

Methodist Modern Art Collection Management Committee - Annual Report

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Status of Paper	Final
Action Required	To approve
Resolutions	59/1. The Council receives the report. 59/2. The Council approves the Terms of Reference for the Methodist Modern Art Collection Management Committee. 59/3. The Council approves the Aims of the Friends of the Methodist Modern Art Collection. 59/4. The Council appoints Corinne Miller and Katharine Farnham-Dear to the Methodist Modern Art Collection Management Committee for a term of up to six years.

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	Following independent reviews of governance and curatorial practices relating to the Methodist Modern Art Collection, the Management Committee is overseeing an extensive programme of conservation of the Collection, proposing new Terms of Reference and developing a suite of new policies and a new loan agreement; all of which will require the Council's approval in due course as trustees of the Collection for the Church. These documents will aim to ensure better management of the care and exhibiting of the Collection. Having withdrawn the Collection from its previous storage at Oxford Brookes University, a new partner organisation is being sought to care for the Collection and promote it between touring exhibitions. The conservation work and creation of new documentation are also all part of the preparation process for re-homing.
Main Points	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rejuvenation pause 2. Other review recommendations 3. Chair and members of the Management Committee
Consultations	Trey Hall, Director of Evangelism & Growth in the Connexional Team, was invited to address the Management Committee and share in considering the Collection as an evangelism resource.

Summary of Impact

Faith and Order	Confirmed – a primary justification for the Church maintaining the Methodist Modern Art Collection is as a way to encourage conversations about Christian faith and God's love in Christ; therefore the Management Committee would wish to seek the support of the Faith and Order Committee in due course for their new 'mission and interpretation' policy.
Financial	Confirmed <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Insurance: The Collection was valued in 2013 at £2,077,000, and is insured for 'all-risks', to cover it in storage, when touring and for the works to be

	<p>handled and hung by enthusiasts wanting to share the gospel, rather than just by gallery professionals. However, a new valuation will be sought from Christie's/Sotheby's London once the conservation programme is complete, as it is recognised that this figure is now out of date and is likely to have increased significantly.</p> <p>2. The Methodist Modern Art Collection will require ongoing investment to continue its care and maintain its condition. The Gibbs Trust continues to provide generous support and the Management Committee is seeking to recruit a new member to their group with fundraising expertise. A detailed update on the expenditure against budget to date during the 'rejuvenation pause' and progress towards re-homing the Collection permanently will be presented to the SRC in April 2020.</p>
Personnel	Confirmed – 0.2FTE of the Methodist Heritage Officer's time is to be allowed for support of the Methodist Modern Art Collection to end August 2021.
Legal	Confirmed – To approve a new loan agreement with borrowers of the Methodist Modern Art Collection.
Wider Connexional	Confirmed – the long-list of potential new homes for the Collection includes Church and non-Church bodies; exhibitions include local Methodist participation even if the venue is a secular gallery or museum.
External (eg ecumenical)	Confirmed – Seeking to develop and/or enhance relations with potential academic partners and relevant arts bodies, eg, Art + Christianity, the Faith Museum; exhibitions are regularly held at least in part in churches and cathedrals of other denominations, as well as non-Church venues.
Risk	While the draw and impact of exhibitions of the Methodist Modern Art Collection is significant (eg, nearly 80k visitors 2016–2018), relentless touring has taken a toll on the fabric of the works. Without appropriate intervention, this valuable asset may be lost to the Church as a mission tool.

1. Rejuvenation pause

- 1.1. The Methodist Modern Art Collection (MMAC) was the inspired initiative of a Methodist layman, Dr John Morel Gibbs (1912 – 1996) from Penarth in South Wales, during the early 1960s. He was Vice-President of the 1958 Conference and renowned as a psychologist and academic. He worked with the local Methodist minister in Penarth, the Revd Douglas Wollen (1909 – 1998), who wrote as an art critic for journals, *The Times* and the *Methodist Recorder*. Together, they acquired some outstanding examples of British 20th Century art, chosen to illustrate aspects of the gospel narrative, from the Nativity to Pentecost. The resulting Collection of just over 50 works includes paintings by artists such as Patrick Heron, Ceri Richards, Graham Sutherland and William Roberts. The Collection has continued to grow thanks to the ongoing support of the Gibbs Family Trust and the donation of works by other benefactors; most recently, in 2018, of a watercolour on paper by Norman Adams, *Behold the Man*¹. The Collection was presented to the Methodist Church, and initially managed by the then Methodist Education Committee, with the Methodist Council having ultimate responsibility, as it does today.
- 1.2. The initial national tour of the Collection entitled *The Church and the Artist* went to major galleries from 1963 to 1965, when more than 100,000 people saw it. The current Management Committee continues to respond to invitations to tour the MMAC extensively, engaging with communities across Great Britain with shows often attracting large audiences. In 2018, the Collection was seen in churches across the Isle of Man, in Bristol, in Cromer, Norfolk, at Winsford, Cheshire, and in a gallery space at the Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin.
- 1.3. However, works from MMAC will be shown only once in 2020. Otherwise, a ‘pause’ has been called in the relentless touring exhibition programme of the past 20 years. Around 20 works will be shown in Bewdley Museum from mid-March to mid-April: www.forallpeoplebewdley.com
- 1.4. The pause was agreed with the SRC to allow for an extensive programme of ‘rejuvenation’ work to be undertaken throughout 2019/2020 and into 2021, funded by the Methodist Church and the Gibbs Family Trust.
- 1.5. While not on tour, the MMAC is being housed in the specialist museums’ consortium storage facility at Upper Heyford, where other Methodist Council historic books, records and artefacts are held (temporarily) in appropriate environmental standards.
- 1.6. Appendix 1 gives an update on the conservation work to 11 February 2020, the most recent meeting of the MMAC management committee. The total cost of the work completed to date (including transport of the paintings in and out of store, to/from the conservators) is just over £35,700. The conservation budget is just over £103k, including re-casing the works after they have been conserved, but excluding transport, curatorial consultancy or storage while a new home is located. Additional funding of £22k per annum has been allowed for this, initially for two years, to get the conserved works relaunched as a touring collection.
- 1.7. The conservation work comprises the appraisal of the restoration needs of each work, followed by surface cleaning, retouching and repair as required, and frames being replaced as necessary.

¹ All the works can be browsed online at:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/reflecting-on-faith/the-methodist-modern-art-collection/browse-the-collection/>

or an updated guidebook to the Collection, entitled *Seeing the Spiritual*, and a book of postcards of 24 of the works, arranged according to the gospel story, are available through Methodist Publishing, published in 2018:

<https://www.methodistpublishing.org.uk/books/9780953813551/seeing-the-spiritual-a-guide-to-the-methodist-modern-art-collection>

- 1.8. A full set of new travelling cases will be specified once the other conservation work is completed, to ensure that, as well as the restored works being stored and transported securely, future borrowers can pack and unpack the works more easily and in consistent ways.
- 1.9. In due course, the entire Collection of more than 50 works will be assessed and conserved as necessary, but the works required for exhibition in Bewdley have been prioritised.
- 1.10. Two new 'pop-up' banners have been commissioned to travel with works from the Collection and for use by Management Committee members when giving talks or attending events to promote the Collection. One gives a very brief history of the Collection and the other outlines something of its missional purpose and part in reaffirming *Our Calling*. A key aim of these banners is to identify the Collection as belonging to the Methodist Church, through the use of the Church's branding. Those borrowing the works usually uniquely name their exhibition and use interpretation to link the images to their chosen theme for the show, rather than telling the story of the Collection. The Committee decided it was important, therefore, that they provided answers to the repeated, basic questions of visitors of how and why the Church comes to own this Collection.
- 1.11. The Bewdley exhibition will not be promoted as the relaunch of the renovated Collection. It is the Management Committee's intention to seek at least one high-profile opportunity to relaunch the whole Collection in 2021, once it is entirely restored. Initially, they are exploring the possibility of having a role in the celebrations for Coventry as City of Culture in 2021. Several of the artists commissioned to create works for the 'new' Coventry Cathedral, which opened in 1962, feature in the MMAC; most notably, Graham Sutherland.
- 1.12. The insurance policy for the Collection has been updated to encompass all risks, to support the Collection being borrowed and hung by largely inexperienced, volunteer teams to support their plans for mission and evangelism. Following the renovation programme, the Collection will be revalued, and any necessary adjustments made to the policy.

2. Other review recommendations

- 2.1. The renovation of the MMAC was prompted in part by two extensive reviews in relation to the Collection carried out in July 2018. Professor Ann Sumner, Chair of the Management Committee, commissioned two separate investigations of governance and curatorial practice in relation to the Collection. These indicated that the conditions in which the Collection was being stored were not ideal and that a new home and improved documentation would be advisable, particularly if the Committee aspired to care standards equivalent to those required for Museum Accreditation (the standard maintained by our key Methodist heritage sites).
- 2.2. As a result, new Terms of Reference for the MMAC Management Committee have been drawn up and are shown below, together with the associated Aims of the Friends group. The Management Committee requests the Council's approval of these documents.
- 2.3. A freelance registrar is being recruited to develop other documentation, including establishing a new electronic 'MODES' catalogue, to track the condition, conservation needs and whereabouts of the works once a new baseline is established by the current restoration programme. (This is the same collection management software as used by our key Methodist heritage sites.)
- 2.4. The registrar will also draw up with the Committee and with input from the connexional legal advisers, a new 'Loan Agreement' and 'Terms & Conditions' documents, which will make more stringent demands on borrowers. There is already an expectation that borrowers will develop an extensive outreach and engagement programme to support any exhibition of the Collection. However, some of the practical considerations on how to hang the works, stewarding and security have been given insufficient consideration and have thus been under-resourced by borrowers

recently. It has become apparent that this was because borrowers viewed our guidance as advisory and not a loan requirement. This is being addressed.

- 2.5. The Committee is also creating a suite of new policy documents, including a 'Collection Development Policy', addressing disposals and potential future acquisitions, and a 'Mission and Interpretation Policy', which takes into consideration the direction of the developing Evangelism and Growth Strategy. The Management Committee will aim to bring all these new documents together for the Council's approval in October 2020; it considers them essential to 'getting our house in order' for partnership with any suitable organisation that may offer the MMAC a home.

3. Chair and members of the Management Committee

- 3.1. Several recent resignations have opened up three vacancies on the MMAC Management Committee. A very strong field of candidates came forward, but with the extensive and relatively rapid pace of change at present, the nomination panel felt it was imperative to focus on strengthening the Committee in the areas that a skills audit had identified as needful and not just make three 'good' nominations. As no one came forward with experience and enthusiasm for fundraising, a vacancy has been left open. All the potential committee members seen and not nominated here would like to be reconsidered in any future appointments.
- 3.2. The MMAC Management Committee is delighted to bring the names of Corinne Miller and Katharine Farnham-Dear for appointment to the Committee. Corinne Miller is a very experienced gallery professional. She was Head of Culture, Arts and Heritage for Wolverhampton City Council until 2015. Katherine Farnham-Dear has a professional background as a property lawyer in the City of London. She is particularly interested to support the promotion of the MMAC.
- 3.3. The new 'Terms of Reference', if approved, would introduce a six-year term of office for MMAC Committee Members (as 'three years with an extension option of three'). The Committee expects at least one existing member to reach the first three-year point this autumn and unfortunately not to seek re-election due to increased work and family commitments and so they are planning a further recruitment to their number.
- 3.4. The MMAC Management Committee is very sorry to have to inform the Council that the Committee's Chair, Professor Ann Sumner, is currently unable to fulfil that role due to serious illness. Professor Sumner became ill towards the end of 2019 and is not expected to return to this post until at least mid-summer 2020. Members of the Committee are currently sharing the work of chairing; they have been encouraged by Professor Sumner to identify a vice chair from among their number. The Connexional Team and members are in discussion with the Secretary of the Conference about interim leadership to maintain the momentum for change and improvement that Professor Sumner has initiated. She remains in our prayers.
- 3.5. The management of the logistics for the conservation programme has been overseen by members of the Connexional Team.
- 3.6. For the period from now to the end of the connexional year 2020/2021, with the support of the Methodist Heritage Committee and Connexional Team senior management team, the role of the Methodist Heritage Officer will be modified to focus on our historic collections and specifically include support for the MMAC for the equivalent of one day per week. This will be to maintain the profile of the MMAC during the pause and help with plans for a relaunch and re-establishing the MMAC touring exhibition programme, and to support any negotiations towards proposing a new permanent base for the Collection.

*****RESOLUTIONS**

59/1. The Council receives the report.

59/2. The Council approves the proposed Terms of Reference for the Methodist Modern Art Collection Management Committee.

59/3. The Council approves the Aims of the Friends of the Methodist Modern Art Collection.

59/4. The Council appoints Corinne Miller and Katharine Farnham-Dear to the Methodist Modern Art Collection Management Committee for a term of up to six years.

Terms of Reference for the Methodist Modern Art Collection Management Committee

1 Name

The Methodist Modern Art Collection Management Committee (MMACMC)

2 Aims and objectives

The MMACMC aims to protect, advocate and advance the Methodist Modern Art Collection (hereafter 'the Collection') and its associated activities throughout the Methodist Connexion and beyond, ensuring there is clear vision, mission and strategic direction.

To achieve this, the MMACMC will have its key objectives:

(i) to formulate and keep under review an overall Strategic Framework for the development and advancement of the Collection, with a particular focus on the role of the Collection and its associated activities as a tool for the contemporary mission aims of the Methodist Church;

(ii) to oversee the care and conservation of the works of art in the Collection, producing clear policies ensuring their best use in the service of the aims of the Collection and the Church, commissioning and responding to the advice of appropriate professional support as required;

(iii) to assure the principal purpose of the Collection as being presented in exhibitions in diverse venues, including a home location, and being available for loan, in the UK and beyond, both as a whole and as individual works;

(iv) to ensure the Collection is housed in an appropriate host home with suitable storage and display space including for archives, and a clear Service Level Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding, ensuring an effective nurturing relationship with the partner institution, outlining clear workplans which are biannually reviewed and the overall arrangement subject to re-negotiation every five years;

(v) to provide a long-term policy for associated activities in interpretation, engagement and communication, and devise and support appropriate strategies to ensure the value of the Collection across visual arts communities and for achieving mission aims of the Church;

(vi) be the accountable body for the achievement and maintenance of appropriate standards in the care and display of works of art and related archives, to the standard required for Museum Accreditation;

(vii) to provide and review a policy towards new acquisitions, whether through gift, bequest, purchase or long-term loan, and disposal;

(viii) to provide a long-term policy and appropriate strategies for fundraising and income generation, implementing these to help ensure the sustainability of the Collection and its associated activities;

(ix) to provide effective and relevant annual reports to the Methodist Council, and to partners, stakeholders and audiences involved in the work of MMAC.

3 Authorising body:

The committee reports to the Methodist Council.

4 Membership

(a) the committee shall consist of:

- (i) Chair and Vice-chair, with clear role descriptions appointed for six years
 - (ii) a representative of Methodist Council, subject to term of office
 - (iv) a representative of the Gibbs family Trusts or their nomination
 - (v) a representative of the Connexional Team who will hold the budget
 - (vi) up to six other members, including Secretary to the Friends, with clear role descriptions
- (b) All Committee members shall agree to cordial and collegiate working and personal development as appropriate to assist with management issues.

5 Membership criteria

The appointments to the committee will consider the following:

- (i) the role descriptions and person specifications of Chair and Vice-chair, and the generic role description and person specifications for other committee members
- (ii) the six members should be appointed to endeavour to ensure that at any one time the Committee, as a whole, has knowledge, skills and experience in the following areas: -
 - Knowledge of modern and contemporary visual arts
 - Education and learning
 - IT and appropriate contemporary software applications
 - Marketing, tourism and communication, including use of social media
 - Fundraising and sponsorship
 - Exhibition programming and planning
 - Events and activity organisation
 - Theology and knowledge or experience of Methodist Mission and the World Church
 - Object care, conservation and documentation
 - Engagement with contemporary debates about equalities and diversity within the Methodist Church and beyond

The Committee shall ensure that if there are gaps in the skill set in particular areas, they seek external support as required.

6 Sub-Committees and task groups

The Committee may appoint from within its membership sub-committees with a clearly defined role and duration. To ensure effective working, the Chair may delegate to a separate member of the committee the role of convenor of a sub-committee. That sub-committee convenor will provide full reports and minutes to the full Committee.

The number of meetings a sub-committee will require will be agreed at a meeting of the full committee. The full committee may decide to stand down or revise the purposes of sub-committees through regular review of their relevance and efficacy.

Sub-committees may invite individuals with appropriate expertise to contribute to their discussions, but these individuals will not become members of the sub-committee.

The Committee may also agree to appoint task groups with defined timelines to achieve specific goals, as required from time to time.

7 Length of service

The Chair and Vice Chair, after appropriate appointment procedures, shall be appointed for a term of six years.

Committee Members shall be appointed for three years, renewable for a further three years to a maximum of six years.

The Committee may ask for an individual to return to serve for a further three years after an appropriate break in service.

Debrief (exit interviews) shall take place with members who leave the Committee so that loss of institutional experience is minimised.

A notice period of three months shall be requested if members are not seeking re-appointment.

8 Processes for appointing

The Chair will be nominated by a panel arranged by a representative of the Methodist Council and the Connexional Team, following advertising in appropriate contexts and in accordance with current best practice represented through organisations such as the Association of Chairs and the Charities Commission. The Committee will ensure a breadth of members by promoting expressions of interest and advertising in appropriate contexts, with an interview stage and the taking up of references, prior to recommendation. Each recommended member will be appointed by the Methodist Council.

Appointments will be made within a clearly defined schedule of recruitment. This schedule will take into account the need for balance between continuity and refreshment of committee membership given each member's length of service. Succession planning will aim to maintain knowledge and experience on the Committee.

All new Committee members will receive a period of induction and will be mentored by an experienced Committee member.

An annual review opportunity for each Committee member can be organised, allowing for feedback of experience in role and practice, again guided by current best practice from organisations such as the Charities Commission and Association of Chairs.

9 Connexional Team Contact and internal reporting

The Connexional Secretary will nominate an appropriate member of the Connexional Team to be the principal contact for the Committee. This person will attend the Committee's meetings as an observer and officially hold all budgets. From time to time, and as appropriate, other members of the Connexional Team may attend meetings and report on areas such as Communication and Mission.

10 Number of meetings

There should be three full meetings of the Committee per annum.

In addition to these meetings, an annual away day with a review element, for the whole Committee to reflect and assess strategic discussion. This meeting may coincide with a wider meeting of the Friends of

MMAC and other interested partners and parties so that the work of the Committee is shared with and informed by its immediate community of interest, including the host home.

A full committee will be quorate when six members are in attendance.

11 Expenses and remuneration

Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed for travel to formal meetings of the Committee and the formal meetings of sub committees. Expenses related to being the Link Committee Member for an exhibition, including attendance at the Exhibition preview, will be met. Other travel expenses must be cleared by the Chair and connexional budget-holder before being undertaken.

Any member of the Committee undertaking paid work for the Collection or related activities must be agreed in advance by the Chair and Committee, and the relevant Connexional budget-holder.

FRIENDS OF THE METHODIST MODERN ART COLLECTION

The Committee has oversight of the Friends organisation.

The Aims of the Friends of the MMAC are outlined below:

1. Name

The full name of the group is 'The Friends of the Methodist Modern Art Collection' and abbreviated to 'The Friends of the MMAC'.

2. Aims

The aims of the Friends of the MMAC are as follows:

- Secure an increase in the number of Friends of the MMAC
- Review opportunities for encouraging donations and gifts in excess of annual donations from present and future Friends of the MMAC
- Raise funds to cover the costs involved in the administration and servicing of the Friends of the MMAC and use any excess income to support the work and needs of the Methodist Modern Art Collection (MMAC)
- Inform Friends of the MMAC of the work of the Methodist Modern Art Collection (MMAC) by suitable communication methods and organise relevant events as appropriate

3. Responsibilities of the Secretary of the Friends

The Secretary to the Friends is a member of the MMAC Management Committee (MMACMC) and holds the lead role in the responsibilities listed below. He/she may be assisted by other Friends of the MMAC or other persons when the workload or specialist expertise so demands.

- Collection of annual donations and other gifts from current and future Friends of the MMAC
- Administer records relating to the Friends of the MMAC
- Comply with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- Administer and monitor the bank account in the name of the Friends of the MMAC
- Oversee Gift Aid claims administration in conjunction with relevant Methodist Church finance staff
- Report to the MMAC on the financial position of the Friends of the MMAC bank account and review how any excess income can support the work of the MMAC.

NB. These Terms of Reference replace documents drawn up in 2001 and 2004 as part of the connexional Governance Scrutiny process, held on file by the then Coordinating Secretaries' Office.

Appendix 1 - Update on conservation

NB the conservation of the works listed as 'Bewdley' have been prioritised ready for exhibition.

The paintings that have been conserved since end of September 2019 are as follows:

EULARIA CLARKE	<i>Storm over the Lake</i>	
EULARIA CLARKE	<i>The Five Thousand</i>	<i>Bewdley</i>
JOHN REILLY	<i>Cain and Abel</i>	
ROY DE MAISTRE	<i>Noli me tangere (Touch me not)</i>	<i>Bewdley</i>
MAGGIE HAMBLING	<i>Good Friday: Walking on Water</i>	<i>Bewdley</i>
GHISLAINE HOWARD	<i>The Washing of the Feet</i>	<i>Bewdley</i>
JOHN REILLY	<i>The Raising of Lazarus</i>	<i>Bewdley</i>
GRAHAM SUTHERLAND	<i>The Deposition</i>	<i>Bewdley</i>

The following five works are currently with the conservator and will be completed by early March 2020:

HICKS-JENKINS	<i>Christ Writes in the Dust: the woman taken in adultery</i>	<i>Bewdley</i>
HOYLAND	<i>Nativity Polyptych</i>	
ISELIN	<i>The Elements of Holy Communion</i>	<i>Bewdley</i>
ROGERS	<i>The Ascension</i>	<i>Bewdley</i>
SAHI	<i>The Dalit Madonna</i>	<i>Bewdley</i>

The following two works on paper have been conserved and reframed:

SADAO WATANABE	<i>Christ Enters Jerusalem</i>	<i>Bewdley</i>
THEYRE LEE-ELLIOTT	<i>Crucified Tree Form – the Agony</i>	<i>Bewdley</i>

A review of the conservation needs of these works was undertaken in January 2020:

ERIC GILL	<i>The Annunciation</i>	
HICKS-JENKINS	<i>Grisaille study: Christ Writes in the Dust (male form)</i>	
HICKS- JENKINS	<i>Grisaille study: The Woman taken in Adultery (female form)</i>	
MICHAEL EDMONDS	<i>Crucifixion</i>	
NORMAN ADAMS	<i>Behold the Man</i>	

As at 11 February 2020