

## Methodist Modern Art Collection Management Committee (MMAC) – Annual Report and Policy Proposals

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<b>Action Required</b>	For decision
<b>Resolutions</b>	43/1. The Council receives the report.  43/2. The Council delegates to the SRC approval of the policies, covering paragraphs and supporting documents proposed by the Management Committee.  43/3. The Council approves the proposed change to the terms of reference for the Methodist Modern Art Collection Management Committee to increase the membership from 11 to 13.  43/4. The Council agrees that the Methodist Modern Art Collection Management Committee may identify and invite an additional volunteer expert to join the Committee or any of its working groups for up to a year, in a non-voting capacity, to facilitate a specific project or activity, and that this support may be extended for up to one further year only, following a review of the need and further full Management Committee vote.
<b>Methodist Council objectives that this paper supports</b>	1. Worship 2. Inclusive Church 3. God for All: Evangelism 5. Resources for the Church: the use of God's gifts

### Summary of Content

<b>Subject and Aims</b>	1. Outline of the work of the MMAC Management Committee since March 2019, including progress on the conservation programme and plans to relaunch the Collection. 2. To present a suite of policy documents to be scrutinised by the Strategy and Resources Committee and request to increase the Committee's membership and to co-opt additional expertise to working groups in order to deliver on these policies.
<b>Main Points</b>	1. Introduction 2. Rejuvenation pause for conservation 3. MMAC Management Committee structure and operation 4. Programme planning and relaunch 5. A new home for the MMAC
<b>Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)</b>	MC/20/59 Methodist Modern Art Collection Management Committee - Annual Report: Terms of reference Details of all the works in the MMAC are available online at: <a href="https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/reflecting-on-faith/the-methodist-modern-art-collection/">https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/reflecting-on-faith/the-methodist-modern-art-collection/</a> Or see: <i>Seeing the Spiritual: A guide to the MMAC</i> – available from Methodist Publishing
<b>Consultations</b>	The proposed policies were peer reviewed by consultant registrars, Matassa Toffolo Art Collections Management. Methodist Insurance. Exhibition Loan Agreement was scrutinised by the Connexional Legal team.

### **Summary of Impact**

<b>Faith and Order</b>	<b>Likely:</b> to support the creation of resources with theological content.
<b>Financial</b>	<b>Confirmed:</b> ongoing support of the touring and storage of the Collection.
<b>Legal</b> including impact on other jurisdictions	<b>Confirmed:</b> to approve the proposed new loan agreement for borrowers of the MMAC; to agree cover and conditions on insurance for the MMAC.
<b>External (eg ecumenical)</b>	<b>Confirmed:</b> negotiations are under way to start the Coventry & Nuneaton art trail to relaunch the conserved MMAC from Coventry Cathedral, as part of the Coventry City of Culture 2021 celebrations. <b>Likely:</b> finding a suitably equipped and staffed new home base for the MMAC may necessitate a location and agreements on curation with a partner outside the (Methodist) Church.

## Methodist Modern Art Collection Management Committee (MMAC) – Annual Report and Policy Proposals

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Methodist Modern Art Collection (MMAC) includes more than 50 outstanding examples of British 20<sup>th</sup>-century art, chosen to illustrate aspects of the gospel narrative, from the Nativity to Pentecost. The Collection 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 by Norman Adams, *Behold the Man*.
- 1.2. The Collection was presented to the Methodist Church, and the Methodist Council is the trustee body. Care and its use for mission are currently delegated to the MMAC Management Committee who, until the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, had continued to respond to invitations to tour the MMAC extensively. In 2016–2018 the MMAC was seen by nearly 80,000 visitors, and in 2018 (the last full year of touring), by 12,000 people in churches across the Isle of Man, in Bristol, Cromer and Winsford, and at the Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin.
- 1.3. A so-called ‘rejuvenation pause’ in touring to allow for recommended conservation work on the Collection was agreed with the Strategy & Resources Committee (SRC) in 2018, initially from September 2018 into early 2020. It had only been planned to have one show during 2020. *For All People* was to be an exhibition of 20 works in the Wyre Gallery at Bewdley Museum: [www.forallpeoplebewdley.com](http://www.forallpeoplebewdley.com) but at the last moment a decision had to be made to postpone the exhibition due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was rescheduled to Lent 2021, but sadly has had to be postponed again, as it seems unlikely that by March the lockdown will have been lifted enough to guarantee audiences access to the exhibition. Much preparation and hard work has gone into the exhibition planning by the ecumenical local organising group and the MMAC’s ‘link’ committee member.

### 2. Rejuvenation Pause for conservation

- 2.1. The rejuvenation pause has been extended to autumn 2021 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the MMAC Management Committee has been able to continue the programme of conservation and re-framing approved and funded by the SRC and the Gibbs Family Trust, which is following the key recommendations in the Practice Review commissioned by the Management Committee in 2018.
- 2.2. Appendix 1 gives an update on the works that have been conserved and re-framed as at 3 February 2021. The conservation has comprised the appraisal of the conservation needs of each work, followed by surface cleaning, retouching and repair as required, and frames being replaced as necessary with more durable ones, appropriate for touring, to protect the works. The entire Collection of more than 50 works has now been assessed and the majority requiring treatment have been conserved. The next priority is appropriate new travelling cases for some works. The total cost of this work to date (including transport of the paintings in and out of store, to/from the conservators) is just under £75,500. The conservation budget was just over £103k (over two years), including re-casing the works after they have been conserved (which is now being prioritised for the relaunch). Additional annual funding of £22k pa was allocated by the SRC for transport, curatorial consultancy and interim storage, also initially for two years. Advice from our consultants has highlighted the

importance of hiring professional technical assistance in future to mitigate risk in touring by supporting volunteers to hang works, eg, at local church venues.

- 2.3. Independent consultant registrars, Matassa Toffolo Art Collections Management, were appointed in late August 2020 to oversee improvements to the documentation related to loans of the Collection, again as recommended in the 2018 Practice Review, and to review the current storage facilities and aim to professionalise procedures around exhibition organisation and administration, including documenting the MMAC digitally on the MODES Collection Management System (which is also used by all the key Heritage sites).
- 2.4. The Collection was last valued in 2013. Methodist Insurance (MI) have requested that a new insurance valuation be arranged, which will be sought from Christie's/Sotheby's London as soon as the conservation programme is complete. The works are insured for 'all-risks' with MI Fine Art, who understand the Collection needs to be handled and hung at a broad range of venues, by volunteers as well as professional organisations. In a recent review, MI emphasised that the Council's insurance only covers the works and that borrowers need to have Public Liability Insurance to cover volunteers and visitors. (This is now conditional in the new loan agreement and will be emphasised in future guidance to borrowers.)
- 2.5. The implementation of the conservation programme has mitigated the potential risks in relentless touring the MMAC and of this taking a toll on the fabric of the works, ensuring that this valuable asset will not be lost to the Church as a mission tool. The Committee has established a Risk Register, highlighting such risks as the operational capacity of volunteer management, and the impact of the pandemic on potential partners who could provide a suitable future home for the Collection.
- 2.6. The MMAC Management Committee does not currently have a series of policy documents, as would be the usual practice in the museums and galleries sector, to direct its work in an open and transparent way and to aid the negotiation of a new home with a relevant partner. The Committee's ambition is to meet the nationally-agreed 'Accreditation' standard for galleries and museums, administered by the Arts Council England, and so in writing the relevant policies was advised by members of the Management Committee with appropriate professional knowledge and experience, for example, of curating collections.
- 2.7. The MMAC Management Committee wishes to propose a suite of policies. These are detailed and it is therefore proposed that the scrutiny of them be delegated to the Strategy and Resources Committee. They consist of the following:
  - 2.7.1. covering paragraphs on the background and purpose of the MMAC (which, in practice, will be inserted at the start of each policy).
  - 2.7.2. a suite of policies which, if approved, would shape the Committee's work for five years to May 2026. The policies have been peer reviewed by the consultant registrars, Matassa Toffolo, and comply with sector standards and the requirements of the Arts Council England's Accreditation scheme.

The policies are:

    - Collection Development
    - Collection Care and Conservation
    - Exhibition Loans
    - Mission and Interpretation
  - 2.7.3. two supporting documents: Condition Report and Exhibition Loan Agreement .

- 2.8. The MMAC is an effective tool to encourage conversations about Christian faith and God's love in Christ. The 'Mission and Interpretation' policy for the Collection emphasises the potential value of the Collection to mission, especially evangelism. The Committee would value ongoing conversations with the Faith and Order Committee and Connexional Evangelism & Growth team about supporting the implementation of this policy, for example, with the theological messaging of resources and how those stewarding the Collection can engage visitors most effectively in conversation.
- 2.9. Updated supporting documents have also been prepared: Condition Report and Exhibition Loan Agreement. Reporting routinely on the condition of the works will result in a rolling record of any conservation issues and ensure their timely resolution. The agreement has been scrutinised by the connexional Legal team, and may be amended on their advice for non-Church borrowers, for example accredited museum venues. In addition, a revised 'Guidance for borrowers' document will be developed to support exhibition planning, reflecting the new policies and administrative improvements, and amplifying the implications of the agreement for borrowers.

### **3. MMAC Management Committee structure and operation**

- 3.1. Like most cultural operations, the business meetings and engagement work of the MMAC Management Committee has moved online since March 2020. With no exhibitions possible, at Easter and Christmas 2020 downloadable resources were provided from the website for reflection based on works in the collection: *Paintings, Prayers and Poems* and *Carols, Prayers and Poems*<sup>1</sup>. These were warmly welcomed. The *Friends Newsletter* continues to play an important role in keeping supporters connected and in building partnerships.
- 3.2. Following the recommendations of the Governance Review of 2018, three working groups have been set up initially to aid the operational business of the Committee, spread the workload and make meeting agendas more manageable. The working groups have had initial meetings and convenors have been appointed: 1. Governance; 2. Collections Care, Conservation and Development; 3. Exhibitions and Planning. When appropriate, a Fundraising group will also be formed. These groups will ensure improved management and care of the Collection is maintained, and will move the operation of loans towards the aim of meeting Accreditation standards (in line with the key Methodist Heritage sites), which should facilitate access to funding streams, and equip the Committee for negotiating a new long-term home for the Collection.
- 3.3. The Management Committee was sad to say farewell and wish to express gratitude to Lucy Newman Cleeve, who has stepped down having been a member for the past three years.
- 3.4. The Committee has sought to recruit new members with professional art handling experience to support the exhibition programme, especially because it has been agreed that all future exhibitions should have two 'link' committee members with complementary skills per exhibition; one of whom should have a professional museum background. Ms Verity Smith was appointed to the Management Committee in January 2021, and will convene the Exhibitions and Planning working group.
- 3.5. The nomination of Ms Sarah Allard to the Management Committee is now recommended to the Methodist Council. Ms Allard is a museum professional, a former Senior Keeper of Art at Derby Museum and Art Gallery, and an active member of her Church. The resolution for appointment is contained within MC/21/53.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/reflecting-on-faith/the-methodist-modern-art-collection/resources/books-posters-postcards-and-downloads/>

- 3.6. Recognising the importance of inducting and supporting new Management Committee members, a new induction presentation and pack has been prepared and each new member of the Committee will be assigned a mentor.
- 3.7. Progress on the re-launch of the Collection and reporting to SRC has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Committee's capacity, in particular the absence of the Chair, Professor Ann Sumner, on extended sick leave from mid November 2019.
- 3.8. The Committee is hugely grateful to the Council for its support during the Chair's absence to facilitate interim leadership, and to Ms Sarah Middleton who served as Interim Chair from April – August 2020, although was also unfortunately on sick leave for four weeks in mid summer. Ms Middleton led the writing of last year's annual report and involved the then newest committee members in starting the work of writing the first new policies.
- 3.9. Professor Sumner was able to support the Interim Chair with the recruitment of the consultant registrars at the end of August, and returned officially to her role in September 2020. Since her return, she has been committed to ensuring progress on the Management Committee's work plan, including the policy writing, overseeing the management of the consultant registrars and supporting the planning for the art trail for the relaunch.
- 3.10. In response to the difficulties that arose initially due the absence of the Chair, and encouraged by the Secretary of the Conference, the Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler, to do so, the Committee have defined and are seeking to fill a Vice Chair role (which was also recommended in the Governance Review). As no one individual on the Committee has the capacity to take this on at the moment, the Governance working group are supporting the Chair in the meantime.
- 3.11. The impact of implementing the Practice and Governance Reviews, in particular to write the attached policy documents and create their associated forms, has been that more voluntary time has been required of members of the Management Committee. Connexional Team support is provided for administration of the Committee's meetings (now online) and has been available to support the conservation programme. The new Methodist Heritage Officer will not be able to support the MMAC as was hoped previously: this post was only filled in mid-February 2021 and on reduced hours.
- 3.12. In relocating the Collection for interim storage, the Collection lost the support of a 0.2 FTE 'Custodian' through Oxford Brookes University. When touring resumes and the Matassa Toffolo consultancy finishes, managing the exhibition of the works will have to be picked up again by the Management Committee.
- 3.13. In response to this capacity issue, the Management Committee requests a change to its terms of reference<sup>2</sup> to increase the membership from 11 to 13, to support the implementation of the new policies, while ensuring a fair distribution of the workload among the volunteer committee members, and so that periods of domestic and work commitments, or ill-health, can be accommodated without detrimental impact on delivery.
- 3.14. In addition, the Management Committee requests to be permitted to identify and invite an additional volunteer expert to join it or any working group for up to a year, in a non-voting capacity, to facilitate a specific project or activity, and that this support may be extended for up to one further year only, following a review of the need and further full Management Committee vote.

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<sup>2</sup> MC/20/59 Methodist Modern Art Collection Management Committee - Annual Report

#### 4. Programme planning and relaunch

- 4.1. Despite the ever-changing COVID landscape, the Committee is committed to re-launching the touring programme of the conserved MMAC in Coventry as part of the City of Culture 2021 celebrations. Considerable discussion has taken place with the Coventry and Nuneaton Circuit to assist in organising an art trail entitled *Stories of Change: Hope, Faith and Love* (4 September – 4 October 2021). They will be working with local communities, artists and churches across the circuit and with Coventry Cathedral, where there are direct links, with artists in common and the response of the Church of England to post-war religious art. In addition, the trail will explore themes pertinent to Coventry's history, as well as the post-pandemic landscape, including recovery and rebuilding/rebirth. Community engagement will be planned at all the churches showing works and the timing of the art trail coincides with the Royal Shakespeare Company's immersive performance 'FAITH' weekend in Coventry and with the annual Heritage Open Days.
- 4.2. As a unique opportunity to re-launch the Collection, but over a much shorter than usual timeframe to plan the exhibitions, the Chair and members of the Management Committee and Connexional Team are supporting the organisation of this programming in considerably more depth than usual: helping to negotiate with Coventry Cathedral, selecting works and contributing to the design and writing of the art trail.
- 4.3. In addition, the Management Committee has received a request from Chester Cathedral to borrow five key works, also in the autumn of 2021, for their exhibition entitled *Global Images of Christ and the Holy Family*, in partnership with the Diocese of Chester's Board of Social Responsibility, as part of the promotion of BAME issues and in response to Black Lives Matter. The Management Committee felt that it was important to support this exhibition as well, which meets many of the criteria put forward in the new Exhibition Loans policy and is an opportunity to raise the profile of the Methodist Church in this key area of mission.
- 4.4. The Committee recognises the importance of planning themed exhibitions that are relevant to contemporary issues and mission, such as responding to the post-pandemic healing process, and ensuring that exhibitions reflect the Church's aims for equality, diversity and inclusion, as well as making the Collection a relevant and responsive tool for evangelism.
- 4.5. The work of the Management Committee will then move into a 'Transition Period', until a new home base is found for the Collection. During this time (expected to be at least two years), it is hoped that exhibition touring will resume, with the Collection returning to appropriate storage in between exhibitions.
- 4.6. During the Rejuvenation Pause, the MMAC is being housed in a specialist museums' consortium storage facility with appropriate environmental standards, under the auspices of the National Conservation Services (NCS) Collaborative Storage Scheme, managed by ReStore at Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire: <http://www.ncs.org.uk/collaborativestorage.php>, alongside other Methodist Council historic collections. Conservators assessing the works there and the Collection's consultant registrars have highlighted the limitations of this store for artworks of this quality, which should be hung on roller-racking (our works are in their travel cases) and be regularly monitored and checked prior to loans (which could be arranged with NCS's conservators, but there are neither on-site curatorial staff nor space and easy access to the works to monitor their condition or make them available for research). Therefore, the Committee is exploring moving the Collection again, on a temporary basis until a new home is found, to storage more appropriate for a touring art collection.

## **5. A new home for the MMAC**

- 5.1. The Committee are grateful to the SRC for current and ongoing operational financial support. The Gibbs Family Trust continues to provide generous project support. Fundraising will be prioritised once the conservation programme has been completed and action on the Governance Review is progressed significantly.
- 5.2. It is the intention that with the new policies in place, the Management Committee will be fit for negotiating a new home base for the MMAC.
- 5.3. Only two venues have written with a formal Expression of Interest in being a new home base for the Collection so far, and it has become clear that in order to negotiate such a partnership clear policy documents were essential first.
- 5.4. The Committee will be looking at Church and non-Church bodies, including universities and art galleries, as potential new homes, recognising capacity as a key issue for the volunteer body, even if the new home is a secular gallery or museum with a curatorial team.
- 5.5. Following the completion of all the policy writing, the Management Committee aims to focus on a clear plan for approval by the SRC, indicating at what time they will be able realistically to begin again the search for a new home in earnest.

## **6. Conclusion**

The MMAC Management Committee believes considerable progress has been made both with the conservation programme (given the added logistical challenges of the pandemic) and the reform of exhibition administration, as well as with their governance, but recognise the risks and challenges of volunteers managing and touring a world-class collection of artworks and the capacity issues this raises.

The Chair would like to thank most sincerely all those who have contributed so generously of their time and professional expertise to delivering change and improvement in response to the Governance and Practice reviews, and to writing the key policy documents that follow.

## **\*\*\*RESOLUTIONS**

- 43/1. The Council receives the report.**
- 43/2. The Council delegates to the SRC approval of the policies, covering paragraphs and supporting documents proposed by the Management Committee**
- 43/3. The Council approves the proposed change to the terms of reference for the Methodist Modern Art Collection Management Committee to increase the membership from 11 to 13.**
- 43/4. The Council agrees that the Methodist Modern Art Collection Management Committee may identify and invite an additional volunteer expert to join the Committee or any of its working groups for up to a year, in a non-voting capacity, to facilitate a specific project or activity, and that this support may be extended for up to one further year only, following a review of the need and further full Management Committee vote.**

## Appendix 1: Progress on conservation programme – works conserved to date (3 Feb 2021)

a) Works conserved by Ruth Bubb		RB's report ref
JOHN REILLY	<i>The Feeding of the Five Thousand</i>	1901
FRANCIS HOYLAND	<i>Holy Communion Predella (plus repair to frame)</i>	1912/1912.2
RALPH BEYER	<i>The Son of Man is Come</i>	1913
EULARIA CLARKE	<i>Storm over the Lake</i>	1903
EULARIA CLARKE	<i>The Five Thousand</i>	1910
JOHN REILLY	<i>Cain and Abel</i>	1904
ROY DE MAISTRE	<i>Noli me tangere (Touch me not)</i>	1906
MAGGIE HAMBLING	<i>Good Friday: Walking on Water</i>	1914
GHISLAINE HOWARD	<i>The Washing of the Feet</i>	1907
JOHN REILLY	<i>The Raising of Lazarus</i>	1916
GRAHAM SUTHERLAND	<i>The Deposition</i>	1918
HICKS-JENKINS	<i>Christ Writes in the Dust: the woman taken in adultery</i>	1915
FRANCIS HOYLAND	<i>Nativity Polyptych</i>	1920
JACQUES ISELIN	<i>The Elements of Holy Communion</i>	1921
PETER ROGERS	<i>The Ascension</i>	1923
JYOTI SAHI	<i>The Dalit Madonna</i>	1902
MARK CAZALET	<i>Nathaniel asleep under a fig tree</i>	1924
MARK CAZALET	<i>Fool of God</i>	1925
PATRICK HERON	<i>Crucifix and Candles</i>	1911
JOHN BROKENSHAW	<i>Untitled – Pentecost</i>	1917
PETER ROGERS	<i>The Mocking of Christ</i>	1905
DENNIS HAWKINS	<i>Pentecost 1</i>	<i>Nearing completion</i>
JOHN REILLY	<i>The Healing of the Lunatic Boy</i>	<i>Nearing completion</i>
WILLIAM ROBERTS	<i>The Crucifixion</i>	<i>Nearing completion</i>
FRANCIS HOYLAND	<i>Crucifixion Polyptych</i>	<i>Nearing completion</i>

**TOTAL RB = 21 (+ 4 nearing completion) = 25**

### b) Works on paper conserved by Louise Vaille

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

**TOTAL LV = 2**

**TOTAL CONSERVED TO DATE RB AND LV = 27**

**TOTAL COST OF WORKS CONSERVED TO DATE BY RB AND LV**

(includes visits for reviews and transportation etc) = **£75,432.75**

Note: Two invoices outstanding for a transport cost and three (temporary) new cases.

Appraisals and cost estimates in hand for 6 further paintings and 5 sculptural works to be conserved.

Source: LM Schedule – *Methodist Modern Art Collection – associated costs with the condition reporting and conservation process (Sept 2018 – current)*

**LM/28.01.21**