whose work has been bought by the prestigious UK Government Art Collection.

Organised in response to the impact of the pandemic on the visual arts sector, the £230,000 X-UK acquisition project celebrates the diversity of creativity across the UK, with 45 contemporary visual artists from all parts of the country represented.

Working in collaboration with the Scottish Contemporary Art Network, as well as national networks in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the project has resulted in over 90 works becoming part of the Government Art Collection.

The newly-acquired pieces will join the 14,500 other works in the Government Art Collection which are displayed in Government buildings across the UK, including in No.10 and No.11 Downing Street, and internationally in British Embassies and Residences in a total of 130 countries around the world.

Culture Minister Caroline Dinenage said:

“The past year has been challenging for the UK’s many brilliant artists. I am grateful that the Government Art Collection has been able to support a diverse range of artists from every corner of the country.”

UK Government Minister for Scotland Iain Stewart said:

The past year has been extremely difficult for the creative community, so we’re delighted to support these four outstanding Scottish artists by acquiring their works for the UK Government Art Collection. The pieces provide a creative snapshot of the times

we're living through, reflecting a rich variety of voices from right across the UK.

The UK Government has worked hard to support Scotland's arts and culture sector throughout the pandemic, providing the Scottish Government with £97 million to sustain the country's arts organisations and backing the Edinburgh Festivals with £1 million of funding.

Alberta Whittle is an award-winning artist, working mainly in film, sculpture and performance art, who is set to represent Scotland at the prestigious Venice Art Biennale 2022. With work already in the Scottish National Gallery Collections and Glasgow Museums Collections, three large prints exploring the relationship between history and the body have been acquired for X-UK.

Rabiya Choudhry is a British-Pakistani artist whose paintings are inspired by everything from comic books to song lyrics to the Glasgow clothes shops her dad ran in the 80s and 90s. Her work acquired by the Government Art Collection, *The New Normal*, reflects on the strange year brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Also represented in the list of acquisitions is Glasgow-based artist Jamie Crewe. For the works acquired by the Government Art Collection, Crewe used the 19th century traditional craft of 'well dressing' to create designs formed out of rose petals, elderflowers, poppy seeds and other natural materials on clay slabs.

Designer Beca Lipscombe and artist Lucy McKenzie have collaborated under the name Atelier E.B since 2007 to create work that explores the relationship between art and fashion. Three silkscreen prints acquired for X-UK are based on commemorative travel blankets the pair produced as souvenirs for the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth and 2012 London Olympic Games.

Moira Jeffery, Director, Scottish Contemporary Art Network, said:

We're so proud to have played our part in a scheme that will share with the work of brilliant artists from Scotland, Atelier E.B, Rabiya Choudhry, Jamie Crewe and Alberta Whittle, with audiences across the world. This Government Art Collection initiative is supporting artists through the pandemic and telling a richer story about who is making art today, where, how and why.

Sir David Verey, Chair, Advisory Committee to the Government Art Collection, said:

There is no better way to support artists in this terrible time than to buy their art. The Advisory Committee of the Government Art Collection is very proud to have been part of this effort.