Salisbury Cathedral Visual Arts Policy

2021-2026

**Introduction and context**

1 Visual art is one of the great civilizing achievements of humankind. It can speak to us of the transcendent and of eternal truths, as well as challenging our perceptions of ourselves. In its creation and presentation, art elicits wonder. It challenges, probes and inspires. It opens us to hidden meaning and to deep purpose. Art can speak when words fail.

2 The Christian tradition has had a sometimes ambivalent relationship with visual art. It has always, however, nurtured a sense that art, through its celebration of the creative act, witnesses to the creativity and energy that have their source in God; and a conviction that art, through its delight in form, beauty and colour, honours the material world and is therefore vital to a religion of the Incarnation, with its claim that the Word of God was made flesh in Jesus Christ.

3 Churches have employed the visual arts for centuries, to celebrate their faith and communicate its truth and beauty, but also to offer a critique of that faith. They have found that art has the power to do these things by attracting and engaging people who are outside the formal structures of believing or belonging.

4 It is this potency that has led Salisbury Cathedral to embrace the visual arts as a central part of its life, both in its worship and in its desire to engage a wide and diverse visitor base.

5 We are continually looking for ways to enliven the experience on offer and to extend the range of people who come to us as tourists, members of the local community, and worshippers. Our existing ‘audiences’ have historically principally been those aged over 55, international visitors of a similar demographic, and students aged 11-18. In keeping with our accessibility policies, we seek to broaden our appeal, to engage families, and those living locally who do not come into the Cathedral. We place particular emphasis on reaching under-represented audiences: notably, those aged 11-26, people with disabilities (including those with impaired sight or hearing), people from black and Global Majority Heritage backgrounds, people on low incomes and those identifying as LGBT+. In our current strategy we place a particular emphasis on young people.

6 The Cathedral has had a strong visual arts programme for the past 15 years and gained a pre-eminent reputation as a venue of high-quality art exhibitions. The Cathedral has an excellent working relationship with cultural partners in the city, including Wiltshire Creative, Salisbury Museum and Sarum College, and is a leading member of Salisbury’s Cultural Partnership. We aim to strengthen both regional and national partnerships in order to maximise the potential of future exhibitions.

**Vision**

7 Our vision is for Salisbury Cathedral to continue to be a significant venue for high quality exhibitions of visual art as a means of articulating our core quality of Creativity and its relationship to the other two qualities of Liberty and Eternity. We wish the art we show to be consonant with the strategic objectives the Cathedral has in place at the time of exhibition.

**Aims**

8 Our aims are to present art which

1. seeks to present the Gospel afresh to all who encounter the Cathedral
2. engages, sometimes challenges, but always invites us to explore our shared humanity and fullness of life
3. brings more visitors – and returning visitors – to the Cathedral and Close
4. creates possibilities for a wide range of people to engage with art, working to ensure that opportunities are inclusive and relevant
5. provides opportunities for stimulating educational and participatory activities for schools, families, adult groups and individuals
6. represents the work of artists of national and international significance, local artists and emerging talents, and artists from diverse backgrounds and experiences
7. enables partnership with local and regional bodies in providing visual art within the City and Diocese of Salisbury
8. helps maintain and increase the profile of the Cathedral, through generating opportunities for positive and broad media coverage
9. supports the Cathedral’s Development Department’s work of attracting grants and sponsorship by providing opportunities for supporter cultivation and engagement

**The Arts Programme**

9 To fulfil these aims the **Chapter** will

1. agree parameters or themes for the planning and curation of the art programme, according to its overall Cathedral strategy
2. agree an annual budget for the programme
3. consider any recommendations for exhibitions made by the Arts Advisory Panel
4. enable the Visual Arts Curator, once proposals have been approved and budget agreed, to develop and deliver the programme in collaboration with other departments of the Cathedral

10The **Arts Advisory Panel** will

1. act as an advisory body to the Chapter on the arts programme and matters pertaining to art in the Cathedral, with Chapter acting as the final arbiter where necessary
2. adhere to this policy by recommending to Chapter a balanced and varied programme, in line with the themes set out by Chapter, for up to the five years ahead, which will aim to host a potential of at least one visual arts exhibition or installation each year
3. provide regular reports to the Cathedral Executive Group and an annual report to the Chapter
4. support the Visual Arts Curator in developing proposals for exhibitions which further the vision and aims of this policy
5. assist the Visual Arts Curator in developing public events in support of exhibitions, and public interaction with the artists
6. in conjunction with the Visual Arts Curator, recommend to the Chapter any commission of art works, funds permitting, either as permanent works inside or outside the Cathedral, or as part of festivals or other projects
7. in conjunction with the Visual Arts Curator, alert Chapter to any significant conservation requirements of the permanent art collection

**Membership of the Panel**

The Arts Advisory Panel will consist of:

* a member of Chapter, usually the Canon Treasurer
* the Director of External Relations and Visitor Experience
* the Visual Arts Curator
* the Head of Operations and Events
* Up to 6 members, appointed by Chapter via the Nominations and Development Committee for a period of four years (renewable once) with particular skills sought in the areas of theology and art; the management, marketing and funding of art installations; and contemporary art and artists.

**Meeting Frequency**

* The Arts Advisory Panel will meet at least termly

**Selection for visual art exhibitions**

11 Exhibitionproposals will be assessed by the Panel and Visual Arts Curator, based on the general and particular criteria below.

12 For all its programming, the Cathedral applies these general criteria to any proposal

1. Is it of a scale appropriate to the Cathedral?
2. Is it something we are best place to deliver in this locality?
3. Is it sufficiently excellent?
4. Does it contribute to the sustainability of our environment?
5. Is it organisationally sustainable?
6. Is it timely?

13 In addition, all the following criteria must be met to some degree: the work must

1. have a dimension which explores aspects of Christianity, and/or promotes understanding of other religious faiths; and/or engages people with aspects of the human condition
2. sympathise with the scales of the spaces of the Cathedral and its Close, and with its core functions of worship and prayer
3. enable conversation, and advance at least one of the Cathedral’s core values and priorities
4. be of a stature and quality likely to attract significant visitor numbers and associated publicity, and especially draw in visitors who might not otherwise come to the Cathedral

14 In the event that proposals are rejected, artists will be contacted by the Visual Arts Curator or Canon Treasurer.

**Exhibition delivery**

15 Following an in-principle agreement by the Chapter for each exhibition, the Visual Arts Curator will have the overall responsibility for the project management of the exhibition, working in collaboration with other departments in the Cathedral and with artists in situ. These responsibilities will include agreeing dates, arrangements for installation and removal, programming of allied events and activities, supporting marketing, PR and development activities, and regular reports to the Executive and Arts Advisory Panel.

16 The **Cathedral** will provide

1. a loan agreement stating terms of the exhibition
2. public liability insurance to a value of £10 million
3. in situ insurance for the duration of the exhibition
4. all interpretation material and signage to support the exhibition
5. all press and publicity, including photography
6. hospitality, often in the form of a private view, if appropriate to the scale of the exhibition
7. retail opportunities where appropriate to the scale of the exhibition and as agreed with the Retail Manager
8. appropriate lighting within reason and capabilities
9. in line with best practice guidance provided by A-N Artists Network and Artists Union of England, the Cathedral will ensure fair renumeration for artists. For exhibition the Cathedral will offer an exhibition fee of £500 for a pre-existing artwork, a £1500 fee for a solo artist exhibition and commission fees scaled to the size of the project. These will be reviewed as and when the aforementioned guidance is updated.

17 The **artist** will be required to

1. contribute to or support the production of interpretative material, including involvement with supporting educational events, where appropriate
2. supply appropriate Health and Safety assessments and method statements, taking appropriate steps to address any issues identified.
3. be responsible for in-transit insurance, security and transport costs for artworks.

**Selling artworks**

18 Salisbury Cathedral does not normally host ‘selling exhibitions’ as might take place in a commercial gallery, and no prices will be displayed. Work which is for sale after the exhibition may be exhibited as ‘price available on request’; and enquiries will be directed to artist or gallery. In such a case a percentage commission will normally be agreed between artist and Cathedral prior to exhibition of any sales up to six months thereafter.

Revised Arts Advisory Panel

5th September 2024

Approved by Chapter

25th October 2024