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THE CRAFTS COUNCIL LAUNCHES A NEW 'HOME FOR CRAFT'

The Crafts Council Gallery will showcase the best of contemporary craft and making through a rolling programme of exhibitions and events.

21 June 2021

The Crafts Council Gallery will open in July 2021, the year the Crafts Council celebrates its 50th anniversary, to become one of the few public galleries in the UK dedicated exclusively to contemporary craft and making.

The Gallery is located in a Grade-II listed chapel on Pentonville Road in London, that has been transformed to provide a multi-use space for exhibitions, education, and events. Admission to the Gallery is free. It is a welcome and open space for collaboration, discussion and co-creation with craft makers, the creative community, local residents and families, and anyone with an interest in finding out more about craft.

The first exhibition in the Crafts Council Gallery is *Maker's Eye : Stories of Craft* which will run from 7 July – 21 August 2021. *Maker's Eye* will showcase the largest ever presentation of objects from the Crafts Council Collection and extensive archive.

What does craft mean to you? The Crafts Council asked 13 craft makers to create a 'visual answer' to this. Objects selected for the show include a delicate canary yellow bowl by Austrian-born British studio potter Lucie Rie, an industrial Armitage Shanks basin-mould selected by Turner Prize-winning collective Assemble, an exquisitely carved gold ring by Castro Smith and a pink knitted 'pussy hat' worn on the 2017 Women's March.

In summer 2020 we invited curator, Dr Christine Checinska, to consider what was missing from our collection and add these into *Maker's Eye*. Her selection of works by contemporary makers plays tribute to the founding ethos of the collection – to document innovative practice by emerging makers. Her selection includes to a large-scale textile piece exploring racism by Welsh-Ghanaian artist Anya Paintsil and new ceramics by Shawanda Corbett.

Maker's Eye is a celebration of how irreverent, political, joyful, and challenging craft can be, and invites reflection on what craft means to individuals. It also opens up a conversation about the value of collections, what is documented, who they are for and ultimately whose stories and histories are told.

The Crafts Council Gallery programme in 2021 also includes a retrospective of the bookbinder Faith Shannon (1938-2018) in September, a celebratory 50th

anniversary season of events, and creative residency with TOAST in October and a showcase of new commissions by five female Black artists in November.

Booking will be live from start of July at www.craftscouncil.org.uk/whats-on/makers-eye

Quotes

"We are pleased to finally open the Crafts Council Gallery in our 50th anniversary year. It will provide a key focal point for all that is brilliant about contemporary craft and making in the UK. It gives us an opportunity to inspire, through a diverse and varied programme, to collaborate with our partners in the sector to plan and co-curate ambitious new exhibitions, and to develop new audiences, extending the UK's reputation as a global leader in contemporary craft." Rosy Greenlees, Executive Director of the Crafts Council

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For more information on the Crafts Council visit www.craftscouncil.org.uk and follow @CraftsCouncilUK on Twitter and Facebook

#makerseye #homeforcraft

For high-res images of the Crafts Council Gallery and pieces in Maker's Eye and any other press enquiries please contact Jill Read, Head of Marketing and Communications at j_read@craftscouncil.org.uk or phone +00 44 (0) 20 7806 2549

Notes to Editors

About the Crafts Council Gallery

The Crafts Council Gallery is located in a Grade-II listed chapel on Pentonville Road in London. AOC Architecture led the redevelopment of both the interior and exterior spaces, completing work in 2020. Their development stripped out raised floor and suspended ceilings to uncover the original parquet floor and increase the height of the gallery, they used natural materials such as clay plaster resulting in a richly textural environment. The new Gallery has a flexible exhibition space, a study area housing 5,000 publications and a reception area. The reception desk, study furniture and all architraving was designed and made by Sebastian Cox; Soane Britain created a rattan bench; and lighting was supplied by TM lighting. The outside courtyard has been re-designed to provide an open and accessible welcome to the Gallery. The redevelopment was supported by a range of funders including Arts Council England, City Bridge Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, Wolfson Foundation, Cockayne Foundation.

About Maker's Eye

For more information on the Maker's Eye selectors and all the objects in the exhibition visit www.craftscouncil.org.uk/whats-on/makers-eye

About the Crafts Council

The Crafts Council is the national charity for craft. We believe craft skills and knowledge enrich and uplift us as individuals and can change our world for the better. Through our activities we inspire making, empower learning and nurture craft businesses.

We do this by:

- championing craft and its positive impact on society by showing diverse examples of craft and making, and by reaching new communities who have previously felt excluded from our activity
- increasing levels of craft education and participation by equipping and connecting craft educators, and by campaigning for craft on the curriculum
- growing the market for craft by supporting craft businesses and providing leadership to the craft sector
- building a sustainable and inclusive craft sector by providing support, and by listening to new and existing stakeholders in order to co-create relevant and impactful activity

We want to share our power, work with others, and increase the agency of our communities in order to create an inclusive and thriving craft sector.