

theharris.org.uk

Exhibitions

Library

Events

Shop

Cafe

What's On

2026



Welcome!

FREE
Entry

We're proud guardians of our founders' intention, inscribed on the outside of The Harris 'The mental riches you may here acquire abide with you always.'

Edmund Harris' vision was that the Harris Free Library, Museum, and Art Gallery would be the focal point of culture, the arts, and learning in our city. And today that still stands true.

We're here to serve as a cultural hub, bringing together communities and promoting creativity and learning through exhibitions, events, resources and spaces. We celebrate the diversity of Preston and beyond, and make culture accessible to all free of charge.

We're an inclusive and welcoming environment where people of all ages and backgrounds can come together and experience the richness of arts, culture and knowledge, explore new ideas and connect with a community.

Come and explore. Be curious. Take part. Share stories. Be inspired. This is your Harris.



Proudly part of
Preston
City Council

Join the Friends



Join the Friends of The Harris and become an essential part of our vibrant cultural hub. Discover enriching experiences and exclusive benefits, including a 10% discount in the cafe, shop and on ticketed events, invites to Harris events, monthly meet-ups and more! Call **01772 905421** or visit theharris.org.uk/friends to join.

Volunteer with us



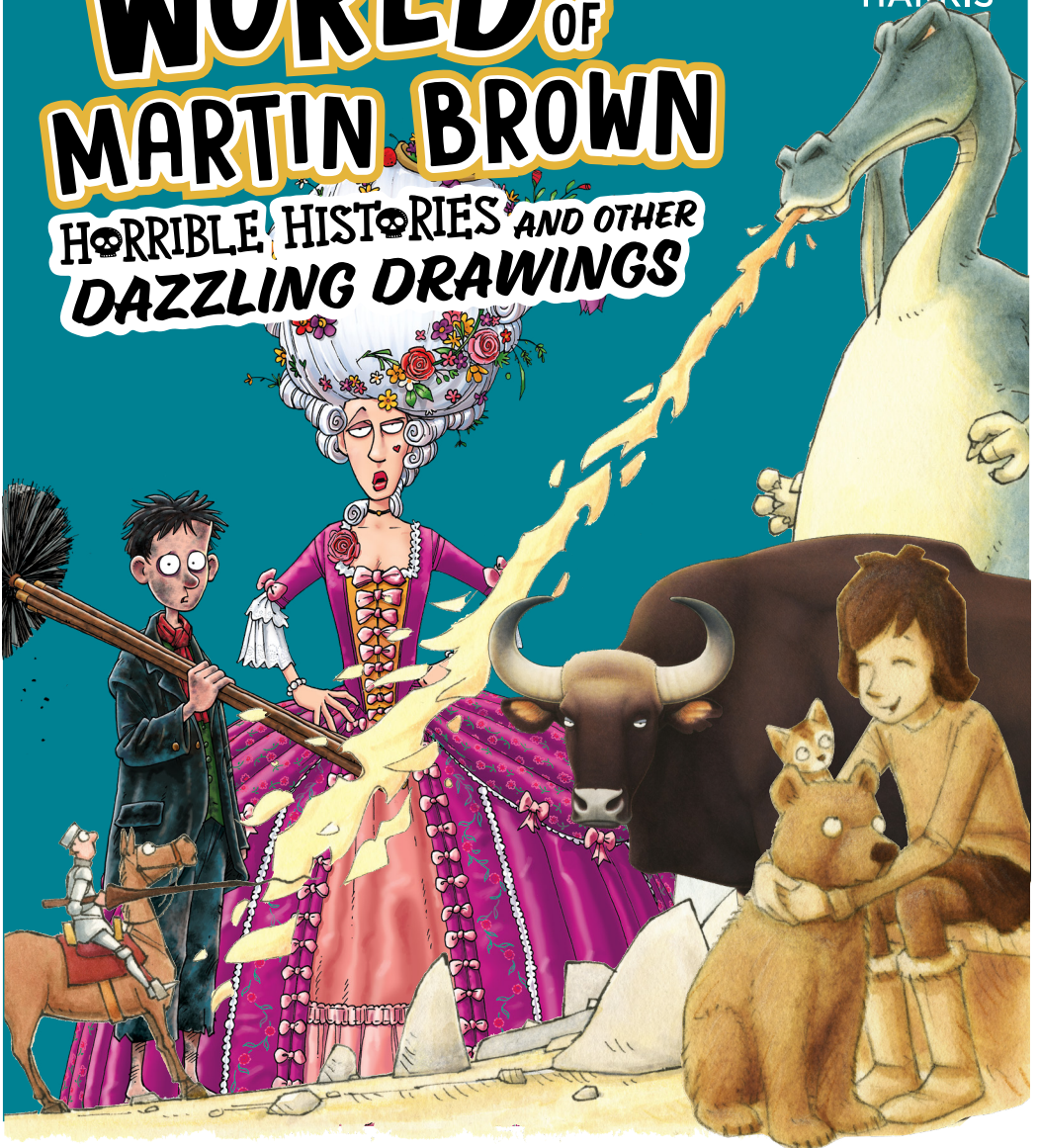
Are you over 16? Looking to gain skills and experience in the arts sector? Wanting to get involved with the community? Sounds like you'd be a great Harris Volunteer! We encourage all ages and abilities to get involved with us. Find out more and sign up at harris.volunteermakers.org.

23 MAY – 31 AUGUST 2026

THE WORLD OF MARTIN BROWN

The
HARRIS

HORRIBLE HISTORIES AND OTHER
DAZZLING DRAWINGS



seven stories
The National Centre for Children's Books

ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

HORRIBLE HISTORIES

SW
SOUTH WEST
HERITAGE TRUST



23 May - 31 Aug



Gallery One



Free

The World of Martin Brown

Horrible Histories and Other Dazzling Drawings

The World of Martin Brown: Horrible Histories and Other Dazzling Drawings celebrates the playful brilliance of illustrator Martin Brown, best known for the world-famous Horrible Histories series by author Terry Deary.

Visitors journey through Brown's artistic world, tracing his career from his early humorous cartoons to global publishing successes. Original art from *Horrible Histories*, illustrations from *Lesser Spotted Animals*, and exclusive content from his latest books, including *Nell and the Cave Bear*, bring Brown's imagination vividly to life.

A word from Martin: "The most important thing about drawing is enjoying it - having fun. Cartoons don't need to look 'right'; they're supposed to look silly. I should know, I've been drawing sillily for years. This exhibition celebrates that silliness and hopefully will inspire visitors to pick up pencils and start doodling, because you never know where your drawings might lead!"

This is an exhibition from Seven Stories, The National Centre for Children's Books, developed by the South West Heritage Trust in collaboration with Martin Brown and Events of Wonder. Horrible Histories® is a registered trademark. Illustrations © Martin Brown.

Special Events

Meet Martin Brown at The Harris

Saturday, 23 May at 1pm
The Studio

£3 per child, booking required

Horrible Histories Film Screening (PG)

Tuesday, 26 May at 10am
The Studio

Free, booking required

For more Horrible Histories themed events over the summer, visit theharris.org.uk/whats-on or scan the QR code below







25 Apr - 5 July



Gallery Two



Free

The Problem Lies Upstream

A Cautionary Tale by Nerissa Cargill Thompson

Nerissa explores environmental issues through contemporary textile art made using recycled textiles and concrete cast in plastic waste. She aims to make people consider the world around them and their responsibility to the environment.

Her work explores juxtapositions of structure, texture and colour, particularly where nature meets man. She creates her signature textiles using a combination of embellishing and embroidery.

The embellisher blends the fabrics together to create subtle variations in texture and tone to mimic lichens. She adds recurring shell motifs using a combination of free-motion embroidery and hand stitching.

The concrete captures the embossed patterns of the plastics, representing man-made structures. The naturally inspired textures of the textiles emphasise the way our waste becomes subsumed into the environment but also how nature fights back.

The Green Loop collection was created to highlight the issue of plastic pollution on the Fylde coast. As Preston is upstream from the Fylde Coast, showing these works at The Harris acts as a reminder of the knock-on effects of our actions on local areas that are dear to us, but also the wider world.

Nerissa's sculptures are a beautiful and effective visualisation of the true legacy of single use plastics and will hopefully instigate conversations around plastic pollution, in particular single use plastic, and what people can do to help, however small.

The Green Loop project was commissioned by Fylde Council and funded by Arts Council England.



billy



Horrockses Fashions

Everyday Glamour & the Art of British Ready-to-Wear

Marking the **80th anniversary** of the launch of Horrockses Fashions, this exhibition explores how the Lancashire-based company fused couture sensibilities with high-quality printed cottons to create dresses that were at once accessible, stylish and unmistakably modern.

Central to Horrockses' success was their pioneering approach to textile design. The company collaborated with leading contemporary artists to create distinctive fabrics that elevated ready-to-wear fashion into a form of wearable art. Bold florals, graphic geometrics and striking modernist motifs appeared on their full-skirted 'New Look'.

Drawing on the world's largest museum collection of Horrockses dresses, this exhibition reveals the creativity, craftsmanship and cultural significance behind one of Britain's most beloved post-war fashion labels.

The exhibition is supported by a new publication titled *Everyday Glamour: Horrockses Fashions from Royalty to Ready-To-Wear*, edited by The Harris' Decorative Art Curator, Scott Schiavone. Pre-order your copy now at theharris.org.uk/the-harris-shop.



19 Sept - 31 Jan



Gallery One



Free



The Big Picture: The pARTnership

Using The Harris Collection as a jumping off point, *The Big Picture* brings together an ambitious and vibrant collection of contemporary work spanning painting, sculpture, and mixed media, made by artists from The pARTnership, a visual arts development project working with learning disabled artists in Blackpool, led by Grundy Art Gallery.



18 July - 4 October



Gallery Two



Free



Temporary Displays at The Harris

Featuring a lineup of internationally acclaimed artists, local talent, and community-led stories across art, culture, and history. Highlights include:

Hannah Sabapathy | A major commission focusing on global links between South Asia and Britain's textile industry during the 1800s.

The Tea on Tea | Uncovering the global and often uncomfortable histories of tea in a new display on the Second Floor Balcony.



Throughout the year



Various locations



Free



Credit: Andrew Lee

The Library

Step into a world of stories, knowledge, and discovery. Whether you're looking for your next great read, a quiet corner to relax, or a place to explore rare texts, our library spaces are perfect for you.

You'll find books woven throughout the museum and our galleries. As you wander around our exhibitions, you'll notice carefully chosen books connected to the objects and artworks on display.

Come and explore a new kind of library, where books live and breathe with art and history. We can't wait to see you.

Become a Member

It's easy to borrow our books, and free! Come along to the library and we'll set up your library card. You can then borrow books and audiobooks.

The Family Library

Explore a magical space full of colourful picture books, entertaining stories, and fun activities to spark imaginations.

Our Family Library space is home to our Baby Bounce & Rhyme sessions. Join us every Wednesday at 10.30am and 2.30pm and take part in a lively sing-song, it's a great way for babies and toddlers to develop their language skills!

Or why not join one of our reading schemes? The Lancashire Reading Trail takes you through an enchanted Lancashire, where you can collect special cards along the way. For children aged 2 to 5, we have the Little Steps reading scheme. Meet friendly jungle animals who will help you learn about new topics with recommended reading and exciting activities.



The Cafe

Whether you're grabbing a quick coffee, catching up over lunch, or soaking in the atmosphere after a gallery visit, the Harris Cafe is where you can refuel and refresh. Every sip of coffee or nibble of a sandwich helps support The Harris.

Calling all Harris Friends, Students and Volunteers! Enjoy a discount on your meal, just show your ID at the counter.



The Shop

Discover unique gifts, locally made treasures, and art-inspired finds, all carefully chosen to reflect the beauty of The Harris. Every purchase helps support our collections, exhibitions, and community programmes.



Venue Hire

Looking for a venue with character, beauty, and heart? Right in the centre of Preston, The Harris offers stunning, one-of-a-kind spaces perfect for everything from meetings to memorable celebrations.



1.30pm - 3pm



Fascinator and Hat Workshop

Sunday, 10 May in The Studio
£15, booking required

Join us for a 'make do and mend' hat and fascinator remodelling workshop from Karen Harvey of Reinvintaged.

1.30pm - 2.30pm



Egyptian Balcony Tour

Saturday, 16 May
£2, booking required

Climb to the very top of The Harris and discover one of Preston's hidden treasures – the Egyptian Balcony.

6pm - 7pm



Lancashire Conservation Studio

Thurs, 23 May in The Reading Room
£5, booking required

Join painting conservators Michael and Ines for a behind the scenes look at recent conservation projects.

1pm - 3pm



Meet the Artist: Martin Brown

Saturday, 23 May in The Studio
£3, booking required

Encounter the art behind the Horrible Histories books this summer by stepping into 'The World of Martin Brown'.

6pm - 8pm



Recycled Plastic Crafts (for Adults)

Thurs, 28 May in The Studio
£5, booking required

Explore colour, composition and texture, creating collages from soft plastic.



← Scan to book

May Top Picks

1pm - 3pm



Life Drawing

Sunday, 7 June in The Studio

Pay what you can

In these sessions, we'll be observing and drawing both male and female nude models.

7pm - 8pm



The Lamb Lies Down on Broadgate

Thurs, 11 June in The Reading Room

£3, booking required

An interactive presentation by Preston based author and songwriter Dave Gardner.

11am - 12.30pm



A Worthy Memorial

Sat, 13 June in The Reading Room

Free, booking required

Join local historian John Garlington for an illustrated talk to mark 100 years since the unveiling of Preston's war memorial.

1pm - 3.30pm



Coastal Textures Textiles Workshop

Sunday, 14 June in The Studio

£5, booking required

Use recycled clothing and simple hand stitching to build up a textile artwork inspired by coastal textures.

6.30pm - 7.30pm



Behind the Scenes Collections Tour

Thurs, 25 June in The Harris Stores

£10, booking required

Step beyond the gallery and discover a side of The Harris rarely seen by the public.



← Scan to book

June Top Picks

6pm - 7pm



Tom Finney - His Life in Pictures
Thurs, 9 July in The Reading Room
Free, booking required

Join PNE historian Ian Rigby for a walk through the life and career of Preston's greatest ever footballer.

1.30pm - 2.30pm



Egyptian Balcony Tour
Saturday 11 & 25 July
£2, booking required

Climb to the very top of The Harris and discover one of Preston's hidden treasures - the Egyptian Balcony.

2pm - 3pm



Pride of Preston: Dick, Kerr Ladies
Sat, 11 July in The Reading Room
Free, booking required

Join renowned football historian, Gail Newsham, and learn about the Lancashire lasses who defied convention.

11am & 2pm



World of Martin Brown: Family Fun
Tues, 21 July in The Studio & No.9
Booking required

Encounter the art behind the Horrible Histories books this summer by stepping into 'The World of Martin Brown'.

6.30pm - 7.30pm



Behind the Scenes Collections Tour
Thurs, 30 July in The Harris Stores
£10, booking required

Step beyond the gallery and discover a side of The Harris rarely seen by the public.



← Scan to book

July Top Picks

11am & 2pm



Footy Fairy Tales

Tuesday, 4 August in The Studio
£3, booking required

Have you ever wondered what happens when football and your favourite fairy tales collide?

10am & 5.30pm



Horrockses Paper Flower Workshop

Thurs 6 & 13 August in The Studio
Free, booking required

Step inside the creative process and become part of the exhibition itself by crafting your own paper flower.

12.30pm - 1pm



Harris Highlights: Cuerdale Hoard

Thurs, 13 August in Discover Preston
Free, booking required

Harris Volunteer Roisin introduces this local treasure trove, one of the largest Viking silver hoards ever found!

2pm



Horrible Histories Film Screening

Wednesday, 26 August in The Studio
Free, booking required

Rotten Romans (PG) follows Atti, a quick-witted Roman teenager, who upsets Emperor Nero with one of his schemes.

2pm - 3pm



Harris Highlights: Preston Suffragettes

Sunday, 30 August in Discover Preston
Free, booking required

Harris Volunteer Pam discusses photographs, objects, short films and paintings.



← Scan to book

Aug Top Picks

The Harris Museum & Library

Monday | 9am - 5pm
Tuesday | 9am - 5pm
Wednesday | 9am - 5pm
Thursday | 9am - 9pm
Friday | 9am - 5pm
Saturday | 9am - 5pm
Sunday | 11am - 4pm



You'll be able to come into The Harris until 30 minutes before we close

The Harris Cafe

Monday to Saturday | 9.30am - 4pm
Sunday | 11am - 3.30pm

Market Square
Preston
Lancashire
PR1 2PP



This guide was created by The Harris Marketing Team. Printed on carbon neutral paper.

