

Demarco's archive to be secured for Scotland

✘ Action to secure a significant collection of art and memorabilia for Scotland has been announced by the Culture Minister.

Richard Demarco – one of the most influential figures on the Scottish contemporary arts scene – is seeking a permanent home for his extensive collection of works of art, documents and photographs.

Fiona Hyslop has asked key cultural bodies to advise on the options for keeping the Demarco collection in Scotland. The Minister announced that funding of £15,000 is being provided towards cataloguing the collection, currently housed at Craigcrook Castle in Edinburgh.

In a Scottish Parliamentary Debate today, celebrating Mr Demarco's 80th birthday, Ms Hyslop said:-“Richard has never sat still long enough to write his memoirs, but there is an excellent record of his life's work, and the world of art that accompanied it, in a substantial and significant archive. The archive was lovingly created and is growing by the day.

“Richard's biggest pre-occupation is what will happen in the future to his collection and archive. Some of it is already part of the National Galleries of Scotland's collection. There is much more though, as anyone who has visited Craigcrook – and seen the terrific artworks, memorabilia and all those piles of boxes – will acknowledge.

“I am conscious there are several options and possible destinations. As Scottish Culture Minister, naturally I want that destination to be here in Scotland. Our focus is on exploring all the options. It is also important that the archive is fully recorded as an investment for posterity.

“Richard Demarco has made a huge contribution promoting Scotland overseas through the arts. To celebrate this, an exhibition of items drawn from his collection will go on display in Scotland House in Brussels. A programme of associated events is also being planned and I have asked Richard to work with us on this.”

From November 28, a major exhibition entitled ‘Ten Dialogues: Richard Demarco, Scotland and the European Avant-garde’ will be on display at [The Royal Scottish Academy](#).

Born in Edinburgh in 1930, Richard Demarco’s reputation as a leading exhibition and theatre director began when he helped found the Traverse Theatre in the city in 1963. Since then, he has been one of Scotland’s most influential advocates for contemporary art through his work at the Richard Demarco Gallery and the Demarco European Art Foundation, as well as his professorship at Kingston University in London.

Mr Demarco’s contributions to contemporary art internationally have been recognised on numerous occasions, receiving the Polish Gold Order of Merit, the Cavaliere della Repubblica d’Italia, the Chevalier des Arts et Lettres de France and the CBE.

The National Library of Scotland, the National Galleries of Scotland, and Creative Scotland have been asked to work with Richard Demarco, Edinburgh College of Art and the Scottish Government to advise on a secure future in this country for the Demarco collection and archive.