

As we continued to face the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 global pandemic in 2021, we successfully extended the reach of our museum beyond its physical boundaries and opened our doors to a global audience.

Regardless of location or time, anyone could access and engage with TJC, enabling us to share our collections and experiences with the world. We seamlessly adapted our programming to suit the changing levels of lockdown and visitation as informed by the Victoria Government. By offering a range of online programs, from virtual lectures, on-demand presentations, immersive TJC 360° tours of *Fairhall*, 24/7 online shopping, and YouTube videos of exhibitions, we reached audiences than we previously could only imagine.

***AN INTERIOR LIFE | William Johnston & His Collection*** was briefly allowed to reopen to visitors in July of 2020, though short lived, it was great to reopen the gallery mid-year. We continued to offer access to all our exhibitions via CAPTUR3D 3D virtual tours, or as we called them, *TJC 360°*, as well as through videos uploaded on our YouTube Channel.

From January 2021, ***AN INTERIOR LIFE*** saw a steady rise in YouTube views from its initial upload in March 2020, with over 40,000 video views accumulating in the first 6 months of 2021. Viewers from the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, Spain and Australia were amongst the top viewers, with viewers coming from 45 different countries in total. This also saw a rise in our YouTube subscriber following which grew from 47 subscribers to 801 over the first 6 months of 2021.

Our first exhibition for the 2020/2021 year was ***JUBILATION: Diamonds & Pearls***, which opened in December 2020 as part of our *Summer at The Johnston Collection* series with The Embroiderer's Guild of Victoria. ***JUBILATION: Diamonds & Pearls*** celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Embroiderer's Guild, Victoria, which coincided with the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the public opening of *Fairhall*.

We welcomed visitors back in limited numbers as advised by the Government's COVID Safe Guidelines. The co-curators, Alison Cole and Yvonne Walton, hand-picked some impressive contributions from Guild embroiderers who have exhibited work from over fifteen years or so of Christmas exhibitions at The Johnston Collection.

In March 2021, we opened ***OBJECTS OF MY AFFECTION: Stories of love from The Johnston Collection*** as part of our William Johnston, His Residence & Collection series. We were finally able to welcome The Friends back to TJC for the EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW NIGHT of the exhibition: ***OBJECTS OF MY AFFECTION*** on 9 and 10 March 2021. This exhibition explored the collecting habits of William Johnston, and his ability to gather objects connected by an affection for collecting.

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This was a year of expected interruptions due to COVID-19, which meant that we could pursue our lecture program virtually and very strongly. Our lecture series for the year was presented via Zoom and included both on-demand lectures and 'live' Zoom lectures presented in real time. Our lecture series allowed our visitors to travel around the world from the comfort of their own home. Thanks to some periods of relief from the lockdowns, we were able to engage in some public programs, including the MFF IDEAS PROGRAM 2021.

The MFF Ideas Program included the following lectures: CREATING THE CONSUMER: Twentieth Century Fashion with Peter McNeil, THE FASHION FOR EXHIBITION FASHION with Dr Sally Gray, and a virtual lecture, The Many Slippers of Cinderella with Hilary Davidson. These lectures allowed visitors to learn how fashion consumption has travelled in all directions, across class lines, between urban and rural areas, and around the globe.

Over the year, we were able to present 51 lectures despite the setbacks.

Our *SHOP* continued to launch into success, with huge demand for online orders. The launch of our brand-new Shopify online store in March 2021 seriously enhanced our online retail space where visitors could peruse our products online, and have purchases delivered directly to their home. Jigsaws and games were extremely popular during lockdown, and we also offer cards, facemasks, gifts, and reading products. With the physical store closed, our Shopify Store allowed visitors to shop online, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We sent emails to subscribers twice a week with fresh, exciting offerings and themes for each bulletin. This also allowed us to cross promote our other activities, such as virtual lectures.

Our acquisitions included a William Bateman platter from 1836, as well as a rummer from England, circa 1820. Both were purchased with funds provided by TJC Ambassador, Mr Andrew Dixon. We were also gifted two decorations from The Embroiderer's Guild, Victoria, as part of the Diamond Jubilee of The Embroiderers Guild. We are grateful to have presented Jubilation to celebrate 60 years of The Embroiderers Guild.

In the face of the ongoing challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, we at TJC successfully broke through the confines of our physical space and embraced a global audience. We could not have done this without the dedication and support of our donors, sponsors, members, volunteers and TJC staff. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to accessibility, which allowed individuals from any location and at any time to engage with TJC, enabling us to share our remarkable collections and enriching experiences with the world.

**Louis Le Vaillant**  
CEO

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