

1. Joint Bid for Newlyn-style masterpieces successful

1.1 Falmouth Art Gallery and Penlee House Gallery & Museum have successfully achieved a countrywide first by joining forces to create a combined bid to save two important Newlyn-style paintings for Cornwall. The National Art Collections Fund has now confirmed that no other bid of this type has ever been achieved before.

1.2 The bid is worth **£111,660** to Cornwall and the finance will be administered through Falmouth Town Council. Key funding came from a number of sources including The National Art Collections Fund, Museums, Libraries and Archives Council/Victoria & Albert Museum National Purchase Fund, Friends of Penlee House Gallery & Museum and private donations. The Heritage Lottery Fund agreed to fund the final £43,950 (39 per cent), which also includes money for skill-sharing between the two galleries and a wide range of exciting community activities.

1.3 The first phase of the project is now successfully completed: The saving of two Newlyn-style masterpieces of national importance: *Return of the Fleet, 1888* by Sir Frank Brangwyn RA RWS PRBA 1867-1956 (for Falmouth Art Gallery Collection) and *In the Whiting Ground* by Harold Harvey 1874-1941 (for Penlee House collection). The works are central both to the story of Cornwall's rich artistic heritage, and to coastal life in Cornwall during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Newlyn School had a common approach to painting, working out of doors in front of their subject. By 1905 the Newlyn School was described as the '*most significant body of painters now in England*'. As predicted in the bid to grant bodies the anniversary exhibitions of Brangwyn's work in England, Wales and Brussels are now leading to a renewed interest in his work and a rise of prices for his paintings, so the gallery acquired the work just at the right time.

1.4 Phase two is now under way - using the two paintings as a catalyst for an exciting community learning programme in Falmouth and Penzance, delivered jointly by staff and volunteers of Falmouth Art Gallery and Penlee House. The project helps both local communities learn more about the rich artistic heritage of Cornwall, which is famous throughout the world. A key component of the project would be the training and sharing of transferable skills and the strengthening of partnerships, not only between the two museums, but with a wide range of partners with a special emphasis for disadvantaged groups.

2. Financial Implications of the bid

2.1 The additional £111, 660 on the gallery's expenditure, as well as other grants and sponsorship will clearly distort the end of year figures, in a similar way to the Opie project last year. The curator will be liaising closely with the Town Council's Deputy Town Clerk/Financial Officer to ensure that there will be no additional costs to Falmouth Town Council other than the gallery budgets already approved.

2.2 Nevertheless, the success of such an important bid will alter the priorities for the year and the curator would like permission from Councillors to make variations between agreed gallery budgets to ensure that we deliver the programme promised to grant bodies effectively. These would only be undertaken with liaison with the Deputy Town Clerk/Financial Officer and would not increase the total Council expenditure agreed in the budgets.

3. Posers Exhibition

3.1 The show was one of our most successful attended by **13,604** visitors with **799** educational visits. The gallery put on a number of family workshops to include groups such as MENCAP, Cluster Schools, Falmouth Youth Club, excluded children and local schools. The gallery worked on a music and mime project with the Cornish band **Three Daft Monkeys, Swamp Circus** and the **Cornwall Children's Fund**. Children used the paintings as inspiration to create lyrics which were put to music and professionally recorded by 3 Daft Monkeys. The children were given copies of the music CD containing their lyrics, with the cover of the CD designed individually by each child. A number of certificate ceremonies for children also took place during the exhibition run attended by the Mayor.

3.2 The exhibition was sponsored by Philip Mould OBE, art advisor to the House of Lords and a painting expert on the BBC's Antiques Roadshow, opened the show. Steve Ivall of The Packet Newspapers kindly presented prizes to children who had excelled as 'posers' using the gallery costume box.

4. The Public Catalogue Foundation

4.1 The Public Catalogue Foundation has generously financed the production of digital images of all oil paintings in the collection of Falmouth Art Gallery. The preparations for this were undertaken between March and June and the photography of all works has now been completed.

4.2 The digital images will be used as part of a project to publish a catalogue of all oil paintings in public collections in Cornwall. Falmouth Art Gallery was chosen at the beginning of the scheme because of the high standard of its collection and cataloguing.

5. National Inventory Research Project

5.1 The gallery has welcomed a visit from Dr Anne Cowe of the National Inventory Research Project, the aim of which is to create a database of paintings by foreign artists pre-1900 in British regional collections. She has inspected all relevant works and is helping to research them. The programme has already identified that there is an identical version of Filippo Palizzi's *The Animals Leaving the Ark, Mount Ararat* in the collection of the Museo e Gallerie Nazionali de Capodimonte, Naples.

6. Guardian Praise for the Gallery

6.1 The *Guardian* newspaper kindly described Falmouth Art Gallery as a 'small but perfectly formed gallery' and then went on to praise its exhibitions and education work.

7. Loan Abroad

7.1 The gallery is lending *Funchal, Madeira* by Sir Frank Brangwyn to a retrospective exhibition of his work in Belgium (Arents House, Bruges July 7 to September 17 2006). The show is part of the anniversary exhibitions held in England (Leeds City Art Gallery 6 April to 11 June 2006), and Wales (Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Swansea 13 October 2006 – 7 January 2007), both of which are also borrowing from the Falmouth Art Gallery collection.

8. Recent Gifts and Transfers

8.1 Falmouth Art Gallery has received an important drawing of *Camden Town* by the internationally renowned artist Frank Auerbach (b.1931). Auerbach joined Marlborough Fine Art (Francis Bacon's dealer) in 1965 and began to exhibit globally. By 1978 he had had a retrospective at the Hayward Gallery, and the Tate Gallery and Saatchi collection hold his work. The drawing (which was originally sold by Marlborough Fine Art), was transferred to Falmouth by Torre Abbey, Torquay in preference to the Tate Gallery, London which had also requested to house the work. Falmouth Art Gallery's case was strong because of its location in the South West and because our gallery wanted to show the work in the forthcoming exhibition *Long Studios*, which opens on December 2 (also featuring Sir Peter Blake). The architect of the National Maritime Museum Cornwall, M.J.Long, has designed a number of studios for leading artists including Auerbach, and the exhibition will show photographs of these studios alongside original works by the artists. M.J.Long is a regular visitor to the gallery and the exhibition is being mounted in association with University College Falmouth.

8.2 Mr Kym Hughes has generously presented four paintings of considerable local interest in memory of his parents Grace and Thomas Hughes. The paintings are by the Falmouth artist Frank Jameson 1899-1966 and include a self portrait, a portrait of his wife Joyce, and a watercolour entitled *Blossom*. The gallery already has a self portrait of the artist's daughter, Daphne. The fourth work is a portrait of a young lady with a pigtail by the Penzance artist Jill Garnier (née Blyth) 1890 -1966. Mr Hughes was moving from Mylor Bridge to the Lake District and wrote that he wished to donate the paintings because of '*the infinite pleasure that Falmouth Art Gallery has given me in the past*'.

8.3 Alan and Christine Smith have generously donated an oil painting *Mackerel* by the Falmouth artist Fred Whicker 1901-1966. Fred exhibited at the Royal Academy, London and was, with his wife Gwen, a member of the St Ives Society of Artists. Both artists were the subject of a retrospective exhibition at Falmouth Art Gallery in 1994.

9. Transfer of Photographs

9.1 Following the best practice guidelines recommended by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, Falmouth Art Gallery has transferred some items of its collection to more suitable registered museums. The curator has had a request from the local historian Peter Gilson for Falmouth Art Gallery to transfer its small collection of historical photographs of Falmouth to The Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society Collection. Mr Gilson is donating to the Polytechnic his own collection of photographs, which together with those already owned will provide a substantial archive for the town. The Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society is not a registered museum and so any transfer, if agreed by the Council, would stipulate that the collection should receive curatorial advice for the long term care of photographs. Any transfer would **not** include local topographical engravings and lithographs, such as those purchased by Councillor Evans in '*The Saved for the Town*' exhibition, or civic photographs such as photographs of the Mayors of Falmouth.

10. NACF Regional Meeting

10.1 Barbara Spring, the Regional representative for Cornwall of the National Art Collections Fund is organising a lunch for members, followed by visits to the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society and a tour of Falmouth Art Gallery on Friday June 30. The Art Fund members do much to raise funds to help museums purchase works of art and their members will be able to see works by George Romney, John Opie, Henry Scott Tuke, Sir Frank Brangwyn and Harold Harvey – all of which they helped to acquire.

11. Baby Paint Sessions

11.1 Glyn Winchester is helping continue the popular Baby paint sessions in the gallery. She is being helped by volunteer Claire Harrison from University College Falmouth. Glyn has now held a number of successful sessions and some of the artwork can be seen display in the staircase gallery.

12. Work Placement Programme

12.1 Richard Harold is undertaking an extensive placement to gain experience of work in a professional public gallery. The placement has been organised by New Deal.

12.2 Donna Williams, who is currently completing an MA in Museum Studies at Leicester University, will be undertaking a placement at Falmouth Art Gallery as part of a practical component for her course. She will be working on the *Living with Picasso* exhibition, evaluating the Heritage Lottery Project and getting general all round experience. The gallery has worked closely with Leicester University now for a number of years.

13. Purchase Grant Fund Celebrations

13.1 Falmouth Art Gallery is celebrating the 125th anniversary of the Purchase Grant Fund with a special exhibition in the permanent gallery and a series of events and talks throughout the year.

13.2 The fund is operated and financed by the Victoria & Albert Museum and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, providing one million pounds in grants annually.

13.3 Grants are given to Museums, Libraries and Archives which meet high standards of collection care and public accessibility. Falmouth Art Gallery has benefited considerably from the Purchase Fund.

14. Diane Ibbotson Talk

14.1 Diane Ibbotson kindly gave an interesting and informative lunchtime lecture. The talk was fully attended and the audience included many distinguished local artists.