

Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest

10am, Friday, 15 December 2017

Purchase of a silver articulated griffin sculpture/ornament by Bryony Knox

Item number	5.7
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	

Executive summary

Committee is asked to approve the purchase of a silver articulated griffin sculpture/ornament made by Edinburgh silversmith Bryony Knox.

Purchase of a silver articulated griffin sculpture/ornament by Bryony Knox

Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee approves the purchase of the silver griffin articulated sculpture/ornament by Bryony Knox.

Background

- 2.1 The Museum of Edinburgh has a fine collection of 18th and 19th century silver, made in Edinburgh and Canongate, but there are few pieces from the late 20th century and present day. Acquisitions of new work by contemporary silversmiths are an important part of ensuring that the collection continues to display work made in Edinburgh and its environs as part of a wider remit to collect contemporary applied art made in the city and east of Scotland and to ensure our collection remains relevant to future generations.

Main report

- 3.1 The following item by Bryony Knox presented to the Committee for consideration:

Griffin

Articulated silver sculpture

Silver with chasing and repoussé work.

150mm x 120mm, 80mm on canvas, 2014

£3,250



- 3.2 After studying for a foundation course in Art and design at St Albans College of Art and Design, Bryony Knox graduated with a first-class honours degree in three-dimensional design from the University of Wolverhampton, before completing her master degree in Metalwork at Glasgow School of Art in 1999.
- 3.3 Bryony has been working in metal for nearly 20 years and set up her own studio in 2009. She currently works from the Coburg House Art Studios in Leith, Edinburgh. Commissions include objects for J K Rowling, Winchester Cathedral and HRH Princess Anne as well as the Pearson Collection in London and the Cargill Thompson Collection in Glasgow.
- 3.4 Bryony specialises in the ancient silversmithing technique of repoussé and chasing. By using pine pitch and a myriad of small steel punches, she fashions and forms her silverware. Her work is based on a love of storytelling, movement and colour. From elegant vessels to boxes with secrets, each individual piece is fashioned and embellished using the techniques of repousse and chasing. She designs sculptures and silverware with a twist, which on closer inspection or handling reveal an additional function. Interaction and discovery of unexpected movement, revealing flashes of colour and texture, bring to life these wonderful characters and creatures of nursery rhyme and fable.
- 3.5 Recent experience as Silversmith in Residence at Edinburgh Zoo has informed her latest collections - a series of kinetic silver objects, with function and form inspired by the essence of animals and birds. Her work also explores the combination of glass and contemporary chased silver, creating sculptural yet functional silverware with a twist.
- 3.6 The articulated silver griffin can rear up on his hind and front legs, move his wings and tail and be posed. There is a small lever at the back of his head so his beak can be moved. The piece was inspired by Bryony's love of storytelling and mythical animals. The piece is made from flat sheet silver which has been formed into three dimensions by repoussé and chasing. The hind legs and torso are made in two parts which are then soldered together. Each set of feathers has a different detail and use of the chasing technique. The silver has been oxidised and then polished to give a feeling of antiquity in a contemporary piece.

- 3.7 Bryony has shown her work at Exhibitions in Scotland, England and America including the Collect Exhibitions at the V&A and Saatchi Galleries in London between 2004 and 2017, Elements2 and Elements3 in Edinburgh in 2016 and 2017, SOFA Chicago representing Craft Scotland in 2015, The Goldsmiths Fair at Goldsmiths Hall in London between 2005 and 2013. In 2017 Bryony was shortlisted for the Sunny Art Prize, in 2015 she became Silversmith in Residence at Edinburgh Zoo and in 1995 was awarded The Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths Silverware Award at the New Designers Exhibition.
- 3.8 The griffin sculpture is being purchased as part of a wider ambition to collect more contemporary material including Edinburgh Silver, Glassware made in Edinburgh and the borders, and Scottish East Coast Ceramics. The griffin sculpture will be displayed in the Silver Gallery at the Museum of Edinburgh

Measures of success

- 4.1 Completed purchase of articulated silver griffin sculpture/ornament by Bryony Knox.

Financial impact

- 5.1 The total cost of the piece is £3,250. Funds for this purchase can be made available from the Jean F. Watson Bequest, and it is intended that an application for grant aid will be the National Fund for Acquisitions.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 Not applicable.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 Not applicable.

Sustainability impact

- 8.1 Not applicable.

Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 Not applicable.

Background reading/external references

- *Scotland's Homes and Interiors*, article 2016
- *Scotland on Sunday*, article *Top picks of the VA's Exhibition* 2016
- *Elements Exhibition, Elements 2, Elements -3* – exhibition catalogues
Incorporation of Goldsmiths & Lyon and Turnbull 2014, 2016, 2017
- *Scotland on Sunday Magazine*: Interview/Metro-Goldsmith Fair 2013
- *Period Living, Homes and Gardens and Evening Standard*: Featured in articles
on the Goldsmiths Fair 2012
- *Homes and Interiors and Scotland on Sunday*: Featured in articles on Scottish
Silversmiths the Goldsmiths Fair 2012
- www.bryonyknox.com/
- www.craftscotland.tv/2015/bryonyknox

Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

Contact: Helen Edwards, Curator (Applied Art)

E-mail: helen.edwards@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 529 4097

Appendices

None