

## Handpicked: Painting Flowers

from 1900 to Today

25 April – 6 September 2026

Press View: 24 April 2026,

10.45am – 1pm



Jennifer Packer, *Chrysanthemums*, 2015, oil on canvas. 12x9 inches (30.4x22.8cm). © Jennifer Packer. Photograph © The Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge.

Kettle's Yard is delighted to present 'Handpicked: Painting Flowers from 1900 to Today', a major exhibition celebrating the vitality and resonance of flower paintings over the past 125 years. Running from 25 April – 6 September 2026, the exhibition will reflect artists' enduring interest in one of art history's most cherished genres, featuring works by over 40 artists including Henri Rousseau, David Bomberg, Tirzah Garwood, Louise Bourgeois, Chris Ofili, Doron Langberg and Jennifer Packer.

When Jim and Helen Ede opened Kettle's Yard to visitors in 1957, the modest but beautiful arrangements of fresh cut flowers were key to one's experience of visiting the house. Flowers created visual correspondences with surrounding artworks, notably Winifred Nicholson's *Cyclamen and Primula* (c. 1923) and Christopher Wood's *Flowers* (1930), which remain on permanent display. Inspired by these two much-loved works, the exhibition will reveal the myriad ways in which paintings of flowers can suggest personal and symbolic meaning and reflect sociohistorical changes, as well as being both stylistically innovative and compelling.

'Handpicked' will exhibit works from 1900 to the 1960s in the first gallery space, and from the 1970s onwards in the second, finishing with works that exemplify the diversity of painting today. It will

open with Henri Rousseau's colourful *Bouquet of Flowers* (1909-10), created towards the end of the artist's life and revered by Picasso and the Surrealists for its unconventional style and dreamlike vision.

Like Rousseau, other 20th-century artists depicted flowers in their own distinct ways, sometimes using the subject as an opportunity to experiment, as seen in Vanessa Bell's Cubist-inspired *Still life of Dahlias, Chrysanthemums and Begonias* (1912), and Anne Redpath's response to Abstract Expressionism in *White Cyclamen* (1962). This part of the exhibition will also explore works inspired by botanical art, as in Charles Rennie Mackintosh's iconic *Fritillaria* (1915) or Rory McEwen's luminous painting, *Tulip 'Helen Josephine'* (1975).

In the second gallery, works made in more recent decades will reveal an exhilarating variety of approaches to paintings in which flowers are the central subject, from Euan Uglow's depiction of a single stem in *Narcissus on Yellow Background* (1978) to Jai Chuhan's *Flowers* (2008) painted from life in a single session. Here, paintings by Caroline Walker, Andrew Cranston and Aubrey Levinthal will evoke particular places and our emotional relationships with flowers, capturing both blazing and subtle colours and embodying the temporality of life. A number of artists will also

### For further information and images

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create new works for this part of the exhibition, including Cassi Namoda, Kaye Donachie and Lubaina Himid.

'Handpicked' is curated by Kettle's Yard Director Andrew Nairne with Assistant Curators Naomi Polonsky, Gabrielle Brasier and Curatorial Assistant Megan Breckell, in discussion with members of the Kettle's Yard community panel. It will be accompanied by an illustrated publication with an essay by Olivia Meehan, the author of *Slow Looking: The Art of Nature* (Thames & Hudson, 2025), as well as a lively public programme of audio tours, talks and workshops for all ages.

The full list of contributing artists includes: Hurvin Anderson, Vanessa Bell, David Bomberg, Louise Bourgeois, Andrew Cranston, Kaye Donachie, Gigi Ettedgui, Anna Freeman Bentley, Jai Chuhan, Marjory Garnett, Tirzah Garwood, Gluck, Lubaina Himid, Howard Hodgkin, Isak of Igdlorpaït, Poppy Jones, Nerys Johnson, David Jones, Joy Labinjo, Doron Langberg, Aubrey Levinthal, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Rory McEwen, Cedric Morris, Cassi Namoda, William Nicholson, Winifred Nicholson, Chris Ofili, Euan Uglow, Jennifer Packer, Celia Paul, Bryan Pearce, Emma Prempeh, Bianca Raffaella, Eric Ravilious, Anne Redpath, Henri Rousseau, William Scott, Judith Tucker, Charlotte Verity, Edouard Vuillard, Caroline Walker, Alison Watt, Christopher Wood, and Clare Woods.

### Notes to Editors

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### About Kettle's Yard

Kettle's Yard, part of the University of Cambridge, is a leading gallery and unique house with a remarkable collection of 20th-century art. Its founders Jim and Helen Ede believed in art's ability to transform lives, a vision upheld today through critically acclaimed exhibitions, pioneering community and learning programmes, and research of the highest quality. Our aim is to offer an inspiring and enriching experience for everyone who visits. Find out more and get involved at: [www.kettlesyard.cam.ac.uk](http://www.kettlesyard.cam.ac.uk)



Christopher Wood (1901 – 1930), *The White Vase*, 1930, oil on canvas on board, 460 mm x 380 mm. Courtesy Pallant House Gallery, Chichester (Bequeathed by Ian Mylles with Art Fund support 2021). Photo: © Pallant House Gallery, Chichester.



Charles Rennie Mackintosh, *Fritillaria*, 1915, watercolour and pencil on paper, 25.3 x 20.2cm. © The Hunterian, University of Glasgow.

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