

## The Whitechapel Gallery announces live performances and events for the Swarovski Whitechapel Gallery Art Plus Opera fundraising gala

Thursday 15 March 2012, 7.30pm - late

The Whitechapel Gallery's annual fundraising gala, in partnership with Swarovski, will celebrate the meeting of art and opera in an exceptional event on **Thursday 15 March 2012**. Inspired by the style and spirit of the 1920s, **Swarovski Whitechapel Gallery Art Plus Opera** will feature performances by members of the Royal Opera Chorus, an auction of donated work by major contemporary artists run by Sotheby's and a night of celebrity DJs, all to raise funds for the Gallery's Education programme.

Whitechapel Gallery Director **Iwona Blazwick OBE**, **Nadja Swarovski**, Member of Swarovski's Executive Board, **Mollie Dent-Brocklehurst**, Art Plus Chair, and the committee of leading figures from the arts, fashion, film and music worlds, invite guests to buy tickets to this extraordinary evening of live performance, art and opera. All proceeds go towards raising vital funds for the Whitechapel Gallery's Education Programme that works with thousands of children and diverse community groups each year.

The **Royal Opera House** will present a highlight of the evening with members of the **Royal Opera Chorus** performing in an art gallery for the first time. The distinctive architectural spaces of the Whitechapel Gallery will become a beautiful setting for a range of performances which will surprise guests. Eighteen members of the chorus will perform a series of operatic passages which relate to the visual arts. Excerpts from Igor Stravinsky's opera *The Rake's Progress*, inspired by the work of William Hogarth, will highlight the crossover between the visual arts and opera and Swarovski's stunning chandeliers will provide the perfect setting for the classic ballroom scene from Giuseppe Verdi's opera *La traviata*.

Guests to the event will have the opportunity to bid at an auction of works by renowned contemporary artists including: **Darren Almond**, **Vija Celmins**, **Jake and Dinos Chapman**, **Martin Creed**, **Cristina Iglesias**, **Alan Kane**, **Gabriel Kuri**, **Simon Starling** and **Franz West**. The auction, led by Sotheby's **Oliver Barker**, will include a rare set of three unique polaroids by **Mona Hatoum**, *Static Portraits (Lynnette, Ambreen, Cecilia) 2000* and a striking photograph by **Gabriel Orozco**, *Six crabs on Simon's Drawing 2010*.

The Gallery will be transformed into a sparkling 1920s ballroom setting featuring a selection of chandeliers from Swarovski's Crystal Palace collection, which includes work by leading architects and designers including **Ron Arad**, **Zaha Hadid** and **Amanda Levete**. The evening will include production design by **Event Concept** and a line up of celebrity DJs will entertain guests into the night, including **Dan Lywood** and **Mourad Mazouz**. Guests will enjoy a bespoke Italian inspired menu devised by **Angela Hartnett with Smart Hospitality**, a **Wright Brothers** oyster bar, prosecco by **Laytons**, **Peroni** beers, **Courvoisier** cocktails and **Firefly Tonics**.

### Press Release

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[whitechapelgallery.org](http://whitechapelgallery.org)

Whitechapel Gallery Trustee Limited is a private limited company, registered in England and Wales, registered company no. 4093862 and the corporate trustee of Whitechapel Gallery, registered charity no. 312162. VAT no. 863586582.

*Art Plus* is an annual event which explores the dynamic fusion of the visual arts with other mediums including drama, dance, film or music - culminating each year in a one-night only party and performance event.

The Swarovski Whitechapel Gallery Art Plus Opera committee is chaired by Mollie Dent-Brocklehurst and the Advisory Committee includes: Iwona Blazwick OBE, Whitechapel Gallery Director; Fran Cutler, party planner; Gary Fairfull, Music Curator; Whitney Hintz, Hiscox curator; Dan Lywood, DJ; Elliot McDonald, Pace Gallery curator; Jeremy O'Sullivan, Cultural Attache, European Commission; Dominic Palfreyman, Whitechapel Gallery trustee; Jasmin Pelham, Director Pelham PR; Lauren Prakke, Prakke Contemporary Art; Stan Stalnaker, Director, Hub Culture; Christopher Taylor, Director, Museum 52; Julian Vogel, Director Modus Publicity; Bettina von Hase, Director, Nine AM and Bina von Stauffenberg, Collector and Whitechapel Patron.

The Supporters' Committee includes: Lara Bohinc, Christa Carr, Sadie Coles, Jessica de Rothschild, Amanda Eliasch, Ralph Fiennes, Amy Gadney, Laurence Graff, Angela Hartnett, Mark Hix, Kirsteen Martin, Valeria Napoleone, Tim Noble & Sue Webster, Maureen Paley, Yana Peel, Rosario Saxe-Coburg, Joana Schliemann, Nadja Swarovski, Mario Testino, Rumi Verjee, Alannah Weston and Anita Zabludowicz.

The Honorary Committee includes: Fiona Banner, Rafael Bonachela, Giles Deacon, Tracey Emin, Emilia Fox, Bobby Gillespie, Jenny Holzer, Christian Marclay, Erdem Moralioglu, Samantha Morton, Jack Peñate, Ed Ruscha, Christopher Simon, Neil Tennant, Mark Titchner, Julie Verhoeven and Duncan Ward.

## Notes for Editors

### Education at the Whitechapel Gallery

The Whitechapel Gallery pioneered gallery education and community outreach, and believe that art has the power to transform the lives of children and young people. Leading artists work with those who have the greatest need for opportunity, and their art is celebrated in our dedicated public education galleries. We work with thousands of children and young people annually.

### Swarovski

The Swarovski story began in 1895 when Daniel Swarovski invented a machine for cutting and polishing crystal. This machine not only revolutionized jewellery manufacturing, it inspired the worlds of art, design, fashion and cinema for over a hundred years. Today Swarovski is the world's leading producer of precision-cut crystal, genuine gemstones, and created stones and operates nearly 2,000 retail outlets in over 120 countries. The company has a rich history of working with internationally acclaimed designers including Coco Chanel, Yves Saint Laurent and Christian Dior. Since joining the family business in 1995, Nadja Swarovski has built on this heritage by implementing a series of visionary design initiatives which have transformed the

company's image, turning crystal into a much desired component in the creative industries which is used at the forefront of designer trends across fashion, jewellery and design. Nadja Swarovski is committed to supporting and celebrating design and the arts by collaborating with both established and emerging designers - including Karl Lagerfeld, Christian Lacroix, Shaun Leane, John Pawson, Zaha Hadid, Mary Katrantzou, Marios Schwab and Giles Deacon - challenging them to push the boundaries of crystal use across fashion, jewellery, stage and screen, art, architecture and design. [www.brand.swarovski.com](http://www.brand.swarovski.com)

### **The Royal Opera**

Music Director: Antonio Pappano

Director of Opera: Kasper Holten

The Royal Opera, under the direction of Antonio Pappano, is one of the world's leading opera companies. Based in the iconic Covent Garden theatre, it is renowned for its outstanding performances of both traditional opera as well as commissioning new works by today's leading opera composers such as Harrison Birtwistle, Mark-Anthony Turnage and Thomas Ades.

Some of the most famous singers of all time have performed with the Company including Plácido Domingo, Angela Gheorghiu, Anna Netrebko, Renée Fleming, Rolando Villazón, Juan Diego Flórez, as well as the late Luciano Pavarotti and Joan Sutherland. The Jette Parker Young Artists Programme, founded in 2001, offers exceptionally talented professional singers a tailored programme of coaching and performance opportunities and many of its graduates are now seen regularly on the international stage.

Tickets £145 . T: +44 (0)20 7539 3322

Visit: [whitechapelgallery.org/art-plus-opera](http://whitechapelgallery.org/art-plus-opera)

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### **Press Information**

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