This Must Be the Place: Artists for Whitechapel Gallery
8 October – 8 November 2026
Assembly Room, Free

This Must Be the Place is a special exhibition and sale developed in collaboration with artists and their galleries to mark Whitechapel Gallery's 125th anniversary and help support its future.

Since opening its doors in East London in 1901, the Gallery has introduced its many audiences to groundbreaking artists and practices from across the globe, ensuring its role as a vital barometer and shaper of contemporary culture. *This Must Be the Place* continues that legacy by bringing together twenty-three international artists whose distinctive works are defining the present moment.

Exclusively presented in the Gallery's historic Assembly Room – site of the former Whitechapel Library – are newly commissioned or recent works from: **Remi Ajani, Oliver Bak, Nicholas Bierk, Tim Breuer, Gareth Cadwallader, Andrew Cranston, Simone Kennedy Doig, Nat Faulkner, Lenz Geerk, Brett Goodroad, Sky Glabush, Jake Grewal, Nathanaëlle Herbelin, Esme Hodsoll, Mia Kokkoni, Aaron Kudi, Shigeo Otake, Marc Prats-Quintana, Shiwen, Ellen Siebers, Laurie Smith, Rafał Topolewski,** and **Arisa Yoshioka.**

All the artists share a commitment to painting as a practice. Taking both figurative and abstract approaches, they position the image not as a fixed statement but as a space of enquiry, where meaning is built through attention to surface, material, gesture and time. Many of the works in the exhibition resist the speed and immediacy of contemporary image culture. Instead, they invite a slower encounter, with content and meaning revealed gradually through layers of paint, accumulated marks, shifts of perspective and visual ambiguity.

Together, the exhibition reflects a global generation of artists spanning the UK, Europe, North America, Asia and Africa, who are using the medium of painting to explore personal and collective histories and perspectives, examining the relationship between the visible world and the imagined.

This Must Be the Place is a new initiative that combines institutional presentation with a commercial and fundraising model that offers more equitable ways for public institutions and the wider art ecosystem to support each other.

All works are offered for sale, with proceeds directly supporting Whitechapel Gallery, the artists and their representative galleries.

Notes to Editors

- *This Must Be the Place: Artists for Whitechapel Gallery* runs 8 October – 8 November 2026
- *This Must Be the Place: Artists for Whitechapel Gallery* is curated by Katrina Schwarz in collaboration with Daniel Lamb
- Artist biographies are available on request, or can be found here via our website

Press Contacts

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Listing Information

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8 October – 8 November 2026
Assembly Room
Free

Visitor Information

General Gallery admission: Free
Ticketed shows: £16.50 (Standard ticket) / £9.50 (Concessions)
Opening times: Tuesday – Sunday, 11am – 6pm; Thursdays, 11am – 9pm
Whitechapel Gallery, 77 – 82 Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX
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About the Artists

whitechapelgallery.org/exhibitions/this-must-be-the-place/

About Whitechapel Gallery

2026 marks Whitechapel Gallery's 125th Anniversary, providing a unique opportunity to celebrate the Gallery's groundbreaking history and set a bold agenda for the future.

Founded in 1901 with the aim to bring 'the finest art of the world to the people of East London' the Gallery has been responsible for bringing some of the most radical, innovative and influential artists of our times to its East End home. From the outset it pushed the boundaries of what a locally embedded cultural institution could do: giving

voice and platform to local, national and international artists at all stages of their careers; presenting diverse practices, forms and ideas; exemplifying sector-leading learning and community outreach programmes; and being at the forefront of the global cultural scene.

From ground-breaking solo shows from artists as diverse as **Barbara Hepworth (1954), Jackson Pollock (1958), Helio Oiticica (1969), Gilbert & George (1971), Eva Hesse (1979), Frida Kahlo (1982), Sonia Boyce DBE RA (1988), Sophie Calle (2010), Zarina Bhimji (2012), Emily Jacir (2015), William Kentridge (2016), Theaster Gates (2021), Nicole Eisenman (2023), Zineb Sedira (2024), Gavin Jantjes (2024), Peter Kennard (2024), Lygia Clark (2024), Donald Rodney (2025), Hamad Butt (2025), Joy Gregory (2025)** and **Veronica Ryan (2026)** to thought-provoking group and thematic exhibitions that reflect key artistic and cultural concerns, the Gallery's focus on bringing artists, ideas, and audiences together remains as important today as it did over a century ago, and has helped to cement the East End as one of the world's most exciting and diverse cultural quarters.

The programme for our anniversary year continues to give space to a range of perspectives from the local to the global, with priority given to those systemically under-represented, especially women-identifying artists and artists of colour. Our mission is to ensure that Whitechapel Gallery continues to claim a distinctive and radical position in the wider social and cultural landscape, building on its pioneering history while translating and animating it for our time.

Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

Whitechapel Gallery is a registered charity No. 312162