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Museum shortlisted for national award

Innovative plans to take art to the Chinese have resulted in Bury Art Museum being shortlisted for a national award.

The museum has been nominated in the Trading and Enterprise category of the Museums and Heritage Awards 2013 for its International Touring Exhibition Model.

Bury is up against the likes of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, National Museums Liverpool, Blenheim Palace, and Titanic Belfast.

The team came up with plans to “sell” exhibitions to international galleries on a commercial basis and take the museum’s assets to a much wider audience.

Tony Trehy, Bury’s arts and museums manager, said: “We identified this as a new way of generating revenue and extending international connections by using our most significant asset – our historic collection of art. We recognised that we can generate income directly from the collection and by marketing exhibitions to foreign art institutions.

“Bury Art Museum is now leading a consortium of the Greater Manchester Museums Group generating international touring exhibitions drawn from the region’s great art collections.”

In November 2012 the first exhibition from the consortium, “*Toward Modernity: Three Centuries of British Art*”, began its tour of six venues in China.

The exhibition, including paintings, prints, drawings and watercolours from the North West, opened at The World Art Museum in Beijing as part of the UK Now festival. This was the biggest ever festival of British arts and creative industries held in China, and was organised in part to celebrate the connection between China and the UK as consecutive hosts of the Olympic Games. Bury Art Museum worked with the British Council to develop links with arts organisations in China and to learn about trade and commerce between the two countries.

The winners of the Museum and Heritage Awards will be announced at a ceremony on 15 May, hosted by Sue Perkins.

The full shortlist can be viewed at

<http://www.museumsandheritage.com/show/awards/2013-shortlist>

ENDS

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Picture attached: Tony Trehy at the exhibition launch with staff at the World Art Museum in Beijing.

Note to editors: **Toward Modernity: Three Centuries of British Art.**

An extraordinary wealth of works by British artists exists in the museums and galleries of the North West, a consequence in large part of the Industrial Revolution which led to the patronage of artists and the forming of magnificent collections by wealthy manufacturers and business people. The exhibition, *Toward Modernity: Three Centuries of British Art*, draws on the great richness of art that is the legacy of collecting and patronage by the men and women of the North West, it includes examples of different genres of painting and drawing, from the grand tradition of history and religious subjects, to portraiture and landscape, paintings and drawings which offer glimpses of the everyday life. It celebrates the individuality and eccentricity of British art as well as its sophistication and extraordinary levels of skill.

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