

# Committee on the Jean F. Watson Bequest

10am, Friday, 15 December 2017

## Acquisition of contemporary ceramics, glass and silver

Item number	5.8
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	
Council Commitments	

### Executive Summary

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Committee is asked to approve the reporting and approval mechanism for future purchases of contemporary ceramics, glass and silver.

## Acquisition of contemporary ceramics, glass and silver

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee approves the reporting and approval mechanism for future purchases of contemporary ceramics, glass and silver, outlined below.

### 2. Background

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- 2.1 The Edinburgh Museums and Galleries Applied Art Collection is a Museums and Galleries Scotland 'Recognised' collection, covering three main collecting areas: ceramics, glass and silver. The existing collections are among the best in public hands outside the National Museums of Scotland. The Applied Art Collection focuses on Edinburgh-made objects, in contrast to the wider national and international collections of the National Museums.

### 3. Main report

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- 3.1 At the meeting of the Jean F. Watson Committee on 29 April 2016 the decision was taken to approve the use of funds from the Bequest for purchasing or commissioning contemporary silver, glass and ceramics by makers born or based in Edinburgh and its environs.
- 3.2 In a manner similar to the one approved by the Committee in October 2013 in respect to the Cowper Bequest for acquisitions for the Museum of Childhood, approval is sought to establish a reporting and approval mechanism which will enable the Curator of Applied Art to begin to develop the contemporary Applied Art collection.
- 3.3 Many of the items being sought, particularly of ceramic, are of a modest value. They are viewed at temporary exhibitions, open studio weekends, or through organized studio visits. Other opportunities arise at short notice, by way of pop-up events. The current schedule of Committee meetings means that we risk missing the chance to acquire some significant pieces, and so it is recommended that the Committee give approval to enable the Curator of Applied Art to purchase single items up to a value of £500 and to a cumulative total of £3,000 in one calendar year without the requirement for Committee Approval.

- 3.4 It is further recommended that these purchases are reported retrospectively to this Committee once a year. Any single item costing more than the £500 ceiling would be the subject of a Committee report in advance and presented for formal consideration by the Committee.

#### **4. Measures of success**

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- 4.1 The City's Applied Art Collection of contemporary ceramics, glass and silver continues to grow. New acquisitions are put on public display within Edinburgh Museums and Galleries venues, and are available for loan to other public museums and galleries. Local makers are supported, and they benefit from having examples of their work in a highly respected public collection.

#### **5. Financial impact**

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- 5.1 The total cost to the Fund in any one year would be no more than £3,000.

#### **6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact**

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- 6.1 Not applicable.

#### **7. Equalities impact**

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- 7.1 Not applicable.

#### **8. Sustainability impact**

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- 8.1 Not applicable.

#### **9. Consultation and engagement**

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- 9.1 Not applicable.

## 10. Background reading/external references

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**Paul Lawrence**

**Executive Director of Place**

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## 11. Appendices

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None.