

1 February 2007

Contemporary silver masterpieces from Goldsmiths' Hall set to dazzle audiences in Cambridge

TREASURES OF TODAY, a spectacular exhibition of silver masterpieces from the renowned private collection of the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths, opens at the Fitzwilliam Museum on 2 February. The exhibition features more than 100 examples of some of the most exciting and innovative silver creations to have been designed and made in Britain over the past 25 years, focusing on contemporary silver purchased or commissioned by the Company since 1980 and including the most recent additions to the collection such as two vases by Angela Cork and a stunning bowl by Clare Ransom.

All the great names of contemporary silversmithing are represented, including Gerald Benney, Robert Welch and Stuart Devlin who reached iconic status in their heyday and inspired the subsequent generation of artist-silversmiths such as Rod Kelly, Jane Short and Alex Brogden, who are also featured in the exhibition. In addition there are works by more recent silver stars among them Chris Knight, Toby Russell, David Clarke and Lucian Taylor.

The Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths, one of the Great Twelve Livery Companies of the City of London, received its Royal Charter in 1327, and is today one of the country's leading patrons of modern silver design. Its collection of modern silver, instigated in 1925, is now one of the most comprehensive collections of its kind in the world. There is no public gallery permanently dedicated to it so the only opportunity for the public to see the Collection is when it goes on tour.

The UK's reputation as the world leader in contemporary silver design, combined with the excellent metalwork courses to be found at colleges throughout the country has resulted in many talented young silversmiths coming to Britain to establish their careers. Silver by many of these is now included in the Goldsmiths' collection, among them Simone ten Hompel, Hiroshi Suzuki, Ane Christensen, Junko Mori and Sidsel Dorph Jensen, a number of whom are also represented in the collections and displays of the Fitzwilliam Museum.

Dr Julia Poole, Keeper of Applied Arts at The Fitzwilliam Museum, said "This splendid exhibition demonstrates the imagination and skill of contemporary silversmiths working in Britain, and the versatility of precious metals as media for objects designed for domestic or institutional settings. It complements admirably the Fitzwilliam's displays of contemporary silver, drawn from its permanent collections and from items on loan to the Museum, providing a context in which they may be even more widely appreciated."

Rosemary Ransome Wallis, Curator of the Collections at Goldsmiths' Hall, concludes "There are few opportunities for the public to see this world-famous contemporary collection in its entirety. In the setting of the Fitzwilliam Museum these exceptional works by today's creative silversmiths shine as modern decorative art and are truly 'Treasures of Today'".

The exhibition is complemented by talks by practising silversmiths, courses and family workshops; further details from www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk or telephone 01223 332904. The *Treasures of Today* exhibition is supported by Cambridge University Press; the related education programme is supported by

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Johnson Matthey. Silver items by many of the names featured in *Treasures of Today* will be for sale in the Museum's shop during the duration of the exhibition, which runs until 29 April. Admission to the exhibition is free.

- ends -

Exhibition details (for publication):

Treasures of Today: Silver from Goldsmiths' Hall, London, 1980-2006

Friday 2 February - Sunday 29 April 2007

Mellon Gallery, The Fitzwilliam Museum
Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RB
Tel: 01223 332900

www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk

Open:

Tuesday to Saturday 10.00am to 5.00pm

Sundays and Easter Monday 9 April: 12.00am to 5.00pm

Closed:

Mondays and Good Friday April 6

ADMISSION FREE

Further information and images from:

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

The Fitzwilliam Museum

The Fitzwilliam Museum houses a world-class collection of antiquities, applied arts, coins and medals, manuscripts and printed books and paintings, drawings and prints in a building which first opened to the public in 1848.

The Museum's treasures range from Ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman antiquities to the arts of the 21st century and include masterpieces by Titian, Canaletto, Stubbs, Constable, Monet, Renoir and Picasso, one of the world's foremost Rembrandt print collections, Handel music manuscripts and the famous Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, one of the most significant collections of Korean ceramics outside South-East Asia, medieval illuminated manuscripts and outstanding collections of pottery, porcelain and medieval coins.

The Fitzwilliam has a wide-ranging programme of temporary exhibitions and events and an award-winning Education Service. The Museum is open Tuesday – Saturday: 10.00 – 17.00, Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays: 12.00 - 17.00. Admission to the permanent collections and to temporary exhibitions is FREE. **Website:** www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk

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