

PRESS RELEASE

**Exhibition Openings:
Future Collect at The Hepworth Wakefield**

The Hepworth Wakefield, Gallery Walk,
Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF1 5AW

Thursday 7 April – Sunday 4 September 2022

Media view: Tuesday 5 April 2022

Future Collect is supported by Art Fund, Arts Council England and Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.



Image left: Amii Alrai, Passing of the Lilies, Jerwood Arts. 2021. Photograph by Anna Arca
Image right: Prafulla Mohanti, Neela Saraswati, c. 1970s. Copyright the artist

Future Collect artist [Emii Alrai](#) and curatorial trainee [Amber Li](#) open exhibitions at The Hepworth Wakefield this Spring.

[*A Core of Scar*](#) is an exhibition of Alrai's new work, created for acquisition into The Hepworth Wakefield's permanent public collection. In her large-scale sculptural practice, Alrai weaves together ancient mythologies from the Middle East and oral histories from her own Iraqi heritage, creating objects which imitate archaeological artefacts. Her work draws attention to the contrast between the polished aesthetics of museums and the states of ruin which befall archaeological objects and the landscapes they are excavated from.

For this commission, Alrai has created a series of hand-blown glass vessels that evoke ancient funerary urns. The vessels are marked by scars and seams, which emerge during processes of casting and joining. In archaeological artefacts, such scars can hint at the violence of the object's separation from its homeland – a separation that parallels experiences of migration and diaspora. Investigating physical markers of the past, Alrai finds affinities for these scars in bodily wounds and across geological landscapes. *A Core of Scar* explores objects, bodies, and landscapes as sites of memory.

Accompanying the exhibition is a public programme consisting of two study days, one at Stuart Hall Library and the other, an excursion to Gordale Scar (Yorkshire Dales National Park). Further details in Notes to Editors.

[*Prafulla Mohanti: Full Circle*](#) is an exhibition curated by Future Collect's Curatorial Trainee Amber Li who has been conducting new research focused on work by artists of African, Caribbean, Asian or MENA heritage within Wakefield's art collection. On display are paintings, textiles, and performance works by Prafulla Mohanti (b. 1936, in Odisha, India) that span six decades. The exhibition explores the enduring importance of circles and movement within the artist's work. As a child growing up in Nanpur, a small village in Odisha, Mohanti was taught to draw three circles to represent the Hindu trinity – Brahma (the creator), Vishnu (the preserver) and Mahesh (the destroyer) – responsible for the endless cycle of creation and destruction. For Mohanti, the circle is 'absolute abstraction', both void and container of everything. Mohanti's first exhibition was in Wakefield in 1964, as part of a show called Modern Art in Yorkshire. This is the first time Mohanti's work has been shown in Wakefield since then.

Future Collect is iniva's national partnership programme designed to diversify who is collected by, who works at and who goes to the museum with the aim of better reflecting the breadth of contemporary British society. Each year, iniva partners with one public museum or gallery to commission an artist of African and/or Asian descent, British born or based. The artwork created is exhibited by the partner organisation, presented alongside a bespoke public programme, and subsequently acquired into the museum or gallery's permanent public collection. The project also supports significant curatorial development in the form of a curatorial traineeship.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

A CORE OF SCAR PUBLIC PROGRAMME EVENTS

[Contained terrain: Conversations about collecting natural histories](#)

Date: Monday 16 May 2022

Time: 10:30 – 16:00

Venue: Stuart Hall Library

For the first study day in the second year our of Future Collect programme, we will gather at Stuart Hall Library to focus on questions around natural history and what happens when natural artefacts are placed in collections. What kind of narratives emerge when we collect nature and what histories are lost in this process? How does this link to the histories written into natural landscapes and their geographies? Drawing from Emii Alrai's interest and work with natural and cultural heritage, particularly throughout the making of her Future Collect commission '**A Core of Scar**', we will dive into what it means to work with nature, decolonise natural collections and the tension between decay and conservation in this work.

[Approaching the scar](#)

Date: Thursday 14 July 2022

Time: 10:00 – 18:00

Venue: Excursion to Gordale Scar (Yorkshire Dales National Park)

A key part of Emii Alrai's research and work on her Future Collect commission **A Core of Scar** has been exploring landscapes across the United Kingdom, having travelled from the Northlands in Scotland to Land's End on the Cornish coast. For Emii's second study day we will take an excursion to the **Gordale Scar**, a hidden gorge in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, and a key research site in Emii's work towards her commission.

[PERFUME VESSEL](#) LIMITED EDITION



Perfume Vessel, 2022

Edition of 21 (plus 2 artist proofs)

Materials: Blown Glass & Steel Armature

Dimensions: Glass Element 10 x 5 x 4 cm (slight variations apply), Dimensions with Stand 15 x 8.9 x 9.9 cm

Colours: This edition was created in three colourways: aurora brown, smoke grey, and clear.

Edition price: £480 (Price inclusive of VAT)

Each edition is a unique variant as the glass components were hand-blown into five moulds which disintegrate with use.

Emii Alrai has created a limited edition to accompany her commission for Future Collect, *A Core of Scar*, at The Hepworth Wakefield. *Perfume Vessel* was produced in collaboration with North Lands Creative, a world-leading contemporary glass art studio based in Caithness, Scotland, who facilitated the production of the Future Collect commission.

This sculptural edition is inspired by ancient glass perfume bottles. Shaped to look like Iraqi dates, the edition echoes themes of archaeology and diasporic experience. Each edition has been fitted to an armature, custom-made by Mark Webster of MW Fabrications. These armatures mimic display modes typically used by archaeological museums. Alrai invites us to consider such devices as instruments of colonial capture.

Proceeds from the sale of this edition will support the development of an artist's book by Emii Alrai, creating a permanent legacy for both the artist and the Future Collect project.

ABOUT FUTURE COLLECT

Future Collect was established in 2019 to mark iniva's 25th anniversary with a legacy project aimed at transforming the national conversation around contemporary art collecting. iniva partnered with Manchester Art Gallery to commission artist Jade Montserrat and support curatorial trainee Nikita Gill.

The Hepworth Wakefield is the second organisation to take part in the programme supporting the commission of artist Emii Alrai and curatorial trainee Amber Li.

Details on the third and final partner museum and artist commission will be announced later this year.

ABOUT INIVA

iniva (Institute of International Visual Arts) is an evolving, radical visual arts organisation dedicated to developing an artistic programme that reflects on the social and political impact of globalisation.

With the Stuart Hall Library acting as a critical and creative hub for their work, iniva collaborates with artists, curators, researchers and cultural producers to challenge conventional notions of diversity and difference. iniva engages a wide audience, particularly young people, in discourse and debate on issues surrounding the politics of race, class and gender.

iniva's programme supports artists at different stages in their careers, offering residencies, commissioning new work and promoting practice which enables artistic ambition and development. By cultivating innovative thinking, iniva is committed to disseminating research across a wide cultural spectrum and geographical network. Their ambition is to build a greater body of knowledge around each of the artists with whom they work to ensure the legacy of their practices for future generations of researchers and audiences.

www.iniva.org

ABOUT THE HEPWORTH WAKEFIELD

Designed by the acclaimed David Chipperfield Architects, The Hepworth Wakefield is set within Wakefield's historic waterfront, overlooking the River Calder. The gallery opened in May 2011 and was awarded Art Fund Museum of the Year 2017. Named after Barbara Hepworth, one of the most important artists of the 20th century who was born and brought up in Wakefield, the gallery presents major exhibitions of the best international modern and contemporary art. It is also home to Wakefield's art collection – an impressive compendium of modern British and contemporary art – and has dedicated galleries exploring Hepworth's art and working process. The Hepworth Wakefield Garden, designed by internationally renowned landscaped architect Tom Stuart-Smith, opened alongside the gallery in 2019 and is free for all to enjoy.

hepworthwakefield.org

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