

Big Data; Networked Narratives:

Decentring Collection Histories with data from
the John Moores Painting Prize



14 September - 6th November

Exhibition Research Lab Gallery,

**Big Data; Networked Narratives: Decentring Collection
Histories with data from the John Moores Painting Prize**

14 September - 6th November
Exhibition Research Lab Gallery, LJMU

Curated by Hana Leaper & Sophie
Hatchwell

With Geneva Beckford, Emily Fuggle,
Emily Langridge, Ella Nixon, Rebecca
Savage

Introduction:

Big Data; Networked Narratives: Decentring Collection Histories with data from the John Moores Painting Prize

Hana Leaper and Sophie Hatchwell

The research behind this exhibition began with our Post-War Painting in Regional Collections Research Group. Founded in 2019, it connected curators, academics, artists and educators working with post-1945 civic collections. Together, we explored how post-war British painting was shaped by social, aesthetic and political shifts including the breakdown of colonialism and changing attitudes to gender, sexuality and class.

In 2021, we conducted an audit of exhibition catalogues from the John Moores Painting Prize (JMPP) as a way to offer opportunities for research collaboration and connection during Lockdown. We worked collaboratively with a set of the early catalogues from the 1950s and 60s to build sharable datasets that we could continue to expand and analyse.

We focused on the John Moores Painting Prize because of its importance to the post-war artistic ecosystem of Merseyside and the North West. Local businessman and philanthropist John Moores founded the Prize in 1957 out of a concern for the “plight of provincial museums and art galleries”. He argued that a regional gallery could only be “a living thing” if it played a real part in the cultural life of the town it served, rather than acting as “a pale and distant reflection” of London. He collaborated with the Walker Art Gallery to organise an exhibition “open to any artist working in Britain” and offering “substantial prizes”. Moores framed this as a model that could be replicated elsewhere, insisting that provincial galleries should seek support from local patrons rather than rely on government grants, and that locally rooted commitment was the best way to cultivate a “climate of discernment”.

Our audit has shown that the John Moores Painting Prize is not a Liverpool “outpost” of a London story about post-war British Art, but evidence of a distributed and networked art world. Catalogue data has allowed us to map artists’ locations, career stages and transnational biographies, and showed how regional exhibition opportunities and ensuing acquisitions actively shaped post-war careers and collections. By making these patterns visible, the audit uncovered a networked picture of post-war painting, characterised by mobility, plurality and diversity.

Curator biographies:

Dr Sophie Hatchwell (SFHEA) is Associate Professor in History of Art at the University of Birmingham where she is Deputy Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange (Impact) for the College of Arts and Law. Sophie leads the editorial team of Midland Art Papers.

Dr Hana Leaper is Reader in Histories of Art and Museum Studies, Programme Leader of the Exhibition Studies MA, and Research Director of the Exhibition Research Lab at Liverpool John Moores University. She holds an embedded post with the John Moores Painting Prize.

Sophie and Hana co-convened the Post-War Painting in Regional Collections research group, and their book *Post-1945 Art Collections and Regional Research Networks: Collaborative Art History* is published with Routledge, 2026.

Who tells the story of British art?

Ella Nixon

Who tells the story of British art? invites visitors to step into the role of curator and consider a deceptively simple question: who tells the story of British art? It draws on two influential exhibitions from the late 1950s that offered competing ways of defining contemporary British culture. The inaugural John Moores Painting Prize exhibition, held in Liverpool in 1957, presented works selected through an open submission process and claimed to identify the most significant new painting being made across Britain. A year later, the Arts Council's four-part exhibition survey sought to narrate the development of British art since the Second World War, relying largely on works already held within its collection.

The artworks reproduced here appeared in one of these exhibitions. By rearranging them, visitors are invited to explore how exhibitions create meaning through selection, grouping, and interpretation. What connects these works: style, subject matter, technique, mood, or something less tangible? Which artists, themes, or ideas emerge when the works are viewed together?

This exercise highlights the role of exhibitions as powerful tools for shaping cultural narratives. By creating and documenting their own displays, visitors contribute to an ongoing investigation into how artworks from late 1950s Britain are understood today, revealing the diverse ways in which histories of art continue to be constructed, challenged, and reimaged.

Curator biography:

Dr Ella Nixon is a postdoctoral researcher at The Women's Art Collection at Murray Edwards College (University of Cambridge). She was formerly a Research Associate on the 'Mapping the Collection' collaborative project between the University of Birmingham and the Arts Council Collection. Her doctoral thesis examined the representation of women artists in regional art galleries, in collaboration with the Laing Art Gallery (Newcastle-upon-Tyne).

ella@ellanixon.com

The Price of Success

Rebecca Savage

This display explores an often-overlooked aspect of artistic success: money. When Jack Smith won first prize at the inaugural John Moores Painting Prize in 1957, the £1,000 award transformed his circumstances. At the time, Smith combined his painting practice with part-time teaching and, like many artists, faced financial uncertainty. Reflecting on his win, Smith told a journalist that “the bank welcomed me with smiles” when he deposited the cheque, and that the prize allowed him to upgrade his materials, and begin painting on canvas rather than hardboard. For Smith and many others, prize money was not simply a reward for artistic achievement but a practical means of sustaining creative work.

The 1957 John Moores Painting Prize distributed a total of £4,000 in awards, with substantial sums also awarded to artists including Ceri Richards, Victor Pasmore, John Bratby, Sheila Fell, and Terry Lee. These prizes shaped careers, providing financial security, and creating opportunities that might otherwise have been unavailable.

By placing these financial awards alongside information about everyday costs in 1957, this display encourages visitors to consider the economic realities of artistic practice. The participatory activity invites comparison between past and present: if you received the equivalent of Smith’s prize, around £21,500 today, what would you spend it on? Your responses prompt reflection on the resources, opportunities, and challenges that continue to shape artistic careers.

Curator biography:

Dr Rebecca Savage is an art historian and researcher of visual culture. Her PhD explored the contribution of women artists to British poster design and commercial art in the early twentieth century, examining how artists navigated gendered barriers within the arts and contributing new perspectives on British modernism, visual culture and women’s creative agency. Her current research builds on this work to explore how legislative reform, cultural institutions and new opportunities for artistic recognition reshaped participation in the British art world following the Second World War, with particular attention to gender, class, disability and regionality.

Equity, visibility, and the shaping of cultural memory in the 1989 John Moores Painting Prize

Geneva Beckford

‘Equity, visibility, and the shaping of cultural memory in the 1989 John Moores’ probes the idea that anonymous judging creates a fair and impartial competition in relation to the 1989 JMPP.

The late 1980s were a period of profound social and political change in Britain, marked by social tension, shifting cultural policy, and intensifying debates around representation. While the removal of artists' names from submitted works aimed to reduce bias, anonymity alone could not erase the wider social and cultural inequalities that shaped artistic careers, access to professional networks, and opportunities for visibility. Featuring reproductions of works by Lisa Milroy, Rosa Lee, Shanti Panchal, Graça Coutinho, and Sara Rossberg, this display foregrounds artists whose experiences complicate narratives of neutrality and equal access. By situating their 1989 submissions within the broader contexts of their lives and careers, the display invites visitors to consider how artistic value is constructed and remembered. In doing so, it asks not only who wins prizes, but how institutions shape cultural memory, visibility, and the histories of British art that are carried forward.

Curator biography:

Geneva Lavern Beckford is a curator and doctoral researcher at Liverpool John Moores University. Her doctoral research explores Black Feminist Thought as both an analytical lens and a curatorial orientation for developing conscious, socially responsive institutional practices. More expansively, her research traces the development, erasure, and recovery of Feminist and Black art histories in Britain, positioning the exhibition as a critical site through which these narratives are articulated, contested, and reimagined. Her work is grounded in a commitment to widening access and embedding inclusion across the arts.

‘Entangled in this Strange World’: Women Refugee Artists at the John Moores Painting Prize

Emily Fuggle

This display explores the relationship between migration, refuge, and artistic opportunity through the history of the John Moores Painting Prize. When John Moores established the Liverpool Painting Prize in 1957, he described his support for contemporary art as part of a broader commitment to the people of Merseyside, linking it to his own, and Liverpool’s, role in assisting refugees fleeing persecution and conflict (quoted in ‘The Littlewoods Organisation’ in *The Sunday Times*, Sunday 19 May 1957, p.3.). His comments reflected a city whose recent history was deeply shaped by migration, exile, and international movement.

The first John Moores exhibition reveals the extent to which refugee artists contributed to post-war British art. Among the overseas-born artists represented in 1957 were several who had fled Nazi Europe during the 1930s and 1940s. For these artists, the exhibition offered visibility within a British art world in which rebuilding professional networks and careers could be challenging, particularly for women navigating the combined pressures of displacement, gender inequality, and cultural adaptation.

At the centre of this display is Hanna Weil, who arrived in Britain from Munich as a child refugee in 1933. Her painting *Dark Afternoon, Trani* reflects a post-war Europe marked by trauma, resilience and renewed freedom. Although often overlooked in art historical narratives, Weil’s inclusion in the JMPP and the subsequent acquisition of her work by Rugby Art Gallery demonstrate the Prize’s role in supporting artists whose experiences crossed national boundaries. By tracing these histories, the display highlights how migration has shaped both British art and the stories museums choose to tell.

Curator biography:

Emily Fuggle is an independent curator specialising in histories of exile and displacement. Her PhD research considers the history of Ben Uri Gallery and Museum and the roles of its women art workers in shaping curatorial practices of humanitarian activism, feminist collection-building and community wellbeing, and in fashioning a material memory of exile. She was recently Researcher in Residence at Bow Arts Trust exploring the histories of socially-engaged curatorial practice. She has held museum roles at the Imperial War Museum, the Jewish Museum New York and as curator of the collection of postwar British art at London South Bank University.

How do we find queerness in data?

Em Langridge

This display explores how queerness might be understood in art beyond the identities, biographies, or intentions of artists. Historically, queer histories have often been marginalised within museums and art history, while works have typically been described as “queer” only when an artist’s sexuality, gender identity, or subject matter can be clearly identified. Such approaches risk reinforcing the assumption that heterosexuality and cisgender identity are the default, making queerness visible only when it can be explicitly named.

Rather than focusing on biography, this display invites visitors to consider queerness as a way of looking, feeling, and interpreting. Drawing on queer and non-binary approaches to art history, it asks whether works of art might evoke experiences of ambiguity, fluidity, difference, desire, resistance, or belonging, regardless of when they were made or who created them. In doing so, it shifts attention from fixed categories to the relationship between artwork and viewer.

The participatory exercise encourages visitors to encounter artworks without information about their artist, title, or date. By relying on instinctive responses rather than established narratives, participants are invited to reflect on their own understanding of queerness and non-binary identities. There are no correct answers. Instead, the display highlights the diversity of interpretations that emerge when authority is decentralised and visitors are empowered to make meaning for themselves. Through these encounters, new connections can be forged across artworks, histories, and lived experiences, revealing queerness not as a fixed label but as an open and evolving mode of interpretation.

Curator biography:

Em Langridge is an independent researcher and art historian, and a curator at Showtown: the museum of fun and entertainment in Blackpool. With almost a decade of experience in museums, galleries and archives, their work focuses on community led research and engagement to shine a spotlight on marginalised histories. Their research prioritises creating frameworks to support others in shifting their perspectives and looking at collections, exhibitions, and research through new lenses. elangridge@outlook.com

Full list of works by section

Big Data; Networked Narratives: Decentring Collection Histories with data from the John Moores Painting Prize

Hana Leaper and Sophie Hatchwell

Reproductions of catalogues from the first four decades of the John Moores Painting Prize and the four 1958 Arts Council Collection of Paintings and Drawings touring exhibition catalogues (display unit)

**Sir John Moores, Letter to the Sunday Times, 7th August, 1957.
Artworks from the 1957 John Moores Painting Prize in regional collections (projection).**

Artworks from the 1961 John Moores Painting Prize in regional collections (projection).

Infographics showing gender demographics in the JMPP 1957, 1967, 1976, and 1989.

Infographics showing artists' place of residence in the JMPP 1957, 1967, 1976, and 1989.

Infographics showing artists' place of origin in the JMPP, 1957, 1967, 1976, and 1989.

-

Who tells the story of British art?

Ella Nixon

Activity

This activity invites you to curate your own exhibition using artworks shown in the first John Moores Painting Prize (1957) and the Arts Council's survey of post-war British art (1958). By grouping, arranging, and titling the works, you can explore different ways of interpreting late 1950s British art, while contributing anonymously to research on how contemporary audiences classify and value these artworks today.



Works:

Part 1: Towards Impressionism

Arts Council Collection Part 1: Towards Impressionism

William Townsend, *The Hop Garden* (1950). Oil on canvas, 63.5 x 76.2. The Arts Council Collection.

Carel Weight, *Dans le Vieux Parc* (1951). Oil on canvas, 60 x 73. The Arts Council Collection.

Anthony Fry, *Nude* (1954). Oil on canvas, 76.2 x 91.8 cm. The Arts Council Collection.

Victor Pasmore, *Riverside Garden* (c.1944). Oil on canvas, 45.7 x 61 cm. The Arts Council Collection.

Part 2: After Impressionism

Ivon Hitchens, *Garden Cove* (1948-1950). Oil on canvas, 44 x 108 cm. The Arts Council Collection.

Ceri Richards, *Blue Interior with Dice* (1950). Oil on canvas, 89.5 x 110.6cm. The Arts Council Collection.

Duncan Grant, *The Doorway* (1929). Oil on canvas, 88 x 77.5 cm. The Arts Council Collection.

Matthew Smith, *Provençal Landscape* (c.1935). Oil on canvas, 25 x 41 cm. The Arts Council Collection.

Arts Council Collection Part 3: Romantic and Abstract

Keith Vaughan, *The Village* (1953). Oil on canvas, 76 x 51 cm. The Arts Council Collection.

Peter Lanyon, *Moor Cliff, Kynance* (1953). Oil on board, 129.5 x 68.6. The Arts Council Collection.

Victor Pasmore, *Beach in Cornwall* (1950). Pen and ink on paper, 25.3 x 31.5 cm. The Arts Council Collection.

Peter Lanyon, *Bicyclist in Penwith* (1952). Oil on chipboard, 50.8 x 15.2 cm.

Arts Council Collection Part 4: Since the War

John Bratby, *Jean Reading* (1953). Oil on hardboard, 53.3 x 78.5 cm. The Arts Council Collection.

L.S. Lowry, *The Park* (1946). Oil on canvas, 38 x 80 cm. The Arts Council Collection.

Derrick Greaves, Dog (1955). Oil on canvas, 118.1 x 78.7 cm. The Arts Council Collection.

Jack Smith, After the Meal (1952). Oil on canvas, 112 x 121 cm. The Arts Council Collection.

John Moores Painting Prize 1957

John Bratby, Three Self-Portraits with a White Wall (1957). Oil on board, 241.9 x 196.9 cm. Walker Art Gallery.

William Gear, Black Figures (1957). Oil on canvas, 81.3 x 122 cm. University of Chichester, Otter Gallery, Chichester.

Cecil Collins, Christ Before the Judge (1954). Oil on board, 120 x 90 cm. Gardiner Chantry, Winchester Cathedral.

*Victor Pasmore, Abstract in Black, White, Maroon and Ochre (1957). Enamel on wood, 122.2 x 122.2 cm. Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

*Ceri Richards, Trafalgar Square, London (1950). Oil on canvas, 153.4 x 245.8 cm. Tate Gallery.

*Jack Smith, Creation and Crucifixion (1955-1956). Oil on board, 243.8 x 304.3 cm. Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

Matthew Smith, Still Life (c.1955). Oil on canvas, 127 x 66 cm. Private collection.

Ivon Hitchens, Arched Trees (1954). Oil on canvas, 46 x 109.5 cm. National Museum Cardiff.

Claude Rogers, Professor J. B. S. Haldane (1957). 61 x 50.8 cm. UCL Art Museum, London.

Keith Vaughan, Figure Against a Blue Background (Study for a Transfiguration) (1957). Oil on canvas, 91.5 x 91.5 cm. Art Gallery of New South Wales, Australia.

*Merlyn Evans, Standing Figure No. 1 (1956). Oil on canvas, 192.3 x 102cm. National Museum Cardiff.

*Harold Cohen, Gentleman in Academic Dress (1957). Oil on board, 171.5 x 141.5. County Hall, Leicestershire County Council Artworks Collection.

*Sidney Nolan, Bather in a Lily Pond (1957). Ripon and oil on board, 152.5 x 122 cm. Collection of the Sidney Nolan Trust.

William Townsend, Dungeon Ghyll (1956). Oil on canvas, 137.5 x 76.2 cm. Tate.

Carel Weight, The Dark Tower (1956). Oil on board, 122 x 91.5 cm. Private collection

John Moores Painting Prize – Selection of Five

Sheila Mary Fell, Houses Near Number Five Pit (1957). Oil on canvas, 127.3 x 102 cm. Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

Margaret Elizabeth Evans, Blue Still Life (1957). Oil on canvas, 101 x 126.5 cm. Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

Terry Lee, Bathroom, Regent's Park (1957). Oil on board, 123.2 x 98.4 cm. Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

FN Souza, Portrait of an Indian Philosopher (1957). Unknown medium, dimensions and location.

Josef Herman, Women on the Shore (1945-50). Oil on canvas, 100.5 x 126cm. Private collection.

Arts Council Collection – Selection of Five

Elsie Few, The Pond at Hawkshall. Oil on board, 19.5 x 24 cm. Arts Council Collection. Part 1: Towards Impressionism.

Mark Gertler, Self Portrait (1920). Oil on canvas, 42.5 x 29.2 cm. Arts Council Collection. Part 2: Against Impressionism.

John Craxton, Boy on a Blue Chair (1946). Gouache on canvas, 139.5 x 100.3 cm. Arts Council Collection. Part 3: Romantic and Abstract.

Pamela Lloyd, Pigeon Lofts, Whitby. Oil on board, 12 x 30 cm. Arts Council Collection. Part 4: Since the War.

Prunella Clough, Lowestoft Harbour (1951). Oil on canvas, 162.6 x 106.7cm. Arts Council Collection. Part 3: Romantic and Abstract.

-

The Price of Success

Rebecca Savage

'Contemporary Art Contest: £1,000 prize a break for me says artist', Liverpool Daily Post, Saturday 9th November, 1957 (newspaper facsimile)

Infographic: Product prices in 1957.

-

Equity, visibility, and the shaping of cultural memory in the 1989 John Moores Painting Prize

Geneva Beckford

Reproduced works:

Lisa Milroy (b. 1959, Canada/UK), *Handles*, 1989, oil on canvas, 190.5 × 221 cm

Graça Pereira Coutinho (b. Portugal), *Etruscan Door Series No. VII*, 1989, acrylic on canvas, 240.5 × 170 cm

Shanti Panchal (b. 1951, India/UK), *Laxmi Narayan and Son*, 1987, acrylic on paper, 152 × 122 cm

Rosa Lee (1957–2009, UK), *Matrix*, 1989, oil on canvas, 256.5 × 196.5 cm

Sara Rossberg (b. 1952, Germany), *Map*, 1988, acrylic on canvas, 183.5 × 178 cm

Vitrines

List of exhibitors featured in the 1989 John Moores Painting Prize exhibition catalogue.

Photograph of the 1989 John Moores Painting Prize jury. Left to right: Barbara Toll, Therese Oulton, Kate Whiteford and Tim Hilton.

Photograph of Sara Rossberg at her solo exhibition at Art Basel, Switzerland, 1986.

Newspaper coverage of Sara Rossberg's £30,000 Jackson's Painting Prize win. David Lister, *The Independent*, 1998.

Lisa Milroy Artforum review Magazine feature on artist Lisa Milroy. Stuart Morgan, *Artforum*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (1984).

Photograph of Graça Pereira Coutinho in her studio in Lisbon. Matilde Fieschi, *Público* (Fugas), 2022.

Photograph of Shanti Panchal featuring his artwork *Marine, Off Duty From Frontline* (2012). Jackson's Art Blog.

Photograph of artist Rosa Lee. Undated photograph; source and date currently unknown.

Online magazine feature on Sara Rossberg, *Sara Rossberg: A Luminous Obsession*, Jackson's Art Blog, 2025.

Exhibition press release for *The Power With Which We Leap Together*, Centro de Arte Moderna (CAM), Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 2024.

Haptic Vision Exhibition press release for *Haptic Vision: Rosa Lee and Jo Bruton*, Richard Saltoun Gallery, 2022.

Exhibitors list for John Moores Exhibition 16 (1989), Walker Art Gallery.
Exhibition text for *Endurance*, Shanti Panchal, *Art on the Underground*, Brixton Header Wall Series, 2022–2023.

Exhibition Review Compliments and coronets for Lisa Milroy at Parasol Unit, The Art Newspaper, 2018.

Article from National Museums Liverpool on Ten Moments That Changed the John Moores Painting Prize

Video Sources:

Lubaina Himid's Favourite Past Winner of the John Moores Painting Prize, National Museums Liverpool, 1:01 (2018)

Sacha Craddock On Rosa Lee, Richard Saltoun Gallery, 4:02

Graça Pereira Coutinho, Museu Nacional De Arte Contemporânea, 3:41

Artist Insights with Shanti Panchal, Jackson's Art, 5:00

Shanti Panchal on John Moores Painting Prize 2018 Win, National Museums Liverpool, 2:24

Studio Visit with Lisa Milroy, Tate, 3:55

Isolation (Parts 1–8), Sara Rossberg, 2020 1:54

Fear (Parts 1–3), Sara Rossberg, 2020, 0:32

-

‘Entangled in this Strange World’: Women Refugee Artists at the John Moores Painting Prize

Emily Fuggle

Martin Bloch (1883-1954), Checkpoint, Huyton, 1940, drawing, 19.3 x 25.2cm, Walker Art Gallery, presented to the Walker Art Gallery by Hugh Clausen in 1966

Franciszka Themerson (1907-1988) in her Maida Vale Studio, 1956, © Estate of Franciszka Themerson and Stefan Themerson

Uli Nimpf (1897-1977), Girl Pulling on Her Stocking, 1956, bronze, 24.5 x 19.1 x 18.8cm, Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich

Josef Herman (1911-2000), Miners, c.1946, pen and black ink on paper, 19.6 x 25.5cm, © Ben Uri Gallery and Museum, Josef Herman Estate

Hanna Weil (1921-2011), Dark Afternoon, Trani, 1962, 69 x 106.5cm, Rugby Art Gallery and Museum

Hanna Weil, Girl in a Hat (self portrait?), undated, 46 x 36cm, oil on canvas, with thanks to Gildings Auctioneers

Vitrine

Catalogue to the John Moores Painting Prize Exhibition, 1961
Helen Kapp, 'The Continental British School of Painting', The Studio
(London: Vol. 157, No. 794), May 1959. Hanna Weil, The Tower, 1964.

-

How do we find queerness in data?

Em Langridge

Jack Smith, Creation and Crucifixion, 1955-56, 234.8 x 304.3 cm, Walker Art Gallery. Presented to the Walker Art Gallery by John Moores in 1957, © The Estate of Jack Smith. Courtesy Flowers Gallery, London/New York.

Uli Nimpf, David and Goliath, 1950, 23.5 x 25.6 x 14.5 cm, The Red House, Aldeburgh, Britten Pears Arts.

R.B. Kitaj, The Red Banquet, 1960, 152.2 x 152.3 cm, Walker Art Gallery. © the estate of R. B. Kitaj, Walker Art Gallery.

Victor Pasmore, Abstract in Black, White, Maroon and Ochre, 1957, 122.2 x 122.2 cm, Walker Art Gallery. © Estate of Victor Pasmore. Allrights reserved, DACS. Walker Art Gallery.

Patrick Vinton, Still Life: Kitchen Sink, c. 1957, 91.5 x 122.2 cm, Walker Art Gallery

Trevor Bell, Yorkshire, 1961, 122 x 122 cm, Rugby Art Gallery and Museum. © the artist's estate, Rugby Art Gallery and Museum Art Collections.

Peter Blake, Self-Portrait with Badges, 1961, 174.3 x 121.9 cm, Tate Britain. © Peter Blake. All rights reserved, DACS, Tate.

Geoffrey Earle Wickham, Stone Pine, 1957, 91.5 x 122 cm, Rugby Art Gallery and Museum. © the copyright holder, Rugby Art Gallery and Museum Art Collections.

Euan Uglow, Young Nude Girl, 1960, 101.6 x 126.4 cm, Glasgow Museums Resource Centre. © the estate of Euan Uglow, Glasgow Life Museums.

Joan Kathleen Harding Eardley, The Sea, 1959, 96.5 x 154.9 cm, Perth Art Gallery. © Estate of Joan Eardley. All rights reserved, DACS, Perth & Kinross Council.

Margaret Elizabeth Evans, Blue Still Life, 1957, 101 x 126.5 cm, Walker Art Gallery. © the copyright holder, Walker Art Gallery.

Terry Lee, Bathroom, Regent's Park, 1957, 123.2 x 98.4 cm, Walker Art Gallery. © the artist, Walker Art Gallery.

Associated research and bibliography

The Post War Painting in Regional Collections Research Group where the research for this exhibition originated, was established by Sophie Hatchwell and Hana Leaper in 2019 to challenge the dominant 'centre-periphery model' in British art history and promote the excellence of regional collections. Through a series of workshops and collaborative activities, the Group has focused on uncovering concealed histories of race, gender, and sexuality in post-war regional art collections. Key findings include the importance of regional collections in disrupting centralised narratives and the value of collaborative research across Higher Education Institutions (HEI) and Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums Institutions (GLAMIs). The group's work has led to new interpretations and methodologies for inclusive and representative art histories, emphasizing the need for sustainable and mutually beneficial collaborations between HE and museums.

Publications

'Works from the 1957 John Moores Painting Prize', digital curation, ArtUK

'Works from the 1961 John Moores Painting Prize', digital curation, ArtUK

H Leaper and S Hatchwell, 'Exploring exhibition histories: an audit of the John Moores Painting Prize 1957 catalogue', ArtUK

Alice Correia, 'Absence in Post-War British Painting: South Asian Modernists in Regional Collections', Midland Art Papers 4 (2021)

Clare Nadal, '(In)visibility- Regional Collections and Post-War Abstract Painting by Women', Midland Art Papers 7 (2024)

Sophie Hatchwell & Hana Leaper. Post-1945 Art Collections and Regional Research Networks: Collaborative Art History (Routledge, 2026).



Thanks and acknowledgments:

James Schofield, Gabriela Saenger Silva, Amelie Lang, Chris Wiggins, Alice Dolan, Petra Bukvic, Oriel Studies, Danny Ariza, Martin Gee, Graham Gildea, Benjamin Nuttall



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM