

## Fiona Banner selects from the V-A-C collection

9 December 2014 – 8 March 2015, Gallery 7

Free Entry

Leading British artist **Fiona Banner** chooses rarely seen works from the V-A-C collection by artists including **Richard Avedon**, **Claude Monet** and **Sigmar Polke**, on show at the Whitechapel Gallery from 9 December 2014.

Fiona Banner (b.1966) is a sculptor and artist who came to prominence with her 'wordscapes' series, written transcriptions of the frame-by-frame action in Hollywood war films. For this second display in a year long series, Banner selects works of art from the collection that blur the boundaries between language, photography and painting, and explore representations of reality.

Highlights of the exhibition titled *Stamp Out Photographie* include **Gerhard Richter's** *Kerze* (1982), a hyper realistic painting of a single, glowing candle famously used as the cover of Sonic Youth's 1988 album 'Daydream Nation'. **Andy Warhol's** *Jackie* (1964) based on photographs of Jackie Kennedy Onassis goes on display alongside *Stretch* (1964), a major black & white painting by **Bridget Riley** an optical art work which appears to shift and vibrate.

Claude Monet's impressionist painting *Church in Vétheuil* (1878) is also featured in the exhibition along with works by artists **Christopher Williams** and **Shannon Ebner** which at first seem to represent nature, but are in fact photographs staged with meticulous attention to detail. The presentation will also include a video by Russian born artist **Olga Chernysheva** and works by artists **Liz Deschenes**, **Olafur Eliasson**, **Wade Guyton**, **Michael Kriebler**, **Sherrie Levine**, **James Welling** and **Christopher Williams**.

Rather than conventional gallery lighting, Banner instead uses coloured light which flows gently through Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black in a direct reference to the CMYK system commonly used for printing images. She says, '*I want to make a theatre for the works to act in. It is a play on the act of looking, on our perception. The works that I was drawn to are self reflective, they challenge their own medium: paintings that discuss themselves as reproduction; photographs that deny the image or perform some kind of act of self portraiture; sculpture that declares the impossibility of its own authenticity - each work slumped in the psychiatrist's chair, holding a mirror up to itself.*'

This exhibition highlights the V-A-C collection, Moscow, as part of the Whitechapel Gallery's programme of opening up rarely seen collections from around the world supported by Hiscox. The series of four displays, which began in September 2014, are shown in a dedicated Collections Gallery.

Two further exhibitions of works drawn from the collection will be selected in partnership with two internationally acclaimed artists, **Lynette Yiadom-Boakye** (17 March – 14 June 2015) and **James Richards** (23 June – 30 August 2015). Each presentation is accompanied by a unique publication devised by the guest selector.

## Press Release

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Whitechapel Gallery  
77–82 Whitechapel High Street  
London E1 7QX

T +44 (0)20 7522 7888  
F +44 (0)20 7539 3340

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

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The V-A-C collection brings together a range of important art works including sculptures, paintings and photographs from leading, internationally recognised artists such as Francis Bacon, Liz Deschenes, Natalia Goncharova, Wade Guyton, Wassily Kandinsky, Lucy McKenzie, Amedeo Modigliani, Sigmar Polke to Gerhard Richter, Bridget Riley, Egon Schiele, Dayanita Singh and Christopher Wool.

The collection is owned by the V-A-C Foundation, a not for profit private institution founded in Moscow in 2009. This presentation of the V-A-C collection is part of the Whitechapel Gallery's ongoing programme opening up important public and private collections for everyone.

### Notes to editors

- For over a century the Whitechapel Gallery has premiered world class artists from modern masters such as Pablo Picasso, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko and Frida Kahlo to contemporaries such as Sophie Calle, Lucian Freud, Gilbert & George and Mark Wallinger. With beautiful galleries, exhibitions, artist commissions, collection displays, historic archives, education resources, inspiring art courses, dining room and bookshop, the Gallery is open all year round, so there is always something free to see. It is a touchstone for contemporary art internationally, plays a central role in London's cultural landscape and is pivotal to the continued growth of the world's most vibrant contemporary art quarter. The Gallery does not own a Collection, but has a dedicated gallery for opening up public and private collections, including five displays from the British Council Collection from April 2009 – May 2010; four displays from The D. Daskalopoulos Collection, Greece, from June 2010 – May 2011; five displays from the Government Art Collection, from June 2011 – September 2012; four displays from the Collection Sandretto Re Rebaudengo from September 2012 – September 2013; and four displays drawn from member museums of the Contemporary Art Society from September 2013 – August 2014.
- The first V-A-C collection display selected by Mike Nelson went on show from 9 September - 30 November 2014; the second display selected by Fiona Banner from 9 December 2014 – 8 March 2015; the third display by Lynette Yiadom-Boakye from 17 March – 14 June 2015 and the fourth and final display by James Richards from 23 June - 30 August 2015.
- V-A-C Foundation is a not-for-profit private institution founded in Moscow in 2009 by Leonid Mikhelson (Owner and President) and Teresa Iaricci Mavica (Director). Committed to supporting contemporary art in Russia, the V-A-C Foundation focuses on contemporary art and cultural practice and aims to provide a platform for creativity. The foundation strives to be actively engaged in artistic production, rather than the patronage or sponsorship of ongoing artist processes. V-A-C is deeply committed to the growing importance of art made in Russia as well as the new generations of artists from around the world.
- The V-A-C Foundation displays are curated by Omar Kholeif, Curator, Whitechapel Gallery with Habda Rashid, Assistant Curator, Whitechapel Gallery.
- Much of Fiona Banner's work explores the problems and possibilities of written language. Her early work took the form of 'wordscapes' or 'still films' – blow-by-blow accounts written in her own words of feature films, (whose subjects range from war to porn) or sequences of events. These pieces took the form of solid single blocks of text, often the same shape and size as a cinema screen. Banner's current work encompasses sculpture, drawing and installation but text is still at the heart of her practice. She recently turned her attention to the idea of the classic, art-historical nude, observing a life model and transcribing

the pose and form in a similar vein to her earlier transcription of films. Often using parts of military aircraft as the support for these descriptions, Banner juxtaposes the brutal and the sensual, performing an almost complete cycle of intimacy and alienation. Publishing, in the broadest sense, is central to Banner's practice. In 1997, when she published THE NAM, she started working under the imprint The Vanity Press, and has since published an extensive archive of books, objects and performances, many questioning the notion of authorship and copyright. Fiona Banner was born in Merseyside (UK) in 1966.

- Specialist art insurer Hiscox, a keen contemporary art collector itself, supports the Whitechapel Gallery's programme of collections displays because it gives everyone free access to important collections that would not otherwise be available to the public, and engages a diverse audience with art, particularly the local community. [www.hiscox.co.uk](http://www.hiscox.co.uk).

### Visitor Information

Opening times: Tuesday – Sunday, 11am – 6pm, Thursdays, 11am – 9pm.  
Admission free. Whitechapel Gallery, 77 – 82 Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX. Nearest London Underground Station: Aldgate East, Liverpool Street, Tower Gateway DLR. T + 44 (0) 20 7522 7888 [info@whitechapelgallery.org](mailto:info@whitechapelgallery.org)  
[whitechapelgallery.org](http://whitechapelgallery.org)

### Press Information

For further press information please contact:

**Rachel Mapplebeck on 020 7522 7880 or email [RachelMapplebeck@whitechapelgallery.org](mailto:RachelMapplebeck@whitechapelgallery.org)**

**Anna Jones on 020 7522 7871 or email [AnnaJones@whitechapelgallery.org](mailto:AnnaJones@whitechapelgallery.org)**



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