



## ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS ANNOUNCES ELECTION OF NEW ROYAL ACADEMICIAN, HONORARY ROYAL ACADEMICIANS AND HONORARY FELLOWS

The Royal Academy of Arts has elected **Sonia Boyce** as a Royal Academician in the category of Painting. International artists **Olafur Eliasson** and **Jenny Holzer** have been elected as Honorary Royal Academicians. The **Duke of Devonshire** and **Agnes Gund** have been elected as Honorary Fellows.

### Royal Academician

#### **Sonia Boyce RA** (born London, 1962)

Category of Membership: Painting

Sonia Boyce MBE is a British Afro-Caribbean artist who lives and works in London. She studied at Stourbridge College, West Midlands. Boyce's early work addressed issues of race and gender in the media and in day-to-day life. She expressed these themes through large pastel drawings and photographic collages. Her work has since shifted materially and conceptually by incorporating a variety of media such as photographs, collages, films, prints, drawings, installation and sound. Her recent work collaboratively brings the audience into sharper focus as an integral part of the artwork, between artist, vocalists and audience, demonstrating how cultural differences might be articulated, mediated and enjoyed. Boyce's significant exhibitions include *Five Black Women*, African Centre, London (1983); *Sonia Boyce: For You, Only You*, Magdalen College, Oxford and subsequent UK venues (2007 – 2008); and *All the World's Futures*, 56th Venice Biennale, Arsenale and Giardini (2015). She is represented in the permanent collections of Arts Council England and Tate Modern, London. In 2007, Boyce was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for services to the arts. She is currently Professor of Fine Arts at Middlesex University, London and Professor of Black Art and Design at University of the Arts London.

### Honorary Royal Academicians

#### **Olafur Eliasson Honorary RA** (born Copenhagen, 1967)

Olafur Eliasson grew up in Iceland and Denmark and studied at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Copenhagen (1989 – 1995). Eliasson's art is driven by his interests in perception, movement and embodied experience. He strives to make the concerns of art relevant to society at large. Eliasson's practice encompasses sculpture, painting, photography, film, and installation and also engages the broader public sphere through architectural projects and interventions in civic space. Significant international exhibitions include *The Blind Pavilion*, Danish Pavilion, Venice Biennale (2003); *The Weather Project*, Turbine Hall, Tate Modern, London (2003); *Take Your Time: Olafur Eliasson*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2007); *Olafur Eliasson: Contact*, Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris (2014); and *Nothingness Is Not Nothing At All*, Long Museum, Shanghai (2016). Eliasson's projects in public spaces include *Green River*, realised in various cities between 1998 and 2001; the design for the

Serpentine Pavilion, London, with architect Kjetil Thorsen (2007); *The New York City Waterfalls*, New York (2008); the crystalline facades of Harpa Reykjavik Concert Hall and Conference Centre, Reykjavik, in collaboration with Henning Larsen Architects (2005 – 2011); *Cirkelbroen*, Copenhagen (2015); and *Ice Watch*, Place du Panthéon, Paris (2015). Eliasson is founder of Studio Olafur Eliasson, Berlin (1995); co-founder of Little Sun, Berlin (2012); and co-founder of Studio Other Spaces, Berlin (2014). *Unspoken Spaces: Studio Olafur Eliasson*, the first major publication on Eliasson's architectural projects and works in public spaces over the past 20 years will be published by Thames & Hudson on 18 April 2016. For the Royal Academy's forthcoming Annual Schools Lecture, Olafur Eliasson will be in conversation with the Royal Academy's Artistic Director Tim Marlow on 4 May 2016.

### **Jenny Holzer Honorary RA** (born Gallipolis, Ohio, 1950)

Jenny Holzer is an American neo-conceptual artist based in Hoosick Falls, New York. Her medium, whether formulated as a T-shirt, a plaque or an LED sign, is writing and the public dimension is integral to the delivery of her work. Starting in the 1970s with posters, and continuing through her recent light projections on landscape and architecture, her practice has rivalled ignorance and violence with humour, kindness and moral courage. Her international exhibitions and installations include *Installation for Bilbao*, Guggenheim Bilbao (1997); *For 7 World Trade, 7 World Trade Center*, New York (2006); *For the Guggenheim*, Guggenheim Museum, New York (2008); and *Protect Protect*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2008). Holzer received the Golden Lion prize at the Venice Biennale in 1990, the World Economic Forum's Crystal Award in 1996 and the Barnard Medal of Distinction in 2011. She holds honorary degrees from Ohio University, Williams College, the Rhode Island School of Design, The New School and Smith College.

### **Honorary Fellows**

#### **Duke of Devonshire Honorary Fellow** (born Derbyshire, 1944)

The 12<sup>th</sup> Duke of Devonshire succeeded his father Andrew Cavendish, the 11<sup>th</sup> Duke of Devonshire, in 2004. The Duke and his wife, Amanda, the Duchess of Devonshire, along with their son, Lord Burlington, avidly collect modern British and contemporary painting, ceramics and sculpture, including those by Royal Academicians. Many of these works are on public display at the Duke's family seat, Chatsworth in Derbyshire, which houses a collection of art that spans 4000 years and presents exhibitions by contemporary artists such as Michael Craig-Martin RA (2014). Chatsworth is currently undergoing a major restoration project, The Masterplan, which has already improved access and enhanced the visitor experience, will secure Chatsworth for future generations of visitors to enjoy. The Masterplan is scheduled for completion in 2017. The Duke of Devonshire was previously trustee of the Wallace Collection, London, Sheffield Museums and Derby Museums. He is currently Deputy Chairman of Sotheby's, a trustee of Storm King Art Centre, New York and patron of Derby Museums.

#### **Agnes Gund Honorary Fellow** (born Cleveland, Ohio, 1938)

Agnes Gund is an American philanthropist, art patron and collector, as well as an advocate for arts education. She received a BA in History from Connecticut College, New London and an MA in Art History from Harvard University, Boston. She has since received numerous honorary doctorate degrees, including honours from the Graduate Center, The City University of New York (2007) and Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island (1996). She is President Emerita of the Museum of Modern Art, New York (MoMA) as well as Chairman of its International Council. She is also Chairman

of MoMA PS1, New York and a trustee of the Cleveland Museum of Art in Ohio. In 1977, Gund founded Studio in the School, a non-profit organisation designed to bring professional artists into schools and organisations across New York to lead classes in a range of media. Gund received the National Medal of Arts from President Bill Clinton in 1997, the highest award given to artists and arts patrons by the United States government. In 2011, she was nominated by President Barack Obama as a member of the Board of Trustees of the National Council on the Arts. She has previously served on the boards of the J. Paul Getty Trust, Los Angeles; The Frick Collection, New York; and the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center, New York.

#### **Notes to Editors:**

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#### **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, privately funded 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.

The Royal Academy of Arts is governed by 80 Royal Academicians who are all practising painters, sculptors, engravers, printmakers, draughtsmen and architects and from whom they elect a President. The current President of the Royal Academy is Christopher Le Brun PRA. On reaching the age of 75 the Royal Academicians 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. Royal Academicians can elect Honorary RAs – artists from outside the UK – and Honorary Fellows and Honorary Members, eminent individuals from beyond the art world.

The RA is undergoing a transformative redevelopment which will be completed in time for its 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2018. Led by the internationally-acclaimed architect Sir David Chipperfield RA and supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), the plans will link Burlington House on Piccadilly and Burlington Gardens for the first time, uniting and revitalising the two-acre site. The redevelopment will also reveal the elements that make the RA unique, sharing with the public the historic treasures in its Collection, the work of its Academicians and the RA Schools, alongside its world-class exhibitions programme.

**For public information, please print 020 7300 8090 and [www.royalacademy.org.uk](http://www.royalacademy.org.uk)**

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