

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

21 December 2021 – 21 August 2022

Gallery 4, Free entry

#GalleriesintheGroove

New archive exhibition traces the early careers of iconic artists and musicians

Whitechapel Gallery presents *Galleries in the Groove: Three Visionary Dealers, 1960s–80s*, an archival exhibition exploring the revolutionary work of commercial galleries in three different cities. Featuring vintage posters, film and correspondence, the display celebrates the novel work of each organisation and the opportunities they provided for artists and musicians from **John Lennon** and **Joseph Beuys**, to **Senga Nengudi**, **Bridget Riley** and **Christo**.

The exhibition celebrates London's Robert Fraser Gallery, Just Above Midtown (JAM) in New York and Antwerp's Wide White Space, each of which revolutionised the promotion of contemporary art and took great risks in order to support the artists of their generation.

Just Above Midtown (JAM) (1974–86) represented African American artists, supporting Black arts within a predominantly white industry. Operated by Linda Goode Bryant, the gallery built a robust community of artists, notably including **David Hammons** and **Senga Nengudi**, by offering career support and introducing them to audiences in New York. On display are letters to Marvin Gaye, Chaka Khan, Michael Jackson and Aretha Franklin inviting them to participate in the programme *Afro-American Popular Culture*, alongside photographs from preview events, gatherings and workshops including **David Hammons' Greasy Bag & Barbecue Bones** (1975). The exhibition also features rare audio interviews and documentation of **Senga Nengudi's** 1981 performance in collaboration with **Butch Morris**.

The **Robert Fraser Gallery (1962–69, 83–85)** was as energetic as the Pop Art it promoted. It was here that **Bridget Riley**, and later **Jean Michel Basquiat**, were premiered in the UK. **Yoko Ono** and **John Lennon**, **Andy Warhol** and **Ed Ruscha** all held early exhibitions at the gallery, and this display presents selected photographs, posters and documentation between Fraser and a number of his collaborators – from **Robert Rauschenberg** to **Paul and Linda McCartney** – demonstrating the ease with which formal private views were transformed into social happenings. On display in this section is also an excerpt from **Vanessa Engle's** 2004 BBC documentary, *Art & the 60s: Groovy Galleries*.

Joseph Beuys, **Marcel Broodthaers** and **Christo** were among the first artists commissioned by **Wide White Space (1966–76)** in the early stages of their careers. Run by historian **Anny de Decker** and artist **Bernd Lohaus**, this space became a hub for conceptual and site-specific work. *Galleries in the Groove* features photographs and correspondence from **Daniel Buren**, **Richard Long**, **Walter de Maria** and **James Lee Byars** among others, as well as a new interview between de Decker and the exhibition's curators.

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

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Notes to Editors

- *Galleries in the Groove: Three Visionary Dealers, 1960s-80s* runs from 21 December 2021 – 21 August 2022.
- The exhibition is curated by Dr Nayia Yiakoumaki, Curator: Archive Exhibitions and Head of Curatorial Studies and Archives, Whitechapel Gallery and Inês Costa, Assistant Curator, Whitechapel Gallery, with curatorial support by Asymmetry Curatorial Fellow Zoe Diao.

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 and Hannah Höch to contemporaries such as Zarina Bhimji, Sophie Calle, William Kentridge, Eduardo Paolozzi 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
Whitechapel Gallery, 77 – 82 Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX Nearest London Underground Stations:
Aldgate East, Liverpool Street, Tower Gateway DLR T + 44 (0) 20 7522 7888 | E info@whitechapelgallery.org | W whitechapelgallery.org

Press Contact

For more information, interviews and images, contact:

Megan Miller | meganmiller@whitechapelgallery.org | press@whitechapelgallery.org
Madeline Adeane at Rees & Co | madeline@reesandco.com