



The Hunterian Annual Report

2024–25



University
of Glasgow

Foreword

The past year has been one of outstanding achievement and growth for The Hunterian. As Scotland's oldest public museum and one of the world's leading university museums, we continue to balance our dual role as a centre for academic research, learning and teaching, and a cultural hub as Glasgow's University Museum. This report celebrates the highlights of 2024–25, reflects on our progress and looks ahead to exciting new opportunities.

Our commitment to be an ethical and accessible museum, underpinned by our values to be ambitious, transparent, curious and inclusive, has ensured our work reflects and serves the diverse communities of Glasgow and beyond. Having people and partners work with the collections, and in our spaces, is what The Hunterian thrives on.

In 2024–25, our staff, students, collaborators, volunteers, funders and donors enabled us to deliver exhibitions of international significance, advance cutting-edge research and welcome record audiences to our museums.

A major focus of our work this year has been a Scoping Project, an essential step on our journey to transform The Hunterian. Funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and the University of Glasgow, the project is enabling us to reimagine the Hunterian Museum and Hunterian Art Gallery. Work includes an options appraisal for improving the condition, accessibility and sustainability of our buildings; audience research to understand how to attract and welcome a diverse audience; and building deeper, more equitable relationships with stakeholders and communities. The project will conclude in May 2026 and will inform our planning and strategic direction for the long-term development of our future.

Steph Scholten
Director, The Hunterian

Front cover: Maryhill Integration Network's *Museum of Things* creative workshops in the Hunterian Museum

Year in Numbers

209,330
visitors

Over
110
events

7,400
event attendees,
a 25% increase

4,600
objects and
7,300
images added to our
collections database

230,000
collection records
accessible online

260,000
collection page views

3,190
objects used for
research

2,430
objects used in
teaching

2,037
students engaged
across 50 courses

13
PhDs co-supervised
by Hunterian staff
34
students trained as
Museum Student
Educators

Social media followers
up by 13% to

41,000

Blog readership more
than doubled to

17,736
views

Archaeology students in Glencoe



Visitors and Audiences

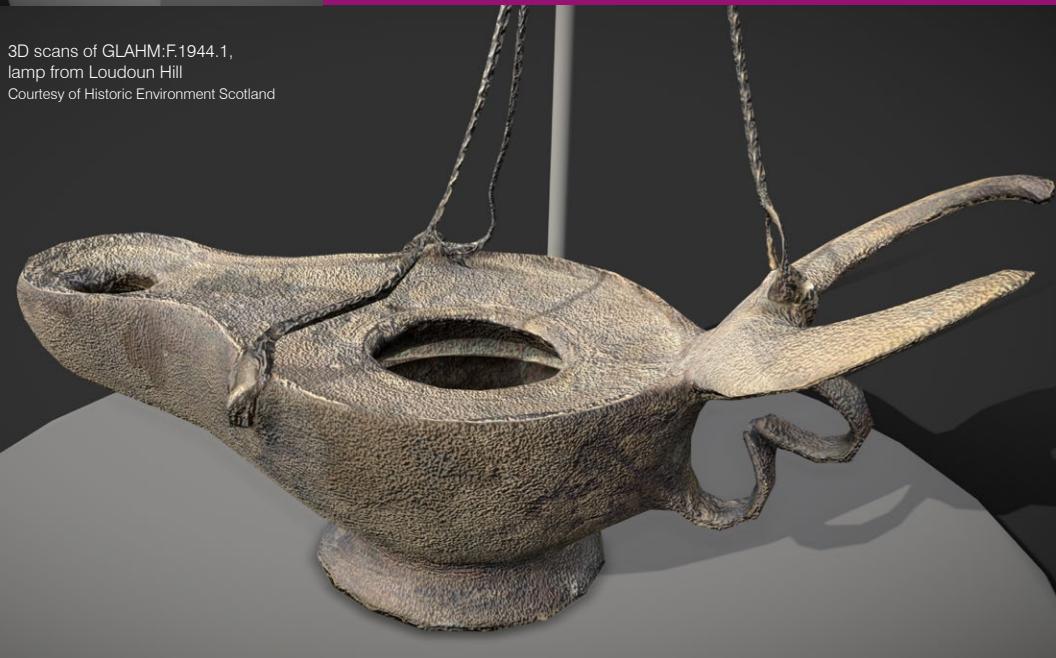
The Hunterian achieved the highest number of visitors in its history this year, welcoming **209,330 visitors** to our Museum and Art Gallery. Audience development continues to successfully target a younger and more diverse demographic.

Visitor feedback confirms that our exhibitions challenge, inform and inspire. Audience research, conducted with over **4,300 participants**, revealed high levels of satisfaction and an appetite for more programming that connects local stories to global issues.

Creative activities at the Hunterian Art Gallery



3D scans of GLAHM:F.1944.1,
lamp from Loudoun Hill
Courtesy of Historic Environment Scotland



Digital Engagement and Communications

The Hunterian's digital reach grew considerably. **Social media followers** rose by 13% to over **41,000**, with **Instagram** surpassing **10,000 followers**. **Blog readership** more than doubled to **14,736 views**.

Press coverage was extensive, with major stories around the repatriation of a Tasmanian Aboriginal shell necklace and The National Lottery Heritage Fund funding announcements.

A redesigned website launched in September 2024, streamlining navigation and significantly improving accessibility for users.

Exhibitions and Public Programme

Our exhibitions this year combined historic scholarship with contemporary perspectives and community participatory practice.

Whistler Pastels explored the artist James McNeill Whistler's methodology and materials. It drew on research from the Kelvin Centre for Conservation & Cultural Heritage Research, funded by the Lunder Consortium for Whistler Studies.

Digging In Another Time: Derek Jarman's Modern Nature examined the political and artistic legacy of the artist, filmmaker, poet and political activist Derek Jarman, connecting it to contemporary art practice.

The exhibition and accompanying public programme of screenings and performances were successful in attracting and engaging new audiences, and was developed in partnership with film producer James Mackay, theatre maker Neil Bartlett, Glasgow Film Theatre, Creative Scotland and Tramway.

Scottish Aluminium explored the industrial and imperial histories of the British Aluminium Company.

Women in Geology, co-produced with community researchers, highlighted under-represented histories of women in geology.

Museum of Things was a disruption of conventional museum display hierarchies, co-produced with Maryhill Integration Network. Through a series of interventions, the exhibition reclaimed and reinterpreted spaces, objects and narratives, delineating new perspectives on belonging and identity.

Margaret Salmon: Assembly showcased film, photography and sculpture, all rooted in the artist's socially committed and locally engaged practice. Members of Maryhill's G20 Youth Project contributed to the exhibition by devising scripts through story counselling and acting in *To A God Unknown*, a new long-form film developed during the exhibition.

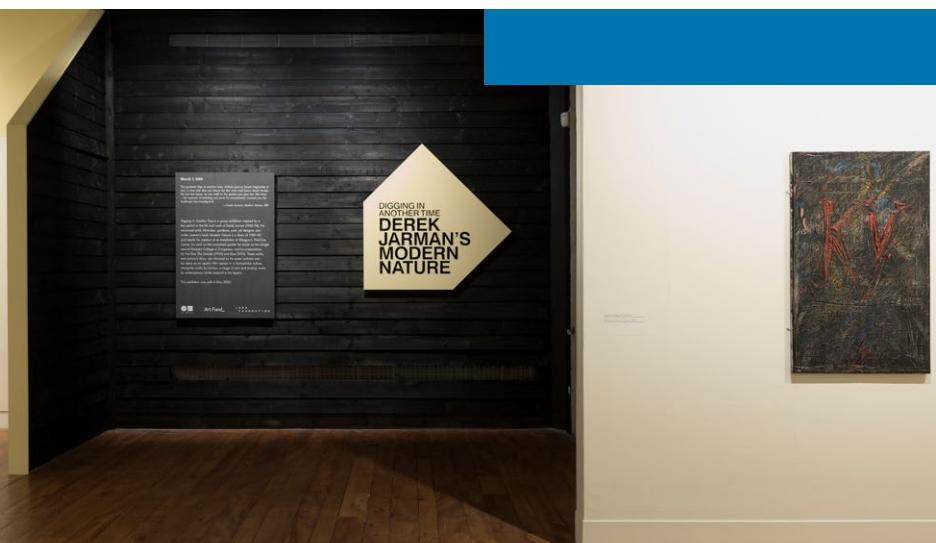
Images from left to right:
Digging In Another Time: Derek Jarman's Modern Nature
Photography: Fred Pedersen

Museum Studies MSc student installing their co-curated exhibition

Banner displayed in the Main Hall as part of the *Museum of Things* exhibition.

As part of Glasgow's 850th anniversary, we presented *Building Memories* and *Bird, Tree, Bell, Fish, Ring*, the latter co-curated with Museum Studies MSc students from the University of Glasgow.

Family days, talks, poetry evenings and cross-disciplinary performances all contributed to a vibrant public programme. Our Look Club initiative, using Visual Thinking Strategies, expanded into sessions for children and community groups, demonstrating our commitment to accessible and inclusive interpretation.



Clockwise from left to right:

GLAHA:58510, Henry Raeburn, *Portrait of an Unknown Young Indian Woman*

GLAHA:59351, Pieter Gerritsz van Roestraeten, *A Still Life with Shells and Lizard in a Jar of Spirits*

Tasmanian Aboriginal delegate Jeanette James with the Tasmanian Aboriginal shell necklace.



Collections Development

Removing barriers and enabling the widest possible public access to our nationally significant collection is an organisational priority. In 2024–25, we added an additional 4,600 objects and 7,300 images to our database, with over 230,000 records now accessible online with over 260,000 annual page views.

Significant acquisitions included portraits by Allan Ramsay, Henry Raeburn, Sir John Lavery and George

Henry, donated from the John Shaw Collection, by Dr Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw in memory of her late husband, a distinguished graduate of the University of Glasgow (MA 1970).

Purchases included John Knox's *Glasgow Green* and Pieter Gerritsz van Roestraeten's *A Still Life with Shells and Lizard in a Jar of Spirits*. We also received Charles Rennie Mackintosh furniture, prize medals and acquired works by Cathy Wilkes.

One of the most important moments of the year was the repatriation of a Tasmanian Aboriginal shell necklace to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre in Hobart. This act of restorative justice reflects The Hunterian's commitment to ethical practice and to responding positively to claims of cultural return.

Loans were made to six external exhibitions, including Tate, the British Museum and the Burrell Collection, ensuring our collections continue to contribute to international scholarship. Conservation efforts included major treatments for recently acquired paintings and large sculptures by Anthony Caro and George Rickey.



Research and Scholarship

The Hunterian's role as a research institution has never been stronger. Ten curators, supported by honorary research fellows and joint academic posts, facilitated more than 140 research visits and authored over 45 publications. 3,910 collections items were used for research purposes.

Staff co-supervised 13 PhDs and engaged in national and international research projects. Key initiatives and contributions include:

- GALLANT, a major University of Glasgow programme, fostering citizen science and biodiversity awareness.
- Women in Geology, co-produced with community researchers to highlight under-represented histories.
- Glencoe Archaeology, analysing a significant coin hoard linked to the Glencoe Massacre.
- Mosquito Scotland, mapping the ecological and health impacts of climate change.

Dr Shani Roper, Curator at The UWI Museum and Mike G Rutherford, Curator of Zoology and Anatomy, with the Jamaican Giant Galliwasps specimen

In 2024, we repatriated a specimen of the Jamaican Giant Galliwasps (*Celestus occiduus*) to Jamaica — the first natural history repatriation to the Caribbean from the UK.

This milestone has led to a strong partnership with the University of the West Indies and sister Jamaican institutions, driving collaboration in collections research, public outreach and cultural heritage, with outputs ranging from international conferences and scientific research to schools outreach.



Learning and Teaching

Teaching with collections expanded further, with more than 2,430 objects used in teaching and 2,037 students engaged across 50 courses. The MuSE (Museum Student Educator) programme involved 34 students, while additional volunteering and placements provided vital workplace experience.

Students in the Hunterian Art Gallery



Governance, Staff and Professional Development

The Hunterian remains committed to supporting staff development and wellbeing. Extensive professional development opportunities have included evaluation training, media training, project management and sensory interpretation workshops.

Over the year, seven members of the Visitor Experience team undertook work shadowing placements focusing on career development projects.

Our governance structures continue to ensure accountability and alignment with the University of Glasgow's strategy, while maintaining transparency with funders and stakeholders.



Teaching in the Hunterian Art Gallery

Funding

We are grateful to our core funders — the University of Glasgow and the Scottish Funding Council — and to our donors, including The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Art Fund, Museums Galleries Scotland and the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund.

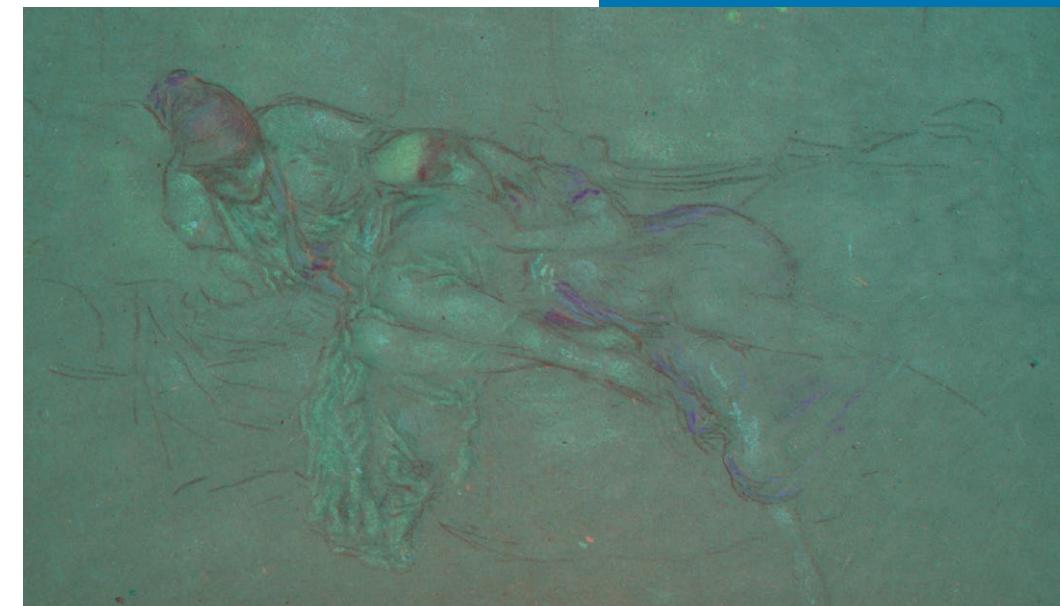
Generous supporters such as Mazumdar-Shaw Philanthropy and Fiona Johnstone have been instrumental in enabling our programmes.

We would also like to thank Huw Foxhall, Rosemary Jackson, Andrew Crawford, Ann Crawford, James Sweeney, Prasannajit da Silva, Lewis Ross, Elizabeth Tanner OBE, Alma and Leslie Wolfson Charitable Trust, The Friends of Glasgow Museums and our visitors for their generous donations.

The commission and acquisition of work by Cathy Wilkes is part of the Imperial War Museum 14-18 NOW Legacy Fund, a national partnership programme of artist commissions inspired by the heritage of conflict.



Collections research at the Collections Study Centre, Kelvin Hall



Technical analysis as part of the Whistler Pastels project



The Hunterian Museum

Looking Ahead

As we prepare to celebrate the University of Glasgow's 575th anniversary in 2026, we are laying the groundwork for a programme that will celebrate the University's history and The Hunterian's role within it.

Future plans include expanding our partnerships, deepening community engagement and participatory practice, and continuing to advance the ethical stewardship of collections.

Our mission remains clear: to use The Hunterian's collections, expertise and creativity to inspire discovery, support research and education, and foster dialogue across cultures and generations. With the continued support of our community, we look forward to another remarkable year ahead.



University of Glasgow
575 commemorative plate.
Commissioned by
Glasgow University Heritage Retail,
designed by Make It Glasgow

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