

# Notice of meeting and agenda

## Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest

**10.00 am Friday, 17th December, 2021**

Virtual Meeting - via Microsoft Teams

This is a public meeting and members of the public are welcome to watch the webcast live on the Council's website.

### Contacts

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Tel: 0131 529 4283

## **1. Order of business**

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- 1.1 Including any notices of motion and any other items of business submitted as urgent for consideration at the meeting.

## **2. Declaration of interests**

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- 2.1 Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.

## **3. Deputations**

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- 3.1 If any

## **4. Minutes**

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- 4.1 Minutes of the Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest – 28 August 2020 - submitted for approval as a correct record 5 - 6

## **5. Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest Business**

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- 5.1 Jean F. Watson Financial Statement 2020/22 – Report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services 7 - 12
- 5.2 Purchase of a sculptural installation by Virginia Hutchison – Report by the Executive Director of Place 13 - 20

|            |  |         |
|------------|--|---------|
| <b>5.3</b> | Purchase of two paintings by Olivia Irvine – Report by the Executive Director of Place             | 21 - 26 |
| <b>5.4</b> | Purchase of a photographic portfolio by Norman McBeath – Report by the Executive Director of Place | 27 - 34 |
| <b>5.5</b> | Purchase of an artwork by David McCulloch (b.1968) – Report by the Executive Director of Place     | 35 - 42 |
| <b>5.6</b> | Purchase of a painting by Donald Smith (1926-2014) – Report by the Executive Director of Place     | 43 - 48 |

## **6. Motions**

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**6.1** If any

### **Nick Smith**

Service Director, Legal and Assurance

## **Committee Members**

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Councillor Amy McNeese-Mechan (Convener), Councillor Robert Aldridge, Councillor Karen Doran, Councillor Catherine Fullerton, Councillor Max Mitchell, Councillor Joanna Mowat, Councillor Gordon Munro and Councillor Susan Rae

## **Information about the Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest**

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The Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest consists of 8 Councillors and is appointed by the City of Edinburgh Council.

This meeting of the Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest is being held virtually by Microsoft Teams.

## **Further information**

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If you have any questions about the agenda or meeting arrangements, please contact , Committee Services, City of Edinburgh Council, Business Centre 2.1, Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh EH8 8BG, Tel , email .

The agenda, minutes and public reports for this meeting and all the main Council committees can be viewed online by going to the Council's online [Committee Library](#).

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# Minutes

## Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest

10.30am, Friday 28 August 2020

### Present

Councillors McNeese-Mechan (Appointed Convener in the absence of Cllr Fullerton), Aldridge, Mitchell, Mowat, Munro and Rae.

### 1. Appointment of Convener

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#### Decision

To appoint Councillor McNeese-Mechan as Convener in the absence of Councillor Fullerton.

### 2. Minutes

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#### Decision

To approve the minute of the Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest of the 7 February 2020 as a correct record, subject to recording Gillian Ferguson as being in attendance from Friends of the City Arts Centre instead of Stephen Holland.

### 3. Jean F. Watson Financial Statement 2019/20

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Details were provided on the financial position of the Miss Jean Fletcher Watson (known as Jean F. Watson) Charitable Trust since the last Committee meeting on the 7 February 2020.

#### Decision

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) To agree that officers would investigate options for displaying art works that were currently kept at the City Art Centre across the city in local communities, as part of the centenary celebrations of the Edinburgh Boundaries Extension Tramways Act 1920, which saw Leith and other areas merged into Edinburgh, and that a report would be brought to the next Committee setting out possible options.

(Reference - report by the Executive Director of Resources, submitted.)

### 4. Purchase of three unique digital prints by Rachel Maclean

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Approval was sought for the purchase of three digital prints *Disunion*, *Green and Pleasant Land* and *Apparition* by Rachel Maclean.

### **Motion**

To approve the purchase of three digital prints, *Disunion*, *Green and Pleasant Land* and *Apparition* by Rachel Maclean.

- moved by Councillor McNeese-Mechan, seconded by Councillor Rae

### **Amendment**

To approve the purchase of *Apparition* by Rachel Maclean.

- Moved by Councillor Mitchell, seconded by Councillor Mowat

### **Voting**

The voting was as follows:

For the Motion - 4 votes

For the Amendment - 2 votes

(For the Motion: Councillors Aldridge, McNeese-Mechan, Munro and Rae.

For the Amendment: Councillors Mitchell and Mowat.)

### **Decision**

To approve the motion by Councillor McNeese-Mechan.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

# Committee on the Jean F. Watson Bequest

10am, Friday, 17 December 2021

## Jean F. Watson Financial Statement 2020/22

Executive/routine  
Wards  
Council Commitments

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 Members of the Committee on the Jean F. Watson Bequest are asked to note the content of this report.

**Stephen S. Moir**

Executive Director of Corporate Services

Contact: John Aghodeaka, Accountant, Finance and Procurement Division

E-mail: [john.aghodeaka@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:john.aghodeaka@edinburgh.gov.uk) | Tel: 0131 469 5348

## Jean F. Watson Financial Statement 2020/22

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 This report provides an update on the financial position of the Miss Jean Fletcher Watson (known as Jean F. Watson) Charitable Trust (SC018971) since the last Committee meeting on 28 August 2020.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee with the financial position of the Jean F. Watson Charitable Trust.
- 3.2 The Committee last met on 28 August 2020 when a financial statement was included which provided an expected outturn position for the 2020/21 financial year.
- 3.3 The City of Edinburgh Council Charitable Trusts Audited Trustee's Annual Report and Accounts for 2020/21 were approved by Finance and Resources Committee on 18 November 2021 and will be submitted to OSCR in December 2021.

### 4. Main report

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- 4.1 Appendix 1 of this report provides an update on the actual 2020/21 outturn financial position of the Trust as well as providing a forecast for the 2021/22 financial year.
- 4.2 Appendix 1 shows that the funds available at the start of the 2021/22 financial year were £154,260 and are forecast to be £159,710 by the end of the 2021/22 financial year. This is subject to investment income remaining stable for the remaining quarters of the financial year.
- 4.3 If the recommended acquisitions were to be approved, and the purchases completed by 31 March 2022, the revised forecast funds available by the end of the 2021/22 financial year will be £152,712.
- 4.4 The value of the investments held by the Trust as at 31 March 2021 was £1,107,550 and the value of the artwork was recorded as £5,382,433.



## **Future Plans**

- 4.5 The Council is currently conducting a review of its administration of trusts. At the Finance and Resources Committee meeting of 12 August 2021, details were provided of the principal findings of an external review of the effectiveness of current governance arrangements in discharging the Council's responsibilities under the Deed of Trust for Lauriston Castle Trust (LCT). In considering the report's recommendations, members agreed to receive a further report to full Council early in the new year including a routemap on a proposed way forward for the Trust, as well as reviewing the arrangements for the other trusts including Jean F. Watson of which the Council is currently sole trustee.

## **5. Next Steps**

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- 5.1 Members of the Committee on the Jean F. Watson Bequest are asked to note the content of this report.

## **6. Financial impact**

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- 6.1 There is no direct financial impact arising from the contents of this report, but it sets out the financial position of the Jean F. Watson Charitable Trust, with investment income exceeding governance costs allowing the on-going expansion of the Edinburgh Museums and Galleries collections.

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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- 7.1 The Jean F. Watson Charitable Trust continues to serve its purpose and purchase works of art by artists who have connections with the city of Edinburgh.

## **8. Background reading/external references**

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- 8.1 ['Charitable Trusts Reserves Policy'](#), Finance and Resources Committee, 17 March 2016.
- 8.2 ['Jean F. Watson Financial Statement 2019/20'](#), Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest, 28 August 2020.
- 8.3 ['2020/21 Audited Accounts'](#), Finance and Resources Committee, 18 November 2021.
- 8.4 ['Miss Jean Fletcher Watson Bequest'](#), OSCR Website.
- 8.5 ['Guidance and good practice for Charity Trustees'](#), OSCR Website.

## 9. Appendices

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9.1 Appendix 1 – Jean F. Watson Committee Financial Statement 2020/22.

|  | £        | £               | Notes    |
|--|----------|-----------------|----------|
| <b>Funds Available as at 1 April 2020</b>        |          | <b>127,846</b>  | <b>1</b> |
| Income from Investments 2020/21                  | 31,477   |                 | 2        |
|  | <hr/>    | <b>31,477</b>   |          |
| Net Acquisitions 2020/21                         | (2,072)  |                 | 3        |
| Grant ( <i>received in advance</i> )             | 5,000    |                 | 4        |
| Governance Costs 2020/21                         | (7,990)  |                 | 5        |
|  | <hr/>    | <b>(5,063)</b>  |          |
| <b>Funds Available as at 1 April 2021</b>        |          | <b>154,260</b>  |          |
| Forecast Income from Investments 2021/22         |          | <b>31,716</b>   | 6        |
| Net Acquisitions 2021/22                         | (20,000) |                 | 7        |
| Governance Costs 2021/22                         | (6,266)  |                 | 8        |
|  | <hr/>    | <b>(26,266)</b> |          |
| <b>Forecast Funds Available by 31 March 2022</b> |          | <b>159,710</b>  | <b>9</b> |

**Notes :**

- 1 £127,846 is the accumulated surplus carried forward from previous years.
  - 2 £31,477 represents the income from interest on investments held with CCLA and M&G, as well as a small amount from the bank account.
  - 3 Acquisitions made in 2020/21 are listed in the table 1 below, **approved by the Committee on 7 February 2020**. Total acquisitions in 2020/21 were £18,214 and total grant aid received was £9,107. A refund of £7,035 was received from City of Edinburgh Council for over-reimbursement of art purchases paid for in the previous year.
  - 4 Grant of £5,000 was received in advance for art purchases to be made in 2021/22.
  - 5 The governance costs cover audit fee and central support costs. In addition there were central support costs of £2,686 for 2019/20 brought forward and paid in 2020/21.
  - 6 The forecast income from investments in 2021/22, subject to market conditions, is £31,716.
  - 7 The total acquisitions already made in 2021/22, **approved by the Committee on 28 August 2020**, are £36,975 and the total grant aid expected is £16,975 including the £5,000 already received in the prior year.
  - 8 The governance costs expected to be paid in 2021/22 are £6,266.
  - 9 The forecast funds available by 31 March 2022 are £159,710.
- The financial statement and notes have been rounded to the nearest whole number, and as such, are subject to rounding differences.
  - If the recommended acquisitions were to be approved and the purchases completed by 31 March 2022 the revised Forecast Funds Available, as shown in table 2 below, will be £152,712 (or £145,715 without grants).
  - The value of the investments held by the Trust as at 31 March 2021 was £1,107,550 (2019/20 was £949,598). The value of the artwork was recorded as £5,382,433 (2019/20 £5,373,974).
  - The **2020/21 Audited Accounts** were approved by Finance and Resources Committee on 18 November 2021.

Table 1

Acquisitions made in 2020/21

| Name of Artwork                          | Name of Artist                           | Gross Cost     |
|--|--|----------------|
| <i>Vestige 2019_45</i>                   | Michael Craik                            | £1,500         |
| <i>Portfolio of prints</i>               | Castle Mills Printmakers- Various Artist | £10,854        |
| <i>Three untitled paintings</i>          | Eric Cruikshank                          | £3,960         |
| <i>Fugue (17/11) &amp; Fugue (30/11)</i> | James Lumsden                            | £1,900         |
|  |  |                |
| <b>Total</b>                             |  | <b>£18,214</b> |

Table 2

Revised Forecast Funds Available

|  |          |                |
|--|----------|----------------|
|  | £        | £              |
| <b>Forecast Funds Available by 31 March 2022</b>         |          | <b>159,710</b> |
| Total Recommended Acquisitions                           | (13,995) |                |
|  |          | (13,995)       |
|  |          | 145,715        |
| <b>Grants (if awarded)</b>                               |          | 6,997          |
| <b>Revised Forecast Funds Available by 31 March 2022</b> |          | <b>152,712</b> |

# Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest

10.00am, Friday 17 December 2021

## Purchase of a sculptural installation by Virginia Hutchison

Executive/routine  
Wards  
Council Commitments

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee approves the purchase of the sculptural installation *Study for a Kiss #5* (2020) by Virginia Hutchison (b.1976).

**Paul Lawrence**

Executive Director - Place

Contact: Helen Scott, Curator (Fine Art)

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## Purchase of a sculptural installation by Virginia Hutchison

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 Committee is asked to approve the purchase of the sculptural installation *Study for a Kiss #5* (2020) by Virginia Hutchison (b.1976).

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 The City Art Centre's fine art collection traces the development of Scottish art from the 17<sup>th</sup> century until present day. Acquisitions of new work by contemporary artists are an important means of ensuring that the collection continues to provide a comprehensive overview of Scottish art for future generations.
- 3.2 Curators at the City Art Centre believe it is important to collect artistic responses to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The events of the last few years have had a significant impact around the world, and the City's fine art collection should document these unprecedented times. In spring 2020, during the first period of national 'lockdown', Tonic Arts, Edinburgh and Lothians Health Foundation's arts programme, commissioned a series of micro-residencies entitled 'Life Under Lockdown'. Virginia Hutchison was one of the artists awarded a residency, and this sculptural installation was completed during that time.

### 4. Main report

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- 4.1 The following sculptural installation by Virginia Hutchison is presented to the Committee for consideration:

**Study for a Kiss #5**

Set of six hand-engraved copper plates

2020

70 x 9cm (each individual plate dimensions)

£2,100



Virginia Hutchison, *Study for a Kiss #5*, hand-engraved copper plates, 2020



Installation of *Study for a Kiss #5* with other works from the series *Study for a Kiss*



Installation of *Study for a Kiss #5*



Detail of hand-engraved copper plates



- 4.2 In the spring of 2020, in the middle of the first national lockdown, Edinburgh and Lothians Health Foundation's award-winning arts programme, Tonic Arts, announced an open competition for a series of 'Life Under Lockdown' micro-residencies.
- 4.3 A call-out sought seven visual artists across seven generations, who could creatively capture the experience of living through the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown from their personal and generational perspectives. Artists were asked to submit applications outlining how they would document their observations, reflections and insights, the ways in which they would create this new work, and how it would reflect this moment in history. Over 100 applications were received.
- 4.4 Having selected seven successful applicants, the residencies programme ran for a ten-week period throughout July, August and September 2020. The resulting artworks were compiled for the exhibition 'Life Under Lockdown', which was staged in the Anne Ferguson Gallery at the Western General Hospital in Edinburgh during summer 2021.
- 4.5 Virginia Hutchison was born in Paisley in 1976. During the mid-1990s she studied for a BA Honours in Printmaking at Gray's School of Art in Aberdeen. In the early 2000s this was followed by an MA in Sculpture at the Royal College of Art in London. Hutchison's artistic practice covers a range of disciplines and media, including text, film, performance and sculpture. She has worked as an artist and arts educator in the UK and USA, and currently runs the bronze foundry at Edinburgh College of Art. She divides her time between Glasgow and the Isle of Lewis.
- 4.6 For the 'Life Under Lockdown' micro-residency, Hutchison produced a series of sculptural installations made from hand-engraved copper, entitled *Study for a Kiss*. The artworks were inspired by ideas around the sense of touch, and the fact that opportunities for human contact during lockdown were much reduced, with people unable to physically connect with each other through handshakes, hugs and kisses. Hutchison made several short films that explore the gestures involved in sending a kiss, slowing down the footage and examining each individual bodily movement. From this starting point, she developed a sequence of line drawings, for which she drew around her own hands and replicated their forms in overlapping patterns to articulate the gestural action. These designs were then hand-engraved onto copper plates, creating the finished sculptural pieces.
- 4.7 Hutchison chose to use copper for this project for a number of reasons. As a soft metal, it can be engraved by hand – a very personal creative process which provides a tactile result. The artist was equally drawn to the warm colour tones of the metal, which emphasise the association with human contact and body temperature. Hutchison was also keenly aware of the naturally-occurring antimicrobial properties of copper. Since ancient times, this metal has been known for its health benefits. For many years it was common practice for copper-based alloys to be used in architectural fittings like door handles, push plates and kick boards within public buildings such as hospitals and schools. Using copper in

fittings that were regularly handled and touched had the effect of reducing the spread of bacteria and viruses.

- 4.8 The shape and dimensions of the copper plates in *Study for a Kiss* are intended to resemble traditional architectural push plates. They evoke both the practical usage of copper in public health and wider themes relating to the importance of touch and interaction in human society. The plates have been devised in pairs, and can either be installed on functioning doors or wall-mounted within a gallery context.
- 4.9 As an artist, Hutchison is interested in how the public engage with artworks, and the role of art within community settings. Creating *Study for a Kiss* at home, during a period of lockdown, caused her to reflect further on these issues, alongside ideas raised by the pandemic itself. As she later commented: “*The act of engraving these hand gestures onto soft copper, a naturally anti-viral material, felt political. As an amateur tattooist there was a sense that it sat somewhere between printmaking and tattooing – of the body, by the body and for the body – politics that should be at the heart of public architecture.*”
- 4.10 The full series *Study for a Kiss* consists of seven sets of hand-engraved copper plates, some of which are devised as single pairs, while others are larger sets of multiple pairs. It is proposed that the City Art Centre should acquire *Study for a Kiss #5*, one of the larger sets made up of three pairs. Hutchison has identified this artwork as one that she feels would be well-suited for a public collection. The six-plate composition provides an expansive and impactful expression of her ideas, while maintaining a fundamental sense of intimacy. *Study for a Kiss #5* is being offered directly by the artist for sale to the City Art Centre.

## 5. Next Steps

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- 5.1 If the acquisition of this sculptural installation is approved, it is intended that an application for grant aid will be submitted to the National Fund for Acquisitions.

## 6. Financial impact

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- 6.1 *Study for a Kiss #5* is being offered for sale at a price of £2,100. Funds for this purchase would come from the Jean F. Watson Bequest, and it is intended that an application for grant aid would be submitted to the National Fund for Acquisitions.

## 7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

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- 7.1 Not Applicable.

## 8. Background reading/external references

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- 8.1 Tonic Arts produced a video about the 'Life Under Lockdown' project: <https://vimeo.com/537183129> Virginia Hutchison speaks about her work 7 minutes 14 seconds into the recording.
- 8.2 Website for *In the Shadow of the Hand* (Virginia Hutchison's collaborative practice with fellow artist Sarah Forrest): <https://www.intheshadowofthehand.com/>

## 9. Appendices

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- 9.1 None.

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# Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest

10.00am, Friday, 17 December 2021

## Purchase of two paintings by Olivia Irvine

Executive/routine  
Wards  
Council Commitments

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 Committee is asked to approve the purchase of two paintings by Olivia Irvine (b.1960) – *Marriage in Ankara* and *Handle with Care*.

**Paul Lawrence**

Executive Director - Place

Contact: David Patterson, Curatorial and Conservation Manager

E-mail: [david.patterson@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:david.patterson@edinburgh.gov.uk) | Tel: 0131 529 3955

## Purchase of two paintings by Olivia Irvine

### 2. Executive Summary

---

- 2.1 Two paintings by artist Olivia Irvine (b.1960) are presented to the Committee for consideration. These form part of a group of works which were completed during the period of lockdown in 2020 and are responses to the loss of her father due to COVID-19 during that time.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 The City Art Centre's fine art collection traces the development of Scottish art from the 17<sup>th</sup> century until present day. Acquisitions of new work by contemporary artists are an important part of ensuring that the collection continues to provide a comprehensive overview of Scottish art for future generations.
- 3.2 Curators at the City Art Centre were keen that we should collect artistic responses to the current global pandemic. These are unprecedented times and we thought it important that the City's art collection reflected that. In spring 2020, during the first lockdown, Tonic Arts, Edinburgh and Lothians Health Foundation's arts programme, commissioned a series of micro-residencies entitled 'Life Under Lockdown'. Olivia Irvine was one of the artists awarded a residency and these paintings were completed during that time.

### 4. Main report

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- 4.1 The following paintings by Olivia Irvine (b.1960) are presented to the Committee for consideration:



*Marriage in Ankara*, fresco sgraffito, egg tempera and silver leaf on panel, 2020, 37 x 30cms



*Handle with Care*, fresco and egg tempera on panel, 2020, 32 x 35cms



- 4.2 In the spring of 2020, in the middle of the first lockdown, Edinburgh and Lothians Health Foundation's award-winning arts programme, Tonic Arts, announced an open competition for a series of 'Life Under Lockdown' micro-residencies.
- 4.3 A call out sought seven visual artists across seven generations who could creatively capture living through the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown from their personal and generational perspectives. Artists were asked to submit applications outlining how they would document their observations, experiences, reflections and insights, the ways in which they would create this new work, and how it would reflect this moment in history. Over 100 applications were received.
- 4.4 The residencies programme ran for a ten-week period throughout July, August and September 2020. The resulting artworks were compiled to form an exhibition which has now been shown in Edinburgh and further afield.
- 4.5 Olivia Irvine was born in Kilwinning in Ayrshire in 1960. She initially studied Medicine at Aberdeen University before switching to a drawing and painting course at Edinburgh College of Art. A postgraduate year followed as well as several scholarships in the 1980s and 1990s. In 1992-93 she completed an MA in European Fine Art at the Winchester School of Art in Barcelona. She currently works in Edinburgh and has a studio at one of the WASPS complexes.
- 4.6 For the project, Olivia made a series of fresco paintings inspired by objects her parents acquired while living in Ankara, Turkey, the decade before she was born. She recalls as a child having to clean and polish them and she always thought they brought a touch of exoticism into her home.
- 4.7 Olivia's father died of coronavirus in April 2020 at the age of ninety. She found that talking to her mother about their life in Ankara, as well as spending time with the objects, drawing them, and making the frescoes helped Olivia through the grieving process. Fresco uses natural powdered pigment on a lime plaster. The paintings have to be done while the plaster is damp and the carbonisation process, whilst it dries, fixes the colours.
- 4.8 Olivia writes: "*Fresco seemed like the right process to use. It takes time to prepare yet is direct and spontaneous in execution. It is possible to work the surface allowing notions of treasured memory, fragmentation, revelation and the passage of time, to arise*".
- 4.9 The two paintings are touching tributes to her father, depicting items he and Olivia's mother collected when they were first married. In choosing them the artist is recognizing that objects can evoke powerful memories in all of us. These paintings are modest in scale and are painted with an eye for delicate detail. Olivia Irvine is already represented in the City's collection by two early works, *Figures in an Interior* from 1985 and *Rain* from 1989. The paintings are being sold directly by the artist.



## 5. Next Steps

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- 5.1 Should the Committee approve the purchase of these two paintings, an application for grant aid will be submitted to the National Fund for Acquisitions.

## 6. Financial impact

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- 6.1 The costs are as follows:
- 6.1.1 ***Marriage in Ankara***, fresco sgraffito, egg tempera and silver leaf on panel, 2020. 37 x 30cms. Price: £670.00
  - 6.1.2 ***Handle with Care***, fresco and egg tempera on panel, 2020. 32 x 35cms. Price: £670.00
  - 6.1.3 Funds for these purchases would come from the Jean F. Watson Bequest, and it is intended that an application for grant aid would be submitted to the National Fund for Acquisitions.

## 7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

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- 7.1 Not Applicable.

## 8. Background reading/external references

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- 8.1 Further details about the artist can be seen on her website: [www.irvineart.co.uk](http://www.irvineart.co.uk)
- 8.2 Tonic Arts produced a video about the '*Life Under Lockdown*' project. <https://vimeo.com/537183129> Hear Olivia speaking about her work 10minutes 54 seconds into the recording.

## 9. Appendices

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- 9.1 None.

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# Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest

10.00am, Friday, 17 December 2021

## Purchase of a photographic portfolio by Norman McBeath

Executive/routine  
Wards  
Council Commitments

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee approves the purchase of the photographic portfolio *Perdendosi* (2021) by Norman McBeath (b.1952).

**Paul Lawrence**

Executive Director - Place

Contact: Helen Scott, Curator (Fine Art)

E-mail: [helen.scott@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:helen.scott@edinburgh.gov.uk) | Tel: 0131 529 3575

## Purchase of a photographic portfolio by Norman McBeath

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 Committee is asked to approve the purchase of the photographic portfolio *Perdendosi* (2021) by Norman McBeath (b.1952).

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 The City Art Centre's fine art collection traces the development of Scottish art from the 17<sup>th</sup> century until present day. Acquisitions of new work by contemporary artists are an important means of ensuring that the collection continues to provide a comprehensive overview of Scottish art for future generations.

### 4. Main report

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- 4.1 The following photographic portfolio by Norman McBeath is presented to the Committee for consideration:

**Perdendosi**

Portfolio of 12 black and white photographs (archival digital prints)

Accompanied by reflective text *Twelve Leaves* by Edmund de Waal

Limited edition boxed set (edition of 25)

2021

42 x 29.7cm

Signed by Norman McBeath and Edmund de Waal

£3,000 (including 14% museum discount)



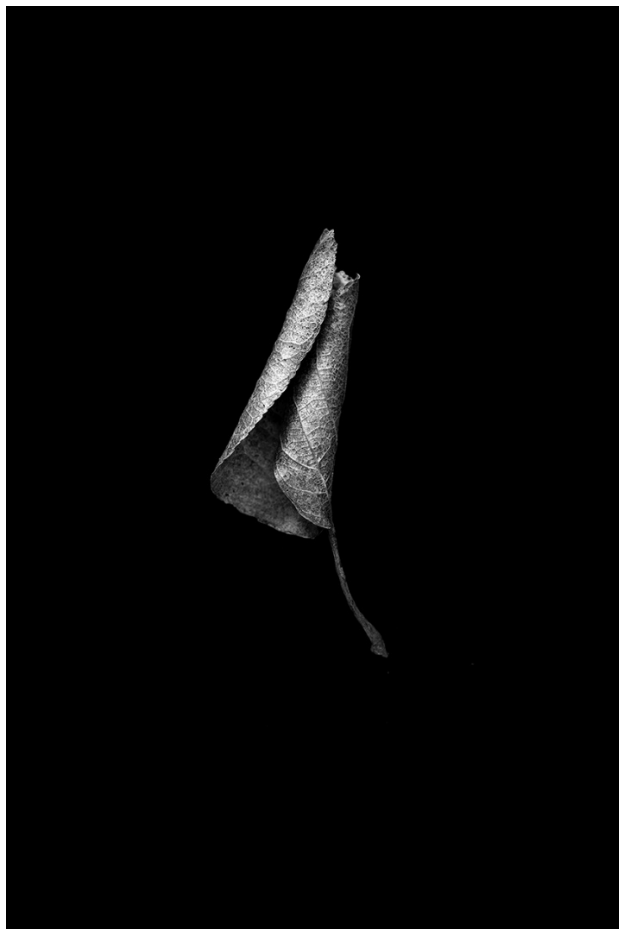




*Perdendosi II*



*Perdendosi IX*



*Perdendosi XII*

- 4.2 Norman McBeath was born in Troon, Ayrshire in 1952. During the late 1970s he studied for a BSc Honours degree in psychology at the University of Stirling, before travelling to Egypt, South Sudan and Saudi Arabia where he taught English as a foreign language. Upon McBeath's return to the UK, seven years later, he began working as a professional photographer. He is now an eminent figure in the fields of both photography and printmaking, specialising as a printmaker in photogravure. McBeath lives and works in Edinburgh.
- 4.3 McBeath initially came to prominence as a portrait photographer. In this capacity, he has photographed a range of well-known figures, focusing particularly on artists, writers and poets. Previous sitters have included Elizabeth Blackadder, Alan Davie, Alison Watt, Ian Hamilton Finlay, Alasdair Gray, Seamus Heaney, Kathleen Jamie and Don Paterson. His portraits are contemplative, thoughtful images that explore the individuality of each subject.
- 4.4 In more recent years, McBeath's photographic practice has expanded to include images of the natural world and built environments. In these artworks, he continues to follow an approach based on a deep sense of perception and attention to detail. According to the artist, much of his work is concerned with "the richness of experience that can be gained by focusing on what is normally unseen in our everyday surroundings. My work explores juxtapositions, focusing on the magic chance of discovery".
- 4.5 In early 2020 McBeath began working on a new series of photographs portraying winter leaves. Many of these photographs were taken in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, when the UK experienced its first period of national 'lockdown'. On daily walks around his local area, the artist would collect dried-out leaves and bring them back to his studio to examine. He was most interested in leaves nearing the end of their transformational cycle, those that had lost their pigmentation and become almost like parchment. McBeath observed that these leaves adopted extraordinary shapes as they decayed, suggesting their own unique identities and characters. He selected and photographed the leaves that possessed the most interesting forms and expressive qualities.
- 4.6 Although this body of work was not a direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic, these events had a profound impact on how McBeath saw the leaves and developed the series. The emerging public health crisis left the artist feeling shocked and frightened, trying to come to terms with the situation while negotiating a 'new normal'. Like many people, he was prompted to consider his immediate experiences and environment. As he later explained: "It was a time for me of heightened awareness and increased sensitivity towards my surroundings, particularly the natural world. Familiar subjects of study became freighted with new associations and symbolism."
- 4.7 The photographs in the series compel the viewer to slow down and look more closely; to examine everyday forms anew and recognise their significance. Each image concentrates on a single leaf, suspended against an intensely dark background. Some leaves are curled tightly upon themselves, while others appear



as if caught in an act of expansive movement. Each one is depicted in exquisite detail, with an array of textures and rich tonal variations. The leaves are all shown on the cusp of disintegration, the final stage in their life cycle, a state that inspired the title of the series, *Perdendosi*, a musical term for gradually dying away.

- 4.8 In the limited edition portfolio, the twelve photographs that make up *Perdendosi* are accompanied by a reflective text by the artist and writer Edmund de Waal (b.1964). McBeath has collaborated with many writers and poets over the years, inviting them to engage with and respond to his photography. Previous collaborative projects have involved literary figures such as Jeanette Winterson, A.L. Kennedy, Paul Muldoon and Robert Crawford. Edmund de Waal is probably best known for his family memoir *The Hare with Amber Eyes* (2010). For *Perdendosi*, de Waal composed *Twelve Leaves*, a piece of writing that offers a series of personal reflections and associations inspired by the imagery.
- 4.9 Through McBeath's photographic images and de Waal's written accompaniment, the viewer is encouraged to develop their own interpretation of *Perdendosi*. The work is deliberately ambiguous, leaving space for the viewer's individual ideas and responses. As McBeath remarks: "I am fascinated by traces of behaviour and events: both what might be about to happen and what we can imagine has already taken place." Each leaf has its own sense of agency and narrative.
- 4.10 McBeath has exhibited widely over the course of his career, both nationally and internationally. His works are held in major public collections, including the National Galleries of Scotland, the National Portrait Gallery, the British Library, Harvard University and the National Portrait Gallery of Australia.
- 4.11 Over the last few years, the City Art Centre has been working to develop its holdings of contemporary Scottish photography. Recent acquisitions have included artworks by David Eustace, Robin Gillanders and Flannery o'kafka. Norman McBeath is not yet represented within the collection. It is felt that the purchase of *Perdendosi* would be an excellent opportunity to acquire an outstanding piece of work by the artist. The portfolio not only demonstrates the poetic craftsmanship that underpins all of McBeath's work, but also offers a thought-provoking creative response to current global events. *Perdendosi* is being offered directly by the artist for sale to the City Art Centre.

## 5. Next Steps

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- 5.1 If the acquisition of the portfolio is approved, it is intended that an application for grant aid will be submitted to the National Fund for Acquisitions.

## 6. Financial impact

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- 6.1 The portfolio is being offered for sale at a price of £3,000, which includes a museum discount of 14%. Funds for this purchase would come from the Jean F. Watson

Bequest, and it is intended that an application for grant aid would be submitted to the National Fund for Acquisitions.

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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7.1 Not Applicable.

## **8. Background reading/external references**

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8.1 Norman McBeath's website: <https://www.normanmcbeath.com>

8.2 Article by Alice Strang on *Perdendosi*: <https://alicestrang.co.uk/norman-mcbeaths-perdendosi-series/>

## **9. Appendices**

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9.1 None.

# Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest

10.00am, Friday, 17 December 2021

## Purchase of an artwork by David McCulloch (b. 1968)

Executive/routine  
Wards  
Council Commitments

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 Committee is asked to approve the purchase of *Walk of Faith* by David McCulloch (b.1968).

**Paul Lawrence**

Executive Director - Place

Contact: David Patterson, Curatorial and Conservation Manager

E-mail: [david.patterson@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:david.patterson@edinburgh.gov.uk) | Tel: 0131 529 3955

## Purchase of an artwork by David McCulloch (b. 1968)

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 A vinyl artwork entitled *Walk of Faith* by artist David McCulloch is presented to the Committee for consideration. This artwork formed part of a group of works which were completed during the period of lockdown in 2020 and is a direct response to the anxiety and unease which we all experienced at that time.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 The City Art Centre's fine art collection traces the development of Scottish art from the 17<sup>th</sup> century until present day. Acquisitions of new work by contemporary artists are an important part of ensuring that the collection continues to provide a comprehensive overview of Scottish art for future generations.
- 3.2 Curators at the City Art Centre were keen that we should collect artistic responses to the current global pandemic. These are unprecedented times and we thought it important that the City's art collection reflected that. In spring 2020, during the first lockdown, Tonic Arts, Edinburgh and Lothians Health Foundation's arts programme, commissioned a series of micro-residencies entitled 'Life Under Lockdown'. David McCulloch was one of the artists awarded a residency and this artwork was completed during that time.

### 4. Main report

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- 4.1 The following artwork by David McCulloch is presented to the Committee for consideration:







Three examples from the full set of 36 floor vinyls



The floor vinyls on display within the Western General Hospital during the *Life Under Lockdown* exhibition, summer 2021.

- 4.2 In the spring of 2020, in the middle of the first lockdown, Edinburgh and Lothians Health Foundation's award-winning arts programme, Tonic Arts, announced an open competition for a series of 'Life Under Lockdown' micro-residencies.
- 4.3 A call out sought seven visual artists across seven generations who could creatively capture living through the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown from their personal and generational perspectives. Artists were asked to submit applications outlining how they would document their observations, experiences, reflections and insights, the ways in which they would create this new work and how it would reflect this moment in history. Over 100 applications were received.
- 4.4 The residencies programme ran for a ten-week period throughout July, August and September 2020. The resulting artworks were compiled to form an exhibition which has now been shown in Edinburgh and further afield.
- 4.5 David McCulloch is a Dundee based multi-media artist and curator, and co-founder of Morphé Arts, a national network supporting arts graduates and emergent artists. His multi-disciplinary art practice includes print and sculpture and encompasses the programming of two alternative gallery spaces, Nomads Projects and Sharing Not Hoarding, both in Dundee.
- 4.6 The 'Life Under Lockdown' residency provided an opportunity for him to reflect, research and respond to life under lockdown by making artworks based on his personal experiences of reading and hearing how language was used between authorities, institutions and the general public at the outbreak of and during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 4.7 'Unprecedented', 'self-isolation', 'social distancing', 'stay home', 'stay safe', 'lockdown', 'key worker', 'PPE' and 'new normal' are just some of the phrases that have become part of the cultural daily vocabulary since the outbreak of COVID-19. David was fascinated by how, as a society, we were affected emotionally and physically by the words permeating our collective rhetoric, and so he developed responses to how words and phrases have impacted the way we were expected to live in lockdown.
- 4.8 In a few years' time, when we look back on what we are currently living through, undoubtedly one of our abiding memories will be the proliferation of signage reminding us to socially distance, wash our hands, etc. *Walk of Faith* consists of 36 floor vinyls. They each show the artist standing on a sign which encourages him to keep his distance. David writes about this work as follows:
- 4.8.1 *"One of the artworks - Walk of Faith - is a series of floor vinyl signs. Physically my signs mimic the common '2m social distance' visual signage that we now see in every building we enter. Each of my signs was a photograph taken from above showing my feet next to the shop floor signs that I encountered. Collectively, they form a narrative revealing my cautious entry back into society after lockdown. Each vinyl includes the date of when the photograph was taken. This indicates both the nature of my activity and my personal timeline of adjustment after an intense period of lockdown. The title Walk of Faith indicates both a physical and emotional encounter.*

*Physically, it felt like every step taken when entering a shop or building could potentially be my last. Emotionally my trust was tested based on how much I believed the instruction on the sign would keep me safe”.*

- 4.9 The artwork is designed to be totally flexible. Should the Committee approve the purchase of the work, the artist will provide a full set of floor vinyls plus the original digital artwork files which will enable us to reproduce them in future. Inherent in any display of *Walk of Faith* is the fact that the vinyls will deteriorate over time as people walk over them. We have agreed with the artist that he will give us the finished digital artwork files so that we can display them many more times in different situations and contexts.
- 4.10 David McCulloch studied at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art between 1986 and 1990. He returned to the same college to complete an MFA (with distinction) in Art, Society and Publics between 2015-17. He has exhibited his work throughout the UK in solo and group exhibitions. He is not currently represented in the City’s art collection.

## **5. Next Steps**

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- 5.1 Should the Committee approve the purchase of *Walk of Faith*, an application for grant aid will be submitted to the National Fund for Acquisitions.

## **6. Financial impact**

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- 6.1 The costs are as follows:
- 6.1.1 *Walk of Faith*, 36 floor vinyls plus final digital artwork, each vinyl 30cms in diameter. The price of the work is £4,000.00. Funds for this purchase would come from the Jean F. Watson Bequest, and it is intended that an application for grant aid would be submitted to the National Fund for Acquisitions.

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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- 7.1 Not Applicable.

## **8. Background reading/external references**

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- 8.1 Further details about the artist and examples of his work can be found here: [www.else-where.org](http://www.else-where.org)
- 8.2 Tonic Arts produced a video about the ‘*Life Under Lockdown*’ project. <https://vimeo.com/537183129> Hear David speaking about his work 8 minutes 59 seconds into the recording.



## 9. Appendices

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9.1 None.

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# Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest

10.00am, Friday, 17 December 2021

## Purchase of a painting by Donald Smith (1926-2014)

Executive/routine  
Wards  
Council Commitments

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 Committee is asked to approve the purchase of a painting by Donald Smith (1926-2014) entitled *Fisherman with Creels*.

**Paul Lawrence**

Executive Director - Place

Contact: David Patterson, Curatorial and Conservation Manager

E-mail: [david.patterson@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:david.patterson@edinburgh.gov.uk) | Tel: 0131 529 3955

## Purchase of a painting by Donald Smith (1926-2014)

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 An oil painting entitled *Fisherman with Creels* is presented to the Committee for consideration. This artwork formed part of a large exhibition of Donald Smith's work which was shown at the City Art Centre from 29 May to 26 September 2021.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 The City Art Centre's fine art collection traces the development of Scottish art from the 17<sup>th</sup> century until present day. Acquisitions of new work by contemporary artists are an important part of ensuring that the collection continues to provide a comprehensive overview of Scottish art for future generations. Donald Smith's work has remained largely unknown until very recently, but his paintings of Island life are significant in the history of post-war Scottish painting.

### 4. Main report

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- 4.1 The following painting by Donald Smith (1926-2014) is presented to the Committee for consideration:



*Fisherman with Creels*, oil on board, 124 x 104cms

- 4.2 In 2011 the City Art Centre included five of Donald Smith's works in the exhibition 'Window to the West', an examination of the relationship between the visual arts and Gaelic language and culture. In the accompanying catalogue, Professor Murdo Macdonald suggested that a full evaluation of Donald Smith's output was overdue, and when he approached the City Art Centre some years later, we were delighted to agree to work in partnership with An Lanntair Gallery in Stornoway to mount a full retrospective of Donald's work. This took place during the summer months of 2021, and the exhibition was extremely well received. *Fisherman with Creels* was part of that display.
- 4.3 Born in rural Lewis in 1926, Donald John Smith was uniquely placed to connect the Gaelic world of the West with the English-speaking mainstream. He left the island to study at Gray's School of Art in Aberdeen, following which he continued to live and work in Aberdeenshire until his return to the island in 1974.
- 4.4 While working as a painter and teacher, Smith developed a structured, contemporary approach to painting which acknowledged movements in Europe and America but remained resolutely local in its subject. Being one of several post-war Scottish artists responding to swift social and cultural change, he saw himself as an outward looking Gael, with one foot in the culture of mainland Scotland, and one in the Hebrides.

- 4.5 Smith was based in a crofting community on the West Side of Lewis from 1974 to his death in 2014. His educational, crofting and community commitments could not stem the flow of portraits, large oil panels and drawings emerging from his studio. Studies of island people became iconic images. These are intensely lyrical paintings, celebrating the strength of the human spirit.
- 4.6 Outside of the Western Isles, Donald Smith's work is not that well known. He is represented in many different private collections, as well as the RSA collection in Edinburgh and by two paintings in the BBC Heritage Collection in Glasgow.
- 4.7 The potential acquisition of this painting was agreed with the artist's family, who were instrumental in helping stage the exhibition in the summer months. It was chosen not least because it complements works by other artists already in the City's collection, including a recent donation by Morris Grassie (*The Sou'Westers, Arbroath*, c.1953-57) and an early work by John Bellany (*The Obsession*, c.1968). *Fisherman with Creels* would be the first work by Donald Smith to enter the City's collection. The painting is being offered for sale by the artist's estate.

## 5. Next Steps

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- 5.1 Should the Committee approve the purchase of the painting, an application for grant aid will be submitted to the National Fund for Acquisitions.

## 6. Financial impact

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- 6.1 The costs are as follows:
- 6.1.1 ***Fisherman with Creels*** oil on board, 124cms x 104cms. The price is £3,555, which includes a 10% museum discount. Funds for this purchase would come from the Jean F. Watson Bequest, and it is intended that an application for grant aid would be submitted to the National Fund for Acquisitions.

## 7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

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- 7.1 Not Applicable.

## 8. Background reading/external references

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- 8.1 Further details about the artist can be found in the publication which accompanied the exhibition '*Islander: The Paintings of Donald Smith*' held at the City Art Centre between May and September 2021.
- 8.2 A review of the exhibition by Art Critic Duncan MacMillan:  
<https://www.scotsman.com/arts-and-culture/art/art-reviews-islander-the-paintings-of-donald-smith-pandemic-a-personal-response-to-covid-19-3261894>

## 9. Appendices

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9.1 None.

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