

For immediate release

Press Contact: Art Fund, Millais House, 7 Cromwell Place, London SW7 2JN Tel: 020 7225 4800 Web: artfund.org Email: <u>info@artfund.org</u>

Ten museums in the running to win £100,000 as Art Fund Prize 2012 longlist is announced

7/2/12

- Four newly opened museums, three Scottish museums, and everything from cryptography and transport to local history and contemporary sculpture feature on 'museum of the year' longlist.
- £10,000 Clore Award for Museum Learning longlist also announced today

The tenth year of the UK's 'museum of the year' award was kick - started today with the announcement of the ten museums in with a chance of winning £100,000, the UK's biggest prize for arts and cultural institutions.

The Art Fund Prize 2012 rewards excellence and innovation in museums and galleries in the UK for a project completed or undertaken in 2011. Following a shortlist of four museums to be announced on 14 May, the £100,000 cash prize will be awarded to the 'museum of the year' at a ceremony at the British Museum on 19 June. The annual prize has been awarded since 2003.

Lord Smith of Finsbury, Chair of the Judges, said: "Whittling the achievements of Britain's museums over the past year down to a list of ten was an unbelievably challenging task. The outstanding quality of the projects that we finally settled on, however, perfectly encapsulates the vitality and dynamism of a part of our nation's cultural life that continues to innovate, push boundaries and engage the public, even in these straitened times."

Penelope, Viscountess Cobham, Chairman of The Museum Prize Trust said: "We are delighted to see such a strong and varied longlist in this tenth year of awarding the Museum Prize. It is testament to the extraordinary work that is happening around the country in museums and galleries that the 2012 Art Fund Prize longlist showcases excellence, innovation and audience engagement at all levels."

Stephen Deuchar, Director of the Art Fund, said: "This year's Art Fund Prize longlist truly reveals the creativity and ambition of museums and galleries beyond London. The vitality of our cultural treasures nationwide is a hugely important resource, and the Art Fund is extremely proud to celebrate these museums' achievements through its sponsorship of the 'museum of the year' prize."

The longlist was chosen by a panel of experts chaired by Lord Smith of Finsbury, former Labour MP and Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. The other judges are Professor Jim AI - Khalili OBE, theoretical physicist, author and broadcaster; Charlotte Higgins, Guardian journalist and author; Lucy Worsley, Chief Curator at Historic Royal Palaces, author and broadcaster; Sir Mark Jones, Master at St Cross College, Oxford and former V&A director; Rick Mather, architect; and Lisa Milroy, artist and Head of Graduate Painting at the Slade School of Fine Art, UCL.

The shortlist of four museums will be announced on 14 May 2012 and the winner on 19 June 2012.

'Have Your Say' online forum

Also launching today is the opportunity for local champions of each of the longlisted museums to say why their chosen museum should win the Art Fund Prize 2012. Members of the public are invited to log on to <u>www.artfundprize.org.uk</u> and leave their comments, a representative selection of which will be presented to the judges to consider when they come to decide the shortlist. Anyone who posts a comment will automatically be entered into a prize draw to win an iPad 2. The forum and prize draw close at 11.59pm on Sunday 22 April 2012.

Clore Award for Museum Learning

Organised under the umbrella of the Art Fund Prize, the longlist for the Clore Award for Museum Learning was also announced today. Supported by the Clore Duffield Foundation, the £10,000 award recognises and celebrates quality, impact and innovation in using museums and galleries for learning activities and initiatives. The award is judged by a separate panel co - chaired by Dame Vivien Duffield DBE, Chairman of the Clore Duffield Foundation and Sally Bacon, Executive Director.

The longlisted museum learning initiatives are:

- Camden Arts Centre, Get The Message
- Florence Nightingale Museum, Our Generation's Re interpretation
- Jersey Heritage, My History Scrapbooks and Discovery Days
- Leicestershire County Council Heritage and Arts Service, Held in the Hand and Touch Tables
- Penlee House Gallery and Museum, Treasures from the Earth
- The Geffrye Museum of the Home, Stories of the World: London
- The Quilt Museum and Gallery, Unfolding the Quilts
- The Whitworth Art Gallery, The Manchester Early Years Partnership
- Victoria and Albert Museum, V&A Schools Team Collaboration with Seymourpowell
- Yorkshire Museum, Celebrating Severus

More information on the Clore Award for Museum Learning can be found at <u>www.artfundprize.org.uk/clore - award</u>

Ten Years of the Museum Prize

2012 is the tenth year of the Art Fund Prize for Museums (formerly the Gulbenkian Prize).

The past winners are:

- 2003 National Centre for Citizenship and the Law, Galleries of Justice, Nottingham
- 2004 Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh
- 2005 Big Pit: the National Mining Museum of Wales
- 2006 Brunel's SS Great Britain, Bristol
- 2007 Pallant House Gallery, Chichester, East Sussex
- 2008 The Lightbox gallery and museum, Woking
- 2009 Wedgwood Museum, Stoke on Trent
- 2010 The Ulster Museum, Belfast
- 2011 The British Museum, London, for A History of the World

-- Ends

Notes to editors:

The Art Fund Prize is administered by The Museum Prize, a charitable company created in 2001 by representatives of National Heritage, the Museums Association, the Art Fund and the Campaign for Museums and chaired by Lady Cobham. These organisations agreed to put aside award schemes they formerly ran (including National Heritage's Museum of the Year) and lend their support to this single major prize.

The Art Fund has sponsored The Museum Prize since 2008. The Art Fund is the national charity which helps museums and galleries to buy, show and share art for the enjoyment of all. Over the past five

years, the Art Fund has given £24 million to buy art and supported a range of projects and programmes aimed at helping more people enjoy art. The Art Fund is independently funded and the majority of its income comes from almost 90,000 supporters who purchase a National Art Pass, costing from just £37.50, which gives free entry to over 200 museums, galleries and historic houses across the country as well as 50% off many major exhibitions.

Find out more about the Art Fund and the National Art Pass at <u>www.artfund.org.uk</u>. The press office can be reached on 020 7225 4888 or <u>media@artfund.org</u>

The Clore Duffield Foundation is chaired by Dame Vivien Duffield DBE and has a strong focus on supporting cultural learning, particularly within museums and galleries and at heritage sites <u>www.cloreduffield.org.uk</u>. It is one of the founding partners of the Cultural Learning Alliance, a collective voice working to ensure that all children and young people have meaningful access to culture in this difficult economic climate. <u>www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk</u>