

South Bank Centre London
Royal Festival Hall
Hayward Gallery
Queen Elizabeth Hall
Purcell Room

Administered on behalf of the Arts Council England
Arts Council Collection
National Touring Exhibitions
Saison Poetry Library:
Housing The Arts Council Poetry Collection



News Release

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HOW TO IMPROVE THE WORLD

60 Years of British Art Arts Council Collection

Hayward Gallery, South Bank Centre
7 September – 19 November 2006

This autumn the Hayward Gallery presents a ground-breaking collection of British art from the last six decades. **How to Improve the World: 60 years of British Art** will explore one of the most fertile eras in the history of British art, a period when British artists have made a global impact. Drawn from the Arts Council Collection, which has been administered by the Hayward Gallery since 1987, the exhibition will feature a roll call of 100 British artists from the last 60 years.

Artists include: **Francis Bacon, Peter Blake, Patrick Caulfield, Jeremy Deller, Lucian Freud, Gilbert & George, Liam Gillick, Mona Hatoum, Barbara Hepworth, Susan Hiller, Damien Hirst, David Hockney, Anish Kapoor, Richard Long, Sarah Lucas, Henry Moore, Chris Ofili, Bridget Riley, Mark Titchner, Cerith Wyn Evans**

Some 150 works will illustrate how the Arts Council Collection has charted the shifts in artistic practice and thinking, and the related social and cultural changes, which have occurred since 1946. From the aftermath of the Second World War, through to the exuberance and irreverence of the 1960s, from the brazen assertiveness of the 1980s to today's multicultural society, British art has registered society's changing attitudes to politics, economics and culture.

Curated by writer and critic, Michael Archer with Hayward Gallery curator Roger Malbert, the exhibition will enable visitors to experience many of the crucial moments in the last 60 years of British art and show how earlier works still resonate today. Highlights include: Francis Bacon *Head VI* (1949), Gilbert and George *Smash* (1977), Damien Hirst *He Tried to Internalise Everything* (1992-94), Bridget Riley *Movement in Squares* (1961) and Susan Hiller *Wild Talents* (1998).

The Arts Council Collection is the most widely used and circulated collection of British modern and contemporary art. It was formed in 1946 to promote and enrich knowledge of contemporary art and continues to acquire works by emerging artists today. The wide array of media in the Collection from painting and sculpture to video, sound, photography and digital media reflects the variety of artistic activity over the last 60 years.

The exhibition illustrates the distinctive nature of the Collection. Acquisitions have always been selected independently by a changing panel of artists, critics and writers, charged with seeking out new work of worth and significance.

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Arts Council Collection Online

The Arts Council Collection will be accessible online from early September to coincide with the exhibition. This will provide an essential research tool for the general public as well as museums and galleries worldwide.

Notes to Editors:

- The Arts Council Collection contains over 7,500 works by more than 2,000 artists. As a collection 'without walls', it has no permanent gallery; it can be seen in exhibitions and displays at home and abroad and works are on long-term loan in many museums and public buildings.
- The Hayward Gallery curates touring exhibitions selected from the Arts Council Collection. An edited version of **How to Improve the World** will tour nationally in 2007.
- Michael Archer is a regular contributor to Art Monthly and Artforum. He is Head of School at the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art, Oxford University. He is author of *Art Since 1960* (Thames & Hudson, 1997) and co-author of *Audio Arts* (1994). He curated **Material Culture: The Object in British Art in the 80s and 90s** at the Hayward Gallery in 1997 and a Hayward Gallery Touring exhibition **Voiceover** in 1998.
- Roger Malbert is Senior Curator at the Hayward Gallery. He has organised and curated many exhibitions and has special responsibility for the programme of Hayward Gallery Touring exhibitions.
- The title of the exhibition is taken from a work included in the show by Cerith Wyn Evans: *"Diary: How to Improve the World (you will only make matters worse) continued 1968 (revised)" from M Writings '67-72 by John Cage* (2003).
- A fully illustrated catalogue featuring essays by Michael Archer, Roger Malbert and Marjorie Allthorpe-Guyton, Director Visual Arts, Arts Council England will accompany the exhibition.
- The Hayward Gallery is a constituent part of the South Bank Centre, which is also responsible for the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and the Poetry Library. The South Bank Centre each year presents nearly 1,000 paid performances of music, dance, literature, a dynamic education programme and more than 300 free foyer events. While the Royal Festival Hall is closed for a major refurbishment, a full programme of activities continues in the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery. The Royal Festival Hall re-opens in June 2007.

Hayward Gallery, South Bank Centre, London SE1

Information: 020 7921 0813

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Book online www.hayward.org.uk

Opening hours

Open daily 10am-6pm: late nights Tuesday and Wednesday until 8pm, Friday until 9pm

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