

## Purchase of a work by Victoria Crowe

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### Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest

16 March 2009

#### Purpose of report

- 1 To consider the purchase of an additional work by Victoria Crowe (b.1945).

#### Main report

2. The following works by Victoria Crowe are presented to the Committee for consideration:

**Beech Tree, Winter**

Oil on board, 1973

122.5 x 91.5cms

Inscribed bottom right: Victoria Crowe 1973

Price: £5,000

**Start of the Day**

Charcoal and conté on paper, not dated

Image size: 50.5 x 77.7cms

Framed size; 100.3 x 116.5cms

Inscribed bottom left: Victoria Crowe

Price: £3,500

3. At the last meeting of the Jean F Watson Committee, the decision was taken to purchase two paintings by leading Scottish artist Victoria Crowe: *Last Portrait of Jenny Armstrong* and *Italian Reflections*. At the meeting, there was considerable discussion about another painting from the Shepherdess series, *Snowbound Cottages*. Since the meeting, the *Last Portrait* has been on display here in the City Art Centre, and is currently in London as part of an exhibition devoted to the artist's work. *Snowbound Cottages* has been sold to a private collector.

4. The outcome of the meeting was reported back to the artist. Hearing of the Committee's interest in other works from the same Shepherdess series, she has made available two other works for the Committee's consideration. At the same time, she has generously gifted to the City Art Centre's collection a total of 11 etchings and lithographs from different periods in her career.
5. Victoria is very keen that the City Art Centre should also have a more recent painting to illustrate her current practice. Therefore, if the Committee decide to purchase either of the two works under consideration, she will, in addition to the prints, gift to the City the major oil *Dancer and Graffiti*. This is an exceptionally generous offer, given the price of this work when it was last exhibited.
6. Of the two works under consideration, *Beech Tree, Winter* was one of the first paintings completed by the artist when she and her husband first moved to Kittleknowe, Carlisle, into a cottage next to Jenny. Painted in a range of sombre colours, it depicts the view from their back garden looking out over the Pentland Hills. The painting was given the Anne Redpath Award when it was first exhibited at the SSWA exhibition of 1973.
7. *Start of the day* is a large charcoal drawing of the interior of Jenny's cottage. It conveys something of the claustrophobia redolent of old cottages rooms with small windows. It was shown in the first Shepherdess exhibition at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in 2000.
8. The two works are being offered by the artist. The price includes a gallery discount. Should the Committee approve the purchase of one of the works, an application for grant aid will be submitted to the National fund for Acquisitions in the new financial year.

### **Financial Implications**

9. The funds for the purchase of the artwork will come from the Jean F Watson Bequest. Grant aid will be sought from the National Fund for Acquisitions administered by the National Museums of Scotland.


### **Environmental impact**

10. N/A

### **Recommendations**

11. Approve the purchase of a work by Victoria Crowe.

12. Accept the generous gifts of the suite of prints and the additional painting *Dancer and Graffiti*.

  
JIM INCH  
Director, Corporate Services  
26/03/09

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<b>Appendices</b>	None
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<b>Wards affected</b>	City Wide
<b>Background Papers</b>	The Jean F Watson Bequest files are held at the City Art Centre