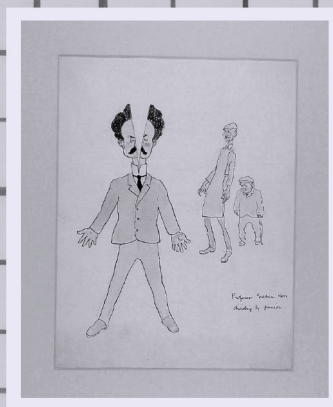
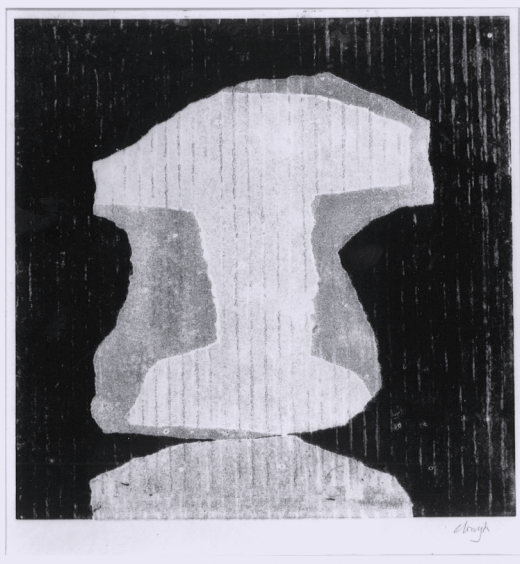
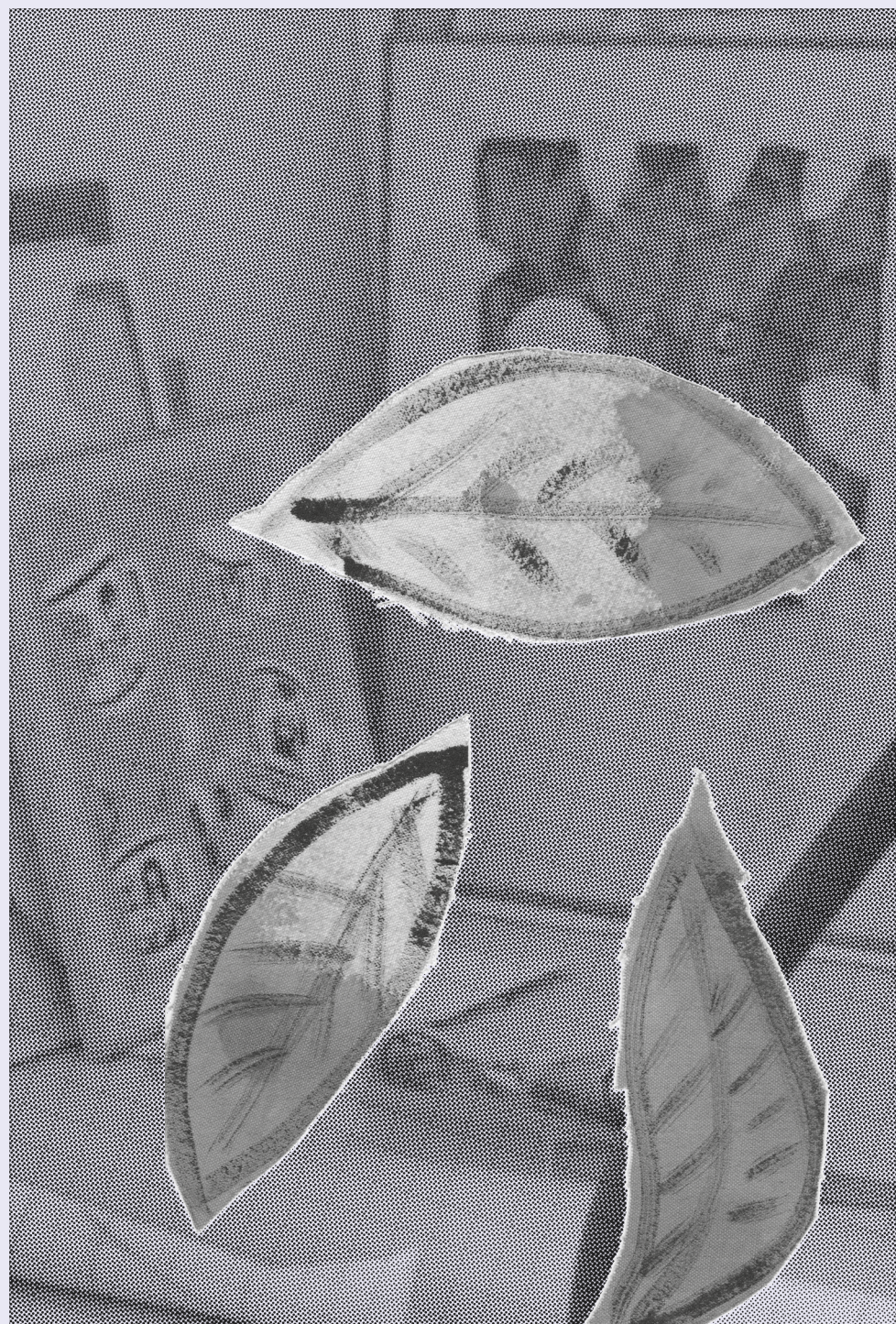


workaround



Charlie Hammond
+ the artist's selection from the Hunterian



A case for display

Stephanie Straine

This text is an intermediary. It is wedged between you—the viewer/reader—and the exhibition, a space containing objects that you're probably standing in. And yet, it's also a plea for direct engagement. You don't really need me to say anything to help you understand this exhibition. This is a show about unmediated action: about getting things out of storage, opening some boxes, and taking out drawings, prints and ant specimens with equal levels of curiosity and enthusiasm. The artist making these selections from The Hunterian's collection has copious quantities of both. He leans into a playful spirit of *joie de vivre*, embracing the messiness of life and work.

This is a solo show and a group show, all together, both and at once. It is also an exhibition, like most others, that's the result of an artist's response to an invitation. It's equally an invitation to those visiting this space, to take pleasure in the laying out of artworks, designs, and objects from history—to have a material encounter with them, to really see them, perhaps without too much of the baggage of art history. Without insisting that we need to 'compare and contrast' everything, without the need to establish a direct chain of influence or historical lineage. Shrugging off the uncomfortable weight of chronological time.

What if we went in the back door—the workers' entrance—rather than up the front steps of the museum?

This invitation to sneak round the back isn't merely a rhetorical flourish designed to irritate the staff at The Hunterian. It reflects the working methods, and title, of this exhibition. The definition of 'workaround' (a word first used as recently as 1961) is 'a strategy or technique used to overcome a defect or other problem in a programme or system'; or, more broadly, 'any method used to overcome a technical problem, especially a problem that could prevent success.' In its computer programming roots, it's usually understood as a temporary fix, rather than an outright solution: in other words, the perfect definition of an assembled exhibition of some months' duration. Nothing changes on a permanent basis, except maybe our own relationship to this repository of knowledge in visual form.

So, we know that a workaround is a form of circumvention. It's a side entrance to the collection. As Charlie Hammond has recently remarked on his way of working: 'I have never really felt and even naturally resisted the linear nature of making and feel perhaps my approach is closer to a spider diagram than beginning, middle and end.'¹ We see a reflection of his working processes in the dispersed, non-hierarchical structure of this exhibition: a web of possibilities.

Or, to make another comparison, it's a structure like 3SF: the three-sided version of football that CoBrA artist Asger Jorn invented in 1962, which encourages collaboration with opposition teams (on view is Jorn's 1944 etching of a footballer). This was a purely theoretical proposition, until the Glasgow Anarchist Summer School stepped up, in 1994, to test out 3SF in real life. It has since flourished into a DIY network of anti-capitalist and inclusive sporting communities.² In this exhibition we have another triangulation: there's Hammond's work, the Hunterian collection works, and then there is the space in which these two elements might intersect. A triangle is always more fun than a square. It's an optimistic space for playful participation which, like 3SF, gives itself up to the joy and even silliness of the everyday.

One of the trickiest things about working with a collection of physical objects is the moment of transition between storage and display. 'Moment' isn't even the right word: it's a decision usually followed by a months-long process, involving multiple people agreeing on how best to shift an object from a state of stable storage (minimising environmental fluctuations to maximise its lifespan without physical degradation) to a state ready for exhibition display. Ready to be looked at by lots of people. Any collection only ever has a tiny fraction of its objects on public view at any one time, and these displays usually prioritise those works like oil paintings and bronze or marble sculptures that are more materially stable, and so easier to remain permanently on show.³

This is really a process of changing what we get to see. To do this with any significant number of artworks requires creativity and ingenuity. It needs a workaround. Hammond knew that he wanted to focus on works on paper, because he primarily works with paper. That's where the discoveries are to

¹ Hammond quoted in 'Two and Half Questions for Lotte Gertz and Charlie Hammond', Sipgate Shows, Düsseldorf, 2022.

² See Benjin Pollock (2021), 'Three-sided football: DIY football and social transformationalism,' in *Sport, Education and Society* 26:9, 1026-1040, DOI: 10.1080/13573322.2021.1944080

³ On institutional care and prioritising the physical maintenance of collection objects, see Gala Porras-Kim's concept of the wellbeing of artefacts, in Oliver Basciano, 'Gala Porras-Kim: Why Museums Need Spiritual Caretakers', in *Art Review*, 2 March 2022, accessed online: <https://artreview.com/gala-porras-kim-wellbeing-of-artefacts/>

be found, in any collection: in the solander boxes full of unframed drawings and prints. It's also where the majority of women artists are likely to be found, in any collection that was established more than thirty or so years ago. Prints, posters, textile designs, designs for murals, stencils and studies have been selected—the works on paper of the storeroom, kept away from light and eyes. This particular selection is mainly from the twentieth century. It's a selection where you can see problem solving, creativity and material processes up close.

The idea of a workaround is a reminder that problem solving is central to artistic practice. An artwork is rarely the product of a straight line from A to B. On another, more prosaic, level, there will also be 'work' all 'around': Hammond's artworks will be pinned to the walls, and his selection of works from the collection will be presented unframed within an ad hoc horizontal gathering of the museum's existing display cases, tables, and vitrines. Hammond's workaround to the resource-heavy requirements of display is to show his viewers everything laid out flat in their mounts. It's a simple device that recalls leafing through paperwork on a table. This casualness (born out of necessity) begins to seem like an enjoyable and even preferable alternative to framing everything up, simply so that these paper-based works could hang on the walls.⁴

Works on paper are generally stored unframed for conservation reasons, but also to enable a larger volume of work to be collected in a more space-efficient manner. Hammond's curatorial ethos hews closely to these realities of museum storage, as determined by preservation requirements, space limitations, budget, and many other practical considerations. Like many artists, Hammond worked freelance for many years as a technician on exhibition installation crews. He enjoys figuring out how to re-use existing display cases and plinths. This undertaking of repair and restoration is much more interesting to him than designing new exhibition furniture. The workaround in action again. It's an ethos ingrained in his own way of making work: Hammond is currently reusing old stretchers that he's been given by other artists and recycling old materials (even artworks!) from his studio. It's a cyclical process of material and conceptual collapse, followed by an incremental rebuilding of new work from old.

⁴ Museums are not immune to the recent sharp increases in the price of raw materials like glass and wood. Hammond's approach is a sustainable one, aligned with an understanding that works on paper are often prepared for framing only when they need to travel, i.e., for a loan to another institution.

Hammond made his selection from the collection before finalising the checklist of his own works. At the time of writing this essay, I'm not entirely certain what works of his own Hammond will include in the exhibition. There may be paintings of roads, office chairs, J-cloths and mugs. There might be other, earlier works. It's a retrospective by way of not being one—another workaround. The show will come together when the objects are brought into dialogue with each other during the installation. We can't predict the nature of that discourse in advance: it's up to the objects, the artist and curator to enact it, and up to the viewers to complete it.

Hammond's mug paintings depict variations on the artist's hand holding a mug decorated with the cartoon character Gaffer from the Tetley teabag brand. What seems like a humdrum, everyday object is charged by the knowledge that Hammond's father was the illustrator who drew all the Tetley characters throughout the nineties. This deeply personal connection is a good reminder of the layers of information and history embedded in any object or artwork; hidden knowledge that we may or may not be party to.

Hammond's approach to making paintings, and the space in the world they come to occupy, is instructive. He says that 'when making paintings I often think of them as characters and when I'm in a space I like to think of the painting as having an attitude or personality. From this position there is an opportunity for conversation and play to happen between the work, the title, the viewer, the maker and the space, which can be fun.'⁵ We can extend this opportunity for conversation and play to this temporary arrangement of works from the collection.

There are a lot of direct approaches on view: line drawings, mono-prints, and other manifestations of tabletop concentration, of making a mark or incision on a horizontal surface. Drawing as thinking, and paper as a space for possibility. This territory is shared with Hammond's own practice, which uses large rolls of brown paper as the support for his paintings. He's an artist who constantly asks himself what it really means to continue the enterprise of picture making.

An interest in directness does not mean that everything selected for this display is preliminary, quickly made or 'sketch-like.' To give one example, Helen Frankenthaler's *Cedar Hill* (1983) is a ten-colour woodblock printed

⁵ Hammond quoted in 'Two and Half Questions for Lotte Gertz and Charlie Hammond, Sipegate Shows, Düsseldorf, 2022.

from thirteen separate blocks: an incredible amount of artistic labour compressed into a near abstract diaphanous image on vegetable-dyed hand-made Japanese paper that seems to emerge, without duration or effort, from the fibres of the paper itself. To make such a complex print, Frankenthaler and her collaborators (wood carver Reizo Monjyu and master printer Tadamashi Toda) would have made many, many correction prints, or proof stages.

Artistic labour is one of Hammond's enduring preoccupations. His selection also includes a correction print of a Victorian etching: that stage of effortful revision and rethinking which has evaporated from Frankenthaler's final printed image. He's always enjoyed the play on words between *work* and *artwork*, that strange shift between verb and noun. Often his relationship to an object is established by way of material play. Thing and action together. There's an absurdity to Hammond's practice that's intentionally deflationary: challenging where the labour might be found in the work.⁶

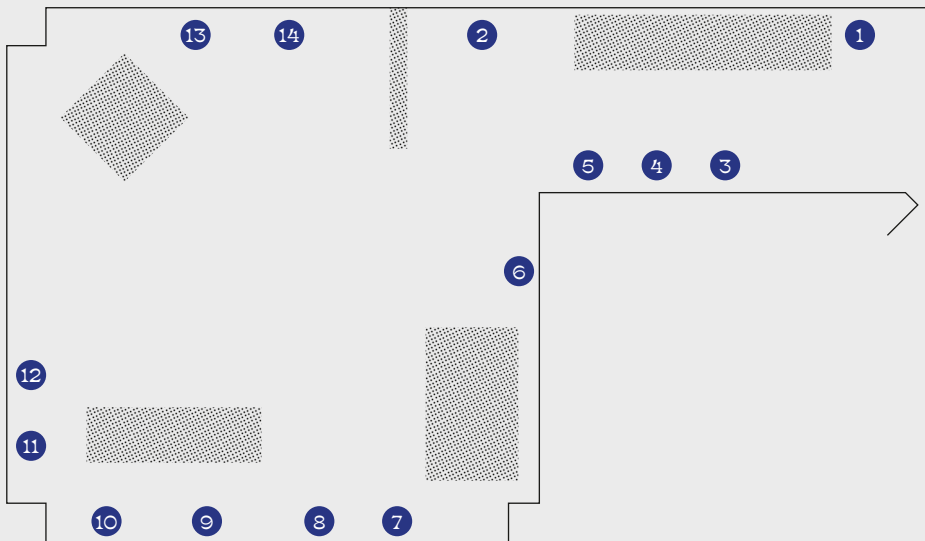
And once we start to look, there is a lot of labour (and the gender politics of labour) on display: Sybil Andrews' colour linocut, *Sledgehammers* from 1933, recalls her work as a welder during WWI, when she would witness blacksmiths at the forge. All the workers came together to build airplanes – at a time when wartime necessity enabled thousands of women to perform roles previously reserved or deemed suitable only for men.

This exhibition is a rarity in that it mixes The Hunterian's art and entomology collections together, by including ten species of worker ants, found in Britain and elsewhere. All worker ants are female. These specimens act as visual punctuation in the gallery space: mounted on buff coloured paper, then pinned. Their accompanying descriptions, by Hunterian Curator of Entomology Jeanne Robinson, describe the various species' adaptations—both physiological and organisational—that evolved for the purposes of more efficient teamwork. A collective workaround becomes a case for display. Perhaps the strongest case for display is seeing the creative methods of the studio puncture the stiff formality of the museum as a timeless treasure vault. If Hammond and his practice have taught us anything, it's not to worry too much. It's time for this text to step out of your way; time for you to indulge in the pleasures of these artworks, and the hard work that made them. Find your own workaround.

⁶ On the relationship between manual and artistic labour in Hammond's paintings, see an earlier text by the Hunterian's curator of contemporary art, Dr Dominic Paterson, 'The Sweats', Galerie Kamm, 2012, reprinted: <https://charliehammondartist.com/written-things/>

- 1 *Mr Kludge Leaves on marigolds on putto* 2022
Pastel and acrylic/flashe on linen
- 2 *Revolutionary scene one. They probably feel happier and less conspicuous carrying something* 2022
Acrylic, gesso and flashe on recycled paper
- 3 *Stop/start/road re-arrangement, the direction isn't clear* 2022
Collage and acrylic on canvas

- 4 *The bits between the branches* 2022
Canvas, collage
- 5 *The Break time for the best in the world* 2022
Collage and acrylic on canvas.
- 6 *The world is or isn't your playground. Look at it or don't from a fresh perspective and you'll find opportunities everywhere or nowhere or somewhere. Rug with roads* 2022
Pastel and acrylic/flashe on linen



- 7 *Green man with scattered leaves* 2022
Pastel and acrylic/flashe on canvas
- 8 *Green man with empty echoes* 2022
Pastel and acrylic/flashe on canvas
- 9 *Revolutionary scene three. The red and the blue* 2022
Acrylic, gesso and flashe on recycled paper
- 10 *Road Plan* 2022
Acrylic, gesso, flashe and collage on recycled paper

- 11 *Yellow lined* 2022
Acrylic, gesso and flashe on recycled paper
- 12 *Revolutionary scene two. Green waste* 2022
Acrylic, gesso and flashe on recycled paper
- 13 *Gaffer. (Red version)* 2022
Acrylic, gesso and flashe on recycled paper
- 14 *Gaffer. Time to break* 2022
Acrylic, gesso, flashe and collage on recycled paper

- 15 *Orange HI-VIS* 2016
Acrylic and flashe on paper
- 16 *Digital mayhem, brown field site* 2016/2022
Ceramic and acrylic on canvas
- 17 *Mr Doerupper, or A Sustained Attack of Uncontrollable Regression* 2008
Oil and ceramic on canvas
- 18 *Studio blooms* 2022
Acrylic and paper cups on canvas
- 19 *Sweaty build-up* 2012
Oil, charcoal, collaged canvas
- 20 *Cherubs, striking. The creep of life with four blooms (version 2)* 2022
Acrylic, gesso and paper cups on recycled paper
- 21 *Country drive/trip through the backwoods* 2010
Ceramic and oil on canvas
- 22 *After Eating Bad Horsemeat (Macaroni Style)* 2006
Oil on board
- 23 *Fleshy MOT, money plant* 2016
Acrylic on Paper
- 24 *Worker, newspaper, money plant study* 2016
Acrylic on paper
- 25 *MOT, money plant* 2016
Acrylic on paper
- 26 *An economic green man* 2022
Acrylic on canvas



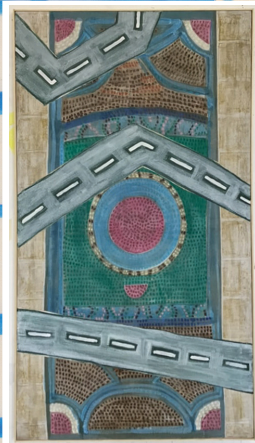
works by Charlie Hammond



Double Profile

Eileen Agar (1899–1991)

1977 Pencil, crayon, watercolour and gouache on wove paper



The world is or isn't your playground. Look at it or don't from a fresh perspective and you'll find opportunities everywhere or nowhere or somewhere. Rug with roads

2022 Pastel and Acrylic flashe on Linen



Gaffer: Time to break

2022 Acrylic, gesso, flashe and collage on recycled paper



An economic green man

2022 Acrylic on Canvas



Fleshy MOT. money plant

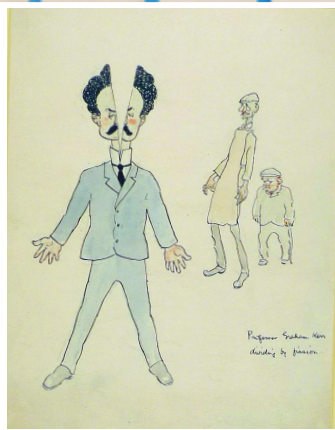
2016 Acrylic on Paper



Tea Time

Albert Roelofs (1877–1920)

1903 Heliogravure and aquatint



Professor Graham Kerr dividing by fission

Henry Osborne Mavor (1888–1951)

1915–30 Ink and watercolour on paper



Stop/start/road re-arrangement, the direction isn't clear

2022 Collage and acrylic on canvas



Country drive/trip through the backwoods

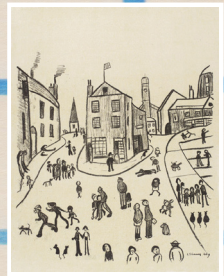
2010 Framed ceramic and oil on canvas



The Break time for the best in the world
2022 Collage and acrylic on canvas.



Goose
Henri Gaudier-Brzeska (1891–1915)
1910–13 Pen and ink on paper



3 Cats, Alstow
LS Lowry (1887–1976)
1969 Lithograph



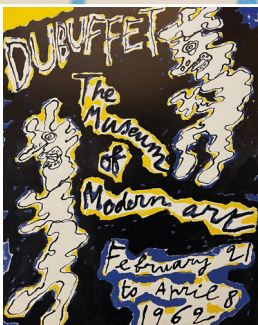
Sweaty build-up
2012 oil, charcoal, collaged canvas / canvas



Studio blooms
2022 Acrylic and paper cups on canvas



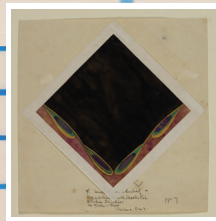
Cooking Pot
Andy Warhol (1930–87)
1961–64 Etching



Poster for the Museum of Modern Art, New York
Jean Dubuffet (1901–85)
1962 Photolithograph



The bits between the branches
2022 Canvas, collage



Design for a handkerchief
Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh (1864–1933)
1915–23 Pencil and watercolour on brown tracing paper



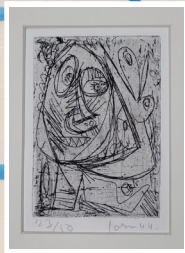
Cedar Hill
Helen Frankenthaler (1928–2011)
1983 Ink on paper tinted with vegetable dye



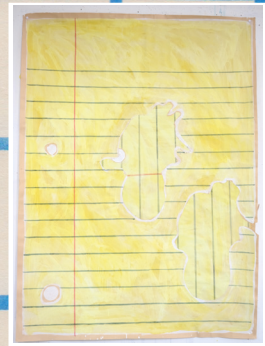
Revolutionary scene one. They probably feel happier and less conspicuous carrying something
2022 Acrylic gesso and flashe on recycled paper



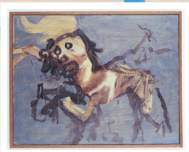
Poster for Olympic Games 1972
Tom Wesselman (1931–2004)
1970 Lithograph



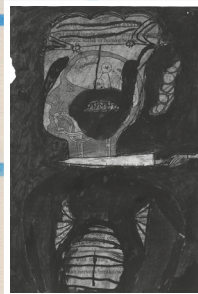
Ohé!
Asger Jorn (1914–73)
1944 Etching



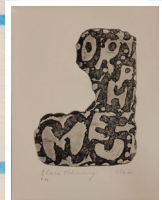
Yellow lined
2022 Acrylic gesso and flashe on recycled paper



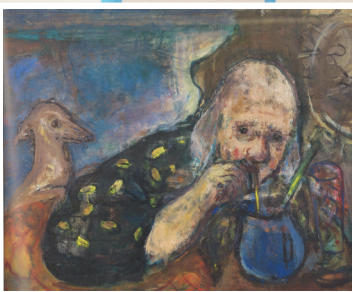
After Eating Bad Horsemeat (Macaroni Style)
2006 Oil on board



Brain and nervous system
Michael Rees (b. 1962)
1996 Pen and ink on paper



Composition
Claes Oldenburg (b. 1929)
1962 Etching



Mutter mit Strohalm (Mother with a Straw)
Marie-Louise van Motesiczky (1906–96)
1962 Oil on Canvas



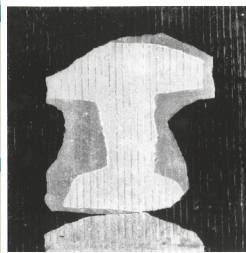
Revolutionary scene two. Green waste
2022 Acrylic gesso and flashe on recycled paper



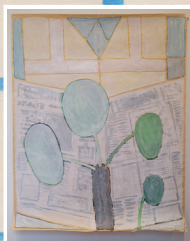
MOT, money plant
2016 Acrylic on Paper



Janus
James Basire (1730 – 1802) after
Giovanni Guercino (1591 – 1666)
1764 – 67 Etching and rocker



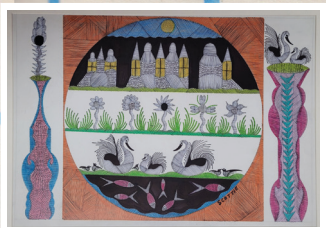
Monotype No.1
Prunella Clough (1919 – 99)
1961 Monotype



*Worker, newspaper,
money plant study*
2016 Acrylic on Paper



Nutrition
Jean Dubuffet (1901 – 85)
1944 Lithograph



Tree of Life
'Scottie' Wilson (1892 – 1979)
1963 Ink and crayon on board



Gaffer. (Red version)
2022 Acrylic, gesso and flashe on
recycled paper



*Revolutionary scene three.
The red and the blue*
2022 Acrylic gesso and flashe
on recycled paper



Tile Tree
Samuel Heile (1909 – 48)
1939 – 40 Watercolour on paper



*Stencil for high-backed chair
for the 'Rose Boudoir'*
Charles Rennie Mackintosh
(1868–1928)
1902 Pencil, pigment and
metallic paint on paper



Orange HI-VIS
2016 Acrylic and Flashe on paper



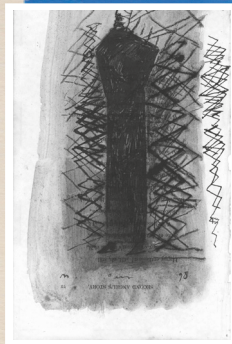
Sledgehammers
Sybil Andrews (1898–1992)
1933 Linocut



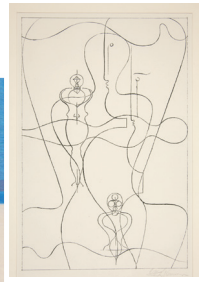
White Horse
Carole Gibbons (b.1935)
1968 Watercolour, gouache and pencil on paper



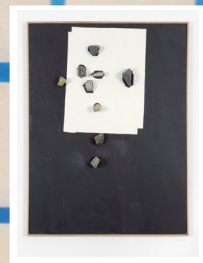
Road Plan
2022 Acrylic, gesso, flashe
and collage on recycled
paper



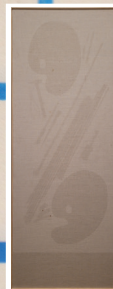
Second angel's story
Michael Rees (b.1962)
1998 Pen, ink and crayon on paper



Figureplay
Oskar Schlemmer (1888–1943)
1919–20 Lithograph



*Mr Doerupper, or A Sustained Attack
of Uncontrollable Regression*
2008 Oil and ceramic on canvas



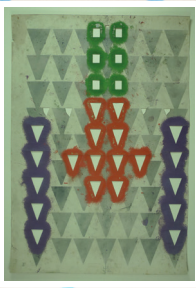
Sun-faded fabric
from Hunterian
display case formerly
containing artist's
tools belonging to JM
Whistler



Seated Child
Jose Luis Cuevas (1934–2017)
1954 Pen and ink on paper



Green man with scattered leaves
2022 Pastel and Acrylic/flashe on canvas



*Stencil for hall, 78 Derngate,
Northampton*
Charles Rennie Mackintosh
(1868 – 1928)
1915 – 23 Pencil, ink and
pigment on paper



Mr Kludge. Leaves on marigolds on putto
2022 Pastel and Acrylic/flashe on Linen



*Cherubs, striking The creep of life
with four blooms (version 2)*
2022 Acrylic, gesso and paper cups
on recycled paper



Kelly No. 4
Sidney Nolan (1917 – 92)
1965 Silkscreen



Self-portrait with Mirror
Marie-Louise van Motesiczky (1906 – 96)
1949 Oil on Canvas



Digital mayhem, brown field site
2016/2022 Ceramic and Acrylic on canvas



Green man with empty echoes
2022 Pastel and Acrylic/flashe on canvas



Study for Craigmillar School Mural
John Maxwell (1905 – 62)
1934 Watercolour, gouache and ink on paper

1 *Poster for Olympic Games 1972* 1970

Tom Wesselman

Lithograph

2 *Cooking Pot* 1961-64

Andy Warhol

Etching

3 *Poster for the Museum of Modern Art* 1962

Jean Dubuffet

Photolithograph

4 *Double Profile* 1977

Eileen Agar

Watercolour and gouache on paper

5 *Sledgehammers* 1933

Sybil Andrews

Linocut

6 *Kelly No. 4* 1965

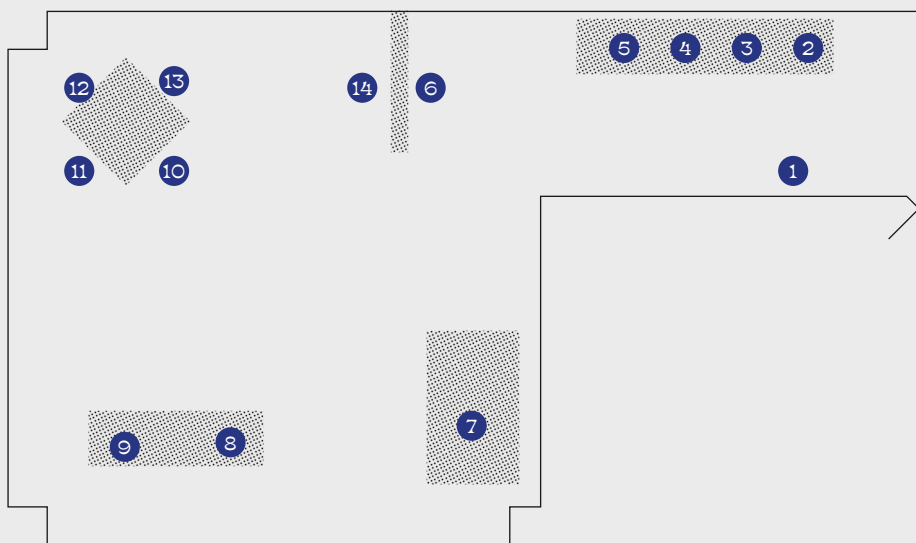
Sidney Nolan

Silkscreen

7 *Tree of Life* 1963

'Scottie' Wilson

Ink and crayon on board



8 *stencil for hall, 78 Derngate,*

Northampton 1915-23

Charles Rennie Mackintosh

Pencil, ink and pigment on paper

9 *design for a handkerchief* 1915-23

Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh

Pencil and watercolour on brown tracing paper

10 *Tile Tree* 1939-40

Samuel Haile

Watercolour on paper

11 *Nutrition* 1944

Jean Dubuffet

Lithograph

12 *Ohé!* 1944

Asger Jorn

Etching

13 *Professor Graham Kerr dividing by fission* 1915-30

Henry Osborne Mavor

Ink and watercolour on paper

14 *Monotype No. 6* 1961

Prunella Clough

Monotype

15 *Tea Time* 1903

Albert Roelofs

Heliogravure and aquatint [with printing notes added by artist in pencil and red paint]

16 *Figureplay* 1919-20

Oskar Schlemmer

Lithograph

17 *stencil for high-backed chair for the*

'Rose Boudoir' 1902

Charles Rennie Mackintosh

Pencil, pigment and metallic paint on paper

18 *Composition* 1962

Claes Oldenburg

Etching

19 *Second angel's story* 1998

Brain and nervous system 1996

Michael Rees

Pen, ink & Crayon on paper

20 *Janus* 1764-67

James Basire (after Giovanni Guercino)

Etching and rocker

21 *Seated Child* 1954

Jose Luis Cuevas

Pen and ink on paper

Self-Portrait with Mirror 1949

22 Marie-Louise von Motesiczky

Oil on canvas

Mutter mit Strohalm ('Mother with

23 *a Straw')* 1962

Marie-Louise von Motesiczky

Oil on canvas

24 *White Horse* 1968

Carole Gibbons

Watercolour, gouache and pencil paper

25 *Cedar Hill* 1983

Helen Frankenthaler

Ink on paper tinted with vegetable dye

26 *3 Cats, Alstow* 1969

LS Lowry

Lithograph

27 *Study for Craigmillar School Mural* 1934

John Maxwell

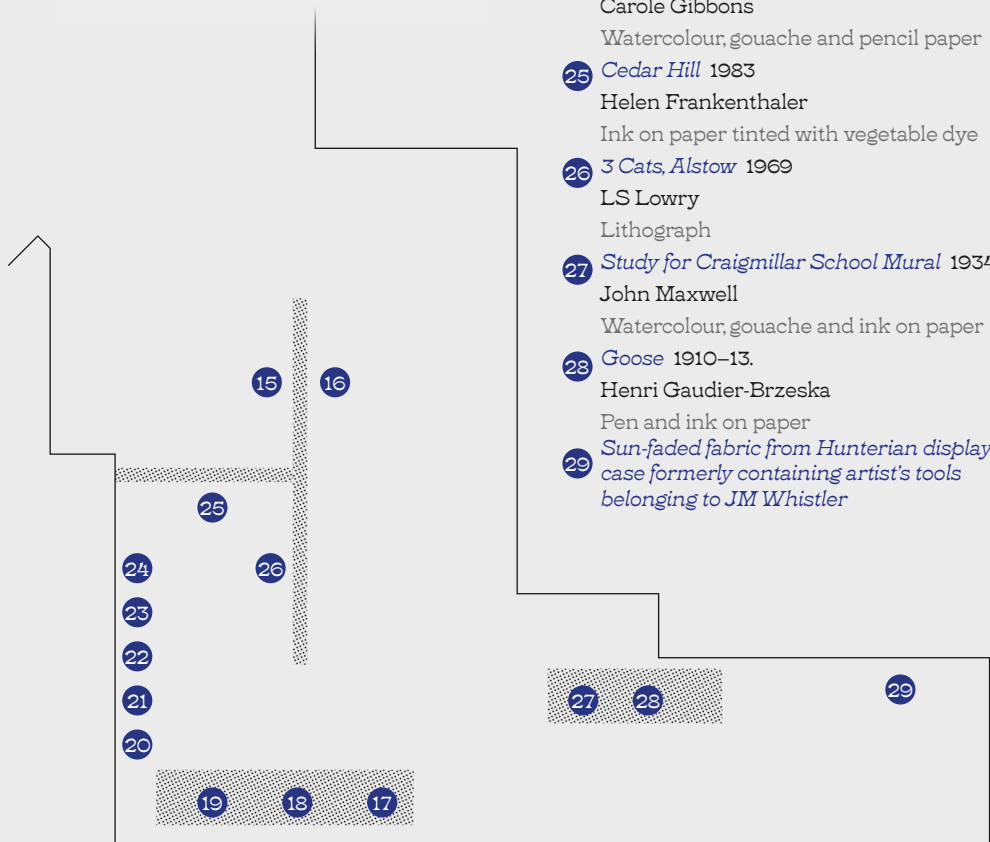
Watercolour, gouache and ink on paper

28 *Goose* 1910-13.

Henri Gaudier-Brzeska

Pen and ink on paper

29 *Sun-faded fabric from Hunterian display case formerly containing artist's tools belonging to JM Whistler*



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Natural Science curatorial research: Jeanne Robinson

Exhibition Manager: Ruth Leach

Installation: Andrew Boyle; Cameryn Clark; Michalina Szymanska

Exhibition build: Andrew Jackson; Mike Richardson

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