



THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS ANNOUNCES THE 253rd SUMMER EXHIBITION COMMITTEE WITH YINKA SHONIBARE RA AS CO-ORDINATOR

Summer Exhibition 2021

Main Galleries

22 September 2021 – 2 January 2022

Sponsored by



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Renowned British artist Yinka Shonibare RA will co-ordinate the 253rd Summer Exhibition in 2021. The Summer Exhibition Committee members are Royal Academicians Tony Bevan, Vanessa Jackson, Mali Morris, Humphrey Ocean, Eva Rothschild, Bob and Roberta Smith and Emma Stibbon. David Adjaye will curate the Architecture Gallery. The committee will be chaired by the President of the Royal Academy, Rebecca Salter.

For this year's exhibition, Shonibare will explore the theme of 'Reclaiming Magic' and celebrate the joy of creating art. He also plans to include some work that has not been made in a 'Western tradition'. Shonibare said: "Reclaiming Magic' is an exhibition which seeks a return to the visceral aspects of art making. It will transcend the Western canon which formed the foundations of the Royal Academy and Western Art History's points of reference. The exhibition will be a celebration of the transformative powers of the magical in art, a return to the ritualistic and the sheer joy of making".

The Summer Exhibition is the world's largest open submission contemporary art show which has taken place every year without interruption since 1769. The members of the Summer Exhibition Committee serve in rotation, ensuring that every year the exhibition has a distinctive character, with each Royal Academician responsible for a particular gallery space. Works from all over the world are judged democratically on merit and the final selection is made during the eight-day hang within the galleries.

The Royal Academy now invites artists and architects to submit their work for a chance for it to feature in the exhibition: summer.royalacademy.org.uk. Entries will open on Tuesday 13 April and the submission deadline is Monday 24 May 2021. The RA expects to receive approximately 15,000 entries and around 1200 works, in a range of media, will go on display.

The majority of works will be for sale, offering visitors an opportunity to purchase original work. Funds raised support the exhibiting artists, the postgraduate students studying in the RA Schools and the not-for-profit work of the Royal Academy.

Sponsor's Statement

Abdallah Nauphal, Chief Executive Officer, Insight Investment said: "Our association with the Summer Exhibition has continued now for more than a decade and we remain very proud to support this important cultural event. The open-entry nature of the Summer Exhibition ensures a diverse array of perspectives and it will be intriguing to see how the artists interpret the extraordinary developments of the past year."

Summer Exhibition 2021 Committee Royal Academician biographies

David Adjaye

Tony Bevan

Vanessa Jackson

Mali Morris

Humphrey Ocean

Eva Rothschild

Rebecca Salter

Yinka Shonibare

Bob and Roberta Smith

Emma Stibbon

Dates and Opening Hours

Press View: Wednesday 15 September 2021, 10am – 2pm

Open to public: Wednesday 22 September 2021 – Sunday 2 January 2022
10am – 6pm Tuesday to Sunday (last admission 5.30pm)

History of the Summer Exhibition

One of the founding principles of the Royal Academy of Arts was to "mount an annual exhibition open to all artists of distinguished merit" to finance the training of young artists in the Royal Academy Schools. The Summer Exhibition has been held every year without interruption since 1769 and continues to play a significant part in raising funds to finance the students of the RA Schools. The RA Schools is the longest established art school in the UK and offers the only free three-year postgraduate programme in Europe.

As the world's largest open submission contemporary art show, the Summer Exhibition provides a unique platform for emerging and established artists to showcase their works to an international audience, comprising a range of media from painting and printmaking to photography, sculpture, architecture and film. Royal Academicians are automatically entitled to submit up to six works to the Summer Exhibition and the rest of the exhibition features work by those invited by the committee and external entrants.

Social Media

Join the discussion about the exhibition online at:

Facebook /royalacademy

Instagram @royalacademyarts

Twitter @royalacademy

#RASummer

Safety measures

The health and safety of visitors and staff is paramount. Safety measures for visitors can be found on the RA website: royalacademy.org.uk/visiting-and-safety-during-coronavirus.

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 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.

For public information, please print: 020 7300 8090 or www.royalacademy.org.uk

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