We Face Forward
Art from West Africa Today  £9.99

To celebrate the 2012 Olympics and offer a global welcome to the many visitors who will be visiting the UK and, in particular, the North West, Manchester’s two main galleries will collaborate for the first time on a major exhibition of contemporary art drawn from countries in West Africa.

Taking place across three locations, Manchester Art Gallery, Platt Hall (Gallery of Costume) and the Whitworth Art Gallery and Park, the exhibition will feature painting, photography, textiles, sculpture, video and sound work – from a wide range of practitioners whose work is internationally acclaimed, but relatively little seen in the UK.

The title of the exhibition is taken from a speech by Ghana’s first president, Kwame Nkrumah, made in 1960. Stating his resistance to cold war super powers, Nkrumah’s full quote is ‘We face neither East nor West: we face forward.’ The exhibition takes its direction from Nkrumah’s statement of independence, deriving inspiration from his sense of West African cultural dynamism.

This publication will include biographies and colour images of all the artists in the exhibition plus the musicians, performers and other artists who are contributing to the public programme. It will feature an introductory essay by the curators of the exhibition and a number of contextual essays by curators and writers who specialise in African art.