Remarkable new national art collection captures life



George Wyllie - Paper Boat

The Scottish Maritime Museum will unveil a remarkable new national art collection featuring works by artists such as FCB Cadell, Ian Hamilton Finlay, Muirhead Bone, Kate Downie and John Bellany in a major art exhibition opening on Friday 1 June.

'*Maritime Perspectives: Collecting Art of a Seafaring Nation*', which will run at the Scottish Maritime Museum on the Harbourside in Irvine, North Ayrshire, until Sunday 21 October, will be the first full showing for the new art collection which captures life along Scotland's coastline in all its grit and glory.

The exhibition will feature over 100 works gathered for the collection over the last three years through SMMart, an ambitious project to create a nationally significant art collection to enrich the nationally recognised maritime heritage at the museum.

The SMMart project, was made possible by a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund's Collecting Cultures programme, with further support from Art Fund and the National Fund for Acquisitions.

'*Maritime Perspectives: Collecting Art of a Seafaring Nation*' will feature the oldest painting acquired to date, 'On the Clyde' painted by James Francis Williams in 1830, through to early 21st-century pieces. Together, the works exploit a wide range of mediums from oil painting, watercolour, sketching and photography through to sculpture and mixed

media.

Striking scenes from the heavy industries of oil and shipbuilding will sit side by side with tranquil scenes of fishing boats and travel posters promoting days out ‘doon the watter’. Haunting memorials to lives lost on dangerous seas in both war and peacetime will juxtapose with island seascapes.

An eclectic art collection of national standing

Announcing ‘*Maritime Perspectives: Collecting Art of a Seafaring Nation*’ David Mann, Director of the Scottish Maritime Museum, says: “With the generous support of HLF’s Collecting Cultures programme, Art Fund and the National Fund for Acquisitions, we are delighted to unveil a new, exciting and eclectic art collection of national standing.

[quote=Fiona Greer, Curator of Art, Scottish Maritime Museum]“A vivid portrayal of life for those living and working around Scotland’s coastline, ‘Maritime Perspectives: Collecting Art of a Seafaring Nation’ will evoke a host of emotions."[/quote]

“The new art collection adds great depth, colour and interpretation to our fascinating maritime heritage collection here at the museum. We look forward to developing the new collection over coming years both as an added attraction for visitors coming to experience the maritime heritage as well as those coming to explore it in its own right.”

Lucy Casot, Head of HLF Scotland, added: “Its thanks to players of the National Lottery that these diverse artworks have been brought together to form a new national collection. Not only are they individually important pieces, but together they tell a fascinating story of coastal life around Scotland which is sure to delight visitors from near and far.”



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Collecting Cultures: back by popular demand!