



Press Release

11 November 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

170 years in the making at Leeds College of Art

Leeds College of Art continues to celebrate 170 years of delivering art education with an exclusive birthday party on Wednesday 16 November at Leeds City Museum, one of the original Leeds School of Art buildings. The evening will bring together current students, key partners and alumni from over the years, some of whom will reunite with their art school friends for the first time since studying in the 1940s/50s.

In the build up to the birthday party, to highlight the College's longstanding contribution to the creative scene in Leeds there are a number of city-wide projects taking place. The College hosted a student party at Belgrave Music Hall and Canteen; has partnered with Independent Leeds Magazine in a special issue exploring creativity in Leeds; and students have created a large-scale mural 'Creative City' at Leeds Train Station, which will be there throughout November for passers-by to enjoy.

It has been a significant year for the College. As well as hosting a number of 170 birthday events and exhibitions, the College gained Taught Degree Awarding Powers (TDAP) in September 2016. This means that it can now award its own degrees (previously the Open University validated then). This is a landmark in the College's history, with plans in place to now become the **only specialist arts university in the North of England**. The College was also awarded the *Whatuni Student Choice Award* for best facilities (out of all UK universities) for the second time in three years.

Founded in 1846 as the Leeds Government School of Art and Design, Leeds College of Art has contributed significantly to the development of art education in Britain and across the world. Today, Leeds College of Art remains one of only a few remaining independent art schools in the UK, leading the way as a centre for art and design education.

The College has an impressive history of notable past students, Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth were students 1919 and 1920. In later years Damien Hirst, Marcus Harvey, Eric Bainbridge, Clio Barnard and Georgina Starr all studied at the College, known then as the Jacob Kramer College. The College's recent graduates continue to win prestigious international awards year on year and enjoy successful careers in the creative industries.

Looking to the future, the College is in the process of applying for university status and a major expansion of its Blenheim Walk site is already under way; creating a 6000m² building to accommodate purpose built studios spaces for new degree courses.

Professor Simone Wonnacott, Principal, Leeds College of Art said:

"We are extremely proud of our significant history and heritage as a leading specialist art school. Our 170th anniversary has been an exciting year. We're now looking forward to becoming the only specialist arts university in the North of England and plans are under way for significant expansion - developing new studio spaces and extending our degree provision into areas such as film and music."

Press Invite

Media and press are invited to the 170-year-anniversary party at Leeds City Museum on
16 November at 5:30pm - 8:30pm (speeches at 6:30pm).

Leeds City Museum, Millennium Square, Leeds LS2 8BH

An evening of canapes, drinks, live music and art.

Joining us will be our special guest Mick McCann, author of 'How Leeds Changed the World', to tell the story of unknown Leeds over the last 170 years.

Please **RSVP** to this event by contacting Emma Morris, 0113 202 8044 or emma.morris@leeds-art.ac.uk

-Ends-

Editor's Notes

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[Please click here for a selection of downloadable media images](#) old student days and current students, studios and facilities.