ONE-DAY FESTIVAL ACROSS MANCHESTER ANNOUNCED - ART ASSEMBLY 2022 TO EXPLORE CITY AS ART SCHOOL

- Art Assembly 2022, with the theme of City as Art School will take place across multiple venues and in the streets of Manchester on Saturday 18 June
- The one-day festival is being organised and delivered by Art Fund and a collective of Manchester’s leading arts organisations, including Castlefield Gallery, HOME, Manchester Art Gallery, the Whitworth, and The Manchester College
- New work by ten Greater Manchester artists, in collaboration with students and learners will explore places of creative learning beyond the art school walls
- New major project with artist David Blandy and young artists from Venture Arts

On Saturday 18 June, Art Fund and a collective of Manchester’s leading arts organisations will present the one-day festival, Art Assembly 2022 - City as Art School. Building on the success of the first Art Assembly festival in Walthamstow in 2019, the event celebrates the idea of the city as an art school and champions culture as part of educational experiences for all people.

The festival advocating art and creativity is organised by Art Fund with Castlefield Gallery, HOME, Manchester Art Gallery, the Whitworth and The Manchester College and will present newly co-commissioned artworks and installations across the city, from established arts venues and busy squares and streets to billboards, pavements and more.

Eight new works by ten Greater Manchester artists, developed and produced in collaboration with students and learners, and a major project with artist David Blandy and young artists at Venture Arts will be situated throughout the city to explore how everywhere has the potential to become a place of creative learning. Their work encompasses a broad range of media, from film and painting, to textiles, installation, performance and music.

Manchester Art Gallery will host several of the new works including Respawn by artist Olivia Glasser, featuring videos of children from Plymouth Grove Primary School re-enacting actions
that are important to them in childhood and exploring what they want to do when they are adults. Parham Ghalamdar is collaborating with Art and Design students from The Manchester College to produce large scale paintings on canvas as well as A.I. generated animations and projections that have been inspired by an exploration of the city’s art scene and its hidden gems.

Trails and the opportunity to explore the city with a fresh perspective is a feature of several of the new commissions. Artists David McFarlane and Raheel Khan are working with young people from Manchester Secondary Pupil Referral Unit to map ‘personal geographies’ and experiment with augmented reality, bringing the maps to life. The results and documentation of the process will be shown between Manchester Art G allery and the city centre shopping area. Maya Chowdhry is working with students studying MA Fine Art and MPhil courses from Manchester School of Art to explore ‘space as a gift’ by creating pop-up plinth installations inside Manchester Art G allery and in St Peter’s Square as platforms for performance art. The plinths will also act as an art material exchange, where the plinth becomes the space for a ‘free exchange’ of donated, scavenged or gathered materials.

Stencilled botanical designs will decorate the streets in the city centre, inspired by the 18th and 19th century working-class botanist societies in Manchester, as part of a collaboration between fashion students from The Manchester College and artists Anna FC Smith and Helen Mather. Poster designs exploring climate emergency, created by students from Abraham Moss Community School with artist Sam Owen Hall will feature on outdoor sites between the school and the city centre. Taking as its starting point the bobbin, Sally Gilford’s commission with the University of Salford’s School of Art, Media & Creative Technology students tackles women’s issues not often discussed within the curriculum. Linked to the area’s previous life in textile production and used as shorthand for something that is rubbish or nothing, large-scale bobbin installations in art supplies shop, Fred Aldous, will spill out into Stephenson Square referencing women’s stories such as the “First in the Fight” suffragette banner, first unfurled in the Square on 20 June 1908. Fred Aldous originally produced the baskets for transporting bobbins and is now a place outside art school walls where a strong creative community exists, while Stevenson Square was a place where historically people gathered to protest.

A guerrilla photography exhibition will be a work-in-progress during the festival and displayed on construction site hoardings as part of Robert Parkinson’s collaboration with The Manchester College photography students. Using a portable Xerox printer transported on an all-terrain cart, the group will print their photographs that relate to each display location.

Through a series of online workshops, artist David Blandy and young artists from the Venture Arts’ studio have been reimagining Manchester 8000 years from now, resulting in a zine Lost Eons: Three Worlds. For Art Assembly, David and the young artists Niamh, Raven and George, will be transforming their collaborative work into an immersive installation at Manchester Art Gallery. They will be inviting the public to join them in speculative world building, to share and create their own vision for Manchester far into the future.
A series of film testimonies by pupils at eight Manchester schools, about how and why all art disciplines are valued within the curriculum, will form part of the project City as Arts Schools, jointly realised through Curious Minds and Manchester’s local cultural education partnership MADE. The films will be shown throughout the day on screens at Manchester Art Gallery as well as having a life after the festival online.

There will be a live recording of Art Fund’s award-winning podcast Meet Me at the Museum in front of an audience at HOME as part of Art Assembly 2022. Meet Me at the Museum first launched in 2018 and offers insights into the vast cultural offer across the country, taking listeners to places that provide inspiration, spark conversation, and enrich lives.

As part of Art Assembly 2022, Art Fund has also committed a £10K Student Opportunities grant to fund four new paid opportunities for young people in the Student Art Pass network to work as Art Assembly Coordinators. These four roles will support the Marketing, Production, Front of House and Evaluation of the festival, and promise an exciting, short-term, paid opportunity for each student to gain relevant knowledge, skills and experience of working in the arts and cultural sector.

Art Fund believes all young people have a right to culturally rich activity through the UK’s brilliant museums, galleries and historic houses. At a time of unprecedented financial difficulty, museums’ future resilience relies on reaching new audiences and serving their local communities more meaningfully than ever. In November 2021, Art Fund launched a public campaign, Energise Young Minds, to enable them to spend £1 million to help museums and galleries across the UK to inspire children and young people. Projects like Art Assembly are only possible thanks to the generosity of those who responded to this campaign, and Art Fund’s members, supporters and legacy donors who are vital to all aspects of their work.

Art Assembly 2022 is a one-day festival championing art and creativity, brought to audiences by Art Fund with some of Manchester’s leading arts organisations including Castlefield Gallery, HOME, Manchester Art Gallery, The Whitworth and The Manchester College.

Art Assembly 2022 is funded by Art Fund, Arts Council England, Manchester City Council, The University of Manchester and The Granada Foundation.

For further details and how to book tickets for the events and podcast, visit www.artfund.org/assembly

For downloadable press images, please go to: https://bibli.artfund.org/web/442defce5add398c/art-assembly-press/

Listing:
Art Assembly 2022  
Saturday 18 June 2022  
Various venues and locations, Manchester FREE  
www.artfund.org/assembly
Notes to editors:

About Art Fund
Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for art. It provides millions of pounds every year to help museums to acquire and share works of art across the UK, further the professional development of their curators, and inspire more people to visit and enjoy their public programmes. In response to Covid-19 Art Fund made £3.6 million in urgent funding available to support museums through reopening and beyond, including Respond and Reimagine grants to help meet immediate need and reimagine future ways of working. A further £2 million has been made available for the 2021 Reimagine grant programme. Art Fund is independently funded, supported by the 130,000 members who buy the National Art Pass, who enjoy free entry to over 240 museums, galleries and historic places, 50% off major exhibitions, and receive Art Quarterly magazine. Art Fund also supports museums through its annual prize, Art Fund Museum of the Year. The winner of Art Fund Museum of the Year 2021 is Firstsite in Colchester.

www.artfund.org