

A Century of the Artist's Studio 1920 – 2020

24 February – 5 June 2022

Ticketed; Galleries 1, 3, 8 & 9 and the Zilkha Auditorium

#TheArtistsStudio

The Whitechapel Gallery presents a 100-year survey of the studio through the work of artists and image-makers from around the world

Whether it be an abandoned factory, an attic or a kitchen table, it is the artist's studio where the great art of our time is conceived and created. In this multi-media exhibition, the wide-ranging possibilities and significance of these crucibles of creativity take centre stage and new art histories around the modern studio emerge through striking juxtapositions of under-recognised artists with celebrated figures in Western art history.

The exhibition brings together more than 100 works by over 80 artists and collectives from Africa, Australasia, South Asia, China, Europe, Japan, the Middle East, North and South America. They range from modern icons such as **Francis Bacon**, **Louise Bourgeois**, Barbara Hepworth, **Pablo Picasso**, **Egon Schiele** and **Andy Warhol**, to contemporary figures such as **Walead Beshty**, **Lisa Brice** and **Kerry James Marshall**.

The exhibition includes paintings, sculptures, installations and films depicting the studio as work of art and presents documentation of artists' studios by world-renowned photographers and film-makers. A series of 'studio corners' also recreate the actual environments where great art has been produced.

A Century of the Artist's Studio follows three years of research led by Whitechapel Gallery Director Iwona Blazwick in collaboration with a curatorial panel comprising Dawn Ades, Richard Dyer and Hammad Nasar. Standing as the frontispiece to the exhibition, **Louise Bourgeois'** (1911-2010) monumental sculpture, *Cell IX* (1999), imagines the studio as prison and portal. The exhibition then unfolds according to two central themes: **The Public Studio – Artists Together**, examines how artists have embraced the studio as a factory, exhibition space, arena, a collective workspace or classroom; and **The Private Studio – Artists Alone**, explores how the studio can be a home, refuge, laboratory or site of political resistance.

In **The Public Studio – Artists Together**, visitors come face to face with **Kerry James Marshall's** (b. 1955, USA) *Untitled (Painter)* (2008), which challenges viewers to reflect on the evolution of the modern studio and artists as subjects in works of art. A Black female artist stands tall, meeting her viewer's gaze with unflinching directness, raising an over-sized artist's palette before her. Also on display is **Shadi Ghadirian's** (b. 1974, Iran) staged studio portraits of young Iranian women in the 1990s, and female portraits by **Mequitta Ahuja** (b. 1976, USA) and **Lisa Brice** (b. 1968, South Africa). These are shown alongside work by or depicting modern masters including **Pablo Picasso's** (1881-1973) 1955 studio homage to Henri Matisse, and photographs of **Andy Warhol** (1928-1987) in his infamous Silver Factory in New York.

Press Release

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Exquisite hand-woven tapestries from the **Arpilleras Workshops** reveal how the studio can be a protective haven for artists to engage with political issues of the day, as well as offering a collective workspace to share resources and work alongside one another. Emerging out of a grassroots movement of women who joined together in response to the punishing Pinochet regime in 1970s Chile, this collective used embroidery to document anonymously the stories of the victims of the dictatorship.

The studio as a visible public stage for many artists is explored, such as through *Drawing Lesson 47 (Interview for New York Studio School)*, 2010, in which visitors will see **William Kentridge** (b. 1955, South Africa) interviewing himself in a film which is both comical and self-deprecating. Also on display is the installation, *La Perla Negra (The Black Pearl)*, by the performance artist **Nikhil Chopra** (b. 1972, India), who speaks of the live art space as his studio. Commissioned for the Havana Biennial (2015), Chopra imprisoned himself in a cage in central Havana for 60 hours, making drawings of what he could see through the bars, demarcating the studio as a prison or cell in which Chopra reflected on the history and future of Cuba. This is shown alongside **Tracey Emin's** (b. 1963, UK) series, *Naked Photos – Life Model Goes Mad* (1996), which records a painting performance she gave in Galleri Andreas Brändström, Stockholm. Taking on the role of both artist and life model, who is often nude, Emin was viewed by visitors through small peepholes as she worked in a specially-constructed studio space in a candid and politically charged public performance.

Bridging the two main sections is an exploration of the secret life of the studio, and what occurs when the artist is not physically there. On display is **Darren Almond's** (b. 1971, UK) *Real Time Piece* (1996), a wall-size projection of the artist's empty London studio featuring a table, chair, fan and digital clock on the wall. Every sixty seconds the numbers flip over, causing an unexpectedly loud crash. In *Studio Interior (Red Stool, Studio)* (1945), by **Wilhelmina Barns-Graham** (1912-2004), a light-filled corner in her new studio is portrayed with a blank canvas ready to be painted, marking the beginning of a new chapter in her career on the path to becoming a pioneer of British abstraction. **Andrew Grassie's** (b. 1966, UK) photo realistic miniature paintings of empty fictional artists' studios from 2017, for which he styled his own studio space, are shown alongside paintings from **Paul Winstanley's** (b. 1954, UK) *Art School* series, for which the artist visited empty art students' studios during summer vacations. As government cuts continue to radically change the educational landscape and the presence of the arts within it, Winstanley's series pays homage to art schools and the creative potential these spaces represent.

In the first-floor galleries visitors will explore **The Private Studio – Artists Apart** where they encounter a series of informal photographs of artists in their studios across India and Pakistan by **Manisha Gera Baswani** (b. 1967, India). Part of a 21 year-long ongoing archive project, the portraits in Baswani's *Artist through the Lens* series are an intimate record of a network and community of artists. Visitors go on to encounter the earliest work in the exhibition, **Egon Schiele's** (1890-1918) *Office in Prisoner of War Camp of Mühling* from 1916, which depicts an empty storeroom across from his war camp desk – his studio at the time – highlighting how an artist's private studio space can be anywhere. A series of photographs by **Paul Mpagi Sepuya** (b. 1982, USA) from 2020 are also on show, which explore the function of the studio, with tripods in shot and clever staging of mirrors reflecting images and bodies at surreal angles.

The studio as a retreat from the outside world is also be examined, as it was for **Josef Sudek** (1896-1976), who was forced to take refuge in his studio as the Nazis occupied Prague in 1944. *The Windows of My Studio* series from this period capture the unexpected beauty of everyday life, from the condensation on his studio windows to his lunch choices. The Canadian artist **Maud Lewis** (1903-1970) painted every surface of her home – a small fisherman's hut – with boat paint. On display are painted objects from the house, which was both her home and her studio.

On view in the Gallery's Zilkha Auditorium is a series of films made by artists in and of their studios, including **Peter Fischli & David Weiss'** (b. 1952, Switzerland; b. 1946-2012) seminal film,

Der Lauf der Dinge (The Way Things Go) (1987). The relationship between cause and effect is explored through staged volatile reactions triggered between everyday objects in a manner that is both slapstick and thought-provoking.

Broader aspects of global studio practices are explored through **five thematic showreels**, demonstrating how artists transform or create studio spaces to teach and give back to their communities. These will include **Yinka Shonibare's** (b. 1962, UK) **Guest Artists Space Foundation** in Nigeria, **Michael Armitage's** (b. 1984, Kenya) non-profit exhibition space, **Nairobi Contemporary Art Institute** in Kenya, **Bandjoun Art Station** in Cameroon, initiated by **Barthélémy Toguo** (b. 1967, Cameroon) and **Germain Noubi** in 2013, to work with young, local artists and **Kehinde Wiley's** (b. 1977, USA) multidisciplinary artist-in-residence program, **Black Rock Senegal**, for international artists to create new work through collaboration in Dakar.

Other showreel topics include 'The Workshop as Studio', ranging from **Atelier 17**, Paris/New York, an art school and studio that was pivotal in the teaching and promotion of printmaking in the 20th century, to the **Mansudae Art Studio** in North Korea, the largest studio in the world, whose output is predominantly monumental sculptures of authoritarian leaders. The supportive role of Studio Associations is also explored, from **ACME**, London, to the **Triangle Network**, a global network of artists and visual arts organisations, which includes Gasworks, London, and The Bag Factory, Johannesburg.

Taking iconic portraits of artists in their studios are the great art photographers of modern times: **Bruce Bernard, Leonardo Bezzola, Rene Burri, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Denise Colomb, Nat Finkelstein, Gisèle Freund, John Hedgecoe, Lucien Hervé, Franz Hubmann, Mathias Johansson, Perry Ogden, Gordon Parks, Stephen Shore, Varvara Stepanova, Cy Twombly and Sabine Weiss.**

A Century of the Artist's Studio follows the Whitechapel Gallery's history of presenting large-scale thematic exhibitions such as *Faces in the Crowd: Picturing Modern Life from Manet to Today* (2005) and *Adventures of the Black Square: Abstract Art and Society* (2015), which were instrumental in developing important new research and ideas around these art historical themes.

To coincide with *A Century of the Artist's Studio*, associated displays, commissions and special events are scheduled to take place, including:

The Living Studio

11 January – 8 May 2022

Galleries 5 and 6, Free

Running parallel to *A Century of the Artist's Studio* is a free live studio experience for all visitors in galleries 5 and 6. Filled with artistic materials, activity prompts and inspirational objects donated by artists participating in London Open 2022 from their own studio spaces, *The Living Studio* draws upon the creative energy of contemporary artist studios and provides an opportunity for visitors to produce their own artistic responses. The space will be further activated through programming with local schools, community groups and families.

Galleries in the Groove: Three Visionary Dealers, 1960s-80s

21 December 2021 – August 2022

Gallery 4, Free

This archival exhibition presents commercial galleries and dealers from three different countries who generously supported the work of a new generation of artists between the 1960s-80s: Robert Fraser Gallery, London, Wide White Space, Antwerp, and Just Above Midtown, New York. Through posters, film, photographic documentation and other ephemera, this archival exhibition sheds light on selected exhibitions, projects and artists, attesting to the impact these three spaces had on the careers and development of artistic communities around them.

Notes to editors:

- *A Century of the Artist's Studio 1920-2020* runs from 24 February – 5 June 2022
- The idea for the exhibition originated from a proposal by art historians Giles Waterfield (1949-2016) and Dawn Ades. Led by Iwona Blazwick OBE, Director, Whitechapel Gallery, the research and themes of the exhibition have been developed over the past three years by a curatorial committee made up of Dawn Ades, Inês Costa, Richard Dyer, Hammad Nasar and Candy Stobbs.
- A fully illustrated catalogue with newly commissioned essays by writers including the Curatorial Committee will accompany the exhibition.
- The exhibition is supported by Cockayne, Grants for the Arts, The London Community Foundation, Max Mara, Collezione Maramotti, Tavolozza Foundation and Ministry of Culture, Republic of China (Taiwan). *Studio Visit: Thoughts and practices surrounding ten artists' studios* is on display with Whitechapel Gallery's longstanding partners at the Collezione Maramotti until 20 February 2022.
- Full alphabetical list of featured artists: Felicia Abban, Mequitta Ahuja, Darren Almond, Holly Antrum, Arpilleras Workshops, Frank Auerbach, Francis Bacon, Mirosław Bałka, Phyllida Barlow, Wilhelmina Barns-Graham, Vanessa Bell, Walead Beshty, Louise Bourgeois, Constantin Brâncuși, Geta Brătescu, Lisa Brice, Nikhil Chopra, Ha Bik Chuen, David Dawson, Marcel Duchamp, Inji Efflatoun, Tracey Emin, Rotimi Fani-Kayode, Peter Fischli & David Weiss, Helen Frankenthaler, Lucian Freud, Manisha Gera Baswani, Shadi Ghadirian, Alberto Giacometti, Antony Gormley, Rodney Graham, Duncan Grant, Andrew Grassie, Ramin Haerizadeh, Rokni Haerizadeh, & Hesam Rahmanian, Florence Henri, Barbara Hepworth, Roni Horn, Tehching Hsieh, William Kentridge, Edward Krasiński, Laboratoire Agit'Art, Maria Lassnig, Maud Lewis, Kim Lim, Maria Loizidou, Mateo López, Kerry James Marshall, John Mawurndjul, Paul McCarthy, Lisa Milroy, Henry Moore, Reinhard Mucha, Hans Namuth, Bruce Nauman, Pablo Picasso, Annie Ratti, Robert Rauschenberg, Armando Reverón, Martha Rosler, Dieter Roth, Egon Schiele, Carolee Schneemann, Gregor Schneider, Kurt Schwitters, Paul Mpagi Sepuya, Hassan Sharif, Anwar Jalal Shemza, Vivan Sundaram, Cindy Sherman, Frances Stark, Josef Sudek, Alina Szapocznikow, Wolfgang Tillmans, Jean Tinguely, Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri, Suha Traboulsi, Raoul Ubac, Ian Wallace, Andy Warhol, Ai Weiwei, Paul Winstanley, Francesca Woodman, Li Yuan-chia.

About Whitechapel Gallery

For over a century the Whitechapel Gallery has premiered world-class artists from modern masters such as Pablo Picasso, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Frida Kahlo, Eduardo Paolozzi and Hannah Höch to contemporaries such as Zarina Bhimji, Sophie Calle, William Kentridge and Michael Rakowitz. Its historic campus houses exhibitions, artist commissions, collection displays, historic archives, education resources, inspiring art courses, talks and film screenings, the Townsend dining room and the Koenig Bookshop. 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.

Visitor Information

Gallery Admission: Free

Opening times: Tuesday – Sunday, 11am – 6pm; First Thursdays, 11am – 9pm

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