

# International Museum Day 2021

With Lancaster City Museum, Lancaster Maritime Museum, Judges' Lodgings, Peter Scott Gallery and The Ruskin

Plain text exhibition guide

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## **Recover and Reimagine: Lancaster's Future Heritage**

Bringing together art, artefacts and ideas from Lancaster City Museum, Lancaster Maritime Museum, Judges' Lodgings, Peter Scott Gallery, Lancaster Castle and The Ruskin, **Recover and Reimagine: Lancaster's Future Heritage** uses Lancaster's collections to respond to the 2021 International Museum Day theme, 'The Future of Museums: Recover and Reimagine.'

## **Museums of the Near Future**

The Ruskin: Museum of the Near Future is delighted to host this co-created exhibition. As we do now, Ruskin lived at a time of rapid change. From minerals to mountains, cornices to cathedrals, Ruskin's drawings, paintings and photographs encourage us to reimagine our understanding of the world through looking closely, seeing clearly and imagining freely. Each site in Lancaster has selected works to reflect perspectives on the arts, activism, sustainability and futures-making.

We invite you to browse the catalogues and send us your own selections and comments [[email the-ruskin@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:the-ruskin@lancaster.ac.uk)] – helping us create and share new ways of reflecting on change and innovation and where tomorrow's world is today.

We chose three themes to think about in relation to our items:

### **1: Education/Culture/Activism**

Museums have always been part of their local communities: in 1875, John Ruskin founded the St George Museum at Walkley, within walking distance of Sheffield's industrial centre, as a local museum for Sheffield and its suburbs. The collection also looked beyond the local, including the art, built and natural environments of the UK and Europe more widely.

In 2020-21, the pandemic has accelerated this trend toward localism while, simultaneously, the world is becoming increasingly connected. Unable to access physical galleries, visitors have had the opportunity to explore international museums from their own homes<sup>1</sup>. They have also interacted with their own local museums in ways they might not have done otherwise. The items represented here show how our museums are reflecting on their new roles, pushing the boundaries of learning and broadening their scope virtually, whilst also imagining a world in recovery. As we look toward global and local recoveries, post-pandemic, we see an opportunity to remake the role of culture in everyday life.

## **2: Society/Sustainability**

Ruskin saw that the future of social relations (and of human society) and the sustainability of the planet are interlinked. Our choices, individually and as communities, reflect our values and impact global ecological crises and widening social inequalities. New approaches which take into account the needs of the human and non-human can show us ways of living which are 'useful, fruitful, beautiful'. Museum collections, and the stories behind them, can inspire choices about our futures while considering the ways that society and sustainability have been interconnected in the past. This creative potential for culture as a driver for change and innovation is more important than ever as we look towards a future society unimaginable even two years ago.

## **3: Collections/Future Making**

For Ruskin, the future is made today. He believed the way we see things now will affect how we think and behave in the future. Like the Covid pandemic, the industrial revolution during Ruskin's lifetime catalysed seismic and long-lasting changes to work, learning, leisure and life. Ruskin's own collections and gifts – to local and national museums, educational organisations and social projects – were assembled and distributed in the context of a rapidly changing world.

Heritage sites and the art and artefacts within them have the power to contribute to change through new ways of viewing and understanding collections like 3D imaging technology<sup>2</sup>; and through prompting us to respond to ideas and challenges in the

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<sup>1</sup> Hyperlink to Lancastrians of Science Virtual Tour:

<https://www.theasys.io/viewer/zISYL6yuJqpIDTvtQ3QfIM3oQihcZQ/>

<sup>2</sup> Hyperlink to 3D model of the Insus Tombstone: <https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/roman-cavalry-tombstone-found-in-lancaster-d1118ace1e4e4f849039aa8d285e4291>

ways collections are curated. This exhibition reflects on the role of collections and of the museum in the ongoing dynamic process of imagining and understanding the past, present, and future shaped by different forms of knowledge, culture, values and beliefs.

## Exhibition Guide

**Exhibit 1:** Sketch by John Ruskin, Scaliger Tombs: details of ironwork. Education/Culture/Activism. From The Ruskin collection. Inventory number 1996P1663.

**Caption:** Ruskin's sketch of ironwork details can equally be read as a botanical image; perhaps museums can help us to see familiar things with new eyes.

**Further information:** This is a sketch of ironwork details from the Scaliger Tombs in Italy. When Ruskin set up his museum in Walkley, he reflected that it had grown from 'the germ of a museum arranged first for workers in iron, and extended into illustration of the natural history of the neighbourhood'. But he also wrote, in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, 'I believe no cause to have been more active in the degradation of our natural feeling for beauty, than the constant use of cast iron ornaments'.

How things are presented changes what we make of them. Encountering this image digitally, the AI alt-text automatically provided by a word processor recognises this image as 'a drawing of a tree'. At some point in the past, this sketch was stored in a box that had been designated as 'botanical images'. Looking through it you're greeted by sketch after sketch of flowers, then this. Glance at this once and you might see leaves; look again and it will change before your eyes, morphing into artificial architectural patterns, like the old optical illusion of the duck or rabbit. When we can return to museums post-Covid with fresh eyes, looking again at things we thought we knew, we might be surprised how things can change.

**Exhibit 2:** Woodcut by Wassily Kandinsky, Motif from Improvisation 25 (plate, folio 16) from Klänge, 2013. Education/Culture/Activism. From the Peter Scott Gallery. Inventory number PSGCT.PD467

**Caption:** This woodcut by Kandinsky is part of a collection of intertwined multi-media works; blending different styles of teaching and learning has become key to education in a global pandemic.

**Further information:** Irene Manton (1904-1988) was a botanical scientist who bequeathed her art collection, including this piece, to the Peter Scott Gallery. Manton never kept the collection to herself but hung them around Leeds University where she worked so as many people could see them as possible. She was interested in how art could be incorporated into everyday life.

Wassily Kandinsky described Klänge (Sounds) as a "musical album." The woodcuts, prose poems, and typography merge and complement one another in a symphonic synthesis, and the horse and rider, Kandinsky's symbol for moving beyond representation in art, is a recurring motif throughout. The artist made the fifty-six woodcuts in this book between 1907 and 1912. His experiments during these formative years with flat, reductive woodcut were an important avenue to the expressive abstraction he was then developing in his painting.

**Exhibit 3:** A screenshot from the virtual 'Lancastrians of Science' tour, hosted by Lancaster City Museum. Education/Culture/Activism. From the City Museum.

**Caption:** Virtual tours of museums have become commonplace in an era of restricted openings and social distancing; perhaps one view of how we will interact with exhibitions in the future

**Further Information:** Lancaster has enjoyed some sort of a museum since 1836, when the Lancaster Literary, Scientific and Natural History Society formed. Early collecting focused on natural history, including shells and geology. The collection moved around the city, enjoying spells at the Athenaeum theatre in St Leonard's Gate, the Mechanics Institute on Market Street and later the Storey Institute, before settling in its present home in 1923. During this time, it evolved from a natural history collection to include history and art. Emphasis was always placed on the public being able to see and learn from real objects and artworks. Visitors to Lancaster City Museum can take a walk through the area's history, experiencing prehistoric, Roman, Medieval, Georgian and Victorian artefacts. They can also experience the campaigns of the Kings Own Royal Regiment, and see changing exhibitions in our temporary exhibition space.

During the pandemic, necessity forced Lancaster City Museum to experiment with new ways of sharing our exhibitions. Our virtual tour allows the viewer to move around a digital gallery, zooming in on objects and interpretation, and clicking on panels to read the text. The pandemic has compelled us to reconsider how we share our collections with those who cannot physically visit the museum.

**Exhibit 4:** Photograph portraits of Lilian and Hilda Burkitt. Education/Culture/Activism. From the Maritime Museum.

**Caption:** Hilda and Lillian Burkitt's activism as part of the suffragette movement prompt us to consider the ways we create change when we cannot protest in person, and how we remember change-makers of the past

**Further information:** Lancaster City Museums and the Lancaster Civic Society are working collaboratively on a programme to honour notable women from the district

who, up until now, have remained unrecognised for their contributions to, and influence on, society.

Hilda and Lillian Burkitt played an important part in the struggle for women's voting rights. Both women were arrested because of their activism, and Hilda was the first suffragette to undergo force feeding – over the course of four prison sentences she would endure this 292 times, more than any other suffragette. After Lillian's arrest in 1908 she continued to support the suffrage movement but withdrew from more militant activities. She went on to serve as a nurse during the First World War, and later worked as a photographer. Both women retired to Morecambe, where this project hopes to honour their legacy with green plaques in their seaside home.

**Exhibit 5:** Painting on glass by Arthur Severn, Boat and Cloudy Sky. Society/Sustainability. From The Ruskin collection. Inventory number 1996P0497

**Caption:** This painting of the sea on glass is a reminder of how not only technology, but parts of the world that we consider constant like the sea and sky, have changed over the centuries.

**Further information:** Arthur Severn's image of a 'boat and cloudy sky' is described as 'ink and wash, on glass'. The cloudy sky and stormy sea are painted, then a pane of glass has been added, and finally a boat inked on top of that. The resulting object gives the eerie impression of instability – it's more 3D than we anticipate an image to be, meaning that encountering it for the first time requires readjusting our expectations. At first glance it can be hard to understand what is being looked at. This disorientating effect is clearly reminiscent of the sea being represented, but it can also remind the viewer of the similarly jarring fact of time – because this is a technology that is no longer used. When we know what to expect from an object (such as a painting) it is easier to overlook this chronological jolt – the fact that this is something from the past, but that we are looking at it now. When we have to work to interpret it, to understand how the parts are sitting together, we can also start to think more easily about what has changed between then and now. The inked glass is now a curiosity. The sea might look the same, but it never is. Both art and the world have changed.

**Exhibit 6:** William S. Mycock, Pilkington Pottery, Lancastrian Lustre Glaze Pot. Society/Sustainability. From the Peter Scott Gallery. Chambers Archive inventory number LANPS.C1023.

**Caption:** Pilkington pottery captures the dialogue between increasing industrialisation and the desire for craftsmanship of the industrial revolution; themes just as relevant to us now

**Further information:** This vase bears the Latin inscription "Contingunt Bona Bonis", which can be roughly translated 'good things happen' or 'blessings befall the good'. It was made by Pilkington's Tile & Pottery company, a manufacturer based in North West England. After being awarded a Royal Warrant in 1913, the pottery became known as Royal Lancastrian. The leading collection and archive of Royal Lancastrian pottery is held at Peter Scott Gallery, Lancaster University.

William Burton, who managed the Pilkington's factory from its inception, was inspired by the Arts & Crafts movement and its emphasis on individual craft, rejecting hyper-industrialised factory production. The gifted artists and designers Burton attracted to Pilkington's Tile & Pottery shared his vision and the wares they produced were internationally renowned.

**Exhibit 7:** Woodblock for John Ruskin's *Modern Painters*. Collections/Future Making. From The Ruskin collection. Inventory number 1996P0064

**Caption:** New technologies fascinated and inspired Ruskin's work, providing him with new ways to look at the world and of producing art.

**Further information:** Along with other artists and scientists of the day, Ruskin was negotiating new ways of documenting, representing and communicating new knowledge and understanding of the world. He regarded his work as equally relevant for art and science: 'I am proud' he reflected in later life 'to think these drawings of mine, one thirty years ago at the foot of the Matterhorn, are entirely right as examples of mountain drawing, with absolutely correct outline of all that is useful for geological science or landscape art.'

Scientific innovation and technical advance were part of Ruskin's tool-kit for discovery. His works capture the explosion of knowledge resulting from the 19th century voyages of discovery. He met with Charles Darwin on his return from the Voyage of the Beagle. He studied under William Buckland, the first Professor of Geology and Mineralogy at Oxford University. Ruskin's close work with his publisher, George Allen, advanced and exploited many of the optical and reproductive technologies coming on stream, allowing the interaction of text and image to provide greater depth to the communication of knowledge, as for example in the etchings and woodblocks in our collection which Ruskin prepared for his published texts.

Ruskin's work was also aided by new optical technologies such as the daguerreotype and photography; and scientific instruments such as the microscope and telescope. For Ruskin, the daguerreotype was astounding because it could reveal details not visible to the naked eye. He called the microscope 'a tormenting aid' but in the *Elements of Drawing* used it to look at the extraordinary structure of bird's feathers: 'the separate cilia of the down... mechanisms at the joints which no eye nor lens can trace'.

**Exhibit 8:** Photographic portrait of Emily Williamson. Society/Sustainability. From the Maritime Museum

**Caption:** Sustainable fashion is not a new idea; Emily Williamson's concern for the damage that feather acquisition was doing to bird populations eventually led to the founding of the RSPB

**Further information:** Emily Williamson (née Bateson) was born at Highfield, Lancaster, in April 1855. An upsurge in the fashion of wearing plumage at the time had involved the substantial destruction of many species, particularly gulls. Emily had long disapproved of the use of bird feathers in fashion, both due to the reduction of bird population and the cruel nature of acquiring the plumage. In February 1889 Emily was influential in establishing the Society for the Protection of Birds, which developed as a national group for activism against cruel practices. The group particularly consisted of women who pledged not to wear clothing that included the feathers from most birds, excepting those that were killed for food or where the harvesting of feathers was not painful (such as with ostriches). Eventually the group was incorporated by Royal Charter and became the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds: the RSPB that we know today.

**Exhibit 9:** Sketch by John Ruskin, Seated figure from Egyptian bas relief. Collections/Future Making and Education/Culture/Activism. From The Ruskin collection. Inventory number 1996P0906

**Caption:** Ruskin's sketch of an Egyptian bas relief speaks both to the teaching and creating power of images, as well as the interconnected nature of time and ideas; some of Ruskin's own ideas hint at Ancient Egyptian cosmologies of image and time.

**Further information:** This drawing - copied from an Egyptian bas relief - is simply described by Ruskin as a "seated figure". In fact, it is a funerary depiction of a deceased woman - probably part of a larger scene in which she was receiving offerings to sustain her in her ongoing life after her death in our world.

The informal nature of this small sketch suggests that perhaps Ruskin was using this as a drawing exercise to practice copying the distinct ancient Egyptian style. This kind of casual treatment of this woman's image defies its importance in its original context: to the Egyptians, images and words contained the reality of the thing they represented. In other words, this wasn't just a picture of the woman - this was the woman herself. Today, we are expanding on the idea of the importance of images as we engage increasingly with historic artefacts online through 3-D images and scanning; in some cases the primacy of text and image are reversed, truly embracing images that speak for themselves.

**Exhibit 10:** Photographic portrait of Janet Raby. Collections/Future Making. From the Maritime Museum

**Caption:** Beatrice Parkinson and Janet Raby were nominated by the local community as part of a blue plaque project commemorating notable Lancastrian women; perhaps museums of the future will rely more on the input of the public into what they collect.

**Further information:** Beatrice Parkinson and Janet Raby exemplify good old Lancashire grit. Both worked at different times as Lighthouse Keepers. They lived at Cockersands Lighthouse cottage, which meant that they had to make the regular half-mile trudge across the sands to Plover Scar lighthouse. The lights were built in the mid-19th century at the entrance to the Lune estuary and both women, full of character and stoicism, provided an essential service, helping crews to navigate their ships safely into the estuary. Plover Scar marked the rocky outcrop at the edge of the deep-water channel into the estuary. The Rabys were keepers for both the lighthouses for the first 100 years; first Francis Raby in 1847, followed by Henry Raby in the late 1870s and finally Janet Raby who held the position until the end of 1945. In 1948 Beatrice Parkinson made the national news as the only female lighthouse keeper in Britain.

The Civic Society's ongoing project to honour notable women – including Beatrice Parkinson and Janet Raby – is an example of how crowdsourced content might inform our museums of the future. The project surveyed the local community in early 2021 to collect recommendations for the first woman to be honoured with a green plaque in the Lancaster district. This ongoing project aims to recognise and represent more women through green plaques in the future; further information is available through links on the exhibition webpage.

**Exhibit 11:** Daguerreotype of St Mark's Square, Venice. Society/Sustainability. From The Ruskin collection. Inventory number 1996D0018

AND Photograph of flooded St Mark's Square, Venice. Image from New York Post article, "Venice flooding: St. Mark's Square reopens despite rising tides". 16/11/2019. NurPhoto via Getty Images.

**Caption:** Even iconic monuments, like St Mark's in Venice, are affected by human-driven change; will there come a time when we can only remember them through images like this?

**Further information:** This image is of a daguerreotype - a kind of very early photography that used silver-plated copper as the medium onto which incredibly detailed images were etched using a combination of dangerous chemicals. Ruskin called the daguerreotype 'the most marvellous invention of the 19th century' and produced his own with the help of his assistant John Hobbs. One of Ruskin's favourite subjects for his daguerreotypes was architectural details; the collection holds many images of church porticos and sculptural elements. This image of St



Mark's Cathedral in Venice has taken a step back from Ruskin's usual focus on fragments or details, and instead shows us an image of the square comparable to tourist photos we might see - or take - today.

In November 2019 Venice suffered severe flooding after stormy weather - up to six feet of water submerged parts of the city. Venice is well known for its intimate relationship with the waters of the lagoon in which it sits; images of gondolas, bridges and canals permeate the cultural consciousness when we hear its name. But the water that makes it so beautiful and has led to its fame may well also be its downfall. As climate change worsens, sea levels will rise and extreme weather events will become ever more common. Many of Venice's historic buildings are already subsiding or becoming waterlogged as a direct result of the indomitable forces of the tides. If the effects of climate change are not mitigated soon, images of St Mark's square underwater may become too normal to be newsworthy. Perhaps, sadly, there will come a time where Ruskin's image of a dry piazza and strong, tall buildings is a mythical record of a new Atlantis - a city that the hubris of mortals has submerged into the sea.

**Exhibit 12:** Four Artworks accessioned by the Peter Scott Gallery in response to Covid-19. Collections/Future Making. From the Peter Scott Gallery.

1. Ellie Barrett, Hand Making List, 2020. Giclée print and jesmonite sculpture. PSGCT.2021.3
2. Stephanie Fletcher, You can eat any mushroom once, 2020. Series of 8 drawings. PSGCT.2021.2
3. Garth Gratrix, Peekaboo, 2019 (at the Cottage by the Sea). PSGCT.2021.1
4. Garth Gratrix, Line Study on Ooh La La, 2017 (at the Cottage by the Sea). PSGCT.2021.2

**Caption:** During the first Covid-19 lockdown artworks from three local artists were acquired, both as a reaction to and commemoration of the community spirit expressed in that time.

**Further information:** When Peter Scott Gallery decided to acquire new works of art to support Lancashire artists during the first Covid-19 lockdown and to mark the crisis in its collection, it was agreed that the acquisitions should be borne out of an artist's practice rather than responding directly to pandemic. The generosity and community spirit that arose during lockdown was heartening, and it was agreed that reflecting the generosity of the time should be an influence on the works entering the collection.

Work was acquired from three artists who are based in Lancashire and make an important and generous contribution to the cultural ecology of the region through their wider practice. All three artists have a focus on local development and support for other artists, in addition to their own artistic practices that engage nationally and beyond.

The three artists chosen, Ellie Barrett, Stephanie Fletcher and Garth Gratrix have artistic practices that reach and inspire others; they engage with politics, policy, education in their work and to create opportunities for the benefit of others.

**Exhibit 13:** Insus Tombstone 3D model. Collections/Future Making. From the City Museum. Inventory number LANLM.2008.2.1

**Caption:** 3D imaging technology is enabling us to interact with the world – including ancient objects – in new ways. It is exciting to think how technology might shape the museums of the future

**Further information:** This image is of a 3D model of an artefact called the Insus tombstone; a grave marker for a Roman cavalryman called Insus which was discovered in Lancaster in 2005. It dates to c.75-120CE and is in remarkably good condition for its age, even retaining some fragments of the original coloured paint. Working with Oxford University's Taylor Bennett, we have created a colourful 3D model of the tombstone that imagines how it may have looked almost two millennia ago.

The model has since been 3D printed in resin, recreating the texture of the carving. Modern technology is changing the way we interact with museum exhibits. 3D printing can be used to let us learn about objects through touch while keeping original artefacts safe from damage, while 3D imaging allows visitors and researchers from around the world to view artefacts in detail from the comfort of their homes

**Exhibit 14:** John Ruskin, The Grass of the Field from The Two Paths: Being a Lecture on Art and its Application to Decoration and Manufacture, Delivered in 1858-9. Society/Sustainability. From The Ruskin Collection. Inventory number 1996B3910

**Caption:** This image, taken from a lecture on art and its application to manufacture (1858-59), reimagines the connection between nature and industry.

**Further information:** Ruskin's extraordinary image of 'The Grass of the Field', a delicate shaft of wheat transformed into metal, imagines a world in which iron has grown directly from the earth.

Ruskin recognised that that he was living through a period of unprecedented change. His works explore how the future may be changed by human intervention in the natural world. They encourage us to re-imagine our understanding of our choices in the world through intense processes of visual observation.

At a time when we are increasingly recognising the scale of human agency in changing the earth's climate and environment, and scientific discovery is increasingly

confronting issues which challenge perception, language and perspective at a fundamental level, Ruskin's concern for environmental issues and the impact of new technologies on the health of the planet speaks powerfully to our own era. Ruskin's meticulous approach to collecting, cataloguing and communicating the forces of change and transformation evidence how we can mobilise our collections to address the stewardship of the earth and the pressing cultural, social and environmental issues today.

**Exhibit 15:** Two Women with a dust pile press at Pilkington's Tile and Pottery factory. Society/Sustainability. From the Peter Scott Gallery. Inventory number LANPS.2010.6.1

**Caption:** These two women, who worked at the Pilkington's factory, are a reminder that people are the driving force behind every process, social and industrial.

**Further information:** On his retirement from Clifton Junction in 1915, William Burton was remembered as committed to his employees' education and welfare. Factory staff wrote to convey their 'appreciation of [Burton's] many thoughtful acts and kindnesses', and his commitment to 'lead the way to improved conditions of labour...'. This photograph taken on the factory floor shows two women with a dust pile press, reminding us of the people behind the objects in our collections. As we look to the future, it is important to remember that there are individuals behind all the social and industrial processes that create our modern world.

**Exhibit 16:** Rawlinson Bookcase and Ladies workbox. Collections/Future Making. From The Judges Lodgings collection. Inventory numbers LANMS.2008.3 and LANMS2006.8.

**Caption:** This bookcase and workbox were made by T. & J. Dowbiggen and F. Dowbiggen of Gillows, a Lancaster-based furniture manufacturer.

**Further information:** Gillows Cabinet Makers made beautiful functional furniture for the aspiring middle classes, gentry and 'half the aristocracy in England' in the 1700s and 1800s. As their reputation for providing excellent furniture made with 'exotic' woods grew, they opened a London showroom. The company received commissions for the New Palace of Westminster, the 'Lusitania' and 'Queen Elizabeth' liners as well as work in Australia, South Africa, America and Europe, providing employment for generations of Lancastrians.

Alongside the history of beautiful furniture design is a darker story, however. Gillows was trading from Lancaster: later the fourth biggest slave trading port in Britain. The

company traded goods that were the product of slave labour like sugar and rum, and provided partial investment in a slave trade ship in the 1750s. How we reconcile these histories is an ongoing discussion, particularly relevant in the context of the current rise in public awareness of systematic racial injustice and the ways that our histories have been written to obscure its role in the success of prominent historical figures.

All the museums involved in this exhibition are committed to participating in this ongoing conversation, not only to highlight the injustices of the past and present, but also to create a future where museums more actively engage with – and better represent - the nuanced stories of people of colour in the past.

**Exhibit 17:** John Ruskin, Lecture Diagrams. Education/Culture/Activism. From The Ruskin collection. Inventory numbers 1996PO465; 1996[BW]PO473; 1996PO464; 1996[BW]PO907

**Caption:** John Ruskin's commitment to and belief in the importance of education was demonstrated in his lecture diagrams.

**Further information:** Ruskin was passionately committed to education for all. He taught at schools, working men's colleges, universities and gave public lectures. He was a spectacular public speaker. He believed that new ways of understanding the world needed new ways of communicating ideas and took great pains in preparing his lecture diagrams and in choreographing their display. His lectures were like theatrical performances. Various sources convey their power and the stagecraft with which Ruskin used models, casts and large-scale lecture diagrams (on average 1.5 x1.5m). His lectures built on the arguments introduced in his books and were a way of teaching art and design as well as the scientific principles of form and structure. The lecture diagrams feature drawings and paintings of the natural world, of architectural forms and illuminated letters, many of which were based on Ruskin's own collection of medieval books; and of figures from classical Greek coins and pottery, and maps.

**Exhibit 18:** Lancaster Castle Gate. Collections/Future Making. Lancaster Castle.

**Caption:** Lancaster Castle offers a way for us to think about the other uses museum spaces are put to and the implication that these might have when we think about them as heritage sites

**Further information:** Lancaster Castle offers a way for us to think about the other uses that museum spaces are currently put to – and will be put to in the future – and the implication that these might have when we think about them as heritage sites. Since it was decommissioned by the Ministry of Justice as a fully functioning HM Prison in 2011, the focus has very much been on the preservation and

restoration of the fabric of these historic buildings. A second key objective has been to keep the Castle open to the public and in particular to make it available to the people of, and visitors to, the city of Lancaster. Although access (in non-Covid times!) is restricted by the functioning of the Castle as the Crown Court, a virtual reality tour is available online. Its present and recent use as a building in the justice system make the reality of historical crime and punishment much more vivid. The past does not occupy a separate space here, but instead very much continues to influence the way users and visitors experience the building.

**Exhibit 19:** Book of Hours; Twenty-one miniatures from medieval manuscripts, pasted by Ruskin onto strips of marginal decoration. Collections/Future Making. From The Ruskin collection. Inventory number 1996P0194

**Caption:** This piece is made up of a collection of miniatures that Ruskin cut out of medieval devotional books, prompting us to think about how we curate our pasts and futures, and what images can teach without words.

**Further information:** A Book of Hours was a popular kind of Christian devotional book in the European Middle Ages, most common from the latter part of the 13th century onward. These books were compilations of prayers, psalms and other religious texts, and more luxurious examples often contained beautiful illuminations and miniatures designed as complementary sources of learning - something of which Ruskin would have approved, considering his advocacy for the power of images to teach. In this piece, Ruskin has carefully removed a number of miniatures and marginal strips from at least two different Books of Hours and has pasted them together like a collage. It is hard to imagine anyone treating an original historic text this way.

The practice of snipping out and pasting together the favoured pieces of these books is reminiscent of how we are often inclined to remove pieces of the past from their context and paste them together to create an idealised picture. We curate and compile the things we find most beautiful or most beneficial to create futures - but should we consider the pieces we are leaving behind? Ultimately, while he has created one piece of art, Ruskin has also willingly destroyed - or at least damaged - at least two others. What are we destroying to create the future? How do we know what the most valuable pieces are to keep? What information are we leaving behind - and can we trust the pictures we have chosen to teach us without words?