



MEDIA RELEASE

HOME made GOOD

Christmas at The Johnston Collection 2018 | 19

Monday 1 October 2018 – Tuesday 5 February 2019

The Johnston Collection's spectacular new Summer | Christmas exhibition *HOME made GOOD* opens on Monday 1 October 2018.

HOME made GOOD | Christmas at The Johnston Collection 2018 | 19 presents over 50 Melbourne makers and artists and more than 200 works.

Shown across eight exhibition spaces in *Fairhall*, the contemporary works are 'inspired by' William Johnston's superb collection of antiques arranged within a domestic setting in his former house.

Featured artists include: Hannah Gartside | Hotham Street Ladies | Anita Mertzlin | Les Morgan | Barbara Porter | Robyn Rich | Dear Songsuwan from KAMI | The Bond Family | The Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc. | Adrien Trevillian.

Visitors to *HOME made GOOD* can expect to see:

- a gigantic gingerbread replica of *Fairhall* exhibition-house made from nearly 65 kilograms of gingerbread mix, furnished entirely of gingerbread furniture, textiles, and paintings, whimsically recreating the antiques from the Collection
- a giant sculpture of Marie-Antoinette composed of discarded plastic bags and soft drink bottles, delivering a political commentary on ocean plastics
- an installation 'on disappointment', by the notorious **Hotham Street Ladies** artists collective as a response to a series of letters received expressing 'disappointment' in their previous exhibition at The Johnston Collection
- paintings by the late Leslie Morgan based on the historical revolutionary figure Toussaint L'Ouverture
- more than 100 meticulously hand-crafted items made by The Country Women's Association members from across Victoria

Inspired by aspects of William Johnston's collection, all the works in *HOME made GOOD* were commissioned by The Johnston Collection who encourage the artists to challenge traditional practice and to push the boundaries of contemporary making.

Louis Le Vaillant, Director | Curator of The Johnston Collection, said: "*HOME made GOOD* celebrates the extraordinary creativity of Melbourne makers and their exploration of new contemporary practices and ideas."

"This wonderful exhibition also demonstrates the communicative nature of contemporary making and shows how makers have applied their voices to their work with dynamic and powerful results," he says.

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ABOUT THE MAKERS

HANNAH GARTSIDE

b. 1987 London, England, living and working in Melbourne, Australia.

Graduated Bachelor of Fine Art (in Sculpture) from Victorian College of the Arts in 2016. Solo exhibitions at George Paton Gallery (VIC) and Metro Arts Gallery (QLD), and has participated in group exhibitions at Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, KINGS ARI, Craft Victoria, Yarra Sculpture Gallery, Wangaratta Art Gallery, Blindside ARI, QUT Art Museum and McClelland Gallery and Sculpture Park.

In 2017, Gartside undertook a two-month Varda Artist Residency in Sausalito, California and was a finalist in Hatched (Perth Institute of Contemporary Art), Fresh (Craft Victoria) and the Fischer's Ghost Art Awards (Campbelltown Arts Centre). Her work is held in the Wangaratta Art Gallery public collection, and in private collections across Australia.

HOTHAM STREET LADIES

The Hotham Street Ladies are a group of women who make street art, installations, public art, recipe books and cakes. Their work was featured in the NGV exhibition *Melbourne Now* in 2013.

The story of The Hotham Street Ladies began in a share household in Collingwood where they still draw much of their inspiration.

The enthusiasm for cakes and the sense of community we have gained from our share household have also lead us to be inspired by groups such as mother's auxiliaries and the Country Women's Association.

The Hotham Street Ladies are Cassandra Chilton, Molly O'Shaughnessy, Sarah Parkes, and Caroline Price.

ANITA MERTZLIN

An artist based in Victoria, Anita Mertzlin has participated in 15 solo and seven group exhibitions since 1988 and has been commissioned to create murals in Richmond, Carlton & Kew. Anita has also illustrated two children's books, "Gandali the Whale" by Meredith Hooper and 'The Cassowary's Quiz' by Carmel Bird. Her work has been acquired by the Marriot Hotel in Melbourne along with private collections in Australia, United States of America and United Kingdom.

LES MORGAN

Leslie Morgan's (1955-2017) artwork is represented in private and public collections including The National Sports Museum and Museum Victoria.

His trans-disciplinary work in painting and writing concerns race, diaspora, migration, cultural hybridity and whiteness. He is author of two books *Illegal Action* (2005), *The Significance of Diaspora Politics in the Visual Arts* (2008) and various journal articles. Morgan's chapter on the work of Abdul Abdullah is published as part of *Re-imagining the City* by Intellect books (2013).

BARBARA PORTER

Barbara Porter labels herself a craft-aholic. An award-winning chef and porcelain artist, Barbara Porter has combined these skills to produce the gingerbread replica of *Fairhall* for *HOME made GOOD*.

ROBYN RICH

Robyn Rich is a Melbourne based artist whose works incorporate painting, drawing and sculpture, three things she finds that demonstrate "my ideas and narratives of the everyday object and the people that use them.

My artwork is filled with whimsical tales, obscure ideas and subtle comments on everyday society. In creating this work, I aim to communicate stories to the viewer and allow them to walk away with their own interpretation." Robyn Rich regularly exhibits in solo and group exhibitions and is in numerous public and private collections in Australia.

DEAR SONGSUWAN from KAMI

Dear Songsuwan from KAMI is an artist who makes paper blooms. Songsuwan creates three-dimensional blossoms and leaves from Mulberry and Lokta bark paper, Italian crepe paper, hand-dyed crêpe paper, and wire, trimming, pleating and crimping to turn coloured paper into leaves, stamens and petals.

THE BOND FAMILY

The Bond Family comprises Maureen Bond and her four daughters, Catherine Byatt, Marissa Byatt, Glenda Piddington, and Jenny Williams. Nurtured by Maureen, the family have a long-standing tradition of resourcefulness and improvisation. Through their independent and collaborative art practices they have continue to develop their skills working in a variety of mediums including glass, textiles, painted design, timber and porcelain.

THE COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC

The Country Women's Association of Victoria (CWA) has been assisting and advocating for women and children for 90 years. Thousands of members meet regularly in local branches across Victoria for friendship, fund-raising and mutual support.

Women and girls of all ages and cultural backgrounds are drawn to CWA in the city and the country for a variety of reasons and each local branch has its own character and projects. The CWA contributors to *HOME made GOOD* are drawn from branches right across Victoria, with ages ranging from 13 to 93.

ADRIEN TREVILLIAN

Adrien Trevillian is one of Australia's foremost hand-icers.

Working with meticulous detail Adrien completed a set of hand-iced gingerbread replicas of items from The Johnston Collection for the *HOME made GOOD* exhibition.

ABOUT CHRISTMAS AT THE JOHNSTON COLLECTION

Since 2004, makers from a different region of Victoria have been commissioned by The Johnston Collection to create new works inspired by the Collection for the *Christmas at The Johnston Collection* exhibition. The Johnston Collection encourages challenges to traditional making, thinking and practice through contemporary responses to the Collection, along with more customary responses that reflect historical techniques, materials and making. This exhibition offers an 'inspired' interpretation of the Collection.

ABOUT THE JOHNSTON COLLECTION

The Johnston Collection is an exhibition-house of visual art and design centred in an historic Melbourne townhouse. A gift to the people of Victoria by William Robert Johnston (1911-1986) it is administered as an independent not-for-profit museum by the WR Johnston Trust.

Since 1990, The Johnston Collection has provided visitors, from near and far, with transformative exhibition and learning experiences to discover, experience and engage with artists, objects and ideas through dynamic temporary programs based on its permanent collection. As a multi award-winning and critically acclaimed museum, The Johnston Collection invites creatives from the broader visual arts and design communities to re-interpret the Collection, offering special tours, study days and lectures throughout the year, that share stories and inspire communities.

ABOUT WILLIAM JOHNSTON

William Robert Johnston (1911-1986) was a 20th century collector and antique dealer who amassed an extraordinary collection of Georgian, Regency, and Louis XV furniture, paintings, ceramics and *objet d'art* over his lifetime.

Johnston was born in Lilydale, Victoria in 1911, the only child of Robert Alexander Johnston, a boot-maker and Louise Friedrichs, a maid. Around the age of eight, William was given a Minton cup by his grandmother, Mary Theresa Friedrichs which became the first piece of his collection and provided inspiration for a career in antiques.

After an early career in window merchandising in Melbourne, Johnston relocated to London to begin a fulltime business dealing in antiques. He purchased *Fairhall* in 1952 with money made from the sale of antiques brought back from England. Originally named *Cadzow*, built in 1860 and extended ten years later, Johnston renamed it *Fairhall* and remodelled it in order to create the appearance of a late 18th century Georgian-style townhouse.

In 1972, Johnston returned to live part-time in Melbourne, gathering his collection of Georgian, Regency and Louis XV fine and decorative arts into *Fairhall* and other properties he owned in the area. At the same time he opened Kent Antiques in High St, Armadale.

Johnston's house, collection and estate were bequeathed to the people of Victoria after his death in 1986 'as a place of historical and educational interest,' now administered as an independent not-for-profit public museum by The WR Johnston Trust. *Fairhall* was converted into an exhibition-house with a garden designed in the English manner. The Trust also acquires new works for the permanent collection, which comprises over 1400 items.

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