



GSK CONTEMPORARY

Press Release

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A multidisciplinary season of cutting-edge visual culture at the Royal Academy of Arts supported by GlaxoSmithKline (GSK)

Royal Academy of Arts, 6 Burlington Gardens

31 October 2008 – 19 January 2009

Supported by



This autumn The Royal Academy of Arts launches GSK Contemporary, a new eclectic three month season of exhibitions and events. GSK Contemporary introduces international artists, surveys emerging trends and provides a new platform for experimentation, discussion and debate within the contemporary visual arts.

On entering the building, visitors will be greeted by Swiss artist Rémy Markowitsch's suspended light-sculpture, *Onion Options*. The Berlin-based painter Maya Roos uses the computer software Norton to break down and colour code the work of an individual and create a 'portrait' through the hard disk of the subject's personal computer. The large painting, *Portrait by Speed Disk: Malcolm* will be unveiled in the ground floor entrance gallery.

The exhibition programme is split into two main parts:

Part I: Molten States 31 October– 4 December 2008

Part II: Collision Course, 16 December – 19 January 2009.

During the change over between the two parts, the exhibition remains open with the majority of galleries remaining accessible to visitors.

Opening the season in the first floor galleries is the multi-media exhibition **Molten States**. Exploring the links between art and performance, it features work from four international artists known for their focus on film, theatre and narrative - Olaf Nicolai, René Pollesch, Julian Rosefeldt and Catherine Sullivan.

Olaf Nicolai presents a newly commissioned installation *Samani. Some Proposals to Answer Important Questions 2008* and René Pollesch (in collaboration with Bert Neumann and Ute Schall) will stage a performance of: *Tod Eines Praktikanten* (Death of a Trainee). Julian Rosefeldt will show the trilogy, featuring *Stunned Man*, *The Perfectionist* and *The Soundmaker*. US film and video artist Catherine

Sullivan's recently commissioned work *Triangle of Need*, a multi-faceted combination of 16 mm film, video projection and monitors will be shown in London for the first time.

The second part of the season, **Collision Course**, reflects the winter timings of the programming with a bleak and austere aesthetic underlying the three main exhibitions; *Burroughs Live*, *Sudden White* and *Dark Materials*, as well as the accompanying programme of talks and cinema screenings.

On entering the main upstairs galleries, visitors will be greeted by a vast snowscape painting of a post-apocalyptic London, which covers the entrance to the exhibition of artists' film and video, *Sudden White*, curated by Mark Beasley.

Film and video works from artists including Bruce Conner, Cyprien Gaillard, Ryan Gander, Jonathan Horowitz, Tracey Moffat, John Russell, Robert Smithson, Javier Tellez, Guido van de Werve and Linda Weiss will be presented on a series of screens, lightboxes and monitors.

Upstairs, *Burroughs Live*, co-curated by Burroughs expert José Férez and David Thorp, aims to establish the presence of American novelist, film maker, social critic, painter and spoken word performer, William Burroughs. The show presents footage of Burroughs' own performances and films including *Thanksgiving Prayer* and *Towers Open Fire* and previously unseen footage. A series of photographic self-portraits will be exhibited alongside works produced in collaboration with other artists such as George Condo and Keith Haring, as well as portraits by Robert Mapplethorpe, Annie Leibowitz, David Hockney and Damien Hirst.

A new film work from artist Malcolm McLaren, *Shallow*, will be shown alongside Burroughs Live. The 21 'film portraits' that make up the work were inspired by Burroughs' Cut Up technique.

Dark Materials, draws together recently acquired works from the Frank Cohen Collection which evoke the sense of the aftermath of destruction, from Banks Violette's burnt out framework of a church, to Indian artist T.V Santhosh's installation *Counting Down*, in which digital timers count down the final moments to catastrophic disaster. The exhibition culminates with a room of 'skeletal' sculptures from Asian artists Hyunkoo Lee, Sudarshan Shetty and Jitish Kallat.

Charles Saumarez Smith, CEO and Secretary of the Royal Academy of Arts:

"GSK Contemporary is a bold and exciting extension of the RA's historic role in contemporary art. It complements the core work of the institution with an experimental and dynamic programme, a welcome forum for debate and discourse as well as an alternative evening destination in the West End. The season is a platform for established and emerging artists, up-and-coming curators and experimental film makers."

Running alongside the main GSK Contemporary exhibition programme, South London artist-curators, temporarycontemporary, will present *Event Horizon*, a performance and social space with new work and site-specific installations from London based artists. With a late night café/ bar at its centre, the rooms provide a gallery space for a constantly changing programme and series of artist run events. Highlights include performances by Georgina Starr, Bob and Roberta Smith, Plastique Fantastique, Brian Griffiths and Spartacus Chetwynd.

The East End restaurant Bistrottheque will be operating FLASH, a temporary restaurant designed especially for the season.

SUPPORTERS

GlaxoSmithKline

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) is the Royal Academy's first title sponsor. GSK is one of the world's leading pharmaceutical and healthcare companies and is committed to improving the quality of human life by enabling people to do more, feel better and live longer. In 2007, GlaxoSmithKline's community investments were valued at £282 million and targeted health and education programmes in over 100 countries. GlaxoSmithKline has a long history of supporting art initiatives that encourage creative thinking.

Justine Frain, Vice President Global Community Partnerships for GlaxoSmithKline:

"We have a long standing commitment to the arts, and indeed have supported the Royal Academy of Arts in different capacities for more than 20 years. We are a business that depends on creativity and innovation to bring improvements in health and wellbeing, so we value creative thinking and discussion. We are proud to be the title sponsor of this new and exciting endeavour by the Royal Academy of Arts."

2008 season supported by  Sotheby's

The Henry Moore Foundation generously supports the Art Bar by temporarycontemporary

The Goethe Institute London generously supports the performance 'Tod Eines Praktikanten' by René Pollesch

The IFA (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen e.V.) generously supports the installation of works by Olaf Nicolai and Julian Rosefeldt

Prohelvetia & The Stanley Thomas Foundation generously supports the installation of work by Remy Markowitsch

The Swiss Cultural Fund in Britain generously supports the installation of works by Maya Roos and Rémy Markowitsch

Media Partner



DATES

Open to public: Friday 31 October 2008 – Monday 19 January 2009

Opening times: Sunday & Monday 12pm – 10pm, Tuesday & Wednesday 12pm – 6pm, Thursday, Friday & Saturday 12pm – midnight

ADMISSION

£6 for single visit ticket; £25 for Multiple Visit Carnet (8 tickets)

Concessions available from the ticket desk only: £5 NUS/ISIC cardholders; registered disabled, Income Support and 60 + years

TICKETS

Tickets for GSK Contemporary are available daily at the Royal Academy of Arts, 6 Burlington Gardens. To book tickets in advance please print: 08716 200 4020 or visit

www.royalacademy.org.uk/gskcontemporary

IMAGES

Publicity images for GSK Contemporary can be obtained from Picselect, the Press Association's image service for press use. Please register at www.picselect.com and once registered go to the Royal Academy folder in the Arts section.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

David Thorp

Independent curator, David Thorp, works with a wide ranging group of contemporary artists presenting visual arts exhibitions and events at numerous international institutions and galleries. Previously curator of Contemporary Projects at the Henry Moore Foundation and former director at the South London Gallery, David Thorp has always worked with living artists at the forefront of experimental visual culture.

Bistrotheque

Established in 2004 by Pablo Flack and David Waddington, Bistrotheque is a restaurant, bar and cabaret space based in London's Bethnal Green. Under head chef Tom Collins the kitchen prepares a menu inspired by the classic French Bistro. With their proximity to the art world, Bistrotheque has become a social hub for the surrounding galleries, hosting numerous arts events for clients including: Gagosian Gallery, Victoria Miro and Maureen Paley.

temporarycontemporary

Artist-curators Anthony Gross and Jen Wu - aka temporarycontemporary, have been invited to occupy three neo-classical rooms in 6 Burlington Gardens as part of this year's GSK Contemporary Programme. They have invited nearly a dozen major London-based artists, to make new, sitespecific installations.

**For public information please print 020 7300 8000 and
www.royalacademy.org.uk/exhibitions/gsk-contemporary-season
Royal Academy of Arts, 6 Burlington Gardens, London W1S 3EX**

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