#### **DBA Design Effectiveness Awards 2022**

Client: Karen Livingstone, The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge Design: Holmes Studio For Publication

# HOCKNEY'S EYE



The Fitzwilliam Museum

# Executive Summary

#### Overview

Hockney's Eye: The Art and Technology of Depiction was a temporary flagship exhibition located across two sites in Cambridge – The Fitzwilliam Museum and The Heong Gallery, Downing College. It ran from 15th March to 29th August 2022.

Holmes Studio's work as designers of this exhibition forms this submission.

The design scope included all outputs and touchpoints for the exhibition:

- Exhibition design: 3D design, interactive interventions throughout the exhibition, interpretation and all 2D graphics within the exhibition
- Marketing: all print, social media, digital and moving image design for the international campaign
- Wayfinding and placemaking: multiple sites and diverse galleries, to ensure a good user experience and flow at all moments on the visitor journey

Figure 1. Hockney's Eye, The Fitzwilliam Museum, August 2022.



#### Achievements

Over 70% of visitors rated wayfinding good or very good

#### More than 50 major pieces of media coverage

in local, national and international print, TV and radio

#### +195% more memberships

in the run of the free-to-visit exhibition

+29% more digital traffic to the museum's website

#### +168% more visitors to the exhibition

than their previous most successful exhibition

#### Feedback

Went to see The Hockney Exhibition. As an art lover, it was one of the greatest exhibitions I have ever seen. Absolutely superb and deserves to win every award going! Really imaginative and beautiful, a great juxtaposition of old and new, highlighting the extraordinary collection of the museum and the genius of Hockney brilliantly. A great use of digital technology as well. Bravo!

Visitor feedback from the Audience Agency Report

'I was worried about how the show would look, and whether either DH or the 'old masters' would take umbrage. In the event, and thanks to your subtly bold designs, it all works amazingly well. As a veteran of working with fine designers, including the late and legendary Guy Ravenel in the Nat Gall Washington, I greatly appreciate the attention given to edges, joins, curves and the quality of the finishes, Even for those who do not actively notice such things, they really count. Well done to all your team.' A message of thanks from Professor Martin Kemp, a curator of Hockney's Eye



The Fitzwilliam Museum CAMBRIDGE

#### **Business Context**

#### The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

The Fitzwilliam Museum is widely considered to hold the world's outstanding university art collection. As the lead partner of the spectacular collections of the University of Cambridge Museums (UCM) and Botanic Garden, it cares for works of art and material culture from Europe, Egypt and Asia of exceptional international importance, works that connect people across cultures and time.

Founded in 1816 'for the increase of learning', the Fitzwilliam has long been both a great public cultural asset and an extraordinary scholarly resource – local, regional, national and global. From antiquity to the present day, the Fitzwilliam houses a world-renowned collection of over half a million beautiful works of art, masterpiece paintings and historical artefacts. The museum is free to all to visit.

The Fitzwilliam Museum's mission defines its aims as

- 1. To touch people's lives by engaging powerfully, thoughtfully and pleasurably with as wide a public as possible
- 2. To produce and promote innovative, relevant, and interdisciplinary research of the highest quality around our collection

#### The museum's voice

The Fitzwilliam Museum is embedded in one of the world's leading universities, research – its facilitation, dissemination and broader, societal impact – is paramount, underpinning all aspects of major activity.

#### The Exhibition

#### A temporary flagship exhibition

Hockney's Eye: The Art and Technology of Depiction was a temporary, cross-site, special exhibition held at The Fitzwilliam Museum and the Heong Gallery, Downing College in Cambridge. It ran from 15th March to 29th August 2022.

#### Hockney's Eye: The Art and Technology of Depiction

The exhibition was the first to explore the many ways of seeing and depicting in the art of David Hockney giving an account of pictures and picture-making seen through his eyes. Hockney is the most intellectually restless of the great contemporary artists. Over a long career, he has continuously explored how the surface of a flat picture can convey what we actually see, radically questioning traditional ways of depicting space, and engaging deeply with modern technologies.

#### Seeing things in perspective

Within the Fitzwilliam Museum, the exhibition was not presented in the traditional spaces for temporary exhibitions – instead, it was a takeover of the second floor of the museum. Hockney's works were juxtaposed with the permanent collections (of the great Masters) on this level – presenting a different approach.

The three curators of the show, Martin Gayford, Martin Kemp and Jane Munro created a dialogue between David Hockney and the great Masters.

#### **Key Challenges and Market Obstacles**

#### A journey of discovery

A particular challenge for this project was to ensure the narrative route through the galleries was joined up and legible. Visitors needed to follow the curatorial story through multiple galleries which varied in style, character, size and content. In some cases Hockney's works were placed in direct comparison with the permanent collection, in others the juxtaposition threw light on both Hockney's works and their counterparts.

#### An unexpected route

In addition to the challenge outlined above, the exhibition was located on the second floor of the Fitzwilliam Museum spanning two separate external sites. The 'Camera Obscura', an immersive experience, was placed on the lawn outside the Fitzwilliam building. The exhibition continued at The Heong Gallery at Downing College, a short walk away. Our design had to address the museum's concern that visitors would not find the show within The Fitzwilliam building, and that they could also potentially miss crucial parts of the story.

#### A transforming museum

With this exhibition the museum announced its ambition as an institution, positioning itself as a world class cultural destination to compete with the Tate or MoMA. As designers, we needed to express the museum's values through the exhibition – inclusive, thoughtful, distinctive, welcoming, rigorous, challenging, unexpected, uplifting and entertaining.

#### The changing role of the museum visitor

In addition to the aims of the museum, the exhibition needed to address the changing nature of audiences. Visitors, especially to exhibitions, are no longer considered or consider themselves as passive recipients of images and ideas. Instead they must be valued as engaged participants whose varied expectations, individual expertise and enthusiasms are fundamental elements to projects.

# Hockney's Eye: Outline of the Project Brief

## The Fitzwilliam Museum's Goals

- To ensure the cross-site spaces are successfully signposted and connected in a way that is accessible to all visitors. The visitor must be able to successfully negotiate Hockney works and the permanent collection while moving through galleries different in style, character, size and content. **(Goal 1)**
- To touch people's lives by engaging powerfully, thoughtfully and pleasurably with as wide a public as possible. **(Goal 2)**
- To provide an exhibition that is interactive and immersive to ensure the objects and research presented are engaging and involving. (Goal 3)

## **Business Challenges**

- Announce the Fitzwilliam Museum's ambition as a world class cultural destination.
- Bring in new audiences to the museum while retaining existing audiences.
- Accessible storytelling for all to disseminate research and the layered curatorial narratives.
- Navigation and orientation within the museum and to the Heong Gallery at Downing College.
- Create an engaging, interactive and immersive exhibition through a practical and sensitive solution.

# Scope of work

Holmes Studio designed every touchpoint of this cross-site exhibition, both at the Fitzwilliam Museum and the Heong Gallery, Downing College, Cambridge. Hockney's Eye: The Art and Technology of Depiction was a takeover of the whole of the Fitzwilliam Museum and Heong Gallery. Our scope included all outputs for the exhibition from the exhibition design – 3D design, interpretation, mapping and all 2D graphics – to all print, social media, digital and moving image for the exhibition and the international marketing campaign to promote it. A key consideration within our scope was to design a cross-site and diverse gallery user experience, enabling visitors to have a fantastic journey through this incredible exhibition.

In collaboration with David Hockney and his team, every element of our design was sent to him in Normandy for his approval. The following pages outline our design and impact in more detail referencing the goals of The Fitzwilliam Museum.

'I loved #HockneysEye well done everyone @ FitzMuseum\_UK it's a triumph. So refreshing to be surrounded by cheerful people enjoying artworks in a new light. And the bright pops of colour made my baby giggle all the way round.' *Twitter* 

### Up-front strategic thinking

How might we create a spatial strategy that puts people and experience at the heart of our design story?

How might we design a practical and sensitive solution?

How might we give everyone a way into this content and layered curatorial storytelling?

How might we bring the The Fitzwilliam Museum's values in our visual and physical design language?

#### Key facts

#### Launch date

A temporary exhibition that ran between from the 15th March 2022 to the 29th August 2022

#### Design fees

REDACTED CONFIDENTIAL DATA

'I recently visited the museum with a friend and really enjoyed it. I then took my 7 year old granddaughter. She loved it so much, it has inspired she and I to try to paint. I have never painted before and my granddaughter is so pleased with her result that I jokingly said that we should send a picture to David Hockney to show him her result. She was rather excited at the thought of this.'

Visitor comment card



#### **Our Design and Impact**

Our design was bold and brave - inspired by Hockney's works, we developed a palette of greens that was incorporated into every touchpoint of the design scope. Our green had to be powerful enough to stand with Hockney's work while not competing with the beauty and unique style of the galleries. Our design strategy used our greens in multiple touchpoints, e.g. 3D backdrops and interpretation within the galleries, to enable visitors to identify which works in the gallery were David Hockney's. Designing this common visual thread throughout the experience made the curatorial dialogue accessible to all ages - especially to younger audiences, (potentially with no knowledge of Hockney's work), with 1 in 10 visitors being under 16. Our design enabled all to identify and distinguish the Hockneys and the permanent collections of The Fitzwilliam - introducing new audiences to the museum – with 1 in 3 visitors describing themselves as first timers. These design decisions made the exhibition accessible and enjoyable for all, regardless of previous experience of Hockney's work, The Fitzwilliam and the science of perspective.

Crucially audiences powerfully engaged with this exhibition. The experience of joy had by visitors is shown in almost 200% more memberships acquired for the museum during the exhibition. A meaningful legacy and business result for the museum in a cultural context where financial engagement from visitors is key to safeguarding the future of our cultural institutions. The rise in memberships and subsequent 373% rise in donations from the public during the course of this exhibition demonstrates the impact of this designed experience on visitors – they had felt it added value to their lives and they were inspired to give back to the museum. We touched people's lives by engaging powerfully, thoughtfully and pleasurably with as wide a public as possible. **(Goal 2).** 

Further enabling visitors was our visitor flow strategy, using green to identify thresholds to the exhibition and signpost visitors upstairs to the second floor where the exhibition

began. Visitors knew where to go and where to look, further supported by our mapping in the *Hockney Handout*. Visitors found moving around the exhibition easy. They were empowered to sit back and experience the joy of this exhibition as we successfully signposted cross-site spaces **(Goal 1)**.

This was a different kind of display and narrative from the usual Hockney exhibition. The main challenge was to make the works "take over" rather than be displayed in the traditional exhibition spaces. Our approach in designing the marketing collateral, for example the exhibition poster, took a bold new approach to a David Hockney exhibition. Our design placed his portrait within a perspective composition. It let people know this was a fresh and different type of David Hockney show.

The greens were incorporated into every touchpoint of the design, including placemaking, backdrops, hoardings, interactive interventions such as the Perspective Window, mapping and wayfinding, interpretation, marketing and moving image incorporating the exhibition trailer and social media. (Figure 3,4,5). The design of the exhibition created a buzz, people wanted to dwell amongst the greens and experience the interactive elements, especially younger and new audiences who had never been to The Fitzwilliam before. The design of the exhibition helped change the perception of who this museum is for, it's for everyone. There was an overwhelmingly positive reception on social media and in the press. The public's response to our design demonstrated this was a successful exhibition that was interactive and immersive to ensure the objects and research presented were engaging and involving, (Goal 3).

#### 'Please pass on my thanks to the design team, who went above and beyond with the design of the exhibition.'

A message of thanks from David Hockney











Hockney's Eye: Concept and Design Development Sketches by Holmes Studio. March 2022.

# Hockney's Eye. Impact – Disseminating research through accessible storytelling for all (Goal 1)

#### The Fitzwilliam Museum's Goal

• To ensure the interior and exterior spaces are successfully signposted and connected in a way that is accessible to all visitors. e.g. A voyage of discovery, the ability for the visitor to be able to successfully negotiate the Hockney works and permanent collection while moving through galleries different in style, character, size and content. (Goal 1)

#### **Business Challenges**

- Accessible storytelling for all to disseminate research and the layered curatorial narratives.
- Navigation and orientation within the museum and the Heong Gallery at Downing College.

#### **Key Metrics**

1 in 10 visitors were under 16 Over 70% rated wayfinding as good or very good 100,000 Hockney Handouts were printed and enjoyed The most popular exhibition to date at The Heong Gallery With 23,882 visitors

#### Placemaking content to guide visitors

Our palette of greens, (inspired by one of David Hockney's jumpers) as bold backdrops to the paintings was crucial in ensuring the curatorial narrative, of Hockney's works juxtaposed with the permanent collection, (Goal 1) (Figure 3&5). The accessible storytelling of our design is further evidenced by our typographic takeover of the stairs (Figure 4), which drew visitors up to the second floor to the exhibition. This addressed a key challenge – the concern that visitors would not find the exhibition. The interactive Camera Obscura was positioned on the outside lawn so that visitors would have a clear view of it from the upstairs gallery, directing them to the next part of the experience. User flow was integral to our overall spatial strategy. 70% of visitors rated wayfinding for the exhibition 'good' or 'very good'.

#### 'Green marks a path through the galleries. Wherever you see a bright burst, on panel or wall, there you will find a Hockney.'

Review from The Observer by Laura Cumming, 20th March 2022

# Disseminating research through immersive experience to bring objects to life

Throughout the exhibition we designed interactive elements to enliven the content. In each gallery there was a dialogue with science and art through paintings and objects. Our interpretation and spatial design created a harmony between these stories. This was evidenced by our design of the 'Disco Tunnel' **(Figure 5)**, a key feature of many selfies. We designed the 'Disco Tunnel' to create the experience of walking through perspective, using five shades of green to enhance the transition between galleries and physically immerse the visitor in the science and art. Once through the tunnel visitors arrived at the 'Perspective Window' which directed their eye to the linear perspective of the gallery, inviting visitors to live the science of perspective for themselves. **(Figure 5)** 

#### Storytelling for all ages and user types

Our creation of a Hockney's Eye visual language, through colour, type and spatial design was crucial to providing accessible content for everyone regardless of age, education or expertise. The consideration of 2D elements – typographic choice, kerning, leading, hang height, density, contrast and viewing distances – ensured users on the spectrum of neurodiversity could engage meaningfully with all the content.

# 'I really liked the exhibition design overall – very legible throughout.'

Visitor feedback from the Audience Agency Report

#### Empowering the visitor with The Hockney Handout

Responding to the wayfinding challenges **(Goal 1)**, we designed the Hockney Handout, using mapping to guide and aid the curatorial story – the duality of scientific concepts and the history of art. It was so popular that it was reprinted during the exhibition and proved crucial in empowering visitors on their cross-site journey. The Heong Gallery received unprecedented visitor numbers and gallerists reported many visitors arriving to the show clutching their Hockney Handout.







Hockney's Eye: 'Disco Tunnel'. Experience walking through perspective within the galleries. Photo credit: Holmes Studio

#### The Fitzwilliam Museum's Goals

- To touch people's lives by engaging powerfully, thoughtfully and pleasurably with as wide a public as possible. **(Goal 2)**
- To provide an exhibition that is interactive and immersive to ensure the objects and research presented are engaging and involving. (Goal 3)

#### **Business Challenge**

• Create an engaging, interactive and immersive exhibition through a practical and sensitive solution.

#### **Key Metrics**

#### 80K+ video views

1.7m+ people reached on social media
8,000+ new Instagram followers
+29% more digital traffic to the museum's website
+ 373% more revenue
raised in donations in the run of the free-to-visit exhibition
+105% mere membershipe

#### +195% more memberships

in the run of the free-to-visit exhibition compared to the whole of last year

#### Design to invoke joy and pleasure

Inspired by Hockney, the palette of greens became one of the definitive visual characteristics of the show. It not only ensured that the curatorial story was accessible and signposted but also was a key feature in the press. Our Hockney green was picked up by the press coverage and created a buzz around the show, social media and twitter were flooded with our Hockney green. This created not only an 'instagrammable' experience which reached greater audiences than any previous exhibition, but also a place people wanted to be and spend time. Visitors felt joy being in this space, citing the bright greens and designed experience as appealing to them as individuals and across generations. The visitor feedback also acknowledges our design approach as a bold and distinguishing design decision that has not been seen in David Hockney shows before. (Goal 2&3) (Figure 3&5)

#### 'Mum used to come as a child and we brought her back at the age of 80. She loved everything about our visit. Thank you.'

Visitor feedback from the Audience Agency Report

#### **Powerful Engagement**

The interactive interventions we introduced, such as the Perspective Window brought the content to life across the multi-site gallery spaces. They created experiences and moments that allowed visitors to enter into, and explore, Hockney's ongoing dialogue between science and art. The scale of engagement with the Fitzwilliam in new ways and with new audiences was unprecedented, **(Goal 2) (Figure 5)**. The number of new members acquired

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during the run of the exhibition was almost double that of new member numbers for the whole of 2019. These unprecedented figures were driven by public demand to see Hockney's Eye, evidenced by the Fitzwilliam Museum running a 'Friends' priority booking period for Hockney's Eye offering exclusive morning viewings to encourage people to become Friends and support the Museum.' The rise in memberships and subsequent 373% rise in donations from the public during the course of this exhibition demonstrates the impact of this designed experience on visitors – they had felt it added value to their lives and they were inspired to give back to the museum.

'Thought the Hockney exhibition was excellent. I would also add that I saw evidence, from the bright colours, how the museum could appeal more to younger people, esp children. Neither my own children or my many grandchildren would ever go to the Fitz as it is too stuffy. We don't want to turn it into the Science museum which is full of hands on gimmicks, but we do need to make it more attractive to the next generations.'

Audience Agency post-visit survey

#### 'So well put together and loved the interactive elements. Made me relook at the artworks I was used to visiting in relationship to the new pieces. Loved this.'

Visitor feedback from the Audience Agency Report





Hockney's Eye: Gallery views in The Fitzwilliam Museum, August 2022. Photo credit: Holmes Studio.

# Hockney's Eye: Collective impact – a major exhibition and legacy for The Fitzwilliam Museum

#### A collaborative achievement

Together with the amazing teams at The Fitzwilliam Museum Hockney's Eye: The Art and Technology of Depiction was a major exhibition and received much critical acclaim, being voted 'One of the best 50 shows of 2022' by the Times. This collaboration between us and our wonderful client Karen Livingstone, the Fitzwilliam's Marketing and Communications team, the curators and with David Hockney and the David Hockney Foundation made this ambitious and bold design concept come to life.

The unprecedented visitor numbers and 373% increase in donations exemplify the visitors emotional connection to place, content and storytelling, that was integral to every design decision we made. Our collaboration ensured our shared vision for this exhibition was realised and that the design did justice to the incredible curation and research at the heart of the exhibition. Crucially it also elevated the content to be accessible to all. Almost 1/3 of all visitors were new audiences and 28% of visitors to Hockney's Eye had never been to the Fitzwilliam before, addressing a key business challenge set out in the brief.

#### **Key Metrics**

#### + 168% more visitors

than their previous most successful exhibition **28% first time** visitors to the museum

#### More than 50 major pieces of media coverage

in local, national and international print, TV and radio

#### + 373% more revenue

raised in donations in the run of the free-to-visit exhibition +195% more memberships

in the run of the free-to-visit exhibition compared to the whole of last year

#### **Critical acclaim**

\*\*\*\*\* "This exhibition leaves you in awe of Hockney" – The Guardian

\*\*\*\* "Art history and scientific discovery encounter one another on equal terms" – The Times

\*\*\* "Hockney will be 85 in July and this feels like an early celebration, a party to which all ages are welcome"The Observer

\*\*\*\* "A blooming good show" — The Telegraph

#### National and international press coverage

The launch of the exhibition was front page news across four major national newspapers – *The Guardian, The Times,* 

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*The Daily Telegraph* and *The i.* The exhibition was also the subject of a special *Sunday Times Culture* Edition and featured in other Sunday supplements. **(Figure 3)**. The press coverage references the unique design of the exhibition, citing the use of our Hockney green and 3D backdrops as exciting and defining characteristics which set the show apart. Crucially these design decisions were shown to have enabled the curatorial dialogue – of Hockney's paintings interplaying with the permanent collection – to take centre stage.

#### 'Hockney is truly "tak[ing] over Cambridge" (pamphlet), transforming both The Fitzwilliam Museum and The Heong Gallery into his own vivid green, multimedia, iconoclastic trail.'

Review by Anna Piper Thompson for Varsity, 10th April 2022

**'The colour blocking of the Hockney exhibition worked extremely effectively. A fantastic experience.'** Visitor feedback from the Audience Agency Report

'The Hockney exhibition was one of the best I've ever seen, and the Fitz has set the bar very high. I was blown away by the curation and presentation – the way Hockney was linked in such imaginative ways to so many other things in the collection. Brilliant. We loved it and will revisit often.'

Visitor feedback from the Audience Agency Report

Figure 6. Duke and Duchess of Cambridge visit The Fitzwilliam Museum. Girton College's instagram account. June 2022.



#### **External Association**

#### The Icon David Hockney

As one of the most influential artists of our time, David Hockney has a positive influence on the success of any exhibition he is in. The exhibition was an incredible journey into the work and mind of one of our greatest living artists and we were humbled to have received a compliment on our design from his Foundation:-

#### 'We've heard nothing but wonderful feedback about your exceptional design for "Hockney's Eye." We are so delighted with how the show turned out.' Shannan Kelly, David Hockney Foundation

#### **Designing a distinctive 'Hockney Green' Show**

We wanted to create a visually arresting and instagrammable' experience which would create a buzz around the exhibition. Our design, using our palette of greens became one of the definitive visual characteristics of this show both in press coverage and marketing campaigns, setting it apart from previous David Hockney exhibitions. Our design, from the Hockney Handout's mapping to placemaking and signposting throughout the exhibition ensured it was easy to navigate. The bold and distinguishing design decisions were acknowledged by press reviews and visitors, which meant it was picked up by social media and created meaningful and widespread engagement. (Figure 5&6).

#### **Designing to overcome obstacles**

It was design that overcame the major challenges of this brief enabling the show to be such a success for visitors to the Museum. We solved the physical obstacles of an exhibition spread across two sites, starting on the second floor, by wayfinding and placemaking. The mapping produced a



journey through the different galleries creating an immersive experience and an exposure to scientific research. Our very careful choice of the Hockney green was a way of creating a common thread throughout the exhibition which would be bold enough to complement and stand next to the permanent collection.

#### Collaboration

#### The Fitzwilliam Museum

We collaborated with the museum's project, marketing and curatorial teams. Aligning and bringing all stakeholders together to realise and live the brand and values of the exhibition, our communal expertise fed into the overall results enabling the client teams to come together.

#### 'Your commitment to doing the best job is making me and the Fitzwilliam do a better job as a result.'

Karen Livingstone, The Fitzwilliam Museum

#### **Collaboration with Sam Forster Associates, Omni** Colour and DHA Designs

We presented our vision to, and collaborated with, Sam Forster Associates, Omni Colour and DHA Designs to realise the build and lighting design together as a team. From specifying the minute details, they believed in what we were making, bought into the idea and put in 110% to make it a reality.

#### Marcomms

Our Marketing Strategy and Campaign. We were commissioned to design marketing collateral across all advertising outputs for the exhibition, both digital and physical, including posters, banners, digital trailers and imagery for web and social media. We developed a look and feel with the team at the Fitzwilliam that would capture peoples' attention. (Goal 1) (Figure 3)

'As you walk down Trumpington Street towards the Fitzwilliam Museum, banners of Hockney's 2021 self portrait border either side of the road, looking down upon you in all his vibrancy. These culminate in two huge banners on the front of the museum, becoming new pillars.'

Review by Anna Piper Thompson for Varsity, 10th April 2022

#### Data used in this submission

All data used is from two reports provided by the Fitzwilliam Museum, 'Hockney's Eye Impact Stats' and 'Hockney's Eye Audience Report'.

Left: Hockney's Eye exhibition brand and poster design by Holmes Studio.