

# IKON

## Forward Programme 2020-21



Ikon Gallery

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Registered charity no. 528892

Twitter, Facebook, Instagram: [@ikongallery](https://www.instagram.com/ikongallery)

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# Introduction

Ikon, Birmingham's internationally acclaimed contemporary art gallery, announces plans for 2020-21: exhibitions, off-site projects and events that represent Ikon's ongoing dedication to showcasing the very best of British and international contemporary art.

Highlights include shows entirely of new work by Birmingham-born John Newling and Australian Indigenous artists Judy Watson and Yhonnie Scarce, a major survey of the 1990s seen through the lens of Ikon's exhibition programme, a UK debut for internationally acclaimed Czech artist Krištof Kintera and a much anticipated retrospective of work by Lahore-based Aisha Khalid.

In addition we will present the third annual *Migrant Festival* and continue to work off-site at HMP Grendon, Buckinghamshire and across the canal network with *Slow Boat*. Ikon's international profile is enhanced with collateral projects at the Venice Biennale and Lahore Biennale, whilst a number of Ikon exhibitions tour nationally and internationally.

Meanwhile Ikon looks further forward, to 2022, when we will present the first UK exhibition of works by the 15<sup>th</sup> century Italian master Carlo Crivelli. Funded by the inaugural Ampersand Foundation Award, the exhibition will comprise major loans from a number of museums including the National Gallery in London.

# Ikon Exhibition Programme 2020-21

Meryl McMaster

*As Immense as the Sky*

4 December 2019 – 23 February 2020



Meryl McMaster, *On the Edge of this Immensity* (2019). Giclée Print. Courtesy of the artist and Stephen Bulger Gallery, Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain and The Baldwin Gallery.

Part of a rising generation of indigenous artists in Canada, Meryl McMaster's photography explores identity and its distinct cultural landscapes with extraordinary visual impact. For Ikon, McMaster (b. 1988, Ottawa) shows new and recent work, drawing on the artist's dual heritage to examine broader questions of being, placing emphasis on the social, cultural and environmental contact zones of both her indigenous and European ancestors.

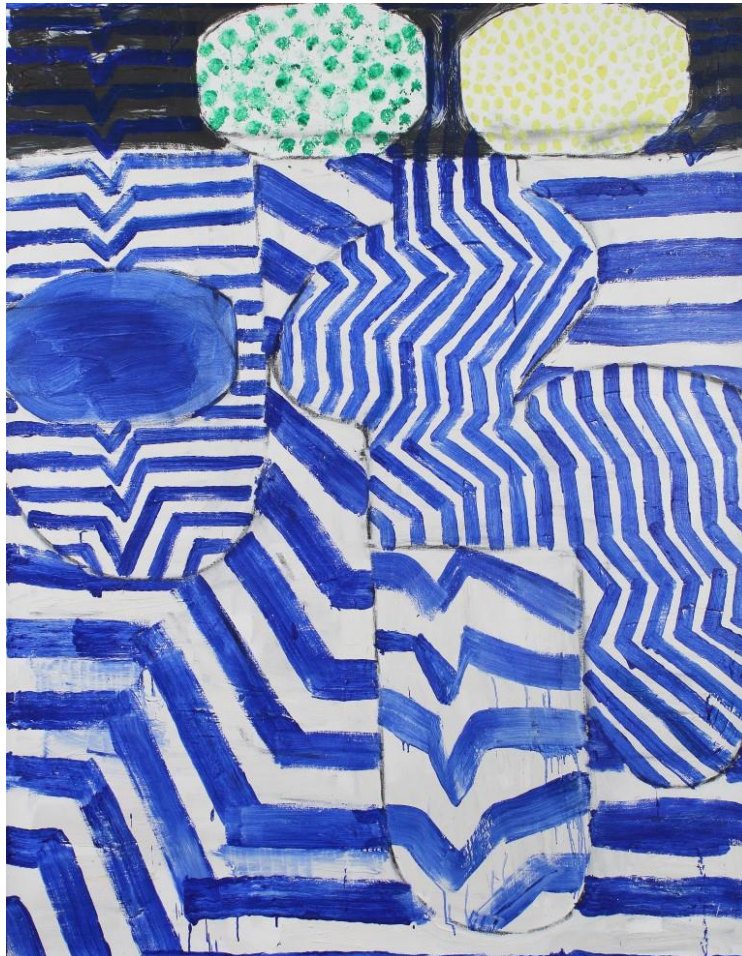
*"I want to bring specific awareness to the broad consequences of colonisation and how the mentality of greed and/or lack of foresight is still impacting us today. At the same time, my work isn't intended to resolve this dilemma but rather to create an opportunity for introspection and conversation. Each of us has a complicated relationship with the past with gaps and biases, and it is important to me to expose and explore these gaps so that we may encounter our next moments better prepared."*

Meryl McMaster

John Walker

*New Paintings*

4 December 2019 – 23 February 2020



John Walker, *Ripple* (2017). Oil on canvas. Courtesy the artist.

Ikon presents a major exhibition of a selection of new paintings by Birmingham-born artist John Walker (b. 1939), recently described as "*one of the standout abstract painters of the last 50 years*" (Cate McQuaid, *Boston Globe*, 2014).

Having studied in Birmingham at the Moseley School of Art, and later the Birmingham College of Art, Walker was the first artist to show at Ikon Gallery when it moved in 1972 to new premises in the Birmingham Shopping Centre above New Street Station. Ikon's exhibition reveals an artist now at the height of his powers, featuring "anti-scenic" paintings inspired by the coastal landscapes of Maine where Walker now lives.

The freedom with which he is painting, and the edgy beauty he achieves as a result, give rise to an artistic experience of colours and graphic rhythms that are fresh and refreshing.



John Newling

*Dear Nature*

4 March – 31 May 2020



John Newling, *A language from the garden (Nymans language)* (2017). Courtesy the artist.

An exhibition of work by Birmingham-born artist John Newling (b.1952) - a pioneer of public art with a social purpose, his works explore the natural world and social and economic systems.

At the heart of Ikon's exhibition is *A language from the garden (Nymans language)* (2017), a grid of marble slabs on the floor, reminiscent at once of teaching aids for children and sculptures by Carl Andre. Each slab is inscribed with plant forms Newling found at Nymans, a National Trust garden in West Sussex, that resemble letters in the modern English alphabet - hence Nymans Language, an officially registered downloadable font. On a wall nearby it spells out verses from the first chapter of Genesis referring to humanity subduing the Earth.

Recently Newling has been making *Soil Books* with soil from his back garden to embody the idea of the Anthropocene, our current geological age in which human impact is evident. He refers to us "signing our names in the soil" and is determined to grasp "what is it to know that we have affected the effects of nature/our environment ...".

Judy Watson

4 March – 31 May 2020



Judy Watson, *myall creek mourning caps 1 (yulurri kala)* (2018)

Ochre, earth, binder medium, acrylic on paper.

Image courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery. Photograph: Carl Warner.

Australian Indigenous artist Judy Watson (b. 1959) shows new paintings, video and installation, exemplifying her interest in sacred sites in the light of her family history.

Watson has recently travelled to see sites of prehistorical significance in the UK – standing stones, circles and hill figures, e.g. Avebury, Uffington, Stonehenge – suggesting a more balanced and sustainable relationship between humanity and the rest of the natural world. It chimes in with a description of her most recent gallery exhibition in Australia: “exploring Indigenous strength and resilience in the face of climate change and other pressures”.

Exhibition organised by Ikon Gallery and TarraWarra Museum of Art with consultant curator Hetti Perkins.

Yhonnie Scarce

9 April – 31 May 2020



Yhonnie Scarce, *Glass Bomb (Blue Danube)* (2015)  
Hand blown glass bomb and yams. Photograph by Janelle Low.

Yhonnie Scarce was born in Woomera, South Australia, and belongs to the Kokatha and Nukunu peoples - like Judy Watson, family history is central to Scarce's work, drawing on the strength of her ancestors.

Working with glass, Scarce explores the political nature and aesthetic qualities of the material – in particular corresponding to the crystallisation of desert sand as a result of British nuclear tests on her homeland during 1956-63. Birmingham is ideal for Scarce's residency, due to its proximity to traditional UK centres of glass manufacturing and in addition the University of Birmingham was the location for most of the scientific research undertaken in the UK during World War II, which subsequently led to the unleashing of the atom bomb.

The outcome of Scarce's residency is presented in Ikon's Tower Room. Organised by Ikon Gallery and TarraWarra Museum of Art with consultant curator Hetti Perkins.



## *Ikon in the 1990s*

12 June – 6 September 2020



Donald Rodney, *In the House of My Father* (1997)

The fourth in a series of surveys of Ikon's artistic programme, this exhibition is a review of the 1990s. Comprising work by artists who featured in exhibitions and other projects at the gallery in John Bright Street during the period 1989-1997 and then at Ikon's current premises in Brindleyplace until 1999.

Elizabeth Macgregor was Ikon's Director at this time and the exhibition programme became more international in its outlook, placing particular emphasis on the Americas and subsequently Australia, whilst also featuring a number of group exhibitions, with themes derived from current affairs.

Artists include: Edward Allington / Basil Beattie / Zarina Bhimji / Adam Chodzko / Juan Davila / Mark Dion / Eugenio Dittborn / Ellen Gallagher / Simryn Gill / Antony Gormley / Victor Grippo / Callum Innes / Ilya Kabakov / Perminder Kaur / Seydou Keita / Rose Finn Kelcey / Tania Kovats / Lisa Milroy / Avis Newman / Lucia Nogueira / Vong Phaophanit / Adrian Piper / Keith Piper / Donald Rodney / Martha Rosler / Yinka Shonibare / Nancy Spero / Georgina Starr / Amikam Toren / Suzanne Treister / Shelagh Wakeley / Maxine Walker / Mark Wallinger / John Yeadon

## The Migrant Festival

18-21 June 2020



Artist Hew Locke with Rt. Hon. David Lammy MP, *The Migrant Festival* 2019

Ikon presents the third annual *Migrant Festival* – a four day programme mixing visual art, music, film and performance. Coinciding with Ikon's 90s exhibition, *The Migrant Festival* celebrates the contribution made by refugees and migrants to Birmingham and the UK, whilst bearing witness to the hardships and sacrifices involved.

Ikon's 2019 festival included a talk with artist Hew Locke and Rt. Hon. David Lammy MP, focusing on the campaign for Windrush British Citizens, and an introduction to the Stuart Hall Archive at the University of Birmingham. Designer Osman Yousefzada staged a second fashion parade, between Selfridges and Ikon, and Celebrating Sanctuary held concerts with Haitian and Syrian musicians.

## Krištof Kintera

16 September – 22 November 2020



Krištof Kintera, *Postnaturalia* (2017). Image courtesy the artist.

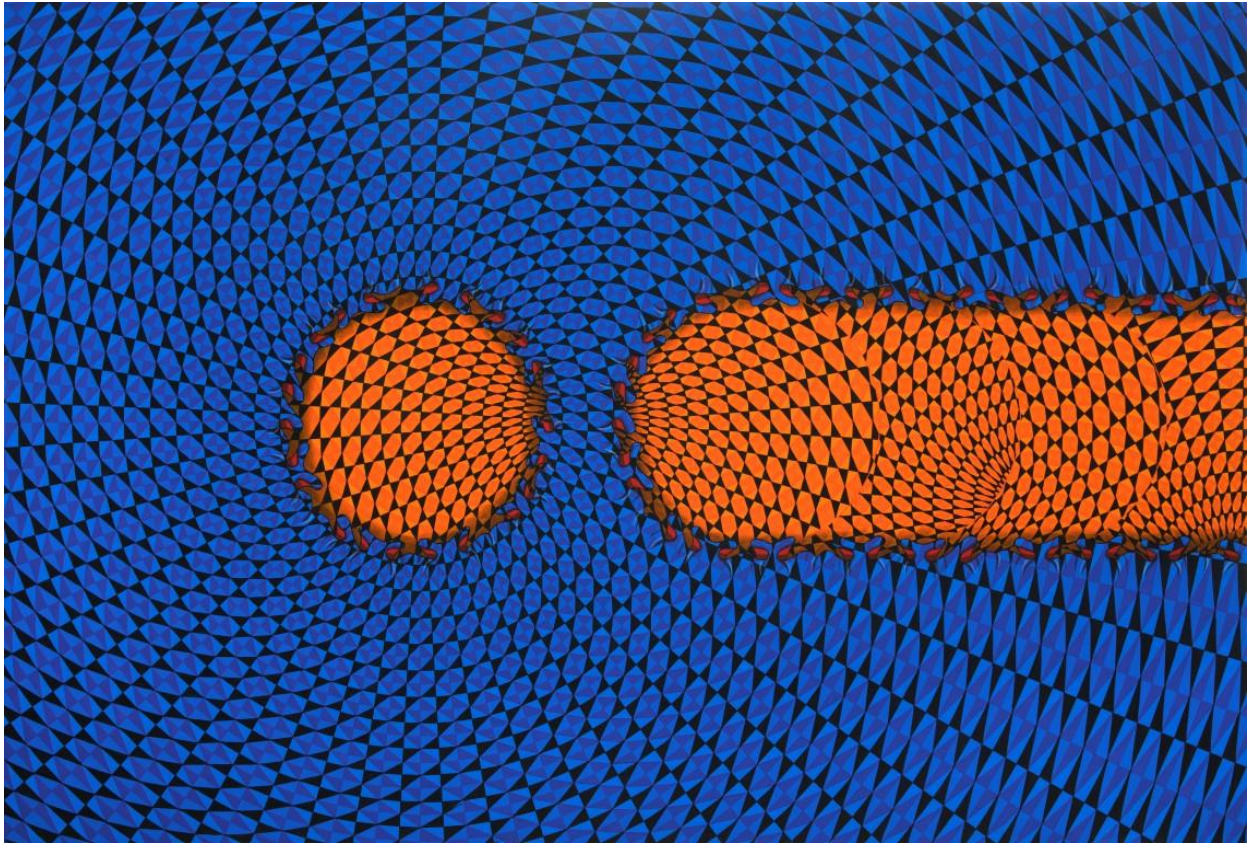
This will be the first UK survey of work by internationally acclaimed Czech artist Krištof Kintera (b. 1973, Prague). It will include new installations for both the gallery and off-site.

Krištof Kintera's artistic practice, crafted with black humour and ironic language audaciously digs into politically charged issues. The artist formulates inventive social criticisms that provide food for thought and expose the dark sides of our contemporary societies. In Kintera's activist works, triviality and fatality coexist to denounce the inherent absurdity in hypercapitalist systems and ecological destruction.



Aisha Khalid

2 December 2020 – 21 February 2021



Aisha Khalid, *AT THE CIRCLE'S CENTRE* (2018). Gouache on paperboard. Courtesy the artist.

Aisha Khalid (b. 1972, Lahore) is one of Pakistan's most prominent contemporary artists. Schooled in traditional miniature painting, she has become a leading figure in developing the medium for modern audiences and attitudes. More recently she has turned to larger paintings, murals and installations.

Ikon's exhibition exemplifies the fundamental propositions of Khalid's artistic practice, touching on themes of gender and conflict. New work, shown for the first time, appropriates the imagery of traditional miniatures depicting battle scenes and other acts of violence, while removing all human figures. Khalid aestheticises her tough subject matter and refers to taboos of representational art, whilst also referencing typically feminine crafts such as textiles and needlework, with a focus on repeated geometric patterns taken from traditional Islamic designs, combined with floral motifs.



# Spring 2022

Carlo Crivelli

*Radical Illusionism in the 15th Century*



Carlo Crivelli *The Annunciation, with Saint Emidius* (1486)  
Egg and oil on canvas, 207 × 146.7 cm. Presented by Lord Taunton, 1864.  
© The National Gallery, London. NG739.

Ikon is delighted to announce winning the inaugural £125,000 Ampersand Foundation Award, which will enable the gallery to realise its dream of staging an exhibition of works by the 15th century master Carlo Crivelli. The Trustees of the National Gallery in London have agreed to lend four masterpieces by Crivelli for Ikon's presentation in Spring 2022.

This announcement comes as Jonathan Watkins marks 20 years as Ikon Director: "An exhibition of work by the 15th century painter Carlo Crivelli is not only a dream come true for Ikon, but also something that I have always really wanted to do. Since being an undergraduate I have been fascinated by Crivelli, at once very 'traditional' in a northern Italian style but pointing towards a postmodern art historical future unlike any other pre-modern artist. In other words, arguably, Carlo Crivelli was as radical as Magritte."

# Ikon Off-Site - Regional

## *Ikon Slow Boat*

2017-2020



Ikon Youth Programme onboard *Slow Boat*

A converted narrow boat, *Slow Boat* is crewed by Ikon Youth Programme as a unique floating space for live performances, film screenings, a site for installation, a social space for hospitality and talks, theatrical events, and HQ for 'guerrilla' activity in locations en route and online. In 2019, Ikon celebrated 20 years of working on the canals.

To mark the end of *Slow Boat*'s current cycle, *Looping the Loop*, in March 2020 we will hold a symposium highlighting key partnerships with Canal & River Trust, Women with Hope and Celebrating Sanctuary, and participatory projects with artists Justin Wiggan, Claudia Losi and the Idle Women.

*Looping the Loop* is supported by Arts Council Strategic Touring, Michael Marsh Charitable Trust, W.A. Cadbury Trust, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Canal & River Trust and Grantham Yorke Trust.

## *Art at HMP Grendon*

2019-2022



Dean Kelland (2019), Ikon Gallery

Birmingham born artist Dean Kelland is Ikon's artist in residence for the next three years at HMP Grendon, Buckinghamshire, Europe's only wholly therapeutic prison. Funded by the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust, his appointment follows Edmund Clark's residency (2014-2019).

*Art at HMP Grendon* is an extraordinary opportunity for the development of artistic practice for both Kelland and the prison community. In consultation with the artist, prison residents will continue to make and submit work to the Koestler Awards – through Koestler Arts, the UK's leading prison arts charity - as well as holding annual exhibitions at HMP Grendon. The residency runs alongside a public programme of research symposiums and events at Ikon, allowing a platform for public discourse on arts practice and criminal justice.

# Ikon Off-Site - International

Venice

Alice Cattaneo

*Davvero intangibile, Really intangible*

22 November – 22 December 2019



Ikon and the curatorial collective a.topos collaborate to present new and recent work, including video and sculpture, by Italian artist Alice Cattaneo. The artist has recently been working in Venice, making glass sculptures that draw from ancient tradition while conveying a here and now fragility.

Alice Cattaneo, *Untitled* (2019).  
Blown glass, slate, ceramic, thread. Image courtesy the artist.

Lahore Biennale

*A Rich Tapestry*

26 January – 29 February 2020



Ikon participates in the second edition of the Lahore Biennale (LBo2), presenting work by four Birmingham artists: Mahtab Hussain, Matthew Krishanu, Farwa Moledina and Osman Yousefzada. Organised in collaboration with Aisha Khalid for a new art space she has established.

Matthew Krishanu, *Crow (orange)* (2018).  
Oil on board. Image courtesy the artist.



# Ikon Touring Exhibitions

## *Portrait of the Artist: Käthe Kollwitz*



Ikon's exhibition of work by Käthe Kollwitz, a leading artist of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, ran September – November 2017. In partnership with the British Museum it toured to Young Gallery, Salisbury (Dec 2017 – Mar 2018); Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Swansea (Mar – Jun 2018); Ferens Art Gallery, Hull (Jun – Sept 2018); and the British Museum (Sept 2019– Jan 2020).

Käthe Kollwitz (1867-1945) *Woman with Dead Child* (1903)  
Soft ground etching with engraving overprinted lithographically with gold tone-plate © The trustees of the British Museum

## Hew Locke *Here's the Thing*



Hew Locke's exhibition tours to Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas (12 September 2019 – 19 January 2020) and Colby Museum of Art, Maine (20 February – 7 June 2020).

Hew Locke, *Armada* (2019) Ikon installation  
Courtesy the artist and Ikon. Photo by Tom Bird.

## Meryl McMaster *As Immense as the Sky*



Meryl McMaster's exhibition tours to Canada House, London in Spring 2020, plus further venues in France, Germany and Canada.

Meryl McMaster, *Edge of a Moment* (2017).  
Giclée Print. Courtesy the artist and Stephen Bulger Gallery, Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain and The Baldwin Gallery.

# Funding

Ikon is a registered charity and is supported using public funding from Arts Council England and Birmingham City Council. These core grants cover the gallery's running costs, enabling Ikon to provide free entry. The exhibitions, learning programme and off-site projects across the city are primarily paid for through fundraising activity. Ikon raises money through venue hire, Ikon shop, private grant giving trusts and foundations, corporate patrons and sponsors, international funding sources and the generosity of those visitors and supporters who make a donation.



# Partnerships

## PLUS TATE

Plus Tate aims to support the development of the visual arts across the UK, and to foster a climate where exchange and partnership can flourish. Joining together to exchange ideas, knowledge, skills and resources, as well as programmes and collections, the Plus Tate partners, along with and facilitated by Tate, broaden and deepen engagement in modern and contemporary art across the country.

## CULTURE CENTRAL

Culture Central is a collective voice and development agency for culture and the creative industries in Birmingham and the wider region. Culture Central is committed to developing and leading projects, alongside other leadership bodies in the city region, that have the potential for a positive impact on the sector and on the region.

## ARTiMBARC

ARTiMBARC is a digital platform that provides bespoke apps for cultural organisations to unlock extra layers of content and support dialogue with audiences. Audio visual narratives will enrich the visitor experience as well as providing basic information on the project, artist and location. ARTiMBARC was founded in 2017 by entrepreneur and philanthropist Julie-Anne Ugglá, curator Sigrid Kirk and entrepreneur Oliver Flynn.

# Jonathan Watkins - Director



In 2019 Jonathan Watkins marks 20 years as Director of Ikon. Previously he worked for a number of years in London, as Curator of the Serpentine Gallery (1995-1997) and Director of Chisenhale Gallery (1990-1995).

He has curated a number of large international exhibitions including the Biennale of Sydney (1998), Facts of Life: Contemporary Japanese Art (Hayward Gallery, London 2001), Quotidiana (Castello di Rivoli, Turin 1999, Tate Triennial (2003), Shanghai Biennale (2006), Sharjah Biennial (2007), Negotiations (Today Art Museum, Beijing 2010) and the Guangzhou Triennial (2012). He was on the curatorial team for Europarte (Venice Biennale, 1997), Milano Europa 2000, (Palazzo di Triennale, Milan 2000), and Riwaq (Palestinian Biennial 2007). He curated the Iraqi Pavilion for the Venice Biennale in 2013 and *Floating World*, Bahrain in 2017. In 2019 Watkins curated *Small Between the Stars, Large Against the Sky*, at Manif d'art 9, The Quebec City Biennial.

Jonathan Watkins has written extensively on contemporary art. Essays have focused on the work of Giuseppe Penone, Martin Creed, Semyon Faibisovich, Yang Zhenzhong, Noguchi Rika, Caro Niederer, Beat Streuli and Cornelia Parker. He was the author of the Phaidon monograph on Japanese artist On Kawara.

Jonathan Watkins has served on numerous committees and boards, most recently for the Imperial War Museum (2011 - 2016), Arts Council Collection Acquisitions Committee (2011 - 2013) and 14-18 Now: First World War Centenary Cultural Programme (2013 - 2017). In 2013 he was nominated as one of the top 100 Global Thinkers by Foreign Policy Magazine.

# Trustees & Patrons

## **Ikon Board of Trustees**

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## **Corporate Patrons**

ARTiMBARC, CIS, Deutsche Bank, Emmerson Press, EY, Glenn Howells Architects, Viessmann.



# Images

Below is a link to images for Ikon's 2020-21 Programme:

<http://ow.ly/yjaG3opU4nA>

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# Notes to Editors

1. Ikon Gallery, 1 Oozells Square, Brindleyplace, Birmingham B1 2HS. 0121 248 0708 / [ikon-gallery.org](http://ikon-gallery.org) Open Tuesday-Sunday & Bank Holiday Mondays, 11am-5pm / free entry  
Ikon Gallery Limited trading as Ikon. Registered charity no. 528892
2. Ikon is an internationally acclaimed contemporary art venue situated in central Birmingham. Established in 1964 by a group of artists, Ikon is a registered charity, with free entry for all, and works to encourage public engagement with contemporary art through exhibiting new work in a context of debate and participation. The gallery programme features artists from around the world and a variety of media is represented, including sound, film, mixed media, photography, painting, sculpture and installation. Ikon's off-site programme develops dynamic relationships between art, artists and audiences outside the gallery. Projects vary enormously in scale, duration and location, challenging expectations of where art can be seen and by whom. Education is at the heart of Ikon's activities and through a variety of talks, tours, workshops and seminars, Ikon's Learning Team aims to build dynamic relationships with audiences, enabling visitors to engage with, discuss and reflect on contemporary art.
3. Ikon's first home was in a glass-sided kiosk in the Bullring shopping centre, a 'gallery without walls'. Since then, Ikon has had a number of venues around the city centre and in 1998 moved to its current premises in Brindleyplace, converting an old Victorian school building into a contemporary art gallery. Ikon now welcomes over 200,000 visitors a year. From a humble start, Ikon has grown to establish a worldwide reputation as one of the most international art institutions in the UK. In recent years, exhibiting artists have hailed from China, Japan, Australia, France, USA, Lithuania, Canada and Vietnam, in addition to homegrown talent including Jesse Bruton, Vanley Burke, Ruth Claxton, Mahtab Hussain and Hurvin Anderson. Ikon has played a key role in the development of many artistic careers - Antony Gormley, Beatriz Milhazes, Cornelia Parker, Julian Opie and Carmen Herrera all had important exhibitions here. In 2015 the gallery celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary through a series of special exhibitions and events, known as *Ikon 50*. For the latest news and events follow @ikongallery on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).
4. Ikon Gallery is supported using public funding by Arts Council England and Birmingham City Council.
5. Arts Council England is the national development body for arts and culture across England, working to enrich people's lives. ACE support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to visual art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2018 and 2022, ACE will invest £1.45 billion of public money from government and an estimated £860 million from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country. [artscouncil.org.uk](http://artscouncil.org.uk)
6. Please note all dates and details are subject to change, for up to date information and high-res images please contact Pelham Communications or Ikon.