

Lynette Yiadom-Boakye Selects from the V-A-C collection: Natures, Natural and Unnatural

17 March – 14 June 2015, Gallery 7
Free Entry

Rarely-seen art works inspired by nature have been selected by Turner Prize nominated painter **Lynette Yiadom-Boakye** for an exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery this spring.

Drawn from the V-A-C collection, Moscow, it includes works by **Peter Doig**, **David Hockney**, **Gary Hume** and **Andy Warhol**, and is the third in a series of four collection displays at the Whitechapel Gallery.

The artist has chosen still life paintings, photographs and a film depicting flora, fauna and people interacting with the natural world. Highlights include **David Hockney's** *30 Sunflowers* (1996), a vibrant, richly coloured, still life painting of sunflowers standing in vases on a red table. Part of a series, Hockney depicts flowers at various stages of life, drawing parallels with the human life cycle. **Peter Doig's** atmospheric, large-scale painting *Green Trees* (1998) depicts an imagined lush woodland area while **Gary Hume's** *Garden Painting #2* (1996), an enamel paint on aluminium art work, portrays a hand reaching for a small leaf in muted greens and blues.

The presentation also includes a video by Estonian artist **Jan Toomik**, *Dancing with Dad* (2003), which shows the artist dancing in sunlit woodlands where his father was buried, as the artist never had the opportunity to dance with his father when he was alive. Black and white photographs by Russian photographer **Nikolay Bakharev** capturing men, women and children posing in natural environments such as dense forests and **Andy Warhol's** brightly coloured screen-print of a cow are also on display.

Lynette Yiadom-Boakye (b.1977) is a contemporary artist renowned for her oil paintings of people conjured from her imagination, drawings and scrapbooks of found images. She alludes to traditions of historical, figurative paintings through her canvases, which are each completed in a single day. The stories behind her subjects are often hard to decipher - the clothing is not specific to a time, the setting is ambiguous and sometimes even the gender of the individual is uncertain. She says: *"The works that I was drawn to in the V-A-C Collection, or really caught my eye, all had a link to nature or still life or, a combination of the two. The title of the display refers to the idea of nature, and the different types of nature – the nature you walk out into in the wilderness, nature that you bring into the house, human nature, people interacting with nature and also the nature within a person. I wanted to think about all of those things in the selection."*

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. The final exhibitions of works drawn from the collection will be selected in partnership with **James Richards** (23 June – 30 August 2015). Each presentation is accompanied by a unique publication devised by the artist selector.

Press Release

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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.

Notes to editors

- Lynette Yiadom-Boakye was born in 1977 in London, where she is currently based. She attended Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, Falmouth College of Arts and the Royal Academy Schools. She has had several important solo museum shows, most recently at Chisenhale Gallery, London (2012) and the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York (2011). Her work has appeared in many group exhibitions, including *The Ungovernables: 2012 New Museum Triennial*, New Museum, New York (2012), *The 11th Lyon Biennial of Contemporary Art*, Lyon, France (2012) and *The Encyclopedic Palace*, at the 55th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia (2013). Her works are held in many collections including Tate; London; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Miami Art Museum, Florida; Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; Arts Council Collection, London; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; and the Nasher Museum of Art, North Carolina. Yiadom-Boakye was the 2012 recipient of the Pinchuk Foundation Future Generation Prize, which was accompanied by a solo exhibition of her work at the PinchukArtCentre. She was short-listed for the 2013 Turner Prize and Prestel has recently published a monograph of her work.
- 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.
- 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.

- 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.

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
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