

CG0027 The Likeness of Things

The first fine art exhibition at a public art gallery to be supported by the foundation took place in Summer 2022. In early 2022 Tina Ball, Culture Development & Events Officer at Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council, submitted a grant application to help stage an exciting exhibition:

“The Likeness of Things is the most ambitious exhibition Kirkby Gallery has ever staged, whilst paying respect to the art collections of the Liverpool City Region.

The work of John Baum, Maurice Cockrill, Adrian Henri, and Sam Walsh are celebrated, emphasising their friendships and their impact on Merseyside’s cultural scene.”

The exhibition aimed to be one of the highlights of Kirkby Gallery’s forward plan: *“2022 is Knowsley’s Borough of Culture: a year long celebration of arts and culture. As part of this, we are presenting an exhibition which pays homage to a group of artists who put Merseyside on the cultural map.”*



to open such an exhibition at Kirkby Gallery.

“The exhibition is supported via the loan of paintings from our significant regional galleries: The Walker, The Williamson, The Victoria Gallery & Museum, The Atkinson, LJMU Collection and

T H E L I K E N E S S O F T H I N G S

BAUM
COCKRILL
HENRI
WALSH



KIRKBY GALLERY, TUESDAY 10 MAY – SATURDAY 16 JULY. ADMISSION FREE

Tina Ball collaborated with university academic, curator and art historian, Catherine Marcangeli, who led the research into the artists and their works necessary to stage such an exhibition. The application highlighted the number of organisations involved and the challenges the pair needed to overcome



five private collections. It also marks a major first — to present paintings of significant scale. To do this, we need to increase two wall areas, one specifically to display the painting, Scillonian Pumps, by Maurice Cockrill, which has not been on public display for 10+ years. We also need to employ a conservator to clean three of the paintings on loan. The costs for undertaking these dual activities sit beyond my basic gallery budget, hence my application.”



The foundation supported the conservation of *Indianapolis Love Story* and *Crouching Man* by Sam Walsh, and *Meat and Flowers* by Adrian Henri.

The funding also covered the cost of stretching and re-stretching of *Scillonian Pumps* by Maurice Cockrill and the preparation work for its installation.

The conservation work was carried out by professional art conservator, Harriet Owen-Hughes.

The Likeness of Things was rooted in the cultural history of late 20th century Liverpool and the Liverpool art scene:

“There is a strong sense of place/region central to this show and coupled with the creation of learning resources exploring traditional art school genre of portraiture/figuration, landscape and still life, it



provides local students and visitors alike with an opportunity to develop a greater understanding of the world of art on their doorstep.”

The exhibition opened on May 10th 2022 and over the next ten weeks attracted some 2,500 visitors to suburban Liverpool.

Tina Ball summed up the sense of achievement the team felt after staging the exhibition:

“We have been able to offer a unique exhibition which was centred on celebrating the importance of the Merseyside Art



Scene between the 60s and 70s. Whilst similar exhibitions have been staged, none have focused specifically on this period, this quartet of artists and never in Kirkby Gallery, which effectively made an exhibition of national standard accessible to our local audiences where travelling into a city would likely not happen."

"We secured loans with all of the Liverpool City Region galleries and established relationships with a number of private collectors. We have formed a wonderful working relationship with curator and art historian, Catherine Marcangeli, who we now hope to work with again on a future, sister exhibition."

The exhibition was as much a social and communal event as an artistic one:

"The exhibition played-out almost like a college-reunion in slow motion, with a substantial number of former students of the featured artists attending and reigniting their appreciation of their lecturers from Art College days. In doing so, it brought a great many new visitors to Kirkby Gallery, whilst enabling our young artist / schools audience to encounter these painters and to engage with painting genres and practices for the first time."

The originality of the show should not be underestimated. A copy of the catalogue, written by Catherine Marcangeli, has been placed within all the national copyright libraries, as well as Knowsley library service and Liverpool JMU.

Visitors were impressed too:

"The work speaks for itself. A real care about the images chosen and the layout. Real quality exhibition."

"Great space and really well curated. The position of each painting and their interaction with each other works well. It is great to be able to stand a good distance away from the paintings to observe them as well as get close."



Foundation support: £2,800