



## ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS ANNOUNCES ELECTION OF NEW PROFESSORS FOR THE RA SCHOOLS AND AN HONORARY FELLOW

At a recent General Assembly meeting, conducted for the first time via video conference, the Royal Academy of Arts elected Fiona Banner RA as Professor of Perspective and Lubaina Himid RA as Professor of Painting for the Royal Academy Schools. Alison Wilding RA's appointment as Eranda Professor of Drawing has also been extended for two years. This follows the election of author Zadie Smith as Honorary Fellow earlier this year.

### **Fiona Banner aka The Vanity Press RA Elect (b.1966)**

#### **Professor of Perspective**

Fiona Banner often works under the moniker of The Vanity Press. She established the imprint in 1997, with her seminal book *The Nam*. Since then she has published many works, some in the form of books, some sculptural, some performance based. In 2009 she issued herself an ISBN number and registered herself as a publication under her own name. Humour, conflict and language are at the core of her work. She first became known for her wordscapes, often heroically proportioned works that capture in her own words "films, from war blockbusters to porn". She often works with the nude, transcribing the human form into category-defying prose. Sometimes she repurposes military aircraft to brutal, sensual, and comedic ends.

### **Lubaina Himid RA Elect (b.1954)**

#### **Professor of Painting**

Born in Zanzibar in 1954, Lubaina Himid is a British painter who has dedicated her four-decades-long career to uncovering marginalised and silenced histories, figures, and cultural expressions. She studied Theatre Design at Wimbledon College of Art and went on to receive an MA in Cultural History from the Royal College of Art. Himid currently lives and works in Preston, UK, and is a Professor at the University of Central Lancashire. She was the winner of the Turner Prize in 2017. In 2021 Himid will present a major monographic exhibition at Tate Modern, London. Other current and forthcoming exhibitions include *Risquons-Tout*, WIELS, Contemporary Art Centre, Brussels, and *Everyday Heroes*, Southbank Centre, London (both 2020). Significant solo exhibitions include *Spotlights*, Tate Britain, London (2019); *The Grab Test*, Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem, The Netherlands (2019); *Lubaina Himid*, CAPC Bordeaux, France (2019); *Work From Underneath*, New Museum, New York (2019); *Gifts to Kings*, MRAC Languedoc Roussillon Midi-Pyrénées, Sérignan (2018); *Our Kisses are Petals*, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead (2018); *The Truth Is Never Watertight*, Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe (2017); *Navigation Charts*, Spike Island, Bristol (2017); and *Invisible Strategies*, Modern Art Oxford (2017). Significant group exhibitions include *En Plein Air*, The High Line, New York (2019–2020); Sharjah Biennial 14, UAE (2019); Berlin Biennale (2018); *The Place is Here*, Nottingham Contemporary, UK (2017); *Keywords*, Tate Liverpool (2014); and *Burning Down the House*, Gwangju Biennale (2014).

## **Alison Wilding RA (b.1948)**

### **Eranda Professor of Drawing**

Alison Wilding is known for her abstract sculptures, which embrace a wide range of materials and processes, on all scales from the handheld to the almost-monumental. Wilding studied at Nottingham College of Art, Ravensbourne College of Art and Design, Bromley, Kent and subsequently at the Royal College of Art. She came to prominence in the 1980s as one of a group of sculptors including Richard Deacon RA and Antony Gormley RA. Major solo exhibitions include *Alison Wilding*, Serpentine Gallery (1985); *Projects*, Museum of Modern Art, New York (1987); and *Alison Wilding: Immersion – Sculpture from Ten Years*, Tate Liverpool (1991). Public commissions include *Migrant* (2004) for Snape Maltings, *Shimmy* (2013) at 10 New Burlington Street, *Herm* (2018) for Rathbone Place and *Still Water* (2018) at the National Memorial Arboretum. Recent online exhibitions include *Alison Wilding Drawings*, Karsten Schubert, London (2020) and *Doors Closing Doors Opening*, Betty Cunningham Gallery, New York (2020). Wilding was nominated for the Turner Prize in 1988 and 1992. Awards include a Henry Moore fellowship at the British School at Rome (1998) Joanna Drew Travel Bursary (2007), Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award (2008) and Bryan Robertson Award (2012). A monograph published in 2018 coincided with an exhibition at the De La Warr Pavilion.

## **Zadie Smith (b.1975)**

### **Honorary Fellow**

Zadie Smith is the author of the novels *White Teeth*, *The Autograph Man*, *On Beauty*, *NW*, and *Swing Time*, as well as three collections of essays, *Changing My Mind*, *Feel Free* and *Intimations*. Zadie was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 2002 and was listed as one of *Granta's* 20 Best Young British Novelists in 2003 and again in 2013. *White Teeth* won multiple literary awards including the James Tait Black Memorial Prize, the Whitbread First Novel Award and the Guardian First Book Award. *On Beauty* was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize and won the Orange Prize for Fiction, and *NW* was shortlisted for the Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction. Zadie Smith is currently a tenured Professor of fiction at New York University and a Member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the Royal Society of Literature.

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### **About the Royal Academy Schools**

The Royal Academy Schools is an independent school of contemporary art that offers up to 17 artists each year the opportunity to participate in a free, three-year, postgraduate programme. Founded in 1769, the RA Schools remains independent to this day. This independence enables the postgraduate programme to constantly adapt to the individual needs of each student. Discussion and debate is fuelled by a variety of lectures, artist talks, group critiques and tutorials given by leading contemporary artists, Royal Academicians, critics, writers and theorists. Graduates of the RA Schools include Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, Matthew Darbyshire, Eddie Peake, Anthony Caro RA, JMW Turner and William Blake. The Keeper of the Royal Academy is Cathie Pilkington RA.

### **About the Royal Academy of Arts**

The Royal Academy of Arts was founded by King George III in 1768. It has a unique position in being an independent charity and institution led by eminent artists and architects whose purpose is to be a clear, strong voice for art and artists. Its public programme promotes the creation, enjoyment and appreciation of the visual arts through exhibitions, education and debate. [Royalacademy.org.uk](http://Royalacademy.org.uk)

The Royal Academy of Arts is governed by 80 Royal Academicians who are all practising artists or architects. On reaching the age of 75 they become Senior Academicians thus initiating vacancies for new Members. Elections are held at regular meetings of the General Assembly, when new Members are voted in by existing RAs.

The Royal Academy is an independent charity. It does not receive revenue funding from the government so is reliant upon the support of its visitors, donors, sponsors, patrons and loyal Friends.

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