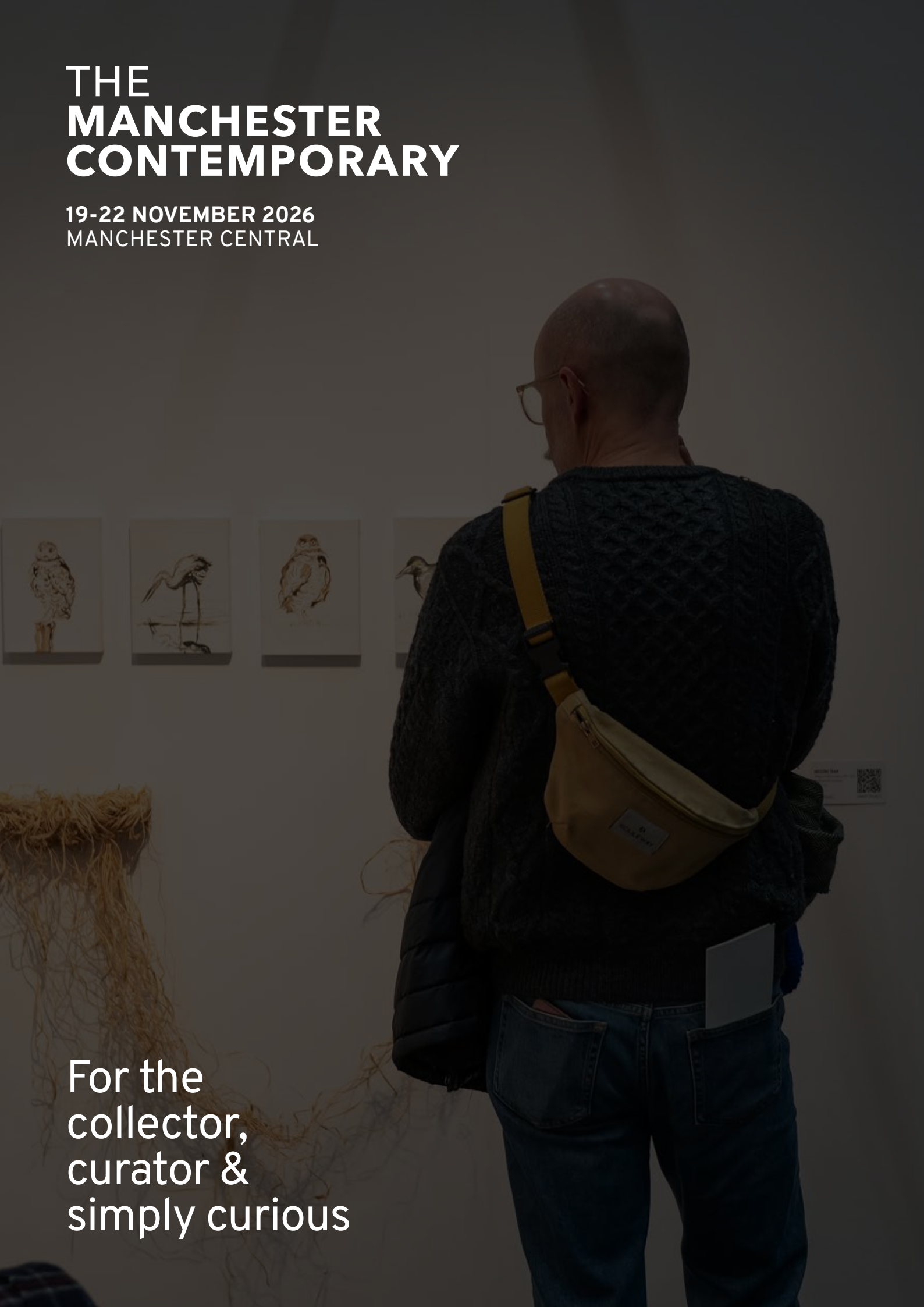


# THE MANCHESTER CONTEMPORARY

19-22 NOVEMBER 2026  
MANCHESTER CENTRAL

For the  
collector,  
curator &  
simply curious

A man with a shaved head and glasses, wearing a dark cable-knit sweater and blue jeans, is seen from behind. He has a bright yellow fanny pack slung over his shoulder. He is standing in a gallery, looking at a wall of framed bird illustrations. To the left, there is a large, textured artwork made of straw or dried grass. The overall lighting is dim, creating a focused atmosphere on the art.

The Manchester Contemporary is a leading art fair dedicated to showcasing critically engaged contemporary artists through a carefully curated selection of independent galleries and artist-led spaces from across the UK and internationally.

For its upcoming edition, the fair is extending to four days, opening with an exclusive Thursday evening preview, followed by public days on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. This expanded format is designed to maximise commercial impact, offering early access to engaged collectors and curators alongside sustained exposure across a full weekend of public attendance.

The Manchester Contemporary presents a strategic opportunity to reach new and motivated collectors beyond the capital. The fair attracts a highly engaged audience actively seeking to discover and acquire contemporary work, creating an environment in which ambitious gallery programmes can be presented with clarity and focus.

Positioned as a compelling, curated alternative to large-scale fairs, The Manchester Contemporary offers galleries the chance to extend their market reach, place emerging artists with new collectors and build long-term relationships within a critically respected, commercially effective setting. Its vision is to become an international focal point for discovering emerging contemporary art providing galleries with a platform that balances curatorial integrity with tangible sales outcomes.



## Why Manchester?

Manchester is one of the UK's most culturally influential cities, internationally recognised for its independent spirit, progressive outlook, and long-standing support for new ideas. With a global reputation across art, music, design and architecture, the city attracts a discerning, culturally engaged audience with a strong appetite for contemporary work.

The city's art ecosystem combines world-class public institutions, a dynamic network of artist-led spaces, and a rapidly growing collector base, creating a fertile environment for discovering and placing emerging artists. Manchester audiences are known for their openness, curiosity and willingness to engage, offering galleries meaningful access to new markets beyond London.

As a well-connected international city with excellent transport links, Manchester draws collectors, curators and visitors from across the UK and Europe. Its scale allows for focus and depth rather than saturation, enabling galleries to present ambitious programmes within a context that values critical practice as much as commercial success.

For exhibiting galleries, Manchester offers the rare combination of cultural credibility, audience engagement and commercial opportunity, making it a compelling destination for showcasing contemporary artists to both established and first-time collectors.



Brooke Benington booth at  
The Manchester Contemporary 2025

## The 2025 facts

**179** exhibitors from across the UK and internationally

**635** artists represented

**10,386** visitors

**£865k** art sold

**97%** of visitors are from the North of England

**37%** of visitors own more than 10 pieces of work

**23%** spend more than £1000 per year on art

**72%** spend up to £1000 per year on art

**41k+** subscribers

**234k** Website Views

**56.8k** Social Media Followers

**1.5m** Estimated PR Coverage Views

**4.3m** Advertising Reach

**1m+** Social Media Impressions

\*includes co-location with Manchester Art Fair.

# Collector Lounge



## VIP PROGRAMME

The VIP Programme at Manchester Art Fair is designed to strengthen relationships between exhibitors and committed buyers, offering the time and access needed to engage thoughtfully with the work on display. It attracts established collectors, new and developing buyers, arts patrons and professional advisers who are actively building collections. VIP guests receive early access to the fair, take part in curated guided tours providing insight into selected artists

and works, and benefit from tailored introductions to exhibitors. A carefully considered programme of hospitality, including Sunday brunch, private dining and collector lunches within Manchester Central, provides a relaxed and sociable setting for conversation. In 2025, the programme brought Michelin starred chefs to Manchester Art Fair to deliver exclusive lunch and dinner experiences.

## ART TALK

Art Talk is a popular series of live discussions, Q&A sessions, panels and artist-led talks where artists, critics, curators, collectors and other art world figures share insights into their work, perspectives on the contemporary art world, and ideas about collecting and creativity.

Collecting Contemporary Art  
Chairperson - Louisa Buck  
Speakers Hannah Barton, Frank Cohen,  
Sigrun Davíðsdóttir & Eliza Gluckman



## ART PREVIEW

The preview, now taking place on the Thursday evening, brings the fair to life with a specially invited audience of collectors, curators and key art buyers alongside the great and the good of the art world. As well being a much loved social event on the Manchester art scene, it gives exhibitors the space and time for genuine conversations and early sales.

## ART CLASSROOM

Art Classroom is a programme of live print demonstrations and hands-on workshops, hosted by creative partners such as Hot Bed Press, Cass Art and Creative Art Courses. Visitors try their hands at techniques such as watercolour, printmaking and contemporary art practices enriching the visitor experience and encouraging dwell time at the fair.

## THE MANCHESTER CONTEMPORARY ART FUND

Since 2017 The Manchester Contemporary Art Fund has acquired 48 artworks worth over £118,000 for the permanent collection of Manchester Art Gallery. The highly anticipated selection is announced at an exclusive reception hosted as part of the preview evening with 30+ fund members and special guests in attendance.

2025 saw the Fund raise a record breaking £41,000 to purchase artworks which will be on display alongside the permanent collection in the gallery in 2026. The TMC Art Fund hosts an annual lunch and tour of these installations as part of its programme of social and engagement events.





Noble & Common booth at The Manchester Contemporary 2025

## STAND PACKAGE

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- Traditional white wooden wall panels, approx. 1m wide x 3m high
- Standard spotlight allocation and track and nameboard signage
- 10 exhibitor passes.
- Profile on The Manchester Contemporary website including art preview and news
- Free art wrap service
- Complimentary weekend and preview tickets
- Free Wi-Fi
- Additional Porters and trolleys on-site during build-up and breakdown
- 24hr secure artwork storage\*
- Stand furniture, additional panels, wall painting and extra lighting options available\*
- Technician hanging service provided by The British Shop\*
- International shipping support provided by The British Shop\*

## STAND SIZES

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3m x 2m =	£1020+vat
4m x 2m =	£1360+vat
5m x 2m =	£1700+vat
6m x 2m =	£2040+vat
8m x 2m =	£2720+vat
4m x 3m =	£2040+vat
5m x 3m =	£2550+vat
6m x 3m =	£3060+vat

\* All prices include the discount supported through funding.

## WALLING & LIGHTING

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The Manchester Contemporary works with Aubury's to deliver a high-quality walling and lighting system for the fair. Exhibitors will receive a standard allocation of lighting with the chance to order additional lighting and storage options once the booking is confirmed.

\* Some options may incur additional charges

## Participation

Applicants are asked to apply online providing exhibitor information along with artist details, example images, artwork price range and the size of stand required. Successful applicants will be contacted with a stand allocation within 4 weeks.

### PAYMENT TERMS

50% of the total invoice is payable on booking followed by a further instalment of 50%. Any bookings less than 6 months from the event will have stand invoices rolled together accordingly.

**APPLY ONLINE**



### APPLICATION CRITERIA

- All exhibitors must show original work and all work must be for sale.
- Original prints and prints made with the hand of the artist are acceptable with a maximum edition size of 150.
- Limited fine art photography is acceptable when signed and numbered with a maximum edition size of 150.
- Digitally created artwork will be considered on an individual basis. Mass produced digital or giclée reproductions are not acceptable.
- The decision of the organisers is final and based upon the selection criteria and fair objectives.

For further information please contact:

**[curator@themanchestercontemporary.co.uk](mailto:curator@themanchestercontemporary.co.uk)**



News Pavilion with United States of Scandinavia booth at The Manchester Contemporary 2025



# THE MANCHESTER CONTEMPORARY

## Steering Committee



**Nat Pitt**  
*Fair Curator since 2018*  
Division of Labour

Nat Pitt trained as an artist at Falmouth School of Art in 1997 and gained his MA from Wolverhampton University 2009 before becoming a fellow at De Appel in Amsterdam, 'curating in the gallery field.'

Pitt is the current curator of The Manchester Contemporary, and before this, has participated in the fair since 2013 as the Director for the gallery Division of Labour. The gallery is currently based in Salford and London dedicated to supporting contemporary art across the UK. Representing; Céline Berger, Matthew Cornford, Gavin Wade, Yelena Popova, Andee Collard, Rosie McGinn, Andrew Lacon, Dean Kenning, Sam Curtis, Hilary Jack, Saulius Leonivicius, Angelina May Davis.

With research interests in regional art market development, art and education and collaborative practice, projects have included working with artists; Sonia Boyce, Robert Barry, Victor Burgin, Ryan Gander, Brian O'Doherty, Jasleen Kaur and Carey Young. Pitt has developed an international profile for his gallery, with past presentations in Venice, Brussels, Rotterdam, New York, Hong Kong, Basel, Vienna and Dallas.



**Jon Sharples**  
*Howard Kennedy*

Jon is a Senior Associate in the Intellectual Property & Commercial team at the law firm Howard Kennedy. He advises clients across the creative industries on intellectual property, commercial contracts and disputes.

As a solicitor, Jon is particularly known for his expertise in the art world. He advises on litigation and dispute resolution involving art and the art market, as well as on agreements, transactions and collaborations involving artists and their estates, commercial galleries, collectors, auction houses, art professionals, and public institutions.

Jon is a member of the committee of the Art Lawyers Association and an officer of the International Bar Association's Art, Cultural Institutions and Heritage Law Committee, and writes an occasional column on legal issues affecting the art market in The Art Newspaper.



**Paulette Brien**  
*The Grundy*

Paulette Brien has been supporting artists to make and exhibit their work for over 30 years. Since 2017, she has been the Curator at Grundy Art Gallery in Blackpool. Here, in collaboration with a range of local, regional, national and international partners, she conceives and leads on the delivery of an ambitious year-round programme of contemporary art exhibitions and events and oversees the acquisition of artworks into the gallery's permanent collection.

Prior to this, Paulette was co-founder and co-director of The International 3 from 2000-2017 – a hybrid artist-led / commercial gallery in Manchester / Salford that supported early career artists to make, exhibit and sell their work. The International 3 was also the Curator of The Manchester Contemporary art air from 2010-2017. Paulette is regularly invited to share her knowledge and experience in a range of professional development settings, including as a visiting lecturer, writer, workshop leader and artist mentor. In addition Paulette is a Leader in Residence for UCLAN (University of Central Lancashire).

# EASEL PROJECTS

Based in the North of England, **EASELprojects** is best known for running Manchester Art Fair and The Manchester Contemporary, which together constitute the largest art market ecology outside of London, as well as the philanthropic The Manchester Contemporary Art Fund. With over 20 years' experience in delivering large scale trade and consumer exhibitions in the culture and hospitality sectors EASELprojects also provides consultancy, marketing and operations support to organisers and partners hosting events in Manchester and the North.

**Co-Founder and Executive Chair Thom Hetherington** is a seasoned figure in the UK arts and hospitality world. He is also founder of Landing Light, a consultancy specialising in culture, hospitality and placemaking strategy. Thom's work makes him a key advocate for regional cultural growth, both as a trustee of Factory International (following similar roles at Urbis, Castlefield Gallery and Manchester Art Gallery) and as a Soho House creative industries mentor.

**Sophie Helm** is the **Co-Founder and Managing Director** of EASELprojects. In her role as Fair Director, she has steered Manchester Art Fair and The Manchester Contemporary for fifteen years, shaping its growth into one of the UK's most significant contemporary art events. She has long been active in broader cultural advocacy for the region, culminating in her recent appointment to the newly revamped Creative Industries Council by Lisa Nandy Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport.



William Hine booth at The Manchester Contemporary 2025



Manchester School of Art  
at The Manchester Contemporary 2025

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## OPENING TIMES

Thursday 19 November 2026, 17.00 – 21.00

Friday 20 November 2026, 11.00 – 19.00

Saturday 21 November 2026, 10.00 – 18.00

Sunday 22 November 2026, 10.00-16.00

► [Watch The Manchester Contemporary in Action](#)

See what exhibitors experience at the fair and discover why it's a must-attend event.

[themanchestercontemporary.co.uk](https://themanchestercontemporary.co.uk)

