

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leisure and Arts Services Committee – 21 June 2004

REPORT ON: Exhibition at McManus Galleries

REPORT BY: Director of Leisure and Arts

REPORT NO: 450-2004

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform the Committee of the forthcoming exhibition Mirror Bead and Thread.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee notes the content of the report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The cost of staging this exhibition is £8,000 which can be met from the Leisure and Arts 2004/2005 Revenue Budget.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The project supports the principles “opportunities for culture, leisure and recreation are available to all” and “access to the skills, knowledge and information needed to enable everyone to play a full part in society”.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

5.1 The project enhances the position of cultural and heritage resources for all age groups.

5.2 The project provides opportunities for people of all ages regardless of ability, social background, race, sex or disadvantage.

6.0 MAIN TEXT

6.1 Mirror Bead and Thread is a wonderful celebration of Gujarati textiles from the Kanchan Malde Collection. The exhibition will take place at McManus Galleries between 2 July and 29 August 2004. It contains over one hundred individual pieces of richly coloured traditional embroidery, beadwork, appliqué, mirror-work, tie and dye and three dimensional work.

6.2 The State of Gujarati in Western India has been a centre of the cotton textile industry for thousands of years. Along with neighbouring areas in Pakistan and Rajasthan, it also has one of the richest traditions of folk embroidery in the world. The exhibition contains objects from all over Gujarat, from the arid area of Kutch to the mostly well watered and prosperous region of Saurastna, also known as the Kathiawar Peninsula.

6.3 Many of the works have embroidered motifs with symbolic meanings. Most obvious are those deriving from Hindi iconography, for example depictions of the God

Krishna. The elephant headed Ganesh is another favourite. Animals make up another set of symbols. For example, elephants are associated with Royalty whereas peacocks and parrots are a sign of beauty. In Gujarat, animals are still important in rural communities. Bullocks are used to plough and draw carts. Horses and camels are used to carry heavy loads especially in the desert area with few roads. The exhibition will feature richly ornate costumes for bullocks and horses on a series of specially constructed mannequins.

6.4 Most of the textiles in the exhibition were made to decorate people's homes. Many of the inhabitants of the Gujarat traditionally lived in simple one or two room houses. Hanging up embroideries was a popular way to brighten them up every day and for special occasions. The most distinctive Gujarati hangings are welcome friezes (Foran) to hang over doorways. They have rows of flaps hanging down, representing mango leaves, traditional welcome decorations. Other types of hangings include L-shaped panels to go either side of doors (sankhatoran or sankhia) and smaller, square panels (chakla).

6.5 On Saturday 3 July Kanchan Malde will conduct a family workshop on Gujarati textiles and on Sunday 4 July her husband Moti Malde will give an illustrated talk on the Gujarat region and the formation of the Kanchan Malde Collection.

6.6 Throughout the months of July and August there will be a supporting programme of activities inspired by the exhibition including:

Clan – Tuesday 20 to Thursday 22 July. A three day arts project for children aged 5 to 12 years.

Colour Culture – Tuesday 27 to Thursday 29 July. A three day arts project for young people aged 13 to 15 years.

Bright Ideas - A series of four different craft activities for children aged 5 – 12 years.

Saturday 17 July 1.00 pm – 3.00 pm

Saturday 24 July 1.00 pm – 3.00 pm

Saturday 31 July 1.00 pm – 3.00 pm

Saturday 7 August 1.00 pm – 3.00 pm

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) and Assistant Chief Executive (Community Planning) have all been consulted on this report and are in agreement with its contents.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 No background papers, as defined by section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

**STEVE GRIMMOND
DIRECTOR OF LEISURE AND ARTS
10 MAY 2004**