

**MODERN ART  
OXFORD**

**CAPITAL REFURBISHMENT 2024**



**A TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECT FOR  
THE MODERN ART OXFORD COMMUNITY**

# MODERN ART OXFORD'S CAPITAL TRANSFORMATION, 2024

Jesse Darling: *No Medals No Ribbons*, installation view at Modern Art Oxford 2022. Photo by Ben Westoby.



**“Modern Art Oxford is a mountain in the landscape of contemporary art.”** Laura Cumming, *The Observer*

Modern Art Oxford is one of the UK’s leading contemporary art spaces with an international reputation for innovative and ambitious programming. Each year, we welcome more than 100,000 visitors with a world-class programme of exhibitions and participatory activity, shaped by a commitment to education, internationalism and inclusion, and founded on the power of visual art culture to enact positive social change.

**“Modern Art Oxford’s internationalism and its ability to shine a light on politics and history are probably unsurpassed by any other public space over the last 50 years.”** Richard Wentworth, artist

Modern Art Oxford is working with RIBA award-winning practice, David Kohn Architects, on the transformational £2m redesign and refurbishment of its ground and lower-ground public areas, to be realised in summer 2024. The project is the latest phase in a significant programme of capital investment, beginning in 2018.

This project has been informed by an extensive public consultation process involving 200+ stakeholders and users. It features elements of co-creation and co-design, led by artists in collaboration with local groups.

Artist’s impression on arrival at the Pembroke Street entrance showing the indicative alterations including new shop and integrated ticketing and welcome desk, new unified floor treatment, new adaptable modular seating and display case layout, rationalised lighting design and redesigned entrance to upper galleries.



**It will:**

- **Create 30% additional space for Modern Art Oxford’s expanding participation work with diverse local communities.**
- **Improve accessibility and navigation for a more rewarding visitor experience.**
- **Enrich visitor engagement through new displays, interactive environments and reference areas.**
- **Enhance environmental performance and strengthen commercial operations thanks to a distinctive retail and hospitality offer.**

Overall, the project will contribute to the dynamism and resilience of the charity, the local cultural ecology and the economy of the city.

Lubaina Himid: *Invisible Strategies* installation view, 2017. Image copyright Modern Art Oxford. Photo by Ben Westoby.



The distinguishing features of this exciting new project and associated outcomes include:

### **Transformational public benefit through increased engagement & participation**

- The creation of a new gallery for changing displays, programmed with and showcasing the creative activities of our local communities, as well as Modern Art Oxford's rich history and innovative digital programme.
- An enlarged and specially adapted space for creative activities with a wide range of user groups, from infants and their carers, to refugees and artists with disabilities; adjoining and looking into the new gallery space and allowing for a 30% year-on-year increase in attendance.
- Remodelling of the entrance to our upper galleries and a new signage scheme to improve access and orientation for all visitors, resulting in a 10% increase in audience figures in the first year of opening.
- The creation of a more prominent, combined welcome/ticketing point to improve the visitor's experience and to aid navigation.
- The creation of zoned recreational spaces throughout, incorporating flexible display and activity environments for the benefit of local users as a public amenity, providing direct engagement for 100,000+ visitors each year.

### **Strengthened commercial performance aiding organisational dynamism**

- A refreshed, more attractive and better located shop, showcasing the work of local makers and MAO's creative learning offer, complimented by a new, truly unique destination cafe on the lower-ground level. The cafe, designed by acclaimed British artist, Emma Hart, will offer visitors a distinctive experience, reflective of MAO's values. It will boost commercial income and contribute to the long-term sustainability of the charity.

### **Improved environmental sustainability**

- Operational efficiencies and a new heating system, leading to 80% reduction in energy consumption and enhanced environmental performance, aligning Modern Art Oxford with a city-wide zero-carbon ambition by 2040.



Artist's impression looking through at the extended and refurbished Creative Space showing the indicative alterations including exposed original brickwork, re-opened existing arch, new furniture for working and storage, new unified floor treatment and rationalised lighting design.

# **MORE ABOUT MODERN ART OXFORD**

Ruth Asawa: *Citizen of the Universe*, installation view at Modern Art Oxford, 2022. Photo by Oxford Atelier. Artwork © 2021 Ruth Asawa Lanier, Inc. / ARS, NY and DACS, London. Courtesy David Zwirner.



Since its foundation in 1965, Modern Art Oxford has brought some of the world's most important, celebrated and often overlooked artists to the city and to the UK, and has championed emerging and under-represented artists. The programme is international in ambition and reach, and is underpinned by partnerships with leading institutions. It features artists from across the globe and contributes to Oxford's standing as one of the world's leading centres for education and culture.

**“Modern Art Oxford is an extraordinary place. Its rich history, exemplary curatorial programme, intellectually generative location, and rigorous regard for the centrality of art and cultural production make it a singularly important institution.”**  
Barbara Kruger, artist

Our programme has included many of the most influential artists of our time including Sol Le Witt (1973), Joseph Beuys (1974), Agnes Martin (1975), Louise Bourgeois (1984), Robert Rauschenberg (1984), Yayoi Kusama (1989), Donald Judd (1995), Marina Abramović (1995, 2022), Mona Hatoum (1998), Yoko Ono (1997), Tracey Emin (2002), Jenny Saville (2012), Barbara Kruger (2014), Anish Kapoor (2021) and Ruth Asawa (2022), to name just a few. Our exhibition history is notable for more than 30 Turner Prize-nominated shows since the prize was established in the mid-1980s, including award-winning Lubaina Himid in 2017 and, in 2023, Jesse Darling, attesting to the national and international significance of our programming.

**“The open-mindedness of the gallery's programming should be cherished.”** Alistair Sooke, *The Telegraph*

Community-facing participation is at the heart of Modern Art Oxford's programme. Inspiring educational experiences and opportunities for creative

exchange help visitors to explore our exhibitions, empower young people and ensure all the communities we serve have the chance to develop their creative potential. Working with local schools and frontline charities, Modern Art Oxford makes the case for the transformative effect of visual art culture today.

*“Modern Art Oxford is an indispensable jewel in Oxford’s world-class cultural portfolio.” Cllr Bob Price, Leader Oxford City Council (2008-18)*

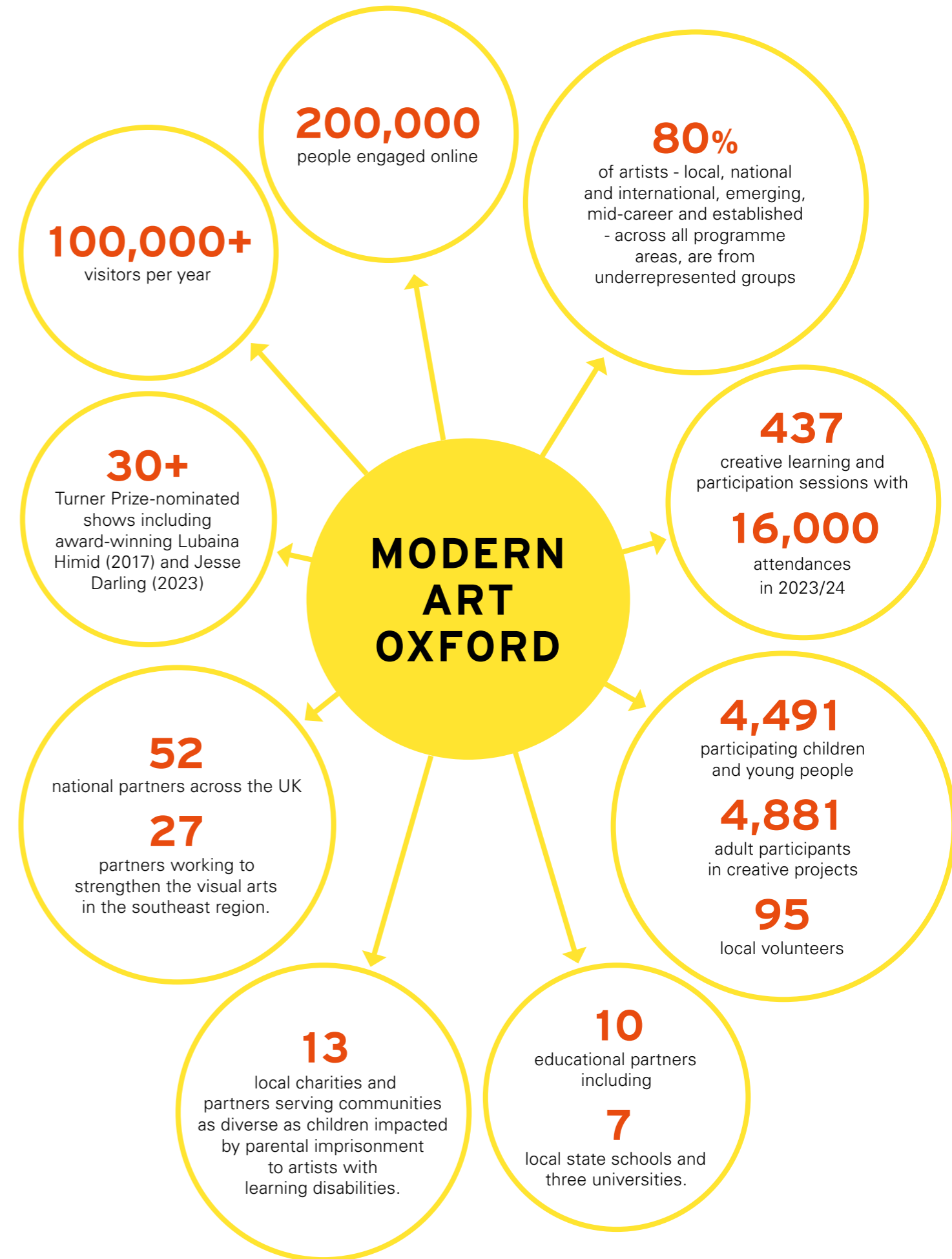
A bold digital programme reaches more than 200,000 people annually. It enables the active participation of thousands of creatives each year by connecting communities with artists and offering an online space for learning, inspiration, conversation and healthy debate. High quality, interactive and co-created content and new commissions make contemporary art accessible and engaging to the widest possible audience, promoting creativity in all of its visual forms, often with a strong interdisciplinary focus.

*“Modern Art Oxford’s ambitious, meticulously researched and ever-prescient programming has played a fundamental role in shaping the discussion around contemporary art in Britain and beyond. It has introduced the public to a wide range of artists of whom they had never heard, but having seen them, will never forget.” Will Gompertz, BBC Arts Editor (2009-21)*



Artist's impression looking through the ground floor gallery from the stair lobby showing the indicative alterations including exposed original brickwork, re-opened existing arch, new unified floor treatment, rationalised lighting design and new wall lining design for art display.

*“The Arts Council has supported Modern Art Oxford since its founding in 1965... a proud history of presenting work by leading contemporary artists, supported by visionary leadership that has helped to build and shape the institution to one of international cultural significance. The Arts Council continues to support Modern Art Oxford as we believe these traditions are still alive and thriving.” Darren Henley, Chief Executive, Arts Council England*



# YOUR CONTRIBUTION

Modern Art Oxford's £2m transformational capital project places communities and audiences at the heart of the building. Your donation, no matter its size, can help close the funding gap and leave a lasting legacy for the city and its residents.

Modern Art Oxford is fortunate to have received major pledges from generous individuals, and major trusts and foundations but we still need your support if the project is to fulfil its aspirations for the benefit of users near and far. Please consider donating today, it will make a difference.

For more information and to discuss your support, please contact [maria.moorwood@modernartoxford.org.uk](mailto:maria.moorwood@modernartoxford.org.uk).

As a donor to the project, invested in the future of Modern Art Oxford, we also invite you to consider a three year commitment as a Supporter (Commissioning Circle, Director's Circle or Patron). Your long-term contribution enables Modern Art Oxford to meet the elevated running costs of an ever growing, world-class artistic programme, and ensures the positive impacts of the project are fully realised. Please visit the Support Us page of our website or contact [maria.moorwood@modernartoxford.org.uk](mailto:maria.moorwood@modernartoxford.org.uk) for further information.



Artist's impression, cut through from Pembroke Street entrance with relocated shop and indicative, new welcome desk and social space seating and activity areas.

Cover image: Artist's impression, Modern Art Oxford façade and Pembroke Street entrance.

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