

THE HARRIS

Winter Guide

HARRIS YOUR PLACE

WINTER 2024



Immerse yourself in creativity and culture with this comprehensive what's on guide, offering an insight into the exhibitions, events, and community initiatives taking place at The Harris during the transformative Harris Your Place project.

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How To Get Involved With The Harris

Whilst we are closed for the Harris Your Place project, there are still plenty of ways to get involved and keep up to date with what's happening behind the scenes.

Follow the links below to find out how you can get involved!

VISIT THE LIBRARY, IT CENTRE & GIFT SHOP

Preston Guild Hall, Monday - Saturday, 9am - 5pm

[Click here](#)

PURCHASE FROM OUR ONLINE SHOP

[Click here](#)

SIGN UP TO THE HARRIS NEWSLETTER

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VISIT THE HARRIS' WEBSITE

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**READ ABOUT HARRIS YOUR PLACE
UPDATES**

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LOOK OUT FOR HARRIS NEWS

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**VISIT THE WHAT'S ON PAGE TO FIND
OUT ABOUT HARRIS EVENTS**

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Harris Museum & Art Gallery



LINKEDIN

Harris Museum, Art Gallery & Library

Harris Your Place



Harris Your Place is a £16 million project set to restore and reimagine The Harris for 21st century audiences as a cultural learning space. This project will protect the building, our collections and the stunning architecture for future generations whilst enhancing accessibility and positioning The Harris as a community hub for Preston and Lancashire.



Harris Your Place is made possible with support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund; Towns Fund; Preston City Council; Lancashire County Council; the Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal; DCMS; Arts Council England, public donations and a wide range of Trusts and Foundations.



Read the latest Harris Your Place updates on our website.



[Click here](#)

Harris Your Place Updates

The Harris Your Place progress continues. A number of individuals and companies are responsible for the renovations currently taking place as part of the Harris Your Place project. We have developed a Q&A series that sees us chat with those responsible about their involvement, and what their role is throughout the renovation project.

Follow the link to read our interview with Ian, the Safety, Health and Environment manager from Conlon Construction, who are currently working on The Harris Your Place Project.



[Click here](#)

Follow the link to read our interview with Nigel, Painter and Decorator on The Harris Your Place Project.



[Click here](#)

Follow the link to read our interview with Nathan, Apprentice Joiner working with Conlon Construction on The Harris Your Place Project.



[Click here](#)

Blended Projection

Colourful high-level projection will play at intervals in the new Special Collections Gallery, which is designed to house the Harris' light-sensitive collections.

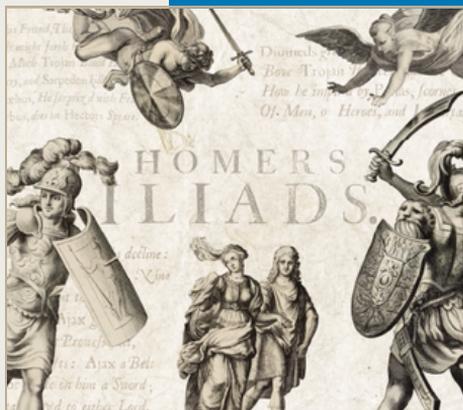
It showcases the types of collections that can be found in the room, from costume to photographs and watercolours to historic books. Watch a bird fly off the page of a book and travel through colourful landscapes and listen to the gentle ambient noise that accompanies the images. We hope that this projection will intrigue visitors to explore The Harris' Special Collections.



Digital Book Screens

The Special Collections Gallery will safely house books from The Shepherd Collection - Preston's founding library collection. We are showcasing two of these beautiful books for reopening - Elizabeth Blackwell's *A Curious Herbal* which contains beautiful illustrations of plants and their medical uses from 1739, and John Ogilby's translated 1660 edition of Homer's *Iliad*.

They will be displayed open in conservation grade showcases, with a touchscreen that allows you to digitally browse through the pages. These images show the attractor screens that are animated and will be displayed on each screen.



Conservation Efforts Underway at The Harris as Collection Prepares for Reopening

We are thrilled to announce a partnership with Lancashire Conservation Studios, who will be undertaking the meticulous treatment of over 90 treasured objects from The Harris' collection. Over the coming months, a variety of artworks, sculptures, fashion pieces, and other key historical objects will undergo expert conservation, cleaning, and repair in preparation for their inclusion in the highly anticipated new displays when we reopen in 2025.

The scope of the conservation work is extensive, ensuring that some of the most iconic pieces from the collection are ready to shine once again. This includes glazing selected paintings to protect them during display and carefully mounting fragile historic textiles on specially crafted mannequins, safeguarding them for future generations.



Among the objects receiving conservation are collection favourites like the beloved marble sculpture *Clytie* by G. F. Watts, which will experience cutting-edge laser cleaning technology to restore its original brilliance.



The conservation efforts will also bring to light several rare pieces that have not been seen by the public for many years, such as an elegant cotton and silk dress dating back to the 1850s, a portrait of Lieutenant Colonel Nicholas Grimshaw, leader of the Royal Preston Volunteers, painted in 1801, and an intricately crafted Victorian mother-of-pearl tea caddy. These pieces, many of which have remained in storage, will be restored to their former glory, ready to be displayed in the new galleries.



Caring for The Harris' collections will continue with the installation of new state-of-the-art conservation-grade shelving in the basement in January 2025. Designed to safely house and preserve collections, this upgrade ensures that generations to come will be able to enjoy the artefacts and stories that make The Harris so special.



This vital conservation work has been made possible with Heritage Lottery Fund and a wide range of local and national funders as part of the Harris Your Place capital project, and through the generosity of The Textile Society's Museum, Archive & Conservation Award 2024, which has funded the restoration of key pieces from The Harris collection.

[Click here](#)

Follow the link to watch the restoration process in action!

Family Library Illustrator

Lucy Mulligan, a Lancashire-based illustrator, has been working on some fantastic images for our family resources as we prepare to reopen The Harris. We put out a 'call out' to find an illustrator, and Lucy's vibrant style quickly stood out, capturing the imagination of children during the selection process. We tested early drafts with families at our May half-term events and made some adjustments based on their valuable feedback. We can't wait for you to see the final results of her work. In the meantime, we've been learning more about Lucy and the inspirations behind her unique style. Follow the link to read Lucy's Q+A.



[Click here](#)

Textile Society Announcement

The Textile Society has announced the recipients for the Museum, Archive and Conservation Award 2024 and we are pleased to have been selected as one of the projects the Textile Society is supporting!

We will receive £1,300 of funding to support the conservation of an 1830s dress, woven in Lancashire from American-imported cotton - featuring a copper plate and wood block printed design inspired by Indian chintz, and the conservation and mounting of a textile by Althea McNish - one of the first designers of African-Caribbean descent to gain international recognition.

Painted Desert, one of her early works, will be displayed in a Rotunda impact case when we reopen, highlighting the diversity of the collection and celebrating McNish as a Black British female designer.

Credit: 1950s printed textile 'Painted Desert' Althea McNish, photographed by Simon Critchley



New Acquisitions

Sunil Gupta

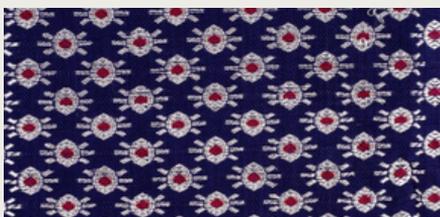
We are delighted to announce the addition of new works by the artist Sunil Gupta to our collection. Among these is the archival pigment print **Shalini, Rudi, Sunil, Léo, and Stanley**, a poignant image taken in a Montreal apartment shared by Gupta with his sister and partner, both of whom feature in the photograph.

Additionally, we are pleased to have acquired the archival pigment print **Sunil and His Parents** (Ram & Penny), generously presented by the Contemporary Art Society through the Collections Fund at Frieze, 2021/22. These two photographs capture the people dearest to Sunil Gupta: his biological family and his 'chosen family' of friends and lovers, formed during the gay liberation movement in Montreal. Together, they form part of a newly curated collection that examines the many dimensions of family life, thoughtfully shaped by your feedback from the Harris Your Place project.



Loom Katha Textiles

We are also pleased to announce the acquisition of two **Loom Katha textiles**, both intricately woven Himroo pieces. One features a dark background with a silver woven pattern, while the other showcases a light background with a pink woven design. These textiles were crafted in India using restored Himroo weaving looms. They were produced by Loom Katha, a weaving collective led by Arushi Chowdhury Khana.



Gavin Renshaw

We are also pleased to announce the acquisition of **Corona** by Gavin Renshaw. In 2019, the Preston-based artist had the opportunity to fly in a light aircraft above the city. Using photographs taken during that flight, Renshaw created a large drawing titled Corona, which offers a bird's-eye view of Preston. The drawing is oriented with the viewer facing north, looking south towards the university campus and city centre, with the River Ribble visible at Walton-le-Dale. This artwork will be displayed on a lightbox in the 'Heart of Preston' exhibition on the ground floor when we reopen. Gavin is currently reproducing the piece for display.



IWM 14-18 NOW Legacy Fund Project Update

We were excited to welcome commissioned artist Khaled Hafez to Preston for two visits as he prepares for a major new artwork that will feature on The Harris' grand staircase. This commission is supported by the **IWM 14-18 NOW Legacy Fund**, a national partnership programme of over 20 artist commissions inspired by the heritage of conflict and led by Imperial War Museums.

Research visit in June: Khaled went on a tour of The Harris building and visited our collections store to see objects with links to Egypt, including an ancient bronze figurine, and watercolours by John Somerscales who created the Egyptian Balcony. He went to Queen Street Mill Museum in Burnley to see Lancashire looms in action and learn about the region's textile heritage. Khaled then visited the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), where he had the opportunity to meet with fine art students and tour the Artlab printmaking studio.

Test visit in November: This second visit was an opportunity to test parts of the production of the new artwork before installation next year. Khaled led two workshops with Harris volunteers and UCLan art students making paper cutouts for a new frieze that will explore histories of cultural exchange and conflict between Egypt and the UK from the First World War onwards. Khaled then spent a day working with printmakers at Artlab to test a series of screenprints that will form part of the commission.



14-18-NOW
WW1 CENTENARY ART COMMISSIONS

Harris Library

We're so much more than a place to borrow books! We are open Monday to Saturday from 9am - 5pm. Our IT Centre is open all day for drop-ins, but if you would like to book ahead, you can book at The Guild Hall IT Desk. You will be able to log on for up to 2 hours from 9am onwards. **Please note** that over the Christmas period our opening hours may differ due to the bank holidays. We are **closed** on **Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day** and **New Year's Day**. Before visiting we recommend you check the library page on our website or The Harris social media for updates on our opening hours.

Baby Bounce and Rhyme

From January 2025, Baby Bounce & Rhyme will be moving to every Wednesday, and two sessions will be available at 10.30am and 2.30pm. We now have a loyalty scheme - collect eight stars on your loyalty card and receive a free book!

Little Steps and Library Explorers

Little Steps and Library Explorers are both library initiatives aimed at under 5's and further details can be obtained from the library. The Junior Library reading schemes encourage children to read with the help of various fictional character stickers including the Lancashire Reading Dragon and the Dream Fairies.

Lancashire Reading Trail

Join in with the Lancashire Reading Trail at The Harris Library. The Lancashire Reading Trail turns reading into a challenge! Follow a map through an enchanted Lancashire and collect special cards and characters along the way. The trail has been created to encourage children (up to the age of 12) to read more.

BorrowBox

If you are unable to access our library services at The Guild Hall, you can borrow books via the BorrowBox app. BorrowBox is the eBook and audiobook library for Lancashire libraries. You'll find a wide assortment of books available and you can sign-up in minutes. All you need is your library card number and pin.



Friends of The Harris



Are you ready to embark on an extraordinary journey through art, culture, and community? Join the Friends of The Harris and become an essential part of our vibrant cultural hub. Discover enriching experiences and exclusive benefits that await you as a valued member.

[Click here](#)

Follow the link to complete the online joining form, or give us a call on our general number, 01772 258248, to join by post.

The Friends of the Harris members recently enjoyed a tour of Lancashire Conservation Studios with the rare opportunity to see conservation work in progress on beloved objects from the Harris collection, including the marble sculpture *Clytie* by G. F. Watts, currently undergoing cutting-edge laser cleaning to restore its original brilliance.



Thank you to everyone who joined us on the day. It was lovely to welcome our members to see The Harris collections again and hear about the conservation work that's taking place as part of the wider Harris Your Place project.

Looking ahead and building on the results of The Friends of The Harris recent membership survey, we look forward to refreshing The Friends of The Harris membership offer in 2025 to continue our support for The Harris, its programmes and collections.



The Harris Gift Shop

As winter settles in, it's time to start preparing for Christmas! Look no further than The Harris Shop for the perfect gifts for the whole family.

From special presents for the adults to stocking fillers for the little ones, The Harris Shop has something for everyone. With the days growing darker and colder, it's the ideal moment to treat yourself to Preston merchandise, Harris-branded items, or unique gifts from local artists, including one-of-a-kind jewellery pieces.

Visit us at our temporary location in The Guild Hall, Preston, open Monday to Saturday from 9am to 5pm, or click the link below to shop online.

By shopping at The Harris Gift Shop, you're supporting our work and helping ensure the continued operation of The Harris.



[Click here](#)

Gallery Two

A New Space for Local Artists and Communities

It is an exciting and busy time as we get ready to reopen The Harris, and our Programme Advisory Group have been working hard behind the scenes too.

The group has been chosen to make sure that the views of the community are reflected in our programming decisions. They have been through the first round of applications for our new Gallery Two exhibition space.

Reading all of the forms and scoring each proposal has been time consuming but a largely interesting process. There was a range of ideas from local people and groups, including paintings, sculptures, photographs and installations. They have now chosen the first two shows – look out for our programme announcement in the new year.

We will reopen the applications in January 2025, for exhibition slots from December 2025.



The Foxtton Exhibition



Did you manage to catch the Foxtton Art Group's second exhibition of 2024? The group's art was on display and up for sale for one month at Fishergate Shopping Centre between 15 November – 16 December. With a colourful array of pieces, it was a beautiful way to brighten up the darkening days as Autumn turned to Winter.

The theme of the exhibition was for the artists' work to be inspired by the art at The Harris. Inspirations included L.S. Lowry, Bridget Riley and Bob and Roberta Smith who are all included in The Harris' collections!

The Harris has been working closely with the Foxtton Art Group for two years now, using art to learn new skills, connect with other people and improve mental wellbeing. This exhibition was a wonderful way to celebrate the hard work and artistic development of the group.

Foxtton is a Preston-based charity which supports adults and young people in Avenham and Frenchwood. They are a vital community resource offering youth clubs, drop-in facilities and a variety of community activities.



Foxtton Youth and Community Centre (temporary address):

Unit 10 & 12, Oakham Court, Preston, PR1 3XP

T: 01772 555925

E: info@thefoxtton.org

The Harris Art and Wellbeing Project

Lytham Sandhills (1864) by Richard Ansdell, is part of The Harris' fine art collection and depicts a shepherd watching his sheep aided by two sheepdogs. The landscape is a wide rural expanse in which the shepherd and his animals seem to be alone, in peace.



A group of library users from Freckleton Library have chosen this painting to feature in The Harris' new wellbeing-themed art gallery because of its 'sense of harmony'.

Whilst we are closed, The Harris has collaborated with six different Preston-based groups to determine which pieces from our fine art collection should be displayed in our new Wellbeing Gallery ahead of reopening in 2025. Groups have connected to paintings from The Harris by discussing what wellbeing means, why it is important, and how the art we look at can help!

Here's what the members of the group from Freckleton Library had to say about *Lytham Sandhills*:

We like the open space and feeling of clean fresh air, and a sense of taking advantage of the outdoors.

We can see ourselves strolling with our own family or dogs in the very same space.

It is that feeling of tranquility, simple times, open horizons, love of man, animals and nature at one with the world.

A big thanks to everyone who took part in The Harris' Art and Wellbeing project from Preston Prison Library, Freckleton Library, Community Roots at Deepdale, The Blue Flamingo Café, Ingol Community Primary School and Preston College.

The Harris on Tour!



 **the HARRIS**

CURIOUS CREATORS

Sessions for 3 - 9 year olds!

Monday 17th February | Ingol Library | 1pm - 3pm

-  Learn to bring shapes, patterns, and art to life by building with polydrons.
-  Make and take home your own playful pottery – inspired by the Stone Age.
-  Themed story book reading: We are the Shapes by Kevin Jenner and Cave Baby by Julia Donaldson.
-  Playtime in the past: dress up like a Victorian.

Tuesday 18th February | The Hub | 1pm - 3pm

-  Printing and painting: get inspired by paintings from the Harris and make your own works of art by printing with apples!
-  Feel closer to nature – listen to and write your own poetry about trees, have a go at creating art from leaf rubbings, learn about different trees and leaf shapes.
-  Themed story book reading: Lulu Loves Flowers by Anna McQuinn and Beautiful Oops by Barney Saltzberg.
-  Playtime in the past – dress up like a Victorian!

Drop-in activities being run by staff and volunteers from UCLan and The Harris. **Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.**

The Harris Volunteers

Haworth Art Gallery Trip

A group of our Harris Volunteers along with some of our Friends of the Harris went on a wintery trip to the Haworth Art Gallery in Accrington and they were met with a very warm welcome indeed!

We were greeted with open arms by a small team of Friends of the Haworth and they gave us a fantastic experience from start to finish. They gave us a presentation about the owners of Haworth House and we learned all about Anne Howarth and her brother William who lived in the house. We all felt warm and fuzzy and could only put it down to their characters lingering on, coupled with the mini jam scones and cream we were given to eat.

Our group then went for a good look around the house and experienced their Tiffany glassware collection in all its glory, along with their Open Exhibition which seemed to coincidentally reflect the house, its collections and surroundings.

We also managed to pop into their Artists Studios which is on site and meet two of the artists there. To complete a perfect afternoon, it snowed and created a picture postcard memory.

We all came back remembering the importance of how we need to give all our Harris visitors a fantastic welcome and how generosity and kindness can go a long way to create a memorable visit.



Lancashire County Council Conservation Tour

Eighteen of our enthusiastic volunteers spent the morning at Lancashire Conservation Studios on the 20 November with Harris staff and three highly trained and knowledgeable conservators, Jenny, Mike and Ines, and we absolutely loved it.

We were expertly guided round the studios behind the scenes, for a real sneak preview of some of the objects and paintings that will be going on display at The Harris when we reopen.

We saw a painting by Joseph Highmore called *Portrait of Gentleman* which was painted in the 1700's. This painting was half way into having its varnish removed before it gets cleaned and revarnished - we were so happy to see the handsome young man underneath the yellowy brown varnish revealed - his wig now looks like it has been treated with glo-white!

We saw other items such as two huge brightly coloured Lipton Tea tins that were polished and ready and a small and intricate mother of pearl tea chest.

All in all, our volunteers reported back to us that they had found it fascinating to know what goes on behind the scenes to get an object or painting ready to put on show to be viewed and that they felt they appreciated the end result more now.



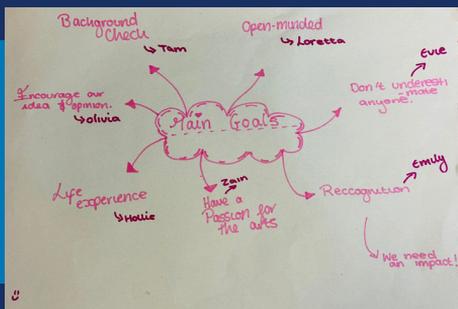
Harris Youth Panel Update

The Youth Panel have been getting their teeth into new staff - not literally! They have been thinking about important 'must have' qualities that The Harris staff which we will be recruiting next year will need.

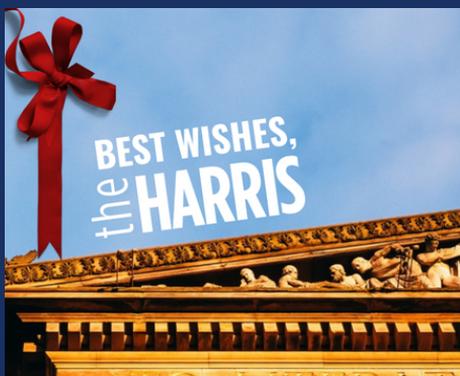
As young people, they feel that they can often be patronised and talked down to or talked at. They have been trying to think of training courses that Harris staff (existing and new) could do so that they are more switched on to working with young people when The Harris reopens.

Some of their thinking was about wanting young staff, but they thought that young staff might not have much work experience. They discussed life experience being as important if not more important as qualifications, so they decided that staff didn't need to be young in age, just young at heart!

They have invited The Harris' Senior Leadership Team to their next meeting and will be offering their help as a youth panel to interview new staff. They are clear on what they want and have suggestions on what to look for in applicants. Look out in the next guide to see what happens next for them.



Season's Greetings!



Wishing all of our visitors, friends, volunteers and supporters a joyous holiday season! Thanks to all who have supported The Harris this year - we can't wait to welcome you back into our wonderful building in 2025!

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