

## **Opportunity: Older Artist Commission**

*Can you connect art, ageing and place?*

*What does being an older artist in today's society mean to you?*

The Whitworth is looking for an older (50+) artist from any discipline to help us to rethink the position of older artists in our society and shape our organizational approach to working with older emerging artists.

### **Older Artist Project:**

After the successes of our work with older audiences, especially through partnerships with Age Friendly Manchester and MICRA (University of Manchester), we were keen to explore how we could not only support older people as participants but also how we can champion the work of older artists.

Over the last 18 months, with support from The Baring Foundation, we have carried out an in-depth phase of research, which explored how we can test and create a dynamic model for working with older artists that will reach out nationally and aspires to connect with age friendly cities worldwide.

While the visual arts has placed a long-held emphasis on 'the new', it has also traditionally embraced older artists, most overtly through the practice of the retrospective. As an alternative to this we would like an emphasis on new work produced by older artists and emergent practice. Instead of acknowledging primary value in the work made by older artists in the past, we wish to draw attention to the possibilities of creative action that continue throughout a person's life, artists do not retire but rather continue to work, with positive consequences not only for their own wellbeing, but as a model of the productive contribution of older people to our society.

The intention is to initiate an organisational shift in thinking, that draws on the creative and intellectual potential input of our older population, both in terms of practicing creatives but also our audiences, volunteers and staff.

### **What we want you to do:**

Deliver a performance, workshop or intervention in the gallery during an event that will explore the above themes and launch the research publication. This activity will give live context to the research publication and its findings and sit alongside a panel discussion of several artists involved in those conversations. We welcome interest from artists working in any discipline and in any format, though the idea must be able to be realised within the context of a one off event.

**Who you are:**

The commission is open to artists working in any visual art form and are;

- Aged 50 or over
- At an early stage of your career as an artist, including those with some professional experience, and those at an earlier stage in their practice who are working towards a new career
- Able to engage with and work collaboratively with people from all backgrounds.
- Available to be part of the event on 12<sup>th</sup> December

**To apply, please send us the following information:**

- Your name and full contact details (including an email address) plus your age / DOB
- 2/3 examples of your work or links to access them online (images should be provided in JPG format presented within a document no larger than 2MB).
- A short outline (no more than 500 words) of why you would like to be considered, what you hope to get from the experience and what you will contribute to the project.

We are committed to building a culturally diverse institution where everyone can flourish and feel valued by their contribution and individuality.

**Please send your proposal to:** [ed.watts@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:ed.watts@manchester.ac.uk)

**Timescale:**

07/10/19 – Proposal Deadline

14/10/19 – Interviews

12/12/19 – Thursday Late event presentation of project

**Fee:**

The fee for the work is £2,000 inclusive of all time and materials.  
There is an additional budget for the Event on the 12<sup>th</sup> December.