ARTICLES OF FAITH

20th February to 8th April 2023
WHERE OUR PATHS MEET

An exhibition of works from the widely acclaimed Methodist Modern Art Collection with artefacts from other faith traditions

www.vic-methodist-bristol.org.uk
To my knowledge, this is the first time works from the Methodist Modern Art Collection have been exhibited alongside art/artefacts from other faith traditions. The title of the exhibition ‘Articles of Faith’ suggests those beliefs which people of faith hold close to our hearts. We do believe different things, yet we share so much, and when we get under the skin to the inner experience of practicing our faith, then we draw closer together. Hence the strapline, ‘Where our paths meet’. We hope that those who are curious about religion, or who have no faith, will feel equally included.

So, the artworks and artefacts are gathered into 8 clusters, which relate to our common human spirituality: hope, suffering, hospitality, relationship & mystery, justice & peace, text & story, life & death, compassion & service.

By grouping the works in this way, we hope that a ‘conversation’ will be opened up, as we view one
artwork/artefact/faith tradition in the light of others. Into this conversation we have deliberately introduced artefacts from Victoria Methodist Church itself (eg. font and lectern). For ‘Articles of Faith’ also suggests that this is not just an exhibition of paintings and sculpture, but also includes items used at home or in a place of worship as people practice their faith.

The whole project has in fact been one long conversation on the part of the planning group, which has widened and deepened as we have been joined by people from faith traditions other than Christianity. It is my deepest hope, that an enduring legacy of this exhibition will be a contribution to the good relationships between people of different faiths in the City of Bristol.

The exhibition itself offers a unique opportunity to organise a programme of events. As you will see, these include themed preaching and prayer, a children’s exhibition, workshops and school visits, poetry readings and music concerts, talks and shared meals.

Finally, I would like to express my thanks to all those on the planning group (from a variety of faiths), to our partners - the Royal West of England Academy of Art, Bristol School of Art (both based next door), Clifton Arts, the University of Bristol Department of Music, and finally to the Management Committee of the Methodist Modern Art Collection

Rev Richard Sharples
All events will take place at Victoria Methodist Church with the exception of the talk on 15th March. All events will also be listed on Eventbrite.

EVENING EVENTS

Some will need to be booked in advance and this will be highlighted in the event description.

Christians have sometimes used John’s Gospel as an exclusive text. In this guided meditation Richard Sharples, Minister at the Church, will bring some of the ‘I am’ sayings from the fourth gospel alongside the artworks in four of the themed areas and open up a way which is inclusive, compassionate, life-giving and hope-filled.

THURSDAY
23rd FEBRUARY
7.30pm

Reflection on selected works with Rev Richard Sharples

MONDAYS
27th FEBRUARY,
6th & 20th MARCH
7.30pm

Sharing Sacred Texts: Text and story; Life and Death; Suffering. These three sessions will be interfaith conversations led by the University of Bristol Interfaith Chaplaincy.

TUESDAY
28th FEBRUARY
7.30pm

Talk by Sarah Middleton: ‘The Methodist Modern Art Collection - discovering Jesus’

Sarah Middleton (MA, Arts & Cultural Management) shares reflections on how this treasure of the art world came to be owned and developed by the British Methodist Church.

City galleries, schools, churches and cathedrals from the UK mainland to the Isle of Man have all exhibited this Collection during its 60 years. Sarah brings insights from the visitors’ books, gallery education events and worship involving the paintings as she invites conversation around images in the Collection, and how they might speak to diverse audiences today.

Sarah’s academic research has involved study of the cultural value of the Methodist Modern Art Collection in twenty first century Britain. Following her MA at the University of Sussex, she co-produced interpretative guides and encouraged churches to engage with the Collection. She is a Methodist Local Preacher and has worked for many years in Connexional and Regional roles collaborating on new worship and study material for the Church in Britain.

This event is organised jointly with the Ecumenical Lent Conversation Team.
Alison is an expert on the Newlyn School, having been Director of Penlee House Gallery and Museum Penzance (1999-2013) where the works of the Newlyn, Lamorna and St Ives colonies are exhibited. She has lectured on the subject in the UK and internationally.

Alison Bevan is Director of the Retreat Association with overall responsibility for the leadership of the charity. She is a spiritual director and retreat leader. She also enjoys walking and photography.

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Clive Hicks-Jenkins in conversation with Rebecca Gibbs, a creative producer and a member of the Management Committee of the Methodist Modern Art Collection. Clive Hicks-Jenkins was born in Newport in 1951, and his first careers were as a choreographer and a stage director. During the 1990s he concentrated on painting, but in recent years he has broadened his practice to embrace, once again, the performing arts and, increasingly, book illustration. He has, for example, worked on an animation of Stravinsky’s The Soldier’s Tale and in 2019 he collaborated with Simon Armitage on an illustrated version of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. In 2022 he prepared illustrations for Olivia McCannon’s Beauty & Beast, a radical reworking of the tale that engages provocatively with issues of pollution and climate change. This year sees the publication of an edition of Seamus Heaney’s translation of Beowulf with his haunting illustrations.

Simon Callow has called Clive ‘one of the most individual and complete artists of our time’ and Nicholas Usherwood in Galleries has described his work as ‘reflective, expressive painting of the highest order.’ His work “Christ writes in the Dust” features in our exhibition.

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One life, several (interlocking) careers: Clive Hicks-Jenkins in conversation with Rebecca Gibbs

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An evening of performance poetry with Harry Baker and Friends, with much laughter and honesty, as they reflect upon living life faithfully from their different religious traditions.

World Poetry Slam Champion Harry Baker is a poet and a maths graduate. He writes about important stuff like hope, dinosaurs and German falafel-spoons. His work has been shared on TED.com and viewed millions of times worldwide, as well as being translated into over 20 different languages. When there’s not a global pandemic on, he performs all over the country and has really really missed live gigs.

“Harry Baker’s intricate, quick-fire rhymes have always been on the impressive side of mind-blowing.” The Scotsman

This event will need to be pre-booked on Eventbrite.

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Evening concert

The University Singers will perform music linked to the exhibition.

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THURSDAY

23rd MARCH

7.30pm

Harry Baker & friends: “Poetry and Stuff”

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TUESDAY

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GOOD FRIDAY
7th APRIL
7.30pm
At the Foot of the Cross
An evening of dramatic readings and music. Performed by members of the Vic community and friends, led by Chris Morison and Lyn Lloyd-Jones.

LUNCHTIME EVENTS
All held at Victoria Methodist Church 1 - 2pm.

WEDNESDAY
22nd FEBRUARY & 15th MARCH
Concerts by University of Bristol Musicians

TUESDAY
4th APRIL
Reflection on selected works with Rev Richard Sharples

Christians have sometimes used John’s Gospel as an exclusive text. In this guided meditation Richard Sharples, Minister at the Church, will bring some of the ‘I am’ sayings from the fourth gospel alongside the artworks in four of the themed areas and open up a way which is inclusive, compassionate, life-giving and hope-filled.
A dialogue between two generations of the Gibbs family about their experience of the Methodist Modern Art Collection, its history and the challenges it poses.

James Morel Gibbs, born 1942, watched the collaboration between his father, John Morel Gibbs, and the Rev Douglas Wollen that found expression in the establishment of the Methodist Collection of Modern Christian Art. After obtaining a degree in the Arts Faculty of Bristol University, James pursued an academic career as a teacher and researcher, a playwright and a director both in Africa and the UK. James’ daughter Rebecca, gained a degree in Art in a Community Context with Drama and Theatre Studies at the University of Roehampton. She is a cultural and community development consultant.

Welcome to this opportunity to hear about the importance of Arabic Calligraphy in Islam and to have a “hands on” taster session writing simple characters in Arabic Calligraphy. The workshop will be led by Munira Hashmi the Muslim Chaplain at Bristol University and Sam Harp a local artist and calligrapher.

SATURDAY
4th MARCH
11am - 1pm for adults
2pm - 4pm for children aged 10 and above
Invitation to Arabic Calligraphy

SATURDAY
11th MARCH
11am - 1pm & 2pm - 4pm for children aged 7 and above
An opportunity for children to explore the exhibition and respond to it through arts and crafts.

SUNDAY
19th MARCH
2pm for children aged 7 and above, parents also welcome
Judaism workshop

An introduction to Jewish Story Telling and Dance led by members of the Orthodox Synagogue.
To open the opportunity to engage with the exhibition to as many school age students as possible, we are holding an art competition and parallel exhibition of children’s/young people’s artworks. Entries of work that relates to any of the themes explored in the exhibition: compassion and service, hope, hospitality, justice and peace, life and death, relationship and mystery, suffering, and text and story are welcomed. Prizes will be vouchers for art materials. The closing date for submissions is the 31st January 2023. The panel of judges will be chaired by the Director of the RWA (Royal West of England Academy) and will include a young art student and a member of Bristol Refugee Artists Collective. All the prizewinners’ art will be featured in the parallel exhibition with as many other contributions as can be accommodated. We can offer visits and guided tours for groups of students (both primary and secondary) for both exhibitions. We are happy to explore with you the best way for your students to engage with the displays and to work out a programme together. Everything is free of charge.

Please contact vicmethevents@gmail.com for more...
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<tr>
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<th>Event</th>
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<td>20th Feb</td>
<td>Exhibition opens to the public</td>
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<td>University Music Concert</td>
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<td>Jesus for R.3.00 @TCMP</td>
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<td>Photo, Diwali Celebrations</td>
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<td>&quot;At the Foot of the Cross&quot; An evening of dramatic readings and music by the Vic community</td>
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<td>An Indian Experience Dance, Food and Live Music</td>
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<td>Clive Hicks-Jenkins in conversation with Rebecca Gibbs, CHJ is an artist with a work featured in the exhibition</td>
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Methodist Modern Art Collection

THANK YOU for financial contributions from:

Bristol Methodist District
Morel Trust
CASS Art
You can find the **Victoria Methodist Church** at:

Victoria Methodist Church
1A Whiteladies Road
Clifton, Bristol BS8 1NU

Accessible parking for blue badge holders can be booked in advance by contacting **vicmethenevents@gmail.com**.

Throughout the period of our exhibition four additional works from the Methodist Modern Art Collection are on display at the New Room, 36 The Horsefair, Bristol BS1 3JE.

www.vic-methodist-bristol.org.uk  
www.methodist.org.uk/artcollection  
www.facebook.com/VicMethodistArticlesOfFaith