

## News Release

**STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 10.00AM ON WEDNESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2017**

### **NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS AND NATIONAL GALLERY ANNOUNCE UNPRECEDENTED COLLABORATION TO STAGE EXHIBITIONS BY ARTIST TACITA DEAN**

In an unprecedented collaboration, three major London galleries, the National Portrait Gallery, Royal Academy of Arts, and National Gallery, will open three distinct exhibitions with the artist Tacita Dean it was announced today, Wednesday 13 September 2017.

The three exhibitions, *Tacita Dean: LANDSCAPE, PORTRAIT, STILL LIFE*, shaped by Dean's response to the individual character of each institution, will explore genres traditionally associated with painting – landscape at the Royal Academy of Arts, portraiture at the National Portrait Gallery and still life at the National Gallery – seen through the contemporary prism of Dean's wide-ranging artistic practice.

*Tacita Dean: PORTRAIT* (15 March - 28 May 2018) at the National Portrait Gallery will focus on portraiture primarily through the medium of 16mm film. This exhibition will be the first in the Gallery's history to be devoted to the medium of film, and also reveals the artist's own longstanding and personal interest in portraiture as a genre. Works on display will include Dean's films of influential figures such as her major six-screen installation with Merce Cunningham in *Merce Cunningham performs STILLNESS...* (2008) alongside her film of Claes Oldenburg in *Manhattan Mouse Museum* (2011) and her film diptych of Julie Mehretu *GDGDA* (2011), all previously unseen in the UK, as well as *Mario Merz* (2002), *Michael Hamburger* (2007), Cy Twombly in *Edwin Parker* (2011), and David Hockney in *Portraits* (2016). Also on show for the first time in the UK will be two photographic works: *GAETA, fifty photographs*, 2015 taken in the studio of Cy Twombly and *The Line of Fate* with Leo Steinberg. Dean is also making two new films, *Providence*, for the exhibition, and *His Picture in Little*, made specifically for presentation within the Gallery's permanent collection.

*Tacita Dean: LANDSCAPE* at the Royal Academy of Arts (dates to be announced) will be the first exhibition to be held in the new Gabrielle Jungels-Winkler Galleries at the RA, following its transformative redevelopment. The exhibition will explore landscape in its broadest sense, from botany to cosmography, travel to weather. It was the likes of the Royal Academicians Constable, Gainsborough and Turner who championed the genre of landscape painting. With an eye on these traditions, particularly the picturesque and the sublime, Dean has created works for the RA's new spaces, including a large-scale photogravure, *Forty Days*, a series of cloud chalk-spray drawings on slate and a monumental blackboard drawing, *The Montafon Letter*. These will be exhibited alongside pre-existing works such as *Majesty* (2006) and her clover collection (1973 onwards). The show will embrace all forms of 'scape' from cloud to mountain to desert and works to demonstrate the persistent place of landscape in its widest description within her practice. The exhibition will culminate in an ambitious new 35mm Cinemascope film, *Antigone*, made with the same

masking technique developed for her Turbine Hall project *FILM* (2011). In this experimental, quasi-narrative film, which features writer/poet Anne Carson and actor Stephen Dillane, Dean has gone so far as to combine multiple 'scapes' and events within the single film frame therefore mixing different places, geologies and seasons into a single cinematographic image.

*Tacita Dean: STILL LIFE* (15 March - 28 May 2018) at the National Gallery will present an innovative exploration of the genre through Dean's lens as one of its leading contemporary practitioners. Guided by her own understanding of still life and its influence on her practice, the artist will curate a diverse selection of works, ranging from 17th-century paintings to recently completed pieces in a variety of mediums, either by the artist herself or by her contemporaries. There will also be a new film diptych, *Ideas for Sculpture in a Setting* made by Dean especially for the National Gallery exhibition. By approaching the genre in this way, the exhibition will provide a forum for repositioning concepts of still life and examine its legacy within the history of art. In presenting historic paintings, such as Francisco de Zurbarán's *A Cup of Water and a Rose* (about 1630) from the National Gallery collection alongside works made by her contemporaries including Thomas Demand, Roni Horn and Wolfgang Tillmans and her own film *Prisoner Pair* (2008, 16mm), the exhibition will demonstrate the continued importance of still life, as well as the National Gallery's collection, as a source of inspiration in contemporary artistic practice.

Tacita Dean (b.1965) is a British European artist based in Berlin and Los Angeles who works with many mediums but primarily in film. Dean first came to prominence in the 1990s and is now considered to be one of the most influential artists working today. Dean's films, drawings and other works are extremely original. Her films express something that neither painting nor photography can capture. They are purely film. And while Dean can appreciate the past, her art avoids any kind of academic approach. Her art is carried by a sense of history, time and place, light quality and the essence of the film itself. The focus of her subtle but ambitious work is the truth of the moment, the film as a medium and the sensibilities of the individual.

#### Quotes:

Tacita Dean said: "It is a great honour to be invited to make this set of exhibitions in three such venerable and individual institutions. The idea to identify the nature of genres within my own practice came from within the particular identities of these three museums and their histories. It has been a huge pleasure developing the structure of these exhibitions with everyone involved and daring to gently nudge pre-existing orthodoxies about what constitutes a landscape, portrait and still life."

Dr Nicholas Cullinan, Director, National Portrait Gallery, London said: "Having worked with her before on *FILM* in 2011 at Tate Modern, Tacita Dean was top of my list of artists to programme when I took up the Directorship of the National Portrait Gallery two years ago, both to collaborate with one of the most influential artists today and to engage the Gallery with film. We are delighted to have initiated this unique collaboration across three major London institutions with one of Britain's greatest living artists. It is also an important moment in the history of the National Portrait Gallery as we stage our first ever exhibition devoted to the medium of film, expanding our understanding of the nature of portraiture today."

Tim Marlow, Artistic Director, Royal Academy of Arts, said: "This is a landmark collaboration between three historic institutions and an internationally important artist. I can think of no better way of inaugurating our new galleries in Burlington Gardens."

Dr Gabriele Finaldi, Director, The National Gallery said "Tacita Dean acts as both artist and curator in the National Gallery exhibition, focusing her, and our, attention on the fascinating quality of objects, real, painted and filmed, from the origins of still life to now."

*Tacita Dean: LANDSCAPE, PORTRAIT, STILL LIFE* is curated by Sarah Lea and Desiree De Chair at the Royal Academy of Arts; Sarah Howgate, Senior Curator, Contemporary Collections at the National Portrait Gallery, and Bart Cornelis, Curator of Dutch and Flemish Paintings at the National Gallery.

-ENDS-

## **Notes to Editors**

### **About Tacita Dean**

Tacita Dean grew up near Canterbury, England, the granddaughter of Basil Dean, the theatre and film director and producer who founded Ealing Studios. She graduated from Falmouth School of Art in 1988 and after a scholarship year at the Supreme School of Fine Art in Athens, Greece, studied for a higher diploma degree in Painting at the Slade School of Fine Art (1990-1992). Dean was nominated for the Turner Prize in 1998 for her 16-minute 16mm colour film *Disappearance at Sea*; a work inspired by the story of Donald Crowhurst (1932–1969), who died tragically whilst attempting to be the first to sail alone non-stop around the globe. She has received a number of awards including the BT New Contemporaries Award, 1992; 2000-2001 DAAD scholarship in Berlin; the sixth Benesse Prize at the 51<sup>st</sup> Venice Biennale, 2005, and the Hugo Boss Prize at the Guggenheim Museum in 2006, which included her film *Kodak*, 2006 and the Kurt Schwitters Prize, Hanover in 2009. In 2007, Dean was elected into the Akademie der Künste in Berlin and to the Royal Academy of Art in 2008. In 2011, she was commissioned to create a unique artwork for the Tate Modern's Unilever Series in the Turbine Hall; Dean described the final piece, entitled *FILM*, as 'a portrait of film itself'. Dean's recent solo exhibitions include a major exhibition in 2016 at the Museo Tamayo, Mexico City; Instituto Moreira Salles, Rio de Janeiro, 2013; Botin Foundation, Santander, Spain, 2013, Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, 2013 and New Museum, New York, 2012. Her works are held in public collections worldwide including the Art Institute of Chicago, Museum of Modern Art, New York, Musée d'art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris and Tate Modern, London. Dean is a founding member of [saveform.org](http://saveform.org). Future solo exhibitions in 2018 include Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh and Kunsthau Bregenz.

### **Publication**

The exhibitions will be accompanied by a fully illustrated publication with essays by Alexandra Harris, Alan Hollinghurst and Ali Smith.

Publication supported by Joe and Marie Donnelly.

### ***Tacita Dean: PORTRAIT***

15 March - 28 May 2018 at the National Portrait Gallery, London

*National Portrait Gallery Spring Season 2018 sponsored by Herbert Smith Freehills LLP*

Tickets with donation: Full price £14 /Concessions £12.50

Tickets without donation: Full price £12 /Concessions £10.50

Free for Members and Patrons

[npg.org.uk/tacitadean](http://npg.org.uk/tacitadean)

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### ***Tacita Dean: STILL LIFE***

15 March - 28 May 2018 at the National Gallery

Free Admission. Donations Welcome.

[nationalgallery.org.uk](http://nationalgallery.org.uk)

Exhibition supported by Christian Levett, and Miss Dasha Shenkman OBE.

Sponsored by Hiscox, Contemporary Art Partner of the National Gallery.

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***Tacita Dean: LANDSCAPE***

Dates to be announced at the Royal Academy of Arts

Supported by Art Fund, the Cockayne Foundation, The London Community Foundation

Tickets to be released in due course.

[www.royalacademy.org.uk](http://www.royalacademy.org.uk)

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