

6 January 2015

New Chair of Trustees announced for the Whitechapel Gallery

The Whitechapel Gallery announced today that **Alex Sainsbury** is appointed Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Alex Sainsbury joins the Whitechapel Gallery in this role as the century-old Gallery strengthens its global reach and outlook to new territories, while expanding its digital platforms and welcoming nearly half a million visitors a year.

Alex Sainsbury (born 1968) joined Rear Window – a small group organising contemporary art exhibitions in found spaces in London – in 1995. In 1997 he co-founded the arts charity Peer. He set up a two year gallery project, 38 Langham Street, in 2001, and from 2005 directed Raven Row, a non-profit exhibition centre in Spitalfields which opened in 2009. He also established the grant-making charity Glass-House Trust in 1993, co-initiating various projects related to child development and social housing, and most recently MayDay Rooms, a social resource at 88 Fleet Street, holding historical material linked to social movements and experimental culture.

From March 2015 Alex Sainsbury chairs the Board of Trustees for the Whitechapel Gallery which includes: Duncan Ackery, Swantje Conrad, Maryam Eisler, Ann Gallagher, Anupam Ganguli, Runa Islam, Cornelius Medvei, Farshid Moussavi, Dominic Palfreyman, Catherine Petitgas, Alice Rawsthorn, John Smith, Rohan Silva and Robert Taylor.

Alex Sainsbury replaces Robert Taylor, who was the Whitechapel Gallery's Chairman of the board of Trustees from 2005 - 2014. Taylor was Chief Executive Officer and Executive Board Member of Kleinwort Benson Banking Group, London. As Chairman he oversaw the Whitechapel Gallery's major expansion in 2009, an ambitious £13million project which doubled the Gallery in size and saw attendance grow by 120%.

The Whitechapel Gallery's vision is to be the artists' gallery for everyone. The Gallery has premiered world-class artists from modern masters such as Pablo Picasso, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Frida Kahlo, Alice Neel and Lucian Freud to contemporary artists such as Sophie Calle, Paul Noble, Thomas Struth, Gillian Wearing and Mark Wallinger. With beautiful galleries, exhibitions, artist commissions, collection displays, archives, education resources, inspiring art courses, talks, film, Café/Bar and Bookshop, the Whitechapel Gallery is free and open all year round.

Forthcoming exhibition highlights for 2015 include: a landmark exhibition tracing a century of Abstract art from 1915 to today, major solo shows for artists Christopher Williams and Emily Jacir, and The London Open triennial exhibition showcasing art being made across the capital, changing displays opening up collections from around the world, as well

Press Release

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as the Whitechapel Gallery's archives, and major site-specific commissions.

Alex Sainsbury said: 'I am honoured to become Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Whitechapel Gallery, which I have long admired. It is a key part of the cultural landscape of London and beyond, and I am excited to be participating in its future.'

Iwona Blazwick OBE, Director, Whitechapel Gallery, said: 'We are delighted that Alex Sainsbury is joining the Whitechapel Gallery as Chairman of our Board of Trustees. He has a deep understanding of artists and the nurturing they need to bring their vision to the world, as well as seeing the importance of philanthropy in supporting the visual arts. My heartfelt thanks on behalf of the board go to Robert Taylor for the decade of service he has generously given, and we look forward to the next chapter of our history with Alex Sainsbury.'

Press Information

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