

Cartwright Hall Art Gallery and Northern Bridge Consortium

Collaborative Doctoral Award

Establishing an International Collection: Development, Engagement, Display

Proposals are invited for a doctoral research project exploring the establishment of an international collection by the Cartwright Hall Art Gallery, Bradford.

Lead Institution: Teesside University

Partner Organisation: Cartwright Hall Art Gallery

Established in 1904, in the later stages of Britain's "imperial century" by the wealthy industrialist Samuel Lister, and including both colonial and post-colonial artefacts and artworks within its collections, the Cartwright Hall Art Gallery has a long-established and complex relationship with former countries of empire. Its efforts to 'demonstrate a meaningful approach to the representation of cultural identity' (Browne and Souto, 2016) can be traced to the ground-breaking *East Comes West* exhibition, which took place at the gallery during the 1970s. Since then, the Cartwright has endeavoured to collect works associated with the cultural identities of many post-war, and predominantly South Asian, migrants to the Bradford area in which it is situated. Today, the Cartwright is the main municipal art gallery of Bradford MD Council Museums & Galleries Service. It has a strong collection of international contemporary prints and South Asian art and crafts, displayed in its transcultural "Connect" galleries. These seek to acknowledge, celebrate and negotiate connections between different peoples, places and imaginations. Well-known international artists currently on display within the permanent galleries include such names as Yinka Shonibare, Anish Kapoor, Dhruva Mistry, Salima Hashmi, Arpana Caur, and Francis Newton Souza. The collection also includes many decorative arts, Asian textiles and calligraphy.

Website: <https://www.bradfordmuseums.org/venues/cartwright-hall-art-gallery>

Research Focus

This collaborative doctoral award (CDA) will explore Cartwright Hall Art Gallery's establishment and development of its International Art collection, from its origins in the 1970s, to the present day. It will also consider how, during this period, the Cartwright has worked to attract and engage diverse audiences through related exhibitions and permanent displays.

The Gallery houses a small hard copy archive relating to the International Art Collection, which dates back to the mid-1980s. This includes newspaper clippings, exhibition invitations, and "exhibition sheets", which record early events of relevance to the field of enquiry. Also archived are a number of academic and journal contributions by the Gallery's former Senior Keeper of the International Art Collection, Dr. Nima Poovaya-Smith. It is anticipated that the successful applicant will draw on this valuable, and thus far largely untapped, resource for the purposes of their doctoral research project.

The exact shape and scope of the project is open to the successful applicant to propose and refine in conjunction with the supervisory team. However, research questions might include:

- How (far) has the Gallery attempted to establish an International Art Collection since the 1970s?
- How has its approach evolved over time and in relation to contemporary developments in visual arts, museum practice and display?

- What barriers has it faced/does it continue to face, and what have been the most significant steps taken towards achieving this goal?
- In what ways have the transcultural “Connect” displays and special exhibitions attracted, engaged and impacted upon visitors to the Gallery, local and international?
- To what extent does the Cartwright’s current collection reflect the diversity of local audiences, and how far is this important?
- What future direction should its efforts towards establishing an International Art Collection take?

Placement Opportunity

In addition to gaining access to the Cartwright’s archives and to its International Curator’s expertise, the successful applicant would be invited to work alongside the gallery with an element of the Gallery’s collection (for example its collection of South Asian textiles) with a view to producing a curator-focused display and related visitor engagement activity.

The Cartwright is currently in the process of reformulating an application to the Arts Council England’s Designation Scheme, which “identifies and celebrates outstanding collections, which deepen our understanding of the world and what it means to be human”. The Gallery’s support for the CDA is indicative of its wider commitment to fostering intercultural relations, and it hopes that the insights gained through successful candidate’s research will contribute to the realisation of this goal.

Supervision

Dr. Madeline Clements, Senior Lecturer, School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Law, Teesside University (m.a.c.clements@tees.ac.uk)

Nilesh Mistry, Curator, International and Decorative Arts, Cartwright Hall Art Gallery (nilesh.mistry@bradford.gov.uk)

Please direct enquiries/expressions of interest to Dr. Madeline Clements in the first instance. These should be received by no later than 13 December. Please note that the deadline for applications (made to the lead institution, in accordance with Consortium regulations) is 9 January 2019.