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# THE ART NEWSPAPER

*Frieze Art Fair: Wednesday 4 October 2017*

## Why London galleries do fairs on their home turf

Staying local keeps costs down—and dealers can benefit from the buzz around town



Many exhibitors aim to encourage visitors to make the short journey from fair to gallery space.

**F**rom the outside looking in, the main benefit of showing at an art fair is the potential to reach clients who may not otherwise cross a gallery's path. "I can see that one advantage is to increase your presence in a market where you don't have a space, but why be in a fair in your own town?", asks the London-based dealer Pilar Ordovas, who has made it part of her gallery's strategy not to do fairs at all.

It is a different story inside the fairs, where, more often than not, the highest geographic concentration of exhibitors is local. This is borne out by the numbers at Frieze this year: more than 40% of the dealers at Frieze London have their headquarters in the capital (the majority) or have a pretty meaningful presence there (such as Thaddaeus Ropac and Gagosian

**"There is an energy that is rarely felt the rest of the year"**

galleries). At Frieze Masters, this is true of nearly 30% of the exhibitors. London, after all, houses a significant number of galleries.

But why go to all the effort – and expense – to show at a fair that is a stone's throw from your gallery space? For one thing, expenses are relative; participating in a fair in your own city reduces the risk of losing vast sums. Daniella Luxembourg, whose Luxembourg & Dayan space in Savile Row is two miles from her stand at Frieze Masters, says: "We all wish fairs were less expensive to do, but at least showing in London is not like showing

in Hong Kong, where booth rental, flights, hotel rooms and Martin Speed [art transport] can cost at least \$250,000."

The London-based gallerist Timothy Taylor agrees that fairs are "unbelievably expensive", but says that, because of the increasingly nomadic nature of the art market, Frieze week is precisely the time to push the boat out. "There is a momentum and energy in London now that is rarely felt the rest of the year. You can only maximise that by fully participating," he says. Such momentum in London was Christie's reasoning behind combining its June and October contemporary auctions into one bumper sale this month – which can be expected to exacerbate the effect.

For many exhibitors, the ultimate goal is to get the travelling and home-grown visitors out of the fair – where they are most likely to start – and into the gallery. Jonathan Green, a director at Richard Green, says: "If you increase

your presence, there's more of a chance." Olivier Malingue describes a fair booth as "a window to thousands of interested people" for whom, he says, "we do our job – we encourage them to come to the gallery". But Ordovas argues that Frieze week is her gallery's busiest time of year; she does not want to run the risk of someone coming to the gallery only to "not find me there".

The sense of loyalty, however, runs both ways. Victoria Siddall, the director of the Frieze fairs, says: "The support of galleries in London is what made Frieze possible from the beginning." Luxembourg is not convinced that the fair leads to more footfall in her gallery and admits that "the sheer number of events suck all the oxygen from everything. But we are a London gallery, we are serious in London and it's important to be a part of our community."

**Melanie Gerlis**

Long-lost Old Master to be sold at Christie's



Rediscovered: Spranger's painting

**A LONG-LOST PAINTING** by the Mannerist artist Bartholomeus Spranger (1546-1611) is due to be sold at Christie's in an Old Masters evening sale in London on 7 December, after the German holder of the work reached a settlement with the heirs of the Jewish art historian Curt Glaser. Henry Pettifer, the auction house's head of Old Master paintings, describes Mercury Carrying Psyche to Mount Olympus (1576; est £400,000-£600,000) as "one of the most significant paintings by the artist still remaining in private hands".

Glaser was a Modern art collector and champion of "degenerate" art. When the Nazis came to power in 1933, he was forced to sell his collection and fled Germany, eventually settling in New York. The painting was acquired by Wolfgang Gurlitt, an art dealer and the cousin of Hildebrand; in 1965, a German collector bought the work in an auction in Cologne. The son of the late German collector contacted Glaser's heirs and a settlement, which lawyers for both sides described as "just and fair", was agreed.

**Catherine Hickley**

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**New Tate fund puts performance centre-stage**

**THE TATE IN** London has launched a fund to enable the museum to display the performance art in its collection. "Museum resources are geared towards displaying works in traditional media, but there is a gap between collecting [performance] works and displaying them," says Catherine Wood, the Tate's senior curator of international art (performance). Works in the collection include pieces by Marvin Gaye Chetwynd and Tino Sehgal. The UK collector Catherine Petitgas, the chair of the Tate's International Council, is backing the new scheme. "Contributors must make a financial commitment for two years," Wood says. **G.H.**

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# NEWS

4 October 2017

## In brief

### The Vinyl Factory's first site-specific commission comes to the Strand

The Vinyl Factory, the London-based enterprise that produces vinyl editions, prints and exhibitions, is due to unveil its first site-specific commissioned work during Frieze week. The Japanese artist Ryoji Ikeda's piece, which is called test pattern [No. 12] (2017), is due to go on show at Store Studios on the Strand in London tomorrow as part of a new initiative called Store X The Vinyl Factory Commissions. "We have worked on projects with artists such as Jeremy Deller, but this is the first time we've commissioned a site-specific work," says Sean Bidder, the creative director of The Vinyl Factory. The company has since commissioned a new film by the Los Angeles-based artist Kahlil Joseph, called Fly Paper (2017). **G.H.**



Ryoji Ikeda's test pattern [No. 12] (2017)

### Abraaj Group Art Prize celebrates tenth edition

Lawrence Abu Hamdan has won the 2018 Abraaj Group Art Prize, which supports artists from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia. The Beirut-based Jordanian-British artist will use the \$100,000 award, which celebrates its tenth anniversary next year, to create work to be unveiled at the Art Dubai fair (21-24 March 2018). "The prize will enable me to conceive and produce a work using materials and technologies previously unavailable to me," says Abu Hamdan, whose politically focused art often incorporates sound. The shortlisted artists, Basma Alsharif, Neil Beloufa and Ali Cherri, will each receive \$10,000. The curator Myriam Ben Salah is organising an exhibition of all four artists, which will be shown at Art Dubai. **A.D.**

## Gilbert & George to open London foundation in 2019

### Former East End brewery will display duo's "difficult" works

As the British artists Gilbert & George mark 50 years together this year, the pair are looking to the future and their legacy. The septuagenarians are converting a 6,000 sq. ft former brewery off Brick Lane in east London into a foundation to show their work and, if funds stretch far enough, pieces by other artists. The space, which they bought for £5m, is due to open in two years' time.

The foundation will be a registered charity, which Gilbert & George will support financially. The building will include a small caretaker's flat, an office, storage space and three galleries to display their work, much of which is in storage. "We're realising that big museums don't show your work that often," they say. "This way, we can host large-scale shows and rotate them every six months to a year." They are designing the small walled front garden, including the wrought-iron gates bearing their initials that will be installed at the entrance. "We want it to be like [the novel] *The Secret Garden*. Everyone has a secret garden; think of the Garden of Eden," they say.

The artists' collection of their own works consists mainly of the



Gilbert (right) and George plan to host large-scale shows in the building

"rejections", as they describe them – "all the pieces people are not quite ready for". It is a collecting technique they share with the art impresario Michael Sonnabend, husband of the dealer Ileana, who was an early supporter of Gilbert & George.

"When Ileana opened her first gallery in the early 1960s, her husband would buy one thing from every show on the last day," Gilbert & George recall. "Ileana said to him: 'Why don't you have the first choice? You're my husband; you could have the pick of the bunch.' He replied: 'When the show is over, I'll find out what nobody else wants, and I guess that's the right one to buy.' And he was right because the more difficult ones always remain.

We have a lot of difficult ones."

Gilbert & George's archive will remain in the East End at 12 Fournier Street, where the artists have lived since the 1960s. "All that we own – every book, the archive, the house – will also be part of the foundation," they say. "Our archive contains absolutely everything: detailed instructions on how to restore our pictures, the lot."

So what compels the pair to take such pains to preserve their legacy? Their response is characteristically deadpan. "Young people ask us why we document everything in the archive. We say: 'It's because we want to be immortal.' They say: 'Do you mean immortal?' We say: 'That too.'"

**Anny Shaw**

### Top art films on show now at the BFI London Film Festival

Art lovers in London for the exhibitions marathon of Frieze week may be less aware of another staple of the UK capital's October culture calendar—the BFI London Film Festival. Joining the Hollywood premieres and arthouse titles in the 61st edition (4-15 October) is a strong line-up of artists' films, many without a wider cinematic release. Here is a closer look at three highlights. **Hannah McGivern**



**Julian Rosefeldt Manifesto**  
BFI Southbank and Picturehouse Central, 6 and 8 October

The German artist Julian Rosefeldt's ambitious 2015 video features Cate Blanchett playing 13 characters reciting lines from some of the 20th century's most influential artists' manifestos, from Futurism to Fluxus. The original multiscreen installation, having toured museums from Sydney to Shanghai, has now been expanded into a feature film.



**Shirin Neshat Looking for Oum Kulthum**  
BFI Southbank and Rich Mix, 7-8 October

The Iranian-born artist Shirin Neshat wrote and directed this film-within-a-film about the Egyptian singer Oum Kulthum, who was loved equally by working-class people and members of the elite across the Arab world. Neshat says that her tribute to the diva has personal resonance, reflecting the challenges that she and other Middle Eastern women have faced in pursuing a creative career.



**Loving Vincent**  
National Gallery and Empire Haymarket, 9-10 October

This biopic retracing Vincent Van Gogh's troubled final weeks comes with a starry cast and an endorsement from the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, but the main attraction is its labour-intensive animation. A team of 125 spent two years hand-painting 65,000 frames in oil on canvas to resemble Van Gogh's swirling style. It is directed by Dorota Kobiela and her husband Hugh Welchman.

GILBERT & GEORGE: © DAVID DWIGGS; IKEDA: REBELLA DEGORI; MANIFESTO: COURTESY OF JULIAN ROSEFELDT; OUM KULTHUM: COURTESY OF SHIRIN NESHAT; LOVING VINCENT: COURTESY OF DOROTA KOBIELA/HUGH WELCHMAN

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detail of Summer Table, 1981  
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frieze  
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# IN PICTURES

*Artists' tour*

## Gilbert & George: East Enders



Gilbert & George in Fournier Street, where they have lived since 1964

In the 50 years since the British artists Gilbert & George met as students at St Martin's School of Art and moved to Spitalfields, the East London neighbourhood has seen Jewish bagel shops giving way to Bangladeshi curry houses, which are now being replaced by trendy cafés. The changing face of Spitalfields has inspired the duo's most recent series, the Beard Pictures, which refer to everything from Santa Claus to Shoreditch hipsters and will debut this autumn at White Cube in London, New York's Lehmann Maupin and Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac in Paris. We took this opportunity to let Gilbert & George show us around their stomping ground.

Interview by Anny Shaw. Portraits by David Owens

### 1 CHRIST CHURCH SPITALFIELDS

There's wonderful scandal to do with the church from the early 1970s, when it was derelict. We were in the middle of a photoshoot in the church when the burgher ran out and said: "Oi, we don't want people like you in here!" He was totally homophobic. The modern vicars are fine, but we don't care what they say because we are not believers. We've had the genius of Darwin.

### 2 BRICK LANE JAMME MASJID

It was a synagogue when we were students and it was a Huguenot church long before that. It became a mosque in the 1970s. You could ask anybody what's coming next and nobody could guess. We imagine it will be social services of some kind, maybe for unmarried drug addicts.

### 3 JEFF'S CAFE, BRUNE STREET

Jeff's is an ordinary English café that happens to be run by a Turkish husband-and-wife team. We lost our favourite restaurant, the Market Café, where we breakfasted and lunched for 30 years. They're all closing because it's so trendy that the rent is too expensive. Every Saturday we go to Franks, a café run by two brothers and their mother from Naples. Frank, the father, died, but they have a shrine in the corner with his photo and a crucifix. It also has a little cup of coffee that they fill every day and which apparently gets drunk.

### 4 MERAZ CAFE, HANBURY STREET

It's Bangladeshi handi food, which is home cooking. We've been coming here for 40 years. We have a special relationship with the son; we get the Muslim hug, three times. It's an honour. We're loyal—once we decide, that's it. We never change our mind. We don't like having to think about where to eat every night. We like to keep our heads free. Our pictures take such concentration; we are not like other artists, we don't have assistants. We want to keep the art original, made by us.

### 5 FRONT DOOR, 12 FOURNIER ST

We moved to the ground floor here in 1964 when the monthly rent was £16. We bought the building in 1973 and were the first to restore a house in Fournier Street. They were all factories back then: button-makers, furriers and hat-makers. We bought the second house [for £265,000]. Twenty years later, we reminded [the seller] that he had said we were mad to restore it. He said: "I wish I'd been mad like you." Gentrification is a cliché of nonsense. The gentry wouldn't come to London anyway—they are hunting foxes in the country. There's not one gent in this street.

### 6 GRAFFITI OPPOSITE FRONT DOOR

People come from all over to photograph street art around here. It's the most middle-class activity, it's extraordinary. One bit of graffiti read: "I would wallop Gilbert but not George." We took a picture and made an image out of it. Nowadays, there isn't much graffiti, it's all street art. Our favourite one featured the world's most famous words: prostitute, breast, penis, arse. It's the closest thing to freedom of speech you can get.

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Carol Rama. Senza titolo, 1967. Ink, glue, and doll eyes on paper mounted on cardboard, 13 3/4 x 18 3/4 inches (35 x 46.7 cm). Photography by Tom Powel