

Oxford
Road
Corridor

GUESS WHO'S BACK MANCHESTER MUSEUM
DIRECTOR ESME WARD USHERS IN A NEW ERA

WE CELEBRATE 50 YEARS OF THE
ROYAL NORTHERN COLLEGE OF MUSIC

INSIDE MECD THE NORTH'S BIGGEST
UNIVERSITY BUILDING

Spring Edition



ISSUE 2 FEB 2023

Postcards from Oxford Road

topography: oxford road, map & key

when I say I know this city I mean
I know it by its men I mean the giving
of directions is an unfolding
like an atlas like a parting of legs
I mean I know it by the long road
of my body laid down nightly
between home and somewhere else
or by the bus stop that was the morning's
quiet leaving or the last fight café
or the opened zip of the canal
I mean that I may not have ever learned
the proper names for anywhere
but their voices are still the dull traffic
when I cannot sleep when I offer you
my hand come with me let me show you
where it was I kissed him here and here and there

key

here against the brickwall cliff-face
of the side-street estuaries
Charles Chester Sidney

here where the snooker table in The Refuge was a bed
and I leant across it his head dipped to the back of my neck
a choreography of pockets

there top floor flat of The Quadrangle the city
on our bare shoulders through the window
and night coming in like a memory

Andrew McMillan



topography: oxford road, map & key was one of three *Postcards from Oxford Road* co-commissions from Manchester Literature Festival and Manchester Poetry Library at Manchester Metropolitan University for the inaugural Corridor of Light in Autumn 2021. The project was shortlisted for the Made in Manchester award at Manchester Culture Awards 2022. Modify Productions created short films of *Postcards from Oxford Road* performed on location which you can watch by scanning the QR code.

Andrew McMillan is the author of the poetry collections *physical*, *playtime* and *pandemonium*. He is Professor of Contemporary Writing at The Manchester Writing School at Manchester Metropolitan University. You can find him at @AMcMillanPoet on Twitter.

Spring Edition

Welcome

Oxford Road Corridor stretches south from St. Peter's Square as far as Whitworth Park, extending either side to Upper Brook Street and into Hulme. Within this square mile, two of the UK's largest universities and a university NHS foundation trust work beside the city's digital, technology and life science businesses to deliver innovation for Manchester and beyond.

Around Oxford Road you can find many of Manchester's iconic venues and cultural spaces alongside the institutions that cultivate the next generation of artists and creatives.

There is a thriving nightlife with exciting new neighbourhoods which bring an abundance of cafés, restaurants and bars. Nestled between the beautiful architecture and landmarks are historic parks and contemporary green spaces.

Here is a taste of what's happening here this spring...

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THE NEW BRUNCH SPOTS AROUND OXFORD ROAD



PREVIEW: QUEER CONTACT RETURNS THIS FEBRUARY



ESME WARD INTRODUCES US TO A NEW ERA AT MANCHESTER MUSEUM



INSIDE MECD, THE BIGGEST UNIVERSITY BUILDING IN THE NORTH

ROYAL NORTHERN COLLEGE OF MUSIC 50TH BIRTHDAY

SELF-GUIDED TOURS 18
SPRING LISTINGS 20



RISE & SHINE

The breakfast, brunch and lunch options around Oxford Road are getting better and better. We take a look at some of the new kids on the block.



Bold Street Coffee



Federal



Loaf

Liverpool's acclaimed **Bold Street Coffee** has come to Manchester. In fact, they've come to Manchester twice: the original Cross Street location proved so popular, a branch has opened up on University Green alongside the likes of Brewdog and TAKK.

What can you expect from this, the fourth incarnation of Bold Street Coffee? Well, take the idea of a coffee and breakfast cafe and then come up with the best possible version of that, filtered through Liverpool's cosmopolitan foodie culture. And that's just for starters. Speciality coffees from all over the world are available in your choice of classic format, whether that's cappuccino, Americano or espresso, and there's also all manner of iced coffees and herbal teas, as well as Arnold Palmers and hot chocolates for when Manchester takes a turn for the chilly.

The breakfast menu includes an essential full English breakfast but has much more to offer besides, with gourmet delights such as baked eggs with shakshuka, spicy and melting nduja, and toasted sourdough. There's also delicious smoked salmon and scrambled eggs and plenty of vegetarian options, along with sweet treats such as French toast and sugary pancakes.

The butties menu covers all the expected bases but look out for masterpieces such as the steak sandwich, featuring 4oz steak, onion jam, crispy shallots, rocket, parmesan, and, again, toasted sourdough, because why wouldn't you? These make a great sit-down lunch but are also perfect takeaways for those on the go.

Whether you're studying, visiting, or you're on a well-deserved lunch break from work, drop into Bold Street Coffee for what we can only describe as a 'cafe plus' experience.

Built on the former BBC Oxford Road site, Circle Square is a mix of residential and commercial space featuring boutique eateries for creatives, entrepreneurs, and technology wizards. And now they can get a world-class cup of coffee at **Federal**.

The brainchild of charismatic Portuguese hospitality king Claudio Ribeiro, Federal is an independent chain of coffee shops in Manchester inspired by the cuisine and atmosphere of Australia and New Zealand. This unit is the third branch, after the meteoric success of the Deansgate and High Street outlets, and where better for it than the buzzing Circle Square neighbourhood? Found next to Hatch and all the wildly popular event venues and retro and vintage marketplaces on Oxford Road's main thoroughfare, the new Federal is getting on board with the marketplace vibe by including a foodie corner along with a late license for those much-needed evening visits.

Featuring ten varieties of hand-brewed, seasonal, single-source coffee, the Federal menu is huge, even before you get to the iced coffees and teas and hot chocolates. The food is a selection of eye-catching on-trend options, such as bagels, halloumi, chorizo, sourdough bread and salmon, brought together and styled into exquisite photo-friendly dishes. Naturally, there are plenty of vegan and vegetarian options and this new branch features French toast as a speciality. You'll have seen the photos on Instagram, but wait until you taste them in real life!

Federal is a must-visit destination for fans of caffeine and classy cafe fare, whether you're heading to a gig or looking to make a special visit. Want a unique gift for your friends and family? You'll also be able to pick up jars and tins hand-picked by Claudio himself at their corner shop facility.

Manchester's food scene has become extra sweet thanks to the team at **Loaf**. Loaf cakes were popular back in the 1960s and now they're back in fashion, with Loaf bakery here to provide some tender loafing care to hungry city-dwellers.

The bakery is known for creating enormous loaf cakes that come coated in a dazzling array of fruity, chocolatey icings; not to mention loaded with wafers, biscuits and sweets. The vibe is retro-modern and tonal pinks. If you're looking for somewhere colourful to drop in for an indulgent lunch, look no further. The loaf cake is a captivating new trend, and if you haven't tried one before, this is the best place to take your first steps.

Starting with a single venue, the team behind Loaf have now expanded their authentic and made-with-love business into two locations; the newest one being on Oxford Street. The team are keen to get to know all their customers personally, interacting daily on social media, which makes Loaf refreshingly different.

It has quickly become a hotspot for those in search of brunch, Instagram snappers, date days, or just anyone who loves to be somewhere beautifully designed. There's a particular kind of upbeat, cheerful atmosphere found in Loaf MCR's choice of venues. There is also a range of pastries, bagels, sandwiches, teas, coffees and hot chocolates available if you fancy making your visit into an afternoon out.

Also, if you're looking to feed an office as a Friday treat, or need cakes for a party or function, drop by for a chat as they are more than happy to bake cakes to order. Try something a cut above the chain franchises – go for something sweet, made with loaf.

Restaurant reviews by
Ian Jones / @lanDJonesnet

Queer Contact

CONTACT CONTINUES ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS
WITH QUEER CONTACT – A CELEBRATION OF THE UK'S MOST
EXTRAORDINARY LGBTQ+ TALENT FROM 4-18 FEB

Queer Contact 2023 is a bigger, brighter, bolder and more beautiful celebration of fierce and fabulous queer artists, with something for everybody.

Festival highlights include Drag Show UK's talented queens Ginny Lemon and Sister Sister, an evening in conversation with *Heartstopper* and *Cucumber* actor and Contact alumni Fisayo Akinade, and the return of the annual and outrageous *Vogue Ball* as part of a jam packed programme of spoken word, lip synching, cabaret and comedy.

Kicking off this year's Festival is a night of high kicks, high camp and high energy as the much-loved *House of Suarez Vogue Ball* makes a welcome return. Taking place at Manchester Academy, this year's ball travels back to the glorious decade of disco for a night of glitter and glam MC'd by the hostess with the mostess, Rikki Beadle-Blair.

Breakout stars of *RuPaul's Drag Race UK* Season 2, Ginny Lemon & Sister Sister make their debut at Queer Contact by trying to bring to the Manchester stage the most disappointing drag show you've ever seen.

Heartstopper and *Cucumber* actor Fisayo Akinade explores the many different elements that have influenced his life and

career in another Queer Contact Festival Highlight In Conversation with Contact Artistic Director and CEO Keisha Thompson. She will talk to him about the 50 things that shaped him – inspired by Contact's celebration of its 50th anniversary.

One of the break out comedy acts from the 2022 Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and the recipient of its inaugural David Johnson Emerging Talent Award for his performance as Milly-Liu comedy performer François Pandolfo makes his debut at this year's Queer Contact with his "one-man-cat-drag-late-night comedy show."

Two words you thought you may never see in the same sentence, Queer and Tardis, take their place on the Queer Contact programme for a night of *Doctor Who*-inspired entertainment by Carrot and Friends. Jump aboard the queerest TARDIS in time and space for cosmic comedy. As the saying goes there ain't no party like a Time Lord party.

For lovers of Drag, Queer Contact 2023 is also delighted to bring drag comedian, Lady Bushra to the stage. Hailed from the exotic land of Bradford, and shortlisted for the 2021 BBC New Comedy Awards, Lady Bushra is the brainchild of British Asian comedian Amir. His alter ego

Lady Bushra is known for her stand-up comedy, ingenious lipsync performances and one-liners.

Other cabaret and comedy highlights include a night with *The Cocoa Butter Club* – an award-winning performance company, showcasing and celebrating performers of colour. Expect a spirited soiree featuring burlesque, live music, drag, voguing, hula hooping and much much more.

South Asian awesomeness is also celebrated with an evening in the company of *The Bitter Peach's Peach Chutney Crew* – the UK's only gender-diverse Pan-Asian cabaret collective, whose mission is to empower the queer Asian community by providing safe spaces, diversifying Asian representation, and educating non-Asians on racial issues. The "Infectiously entertaining" (*The Stage*) Luke Hereford (he/they) brings their autobiographical musical adventures to Queer Contact on their journey of queer self-discovery through the glamorous spirit of his Nan, all to the tune of Madonna, Kylie, Kate Bush and his favourite pop divas.

Queer Contact is part of Contact's Spring Season.

Book online: contactmcr.com

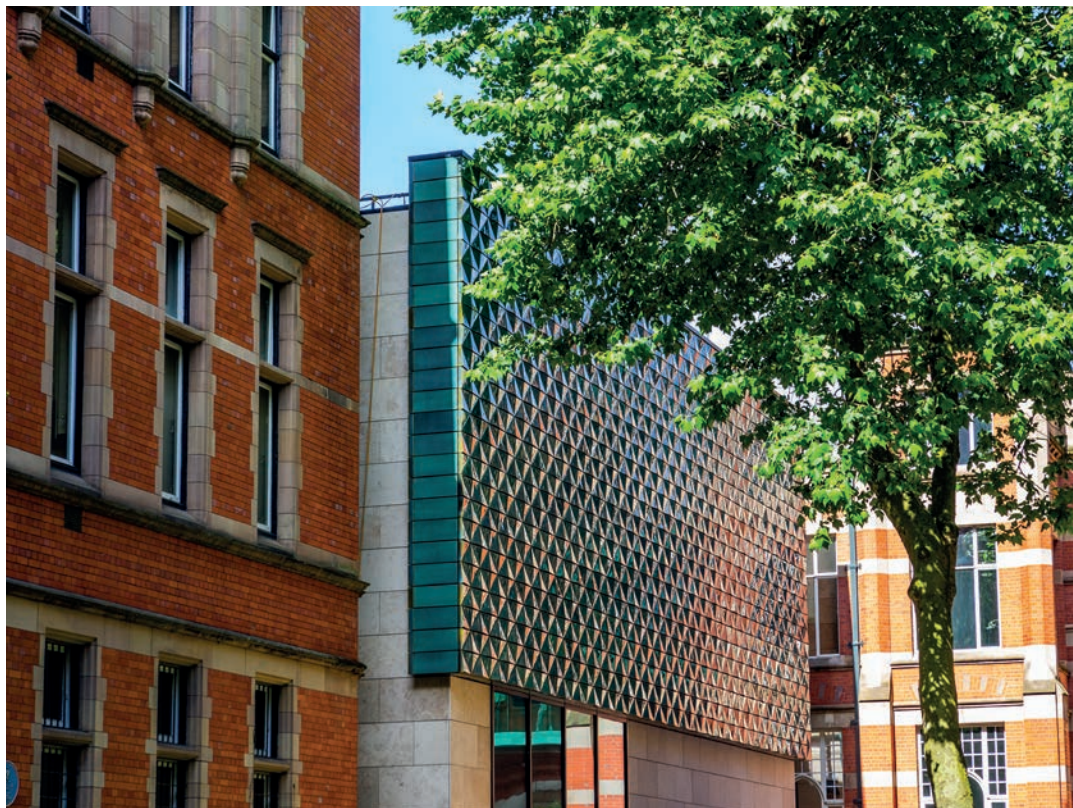




Guess who's back!

MANCHESTER MUSEUM'S DIRECTOR ESME WARD
WELCOMES US BACK AFTER A TWO YEAR HIATUS

Manchester Museum reopens this
February following an ambitious
£15 million transformation which has
expanded the museum to make room
for more joy and learning, become more
widely and deeply loved, and evolve into
the museum Manchester needs.



One of the many things that I love about Manchester is it's a city made by the people, the workers. It's the birthplace of the suffragettes, the first industrial city in the world and the atom was split right here on Oxford Road. When I became Director of Manchester Museum in 2018, I did a lot of thinking about the difference an institution like the museum could make in a place like Manchester. How can it embrace this rich and often radical history and re-imagine its creative and civic role? How could it be useful to people and reflect a commitment to inclusion? We've been closed since August 2021 for a £15 million transformation, giving us an unprecedented opportunity to respond to these questions and evolve into the museum Manchester needs.

We'll reopen our doors on 18 February with a modern extension and beautiful galleries. We'll unveil a stunning new Exhibition Hall showcasing the UK-premier of *Golden Mummies of Egypt*. We'll also have a Belonging Gallery, Lee Kai Hung Chinese Culture Gallery, South Asia Gallery, and a new Dinosaur display. What's most important to me is that our new galleries and spaces are co-designed and co-curated with communities and partners, putting lived experience and human stories at the heart of the museum. Museums have told the same stories for over a hundred years – it's time to tell new stories and show what we care about.

The South Asia Gallery, for example, will be the UK's first permanent gallery dedicated to exploring the experiences, cultures and contributions of the South Asian diaspora. It is a collective endeavour. It is a landmark partnership with the British Museum and it has been designed and is being built with a spirit of collaboration by a unique group of extraordinary ordinary people – community leaders, educators, artists, students, journalists, scientists, and many others from the South Asian diaspora. It draws upon diverse perspectives so that the museum is more relevant to the communities it serves.

How we care for each other and the world shapes all we do. Sustainability and the climate crisis really matter to us. We have opened up the entire top floor and there are education groups, charities, artists, writers, social enterprises, activists, staff and students co-working and collaborating, with a shared commitment to social and environmental justice. When you work in a museum and talk about care, everyone thinks you're talking about objects, and of course you are, but it's also about caring for people and their relationships.

For me, this is exactly what museums in Manchester should be doing. It's an approach that's reflected in the ethos of the University of Manchester, of which the museum is a part, with its commitment to social responsibility.

These new spaces and displays are really exciting, but familiar and much-loved spaces are still here for you too such as our Vivarium and Fossils Gallery.

We know that they hold a special place in the hearts of some who visit us and we've been careful not to change the things they love.

Put simply, we want the museum to be a place where people feel they belong. A range of new co-designed spaces – including a prayer

room, therapy space, quiet room, picnic area and Changing Places toilet – create conditions, we hope, for more people to feel welcomed.

We are also an institution born of empire and we're addressing what that means today, highlighting our commitment to repatriation and foregrounding diverse and Indigenous perspectives is central to everything we do.

Esme Ward
Director
Manchester Museum

Manchester Museum reopens 18 February with *Golden Mummies of Egypt*.
Book for free: manchestermuseum.co.uk

‘Put simply,
we want the
museum to be
a place where
people feel
they belong’



© Maryam Wahid

INSIDE MECD, THE BIGGEST UNIVERSITY BUILDING IN THE NORTH

Jonathan Schofield's jaw drops as he walks around the MECD building at the University of Manchester



"We can make lightning with this one," says Richard Gardner. He then baffles me, an admitted ignoramus of electrical knowhow, as he continues with animation and enthusiasm to talk about how this laboratory can generate 600,000 volts here and 800,000 volts there.

Gardner is the manager of the High Voltage Laboratories at the University of Manchester. We're talking in a huge room filled with outlandish machines on a long-term sabbatical from a science-fiction movie. The room is a Faraday Cage or, in other words, "an enclosure used to block electromagnetic fields". I'm on the wrong side of the bullet-proof glass protecting the scientists and engineers which makes me slightly nervous.

The ten-metre tall "lightning machine", as I call it, or an "Impulse Generator", as Gardner calls it,

can be used to test the effects of lightning on all manner of things, motorway gantries, buildings, power lines and so on. Here lightning can strike a lot more than twice. What's worrying me is this huge machine is attached by a thin wire with a crocodile clip to a pole almost within arm's reach. Again I'm wondering if I should be back behind the bullet-proof glass. Then it crossed my mind I might feel a lot more secure in the Salt Fog Chamber we'd passed earlier. That tests the effect of salt on various materials, think of the metal corrosion you see at the seaside.

"The energy generated in this room," says Gardner before we leave and almost as an aside, "could power half of Stockport." It's taken some time but, at last, there is a new term of reference for that southern Manchester town other than the word "viaduct".

The Manchester Engineering Campus Development has a name it takes some effort to remember. In fact, the name is almost as long as the building so most people refer to it as just the MECD (pronounced MEC-D). It is a monster structure in scale lying between Grosvenor Street to the north and Booth Street East to the south, while unifying older structures, such as Oddfellows Hall, with the vast new build.

It's 860,000 sq feet in area, over and below ground, that's 11 football pitches. It is the biggest single university building in the North, possibly in the UK and one of the biggest in Europe. When MECD reaches capacity it will have a student and staff population of over 8,000, around the size of Keele University.

The length of the building, at 200 metres long, is one metre less than the South Tower of Deansgate Square is high. The volume of MECD is ten times that of the tower. There are 52 teaching spaces and four computer clusters. It's breathtaking.

The architects are Dutch practice Meccanoo. They're doing well in Manchester, with lots of projects. For public buildings, they have a Henry Ford attitude that you can have any colour as long as it's black. Their other most notable building in the city is HOME arts centre. The excellent Aaben in Hulme shows they can do other shades as well.

The dark exterior of MECD will never be beautiful but it is always impressive. The articulations on the side and sheer bulk again remind one of a science-fiction movie in this case of a spaceship landed in M13. Given the equipment inside that's not far off. One oddity in the design is how a plant feature, again in black, over the underground area and close to the main entrance off Booth Street bears an uncanny resemblance to Mecca's Ka'aba.

Otto Diesfeldt, one of the architects involved, says, "We tried to bring a huge variety of technical spaces as close to each other as possible while making the student experience great."

The Project Manager, Neil Stubbs, has been coordinating this vast scheme and he takes me around with Emma Pemberton-Eccles, the Communications and Marketing head. Stubbs wears a wide grin most of the time. He's been working on the project for nine years as the University concentrates its estate around Oxford

Road and moves out of the northern campus along Granby Row.

He should grin, all that work has paid off. Stubbs explains how it took 75 research groups to settle on a design for MECD which must provide tuition, study and pioneering research space for just about every field of engineering in the book. The range is so bewildering I could have made notes for a day and not covered all the topics covered. I would have understood them even less.

Pemberton-Eccles is also grinning. She's pleased with the awards garnered for the community engagement work which created 182 jobs and apprenticeships for local people, some of whom were previously homeless or in the prison system; and how the project awarded £60,000 of cash grants to local community groups and charities along with pro bono work with a local women's refuge, an LGBT centre and food bank.

Well take a look for yourself, it's open to all for a stroll through from Monday to Friday. It's a long stroll and an uninterrupted one of 180 metres, almost the full length of the building. The clever trick here was to place an open aisle on several levels down the east side of the longest element of the building. This connects with workshops and labs to the west and the smaller structures further to the east.

But these are no ordinary aisles. They are flexible work and study areas. This is where for any casual visitor it gets exciting because these aisles are alive. Look down the length from say the Grosvenor Street end during a standard university day and you see hundreds and hundreds of mostly young people working away or socialising. You can hear brains ticking in an environment that feels right.

Look again down those long aisles and despite the dark geopolitics of the here and now, you can allow yourself to feel optimistic. The activity makes you smile. This is where Diesfeldt is right about "making the student experience great", here's the proof of the pudding.

Another interesting point about MECD is it's right on 2022 message with lots of natural ventilation, literally freshening things up. It is not a hermetically sealed building and you can play peeping Tom with it from the outside too.

'The energy generated in this room could power half of Stockport'



© Jill Jennings

Get yourself a pint in Sandbar and sit by the window and you can watch Richard Gardner busying himself across the road in the High Voltage Laboratories when the roller-shutters aren't down and he's making lightning. Gardner again, "It's great working in daylight and having the windows so people can look in. This is a university so it's about research, it's about teaching and engagement so the more people can see in the better."

Everywhere in MECD, there's something to turn the head. The pioneering blended lecture theatres are particularly clever which combine a theatre space with, through a movable partition screen, the practical study area. So, in one interconnected area, the theoretical can be taught and then students can move straight to the hands-on experience. Meanwhile, the ceilings have been left with the plant visible which suits an engineering building perfectly, as its theme is hovering above your head if civil engineering is your thing.

The main entrance off Booth Street encourages exploration of the building. There's something almost eloquent about the broad staircase, there's a 60s optimism, as with the Bikerdike interiors in the Whitworth Art Gallery or the Royal Northern College of Music.

As Stubbs and Pemberton-Eccles point out that optimism suffuses MECD. Stubbs says, "We want the whole building to breathe teamwork and the exchange of ideas whether it's over AI or climate change. It's about facing the key industry challenges going forward. That's why the cafe

here is called Collaborate because that lies at the heart of what we are doing, we want people to work together to create solutions for tomorrow's problems."

Stubbs' words are brave but correct because what this building is also about is confidence. It says, if we want a building to last a hundred years it has to be done well and be flexible enough to adapt to changes, it has to be the best it can be, it needs to be a place where like minds can meet and generate new ideas. Promenading that 180 metres, passing all those active minds, puts me in mind of my favourite quote from the city.

This is from the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society in 1785, treat the word "men" as a generic expression.

"Men, however great their learning often become indolent and unambitious to improve in knowledge for want of associating with others of similar talents and improvements. But science, like fire, is put in motion by collision. Where a number of such men have frequent opportunities of meeting and conversing together, thought begets thought, and every hint is turned to advantage. A spirit of enquiry glows in every breast."

Those words might come down from 237 years ago but they could be the motto for this marvellous addition to town-and-gown life in Manchester.

This article was first published in March 2022 by Jonathan Schofield at confidentials.com



© Roscoe Rutter Ltd

RNCM at 50

MANCHESTER'S GLOBAL CONSERVATOIRE
CELEBRATES ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY AND OFFERS
SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

Located on Oxford Road, nestled between the city's two universities, sits the RNCM: a powerhouse of innovation and creativity and one of the UK's most thriving live music venues.

This year the RNCM turns 50. It's a significant milestone for the much-loved organisation and one that it's keen to share with as many people as possible.

'This is a very exciting time for us,' says Manus Carey, the RNCM's Deputy Principal responsible for performance and programming. 'At just 50 years young our journey is still very much beginning, but

we already have so much to celebrate. Yes, we're recognised internationally as one of the world's top conservatoires, but we're incredibly proud to call Manchester our home. The music-making that goes on here – both in our unique venues and out in the wider community – is really extraordinary, and this year provides the perfect opportunity to celebrate together.'

Housing three main public performance spaces – a concert hall, theatre and recital room – the RNCM – with over 350 concerts and events each year – will be a familiar haunt to the

North West's concertgoers. For those less familiar, this special anniversary is the ideal time to step inside.

The occasion brings an expansive public programme from classical to contemporary to jazz, folk and pop that includes performances from students, staff and alumni, guest appearances from local partners including the BBC Philharmonic, Manchester Camerata, Psappha, Manchester Collective and Opera North, international composer and artist residencies, and an array of family-friendly events.

'So much of what we do is based on collaboration and this was something that we really wanted to showcase within our 50th programme,' says Manus. 'Throughout the year you'll see events that bring our 900 students together with international musicians and composers, as well as some of the amazing professional partners we work with on a regular basis. And we're planning some great projects for young people and our local communities too.'

Since 1973 the RNCM has fuelled the aspirations of young instrumentalists, singers, composers, conductors, and musical entrepreneurs from all over the world. Today – embracing its home in Manchester and on the world stage – its mission is clear: to define the future of music.

'This is something that we hope is apparent to our audiences. We have a restless mission to shape the future of music, and to instil a sense of curiosity in our students to transform the world around them, whether on the stage or out in the community.'

A continuous strand within the RNCM's programming is new music. This year, upwards of 25 premieres by professional composers and 50 by current student composers, music creators and songwriters will showcase new and contemporary work, with Sally Beamish, George Lewis and Anna Clyne joining as composers-in-residence.

'There's an incredible amount of music being created at the RNCM every day across different genres, and we're proud to provide a platform for it to be heard publicly,' explains Manus. 'We're also working hard to share underrepresented music, and alongside the premieres, we've

got over 40 performances featuring works by voices who are not often given the spotlight.

'All of this is complemented by concerts and public masterclasses from our three artists-in-residence, the renowned pianist Stephen Hough, the Elias String Quartet and Manchester Collective,

'Supporting young musicians to achieve their musical potential is something that we're extremely passionate about'

special appearances from our regional and international partners, and community projects and initiatives designed to inspire young people.'

RNCM's work in the community has never been stronger. Alongside its public events for children, young people, and families (which includes a *Young Explorers* concert series, Christmas Family Day, and Children's Opera), is a dedication to break down the barriers to

music education and make it as accessible as possible.

The RNCM50 Fund, established for this special anniversary, is raising vital funds to support the cause, with results ensuring that initiatives such as the RNCM Pathfinder and Young Projects programmes continue to provide free music education to talented musicians in need. And this summer, the Big Weekender festival promises to connect directly to the city's young people and community, filling the RNCM with music and creativity. The event will also launch Soundcheck, an initiative providing free tickets to 14 - 18-year-olds and a 50% price deal for students.

'The work we do in the area is so important,' says Manus. 'Supporting young musicians to achieve their musical potential is something that we're extremely passionate about, and this is one of the reasons why it features so heavily during our 50th year.'

So, with a half-century milestone under its belt and a desire to drive tomorrow's music industry, what does the future of the RNCM look like? 'It looks very much like the future of our great city,' says Manus. 'Diverse, ambitious, curious, welcoming, and full of endless possibilities.'



© Robin Clewley

EXPLORE THE KNOWLEDGE QUARTER

THROUGH SOME OF THE AREA'S MOST SIGNIFICANT
LANDMARKS AND ICONIC BUILDINGS

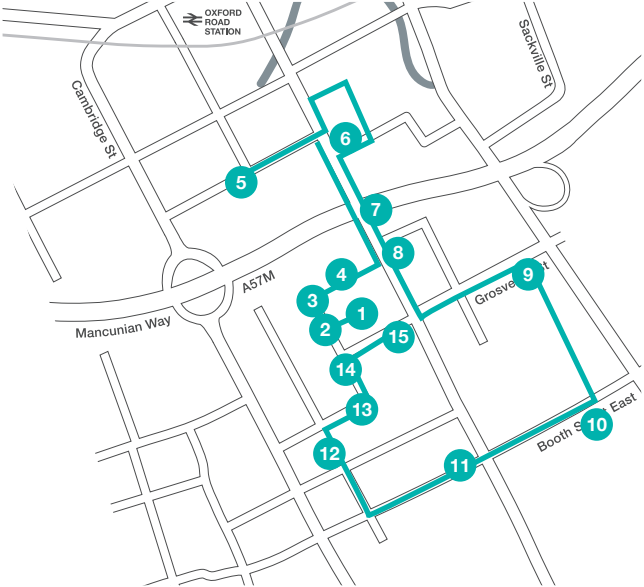
We've been working with Jonathan Schofield, Blue Badge Guide since 1996 and Editor-at-Large of Manchester Confidential, to create routes around Oxford Road that reveal the area's fascinating history.

Three 45-60 minute self-guided walks are available to download from our website using the QR code on this page. These walks are designed to fit around a lunch hour or short visit to the city.

You can join at any point on the map and complete it at your own pace.
We would love to see your photos, so don't forget to tag us.

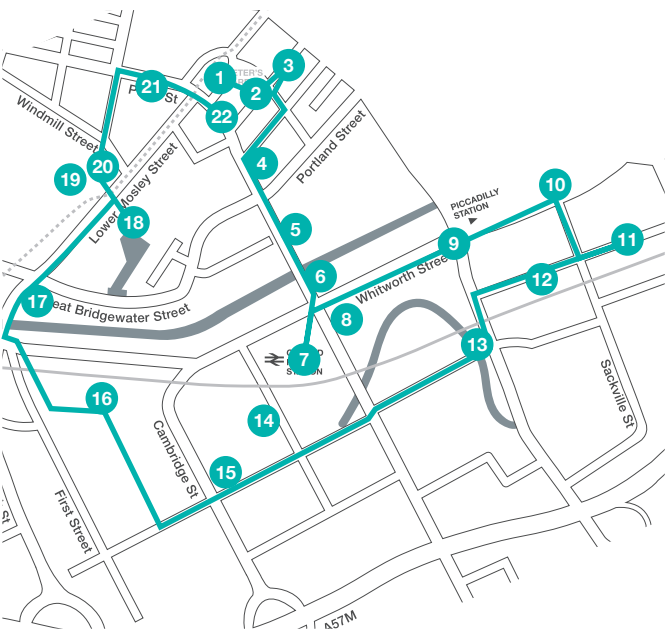
ROUTE 02 TECHNOLOGY, ART AND INNOVATION

From the serene surroundings of All Saints Park to the imposing sight of the biggest university building in the North (see page 12), this route takes you around Manchester Met's campus and back again via new neighbourhoods and advanced materials.



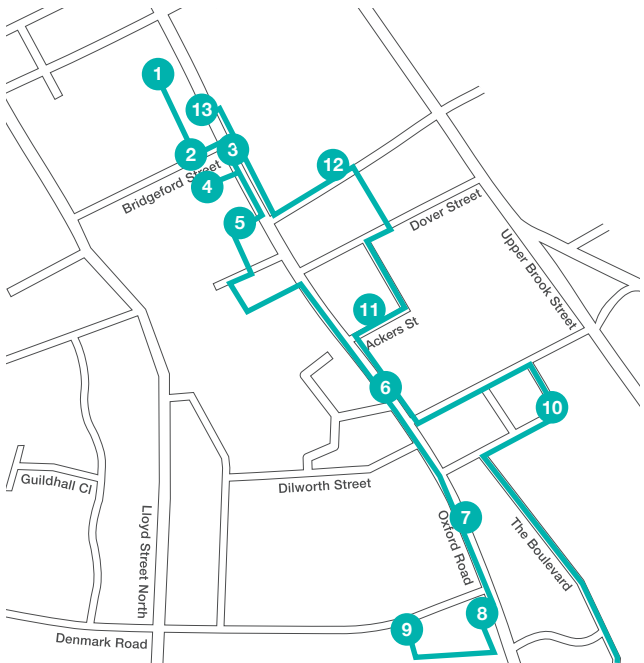
ROUTE 01 CIVIC SPLENDOUR, MILLS AND WAREHOUSES

Beginning at the northern end of the Oxford Road Corridor, this tour reveals the history of some of Manchester's most iconic buildings, cultural spaces and historic pubs. Learn more about Manchester's industrial roots, the slums of 'Little Ireland' and the fascinating story behind the city's most 'sinister building'.



ROUTE 03 ARCHITECTURE, IDEAS, HEALTHCARE & POLITICS

This route will guide you through the University of Manchester and NHS Foundation Trust campuses to Whitworth Park. On your way, you'll tread in the footsteps of numerous Nobel prize winners, cross paths with cultural giants and enjoy some of Manchester's most beautiful architecture.



Spring 2023

2023 looks like another big year for culture around Oxford Road with many of Manchester's most unmissable gigs, exhibitions and theatre. We've only got room to pick out just a handful of the best things to see and do.

The Bridgewater Hall is home to The Halle and BBC Philharmonic orchestras and hosts hundreds of concerts each year. You can also find weekly lunchtime concerts at the RNCM and Martin Harris Centre and stellar weekly line-ups of independent and arthouse cinema at HOME.

Award-winning comedy night XS Malarkey has moved to Canvas, the new wide-ranging space, combining a restaurant, bar and gig space at Circle Square. Keep an eye out for weekly comedy shows in this new space and a top selection of gigs and special events.

International Mother Language Day is celebrated on 21 February; a day of events is planned at Manchester Poetry Library. The venue hosts fantastic literary events throughout the year alongside the International Anthony Burgess Foundation, Blackwell's Bookshop and Central Library.

We encourage you to discover more of the cultural offer online, follow us on socials and visit oxfordroadcorridor.com for the latest. Please double-check listings online before making a journey, as all events are subject to change.

Exhibitions

IN THE CITY

Central Library
Until 1 Apr
A collection of Manchester images centred around culture and football by photographer Richard Davis.

TARA COLLETTE: GENTRIFICATION IS CLASS WAR

HOME
Until 2 Apr
Artist Tara Collette presents a brand-new solo exhibition that explores the impact of gentrification and the lack of affordable housing in our city.

ALTHEA MCNISH: COLOUR IS MINE

The Whitworth
Until 23 Apr
A major retrospective of influential textile designer Althea McNish, the first designer of Caribbean descent to achieve international recognition.

(UN)DEFINING QUEER

The Whitworth
From 27 Jan
(Un)Defining Queer delves into the Whitworth's collection to examine how we can use a queer lens to define what the term 'queer' means.

TALE OF THE FROZEN BITS

Castlefield Gallery
12 Feb – 12 Mar
Tale of the Frozen Bits at Castlefield Gallery is the first major solo exhibition of work by artist El Morgan.

PARHAM GHALAMDAR: PAINTING, AN UNENDING

HOME
18 Feb – 4 Jun
A solo show of new work by Iranian-born artist Parham Ghalamdar, his largest institutional exhibition to date.

NICK JORDAN: NATURAL INTERACTION

HOME
18 Feb – 4 Jun
Featuring new films, prints, photographs, painting and sculptural works, the exhibition explores the interdependencies between social and ecological healthcare or wellbeing.

CHRIS PAUL DANIELS: IS THERE ANYBODY THERE?

HOME
18 Feb – 4 Jun
For this exhibition, Daniels has sourced 70 different films from the North West Film Archive at Manchester Metropolitan University, editing them together to create a monumental study of cultural traditions, procession and ceremony.

GOLDEN MUMMIES OF EGYPT

Manchester Museum
From 18 Feb
Golden Mummies of Egypt is Manchester Museum's re-opening exhibition. This one-of-a-kind cultural experience opens in February 2023.

LARISSA SANSOUR AND SØREN LIND FAMILIAR PHANTOMS

The Whitworth
2 Mar–21 May
The premiere of Familiar Phantoms, a major new film by artists and long-time collaborators Larissa Sansour and Søren Lind.

A TALE OF MANCHESTER LIFE

Elizabeth Gaskell's House
From Apr 5
Explore how the Victorian writer Elizabeth Gaskell presented Manchester and its people through her novels and short stories, and the impact she had through her writing.

Stage

DISNEY'S THE LION KING

Palace Theatre
Until 11 Mar
Disney's award-winning musical *The Lion King* explodes with glorious colours, stunning effects and enchanting music.

PUSH FESTIVAL

HOME
Until 18 Feb
HOME's annual celebration of North West talent returns with four weeks of events.

QUEER CONTACT

Contact
4–18 Feb
Contact celebrates queer culture with an extraordinary line-up of LGBTQ+ talent.

SONG FROM FAR AWAY

HOME
22 Feb – 11 Mar
Will Young stars in this new production of *Song From Far Away* by Olivier Award winner Simon Stephens & Mark Eitzel.

TOO MUCH WORLD AT ONCE

HOME
3–11 Mar
A lyrical, continent-spanning journey, *Too Much World at Once* is an urgent coming-of-age story for our times.

GRACE CAMPBELL

HOME
3 Mar
Fiery and explicit, Grace takes us on a story of how she let go of her need for male validation.

JOSIE LONG: RE-ENCHANTMENT

Contact
3 Mar
The triple Edinburgh Comedy Award nominee, Fringe hero and delirious new mother returns with a show about the changes wrought by time.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE (1936)

HOME
15–25 Mar
Tracy-Ann Oberman stars as morals, prejudice and power collide in this retelling of one of Shakespeare's best-known – and most controversial – plays.

THIS TOWN

Contact
22–30 Mar
This Town uses spoken word to transport us to a post-industrialised landscape, weaving together stories of loss, PTSD, and friendship.

SARA PASCOE

Palace Theatre
18 Mar
The star of BBC2 stand-up special *Sara Pascoe: LadsLadsLads* is back with a brand-new stand-up show.

MY FAIR LADY

Palace Theatre
22 Mar – 1 Apr
The Lincoln Center Theater's multi-award-winning production of *My Fair Lady* is coming to Manchester.

OF ALL THE BEAUTIFUL THINGS IN THE WORLD

HOME
24 Mar – 15 Apr
Yusra Warsama takes *The House of Bernada Alba* as inspiration for this powerful production, as she exports Lorca's language to Moss Side.

RNCM OPERA: MANSFIELD PARK

RNCM
26 Mar – 1 Apr
RNCM's opera students take on Jane Austen's novel with musical styles ranging from Philip Glass to Stephen Sondheim with hints of Benjamin Britten.

MOMMIE QUEEREST

HOME
5–8 Apr
Starring Peaches Christ & Heklina, experience the theatrical musical parody of the horrific celluloid glamour known as *Mommie Dearest*.

THE BODYGUARD

Palace Theatre
3–15 Apr
The international, award-winning smash-hit musical *The Bodyguard* returns to The Palace Theatre.

THE KING AND I

Palace Theatre
9–13 May
The multi award-winning Broadway production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The King and I* returns to Manchester.

STARS

Contact
9–11 May
STARS is a moving and joyful Afrofuturist odyssey that transforms into a celebratory club night, with multiple DJs and accessible for all.

Music

TEMPLES
YES 2 Feb
LUCY HALE DAY OF MUSIC, DISABILITY & TECHNOLOGY
RNCM 3 Feb
RNCM DAY OF PERCUSSION
RNCM 5 Feb
LIL MARIKO
YES 7 Feb
DYLAN
The Ritz 7 Feb
MANCHESTER COLLECTIVE: BAG OF BONES
RNCM 10 Feb
SKIN ON SKIN
Canvas 10 Feb
THE HALLÉ A NIGHT AT THE OPERA
Bridgewater Hall 12 Feb
PREOCCUPATIONS
YES 13 Feb
WEYES BLOOD
The Ritz 13 Feb
RIMZEE
Deaf Institute 16 Feb
JOCKSTRAP
Gorilla 17 Feb

THE PAPER KITES
Manchester Academy 17 Feb
TS7
Joshua Brooks 18 Feb
WE ARE SCIENTISTS
Gorilla 19 Feb
LUKE HAINES & PETER BUCK
Gorilla 20 Feb
LUUK VAN DIJK
Joshua Brooks 24 Feb
THE COVASETTES
Gorilla 25 Feb
RNCM SESSION ORCHESTRA
RNCM 25 Feb
BILK
Manchester Academy 25 Feb
MEEKZ
Manchester Academy 27 Feb
THE HALLÉ BRAHMS' VIOLIN CONCERTO
Bridgewater Hall 1–5 Mar
KERALA DUST
YES 2 Mar
STEPHEN HOUGH
RNCM 3 Mar

SHE DREW THE GUN
Deaf Institute 3 Mar
SPANGLED
Manchester Academy 3 Mar
M60
Gorilla 4 Mar
SIMON KEENLYSIDE & MALCOLM MARTINEAU
RNCM 6 Mar
VUNDABAR
YES 6 Mar
GHOST WOMAN
YES 6 Mar
THE BACKSEAT LOVERS
The Ritz 8 Mar
NAPALM DEATH
Manchester Academy 8 Mar
CIAN DUCROT
The Ritz 10 Mar
SHY FX
Manchester Academy 11 Mar
LEONARD BERNSTEIN'S MASS
Bridgewater Hall 12 Mar
VÕK
Deaf Institute 13 Mar

TUBULAR BELLS
Palace Theatre 14 Mar
JOESEF
Manchester Academy 15 Mar
RNCM CHOPIN PRIZE
RNCM 16 Mar
BERWYN
Canvas 16 Mar
FKJ
Manchester Academy 18 Mar
ALEX G
The Ritz 18 Mar
BIIG PIIG
Gorilla 20 Mar
ANNA B SAVAGE
YES 22 Mar
JULY JONES
Deaf Institute 23 Mar
HANNAH LAING
Joshua Brooks 24 Mar
CAITLIN ROSE
Deaf Institute 24 Mar
SPACE CASSETTE
Canvas 24 Mar
STIFF LITTLE FINGERS
Manchester Academy 24 Mar

THE GO! TEAM
Gorilla 25 Mar
JADU HEART
YES 27 Mar
CHANNEL TRES
Gorilla 28 Mar
LOLA YOUNG
Gorilla 31 Mar
TOMAN
Joshua Brooks 31 Mar
DÉJÀ VEGA
Gorilla 1 Apr
KRANIUM
Gorilla 2 Apr
BLACK HONEY
Gorilla 4 Apr
MANCHESTER PUNK FESTIVAL
Various Venues 7–9 Apr
TRAMPOLINE
YES 12 Apr
ROLLA
Gorilla 14 Apr
GOAT
Gorilla 20 Apr

KAITLYN AURELIA SMITH
Canvas 20 Apr
THE HALLÉ THE RITE OF SPRING
Bridgewater Hall 20 Apr
HEIR
Deaf Institute 21 Apr
SEAFET
Gorilla 21 Apr
PETITE NOIR
YES 21 Apr
GAZ COOMBES
Manchester Academy 22 Apr
TELEMAN
Gorilla 29 Apr
MADE IN MANCHESTER
RNCM 3–5 May
STEVE MASON
Gorilla 3 May
THE GOLDEN DREGS
YES 10 May
LOUIS COLE
Gorilla 17 May
THE WEDDING PRESENT
The Ritz 20 May

Oxford Road Corridor



Golden Harvest
Designed by
Althea McNish, 1957

Althea McNish: Colour is Mine
The Whitworth
Until 23 Apr 2023

Printed cotton satin, manufactured by Toros Prints, c.1957–58 © The McNish Family Trust

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