

Textiles  
Painting & Ceramics  
Jewellery  
Printmaking

INTERNATIONAL

**MAAW** *at the*

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Royal College of Art

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Peru Australia  
Russia Canada  
Mexico Japan  
United Kingdom  
Hong Kong

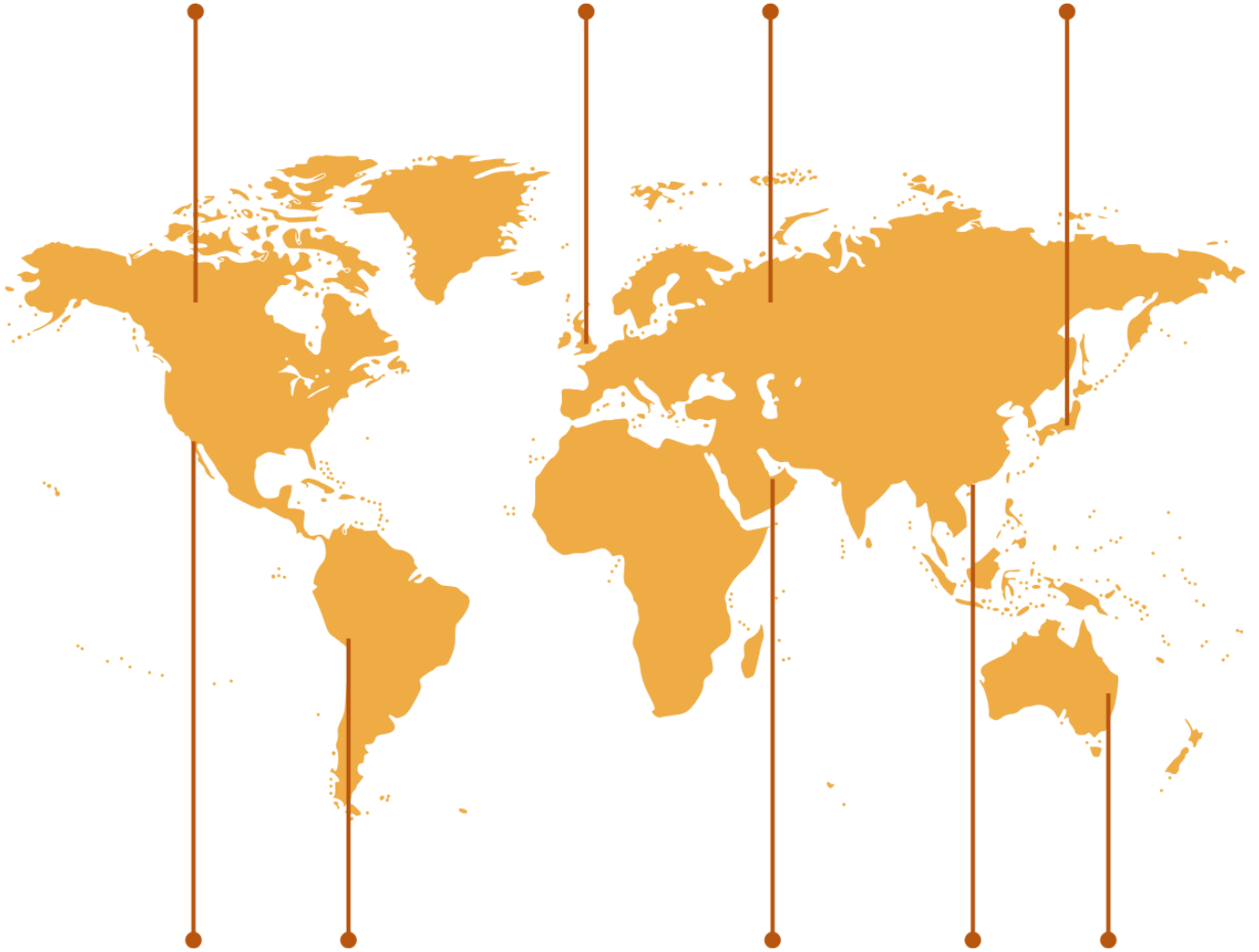
MARCH 18-22, 2024 KENSINGTON

DAISY JINGYI YE  
CANADA

JOANNA COHN  
TIMA JANE HATTON-GORE  
BRITAIN

KATYA BOSKY  
RUSSIA

SACHIKO SHIMOJO  
JAPAN



MARIAHA HERNANDEZ  
SANCHEZ  
MEXICO

MILIK MILAGROS  
PERU

FATIMA ALQASSIMI  
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

RUFINA NATUSCH  
HONG KONG

VALERIE ELLIS  
AUSTRALIA

# MAW MIDDLE AGED WOMEN

On the morning I received the email inviting me to the painting program at the Royal College of Art, I felt amazed and excited by the opportunity. By the afternoon, practical concerns crept in: would I have the stamina?, could I be creative enough? What I hadn't anticipated was a special camaraderie emerging from the unique demographics at the RCA.

The vast majority of students in all disciplines are young women so, by comparison, middle-aged women (MAW) stand out. Naturally, we gravitate toward each other and talk about our experiences and insights.

For most of the women I've met there's a feeling of pulling against family obligation...as though, when we're at art college, we're at the end of a thick elastic strap anchored to a domestic interior somewhere...a strap we're straining against while trying to paint or sculpt or whatever. MAW at art college had shelved their ambitions for half their lives; the RCA was finally their moment on stage but, during what could have been pure fulfillment, they're still negotiating with family who won't give up their claim to the woman they understand only as a source of satisfaction. The masculine ability to rest on domestic life and throw oneself completely into career eludes us.

On the other hand, all the middle-aged women I've met have a 'knowing' we did not have in our twenties. We see art in the context of the world at large and the world at large informs our art with decades of personal experience of socio-politics and professions like law, fashion, theatre and psychology. Because of that, we're far more likely to challenge the authority of our tutors. We expect the 'world's number one art and design college' to deliver excellence.

*Public and employer opinion often defeat society's best interests with a prejudice against middle-aged women.*

Kate Smith (progressive singer mid 20thC)

Then there is the urgency. All of us are death-conscious; time is running out to make our mark. I agree with Nadia Beard, writing for the Financial Times (Jan 2024), "*The tendency to view age and conservatism as interlinked trajectories might be convincing in the realm of politics, but they often have an inverse relationship in art. A desire to avoid repetition, receding fear of how the work will be received and an increased awareness of time make for later work that can tend towards the radical or bold.*"

This exhibition is an homage to the middle-aged women I've met. It does indeed contain work that's less concerned with its reception and more concerned with expression. You'll see into the belly of a huge, flying yellow textile, encounter angels, grenades, eyeballs and jewellery, and see delicate meditative, metaphysical drawings. If you visit on Wednesday afternoon, you'll meet some of the artists and talk to them about their work and their motivations.

I'm particularly pleased to have women from Hong Kong, Japan, Russia, Peru, Mexico, Canada, the UK, the UAE and Australia (me). While the artworks are remarkably diverse in style, scale and materials, you will experience, as I have, the universality of our sacrifice, strength and creativity.

*Valerie Ellis: artist, exhibition organizer, former psychotherapist.*



# VALERIE ELLIS

*Before the RCA, I worked as a psychotherapist. This came about because my family was a model of intergenerational dysfunction and, as a teenager, I ran away to Australia. The open landscape and new perspective made me receptive to a book on psychology given by a friend.*

*I'd been born into an era of appearances. Television dominated culture and, among other things, transmitted the idea to women that their appearance is the most important quality, they are surfaces - shells - which should be decorated to be as appealing as possible to men. Psychology revealed an inner world of thoughts, feelings, ambitions, fears and hopes I never knew existed. Since then, life has been an exploration of what lies beneath the surface...of people, organizations, politics and life. Now I live in the era of revelation where science, technology and art expose hidden truths.*

*Recently, I've enjoyed solo and group shows in London, recognition by the committee for the Luxembourg Art Prize, the ING Discerning Eye competition, directing the Arts Festival in Weybridge and various media interviews and talks.*

Valerie organised & wrote about the exhibition.

**Origin: Australia**

**Field: Painting**

**Previously: Psychology**

**Recognition: The Luxembourg Art Prize**

**Contact: [VeryValerieEllis.com](http://VeryValerieEllis.com)**

*Enfolded*  
Oil on canvas,  
90x180cm



One of the series of artworks made at the RCA when the artist was thinking about surfaces and how they interact with the viewer's search for pictorial depth. The viewer knows they see a painting, which is all surface, however, the urge to look for figure and meaning is universal. Thus, one tends to read the painting as overlapping folds - the artist playing with this habit by using darker colours at the 'edge' of the blue sections - suggesting shadows - and a green 'background' - which is no background at all because one circles back to the recognition that one is looking at a flat surface - a thing without depth because of the painterly application of paint. Thus, the painting is a constant interplay between flatness and depth, surface and interior, aesthetics and meaning, intended to remind the viewer to observe the world in those terms.

The artist is informed by various thinkers; Clement Greenberg's exhortation to let paintings be surfaces instead of windows; Deleuzian metaphysical philosophy on the structure of reality; alternative media coverage on political motivations behind the war in Gaza, and; the artist's personal experience as a psychotherapist.

# JOANNA COHN

*I am a multidisciplinary artist, whose practice involves painting and printmaking in an expanded field. I am concerned with the sensory potential and metamorphosis of technically mediated images.*



**Origin: United Kingdom**

**Field: Printmaking**

**Previously: West End Performer**

**Recognition: Leverhulme Scholar RCA**

**Contact: [JoannaCohn.com](http://JoannaCohn.com)**



*Time's Fall*  
Screen print  
90 x 130

Joanna's recent work explores the human body's relationship to the earth and time. She examines what it means to depict the earth as landscape and body as image, exploring the intersections between image making and map making as a way to navigate into and out of the unknown.



# MARIANA SANCHEZ HERNANDEZ

*I am a Mexican-born, New York-based artist with a background in architecture, whose works span different kinds of media, including painting, scenic design for the stage and ceramics. My exploration in painting is a practice that is shifting and evolving, my marks live in the liminal space between representation and abstraction and deal with the reference of the media itself. My compositions appear through a spontaneous technique that brings to life complex narratives that explore the tragedy and joy, the ambiguities and contradictions of human nature. Domestic scenes, intimate self-reflections, the feminine and motherhood are subjects that appear constantly in my work.*

*(Photo @sarasaiores)*

**Origin: Mexico**

**Field: Painting**

**Previously: Architecture & Set Design**

**Recognition: MFA Yale University**

**Contact: [marianasanchez.cargo.site](http://marianasanchez.cargo.site)**





Untitled  
Mixed media on canvas  
60 x 50cm  
2024

*My latest body of work centers around the medium itself, it questions the traditional values and historical reference of the painted canvas. In my search for a more personal approach, in my intention to question women's commonly underestimated domestic labor, in my search to revalue and bring these objects of love and care into the art shrine, I use confectionary tools to create the painting and moving it from table to wall I hope to recontextualize it's value.*

MIDDLE  
MAW  
WOMEN

# MILAGROS KUGA

*Throughout my journey as a jewellery artist, I have cultivated a parallel passion for my ancestors culture within my specialization. As an artist who believes in creating conceptual wearable objects from multicultural and personal inspirations with a unique ability to translate my ideas into delightful delicate and intricate pieces. My jewellery are my own canvas, where she express herself and communicate with the world and people through them. Where I combines high quality Peruvian / Japanese materials with an artistic and technical vision. I uses no mechanical equipment, all my work is carried out by hand processes, with only basic tools. All my jewellery and accessory are crafted by myself with a sustainable and conscious desire. I have a Japanese craft design degree at Nagoya Art University that helps me to understand, see and put material in different context. Like transform a piece of traditional antique kimono textile into a 3D contemporary necklace. My jewellery is for people who seek originality through creative and unique hand-made pieces. I am currently in England and exploring around Europe, searching for lines, materials, and new inspirations to create a new vision for future jewellery. One of my ambition during at RCA is developpe my own bio-material. images.*



**Origin: Peru**  
**Field: Jewellery**  
**Previously: Psychology**  
**Recognition: Leverhulme Scholar RCA**  
**Contact: [Milik.co.uk](mailto:Milik.co.uk)**



'Mis Rastros'  
Antique kimono, Peruvian poncho, pearls &  
silver wire. 2023

"Mis Rastros" translated as "My Traces" in English, symbolizes a continuous self-reflection on Japanese-Peruvian identity and associated memories. These necklaces embody stories from ancestral cultures that shape identity. Exploring couture techniques, each piece is meticulously assembled from Japanese antique silk sourced from Kimono costumes and Peruvian local textiles from traditional Ponchos. Each piece is a celebration of origins and identity. The green necklace evokes memories of adventures with the artist's grandmother in Cusco, Peru, and envisions a connection to Inca ancestors. The gold necklace symbolizes the region of Cajamarca, where her mother was born. This area is significant for historical events like the demise of the last Inca, Atahualpa, at the hands of Pizarro and a strong contrast to injustice in Lima, the capital of Peru.



# TINA JANE HUTTON-GORE

Tina Jane's practice spans Textile Design (Central Saint Martins Bachelor of Arts 2.1), Visual Arts Illustration (Camberwell Masters Distinction), Printmaking (Royal Drawing School Drawing Intensive and Online Drawing Development Year), Education (Goldsmiths PGCE, University of Hertfordshire Masters), Graduate Diploma (Royal College of Art) and all these influences are seen in the current carnivalesque oil paintings made on the Royal College of Art Painting Programme which employ archive material to fuse Irony, Humour and Surrealism to comment on contemporary society and human interactions. Tina Jane's chief focus for research is the intersection between life and non-life focusing on artefacts made by humans, representing humans, for humans: Scarecrows, Toby Jugs, Nautical Figureheads and Rudderheads, Garden Gnomes, Clowns, Puppets, Ventriloquist Dummies and Dolls. Tina Jane has exhibited extensively in London, China, Spain and the Isle of Wight and has been shortlisted for the National Portrait Gallery Herbert Smith Freehills Portrait Award 2024. Two of Tina Jane's etchings are held in the Victoria and Albert Museum archives.

**Origin: English**

**Field: Fine Art**

**Previously: Illustration, Printmaking, Painting**

**Recognition: Shortlist NPG Award 2024**

**Contact: [tinajaneerca \(instagram\)](https://www.instagram.com/tinajaneerca)**



*Life is a Circus  
Who Pulls Your Strings?*  
Oil on Canvas  
200 x 200 cm  
2023

This carnivalesque vision was created by gathering a selection of vintage images and artifacts such as clowns and puppets symbolising human relations. The artist, her partner Ken and cat “Toby Jug” all make an appearance. The circular motion and the recurrence of black holes invite the viewer to reminisce and re-analyse their own personal and collective memories with a view to experiencing both pleasant but also uncanny sentiments.

MIDDLE  
MAW  
WOMEN

# SACHIKO SHIMOJO

*After graduating from the Creative writing course at Waseda University in Japan, I studied drawing on my own and worked as an illustrator. After that, I created artworks based on quick sketches modeled on dancers and participated in exhibitions. I depict human beings, but I want to borrow their forms to express their inner conflicts, not the surface. Human beings are uncertain and fragile creatures. Influenced by a lot of information and social norms, how much of it can be said to be your true thoughts? However, I believe that the attitude of questioning and struggling with that is the true self. There's a story to be told. I want to interact with the audience through my work.*



**Origin: Japan**  
**Field: Painting**  
**Previously: Creative Writing**  
**Recognition: Solo Exhibition Tokyo**  
**Contact: sachikoshimojo(Instagram)**

23 Cages  
Ink on paper  
A4  
2023



*Our consciousness is unreliable because of the influence of our surroundings. Our existence is fragile, like sea foam...even though, I want to draw the strengths of humans to resist fragility.*

MIDDLE  
MAW  
WOMEN



# KATYA BOSKY

*Through my life's work in various media, I realised that telling stories is the main interest and aim of my art practice. I worked as Chief Costume and Set Designer on many film productions. What I love in film work is that together with the director and the actors, we tell a story that before existed only as a script. In my paintings, consistently populated in the past by 18th-century characters, I stage a scene from a complete story I have in my head, with all the adventures from the beginning to the end. In the last few years, I started writing down the stories and recently published a book, a fable I wrote at the first days of Russian aggression in Ukraine. This book raises funds for British-Ukrainian Aid. A few years ago, with no prior experience, I did a residency at Vista Alegre, a Portuguese porcelain manufacturer, and discovered the excitement and the inspiration of a material to incarnate my stories. It is thus that my masked and feathered Harlequins and Columbines have travelled, dancing and chatting, from film to book illustrations to paintings in the London gallery scene of the 1990s and 2000s and on to the brilliant whiteness of porcelain, telling nowadays a completely different story about wars, painted in red.*

**Origin: Russia**

**Field: Caermics**

**Previously: Chief Film Set & Costume Design**

**Recognition: German Design Award - Porcelain**

**Contact: [gerasimovabosky.co.uk](http://gerasimovabosky.co.uk)**



*Sisyphus*  
Ink on paper  
A5, 2024



From one of Katya's fairy tales: In the heart of her ritualistic anti-war memorial in clay was a heart. It was a symbol for her: not a vessel of human sentiments but a knot of feelings, empathy and desires. Two crying angels stood either side of this heart, bent over, their sorrows too heavy for them.

*What is the state of my heart?* - she asked herself.

*My heart is bleeding...* - answered the voice in her head. She looked inside herself and there was a bleeding heart looking through twisted ribs at the sad world outside. Glass lungs couldn't breathe and her pelvis, drawn with white chalk on the black board of her mind, couldn't bear a child...

And everything came together all at once. The kaleidoscopic, brilliant world inside the Teaching Palace, the faraway horrors of faraway wars and this particular moment of a broken, bombed, ripped-to-pieces person were for her on this piece of card in this nicely lit studio in front of her friends and teachers. She realised that she was a Metamodernist. It was fun - to be in the company of Robin van den Akker, Wes Andersen and her beloved Leos Carax. *Informed naivety is exactly my language* - she murmured, stroking her newly fired bisque earthenware heart driven in a cart by a tiny donkey. Let's add to that Kandinsky, Malevich, El Lisitsky, Popova, Goncharova (Russian amazons) and the picture will be full.

MAVIV

# FATIMA ALQASSIMI

*A dedicated artist and designer, whose creative journey is a relentless pursuit of excellence and passion for art and craftsmanship. My academic journey began with a diploma in Jewelry Business Management from HCT in Dubai, Building upon this and driven by a fervent desire to delve into the realm of luxury and creativity, I completed a master's degree in luxury management at Bocconi University in Milan. This broadened my horizons and provided me with a global perspective. In 2006, I established my workshop in Ras al-Khaimah. Over the years, my labor was recognized with accolades and features in prestigious publications such as Vogue Italian, Vogue Arabia, Alhlan, and Architectural Digest Magazine culminating in the honor of having my work displayed at the acclaimed Waldorf Astoria hotel in Ras al-Khaimah. In line with my commitment to making a positive impact, I wholeheartedly support philanthropic causes and donated a piece to UNICEF to aid in the noble pursuit of children's education.*



**Origin: United Arab Emirates**  
**Field: Jewelry**  
**Previously: Business Management**  
**Recognition: Waldorf Astoria UAE**  
**Contact: [FatimaAlQassimi.com](http://FatimaAlQassimi.com)**

Dallah  
Brass on  
porcelain  
1m high



*Presently, I am channeling my expertise and creativity into meticulous craftsmanship, giving life to eight new mini vases, each possessing its own unique narrative and meticulously handcrafted from metal. These mini masterpieces not only showcase technical mastery but reflect my unrivaled ability to infuse emotion and narrative into my art, inviting viewers into a captivating world where creativity and emotion intertwine seamlessly. I explore the inherent beauty of natural elements, particularly harnessing the energies of healing crystals found in sand, igniting a deep inquiry that would profoundly influence my future creations.*

MIDDLE  
MAW  
WOMEN

# DAISY JINGYI YE



*As a Chinese immigrant in the West, I often wish to reunite inside with outside; to develop a holistic means to nest my body and mind to a rhythm synchronized with my surroundings. My work empathizes with those who struggle with aging, cracked, displaced while striving to find purpose. At the RCA, I research and experiment with healing and mending in a painting; the relationship between the body, liminal space and architectural elements in the adaptive unconscious. By challenging traditional concepts of painting as 'lens-based subjective imagery', I redefine painting as an organic therapeutic phenomenon. My practice fuses intuitive abstract painting with figuration to deconstruct and reconstruct the internal landscape. My gestural painting accesses unconscious materiality surfacing emotions and kinetic movement. Meanwhile, I explore touch. The moment I touch, feel and reflect, sensory experience becomes impulse to express.. to restore tactility to a painting. My undergraduate research centered on natural fibers, plant dyes and textile crafts connecting life forms in the ecosystem. Inspired by nature, I mend and repurpose my work. My practice encompasses psychogeography, material investigation, collage, and intuitive painting. As an expanded painter, challenging the traditional concept of painting as 'lens-based subjective imagery' redefining painting as a reflexive model of thought. My painting is an organic phenomenon, a means of therapy, a holistic means to nest body and mind, an unknown place that allows my unconscious to unfold.*

**Origin: Canada**

**Field: Painting**

**Previously: Motherhood**

**Recognition: AUARTS Graduation Distinction**

**Contact: [yejingyi.com](http://yejingyi.com)**

*The Mindscape 2023*  
Oil, and lacquer on  
linen, 60 x 90 cm



*This work explores the intersection between body, space, and adaptive unconscious through an ecological lens and the practice of psychogeography. For me, to heal is to unpack the personal traumatic experience in the unconscious mind. In this work, I attempt to establish a process that allows the symbolic elements to surface. Therefore, the embedded structure and its meaning might possibly be accessed and communicated through the conscious mind. In this work, I experimented with Japanese Lacquer as its fluidity, stickiness, and thickness manifest the sense of danger or threat. It features my feeling of unconsciousness, contrasting that of the consciousness. Conversely, the translucent and rich oil paint illuminates the light and space, where a transformative aspect may occur out of the context of the adaptive unconscious.*

**MAWI**  
WOMEN

# RUFINA NATUSCH

*My first degree is in physics after which I studied law and practiced as a solicitor in commercial law for many years before exploring my interest in Art, firstly at Morley College, London and now on the MA Textiles program at the RCA. My background in physics and law has given me a framework of reasoning – to be curious, to question and to do so with both discipline and creativity. Textiles is an everyday part of us and is a pervasive and powerful language connecting us beyond borders as it reaches out to both our cerebral and sensory perception of the world. In my lifetime I do not remember such global polarisation in fundamental issues such access to food, housing, healthcare and education. We each have a voice and we each have a responsibility to use it well. It is my hope that my work encourages dialogue and speaks of the need for change and a better future for us as a humanity with a shared origin out of Africa and a shared future as a race.*



**Origin: Hong Kong**  
**Field: Textiles**  
**Previously: Law**  
**Recognition: Osborne & Little Award  
& Coats Foundation Trust Award 2023**  
**Contact: [rufinanatusch.com](http://rufinanatusch.com)**



*Inside & Out 2022*  
Knit, dyed and melted  
organza, polyester ribbon.  
100x100x150cm.

Inside & Out is a study of the presentation and perception of self through colour and colour interaction. It explores the importance of perspective in our dealings with others and also how we see ourselves.

This piece is made to be seen from multiple viewpoints inviting the audience to engage accordingly as they walk around it. The side elevations and the underneath look disparate to the viewer when looking directly into and up with its apparent division of space changing. These however are all responses to the same work reminding us that we, as individuals, have many facets and must be given time and space to be perceived as a whole.

MIDDLE  
MAW  
WOMEN

INTERNATIONAL

**MAAW**

*at the*

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Royal College of Art

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MARCH 2024

MONDAY 18TH - 11AM-6PM

TUESDAY 19TH - 10AM-6PM

WEDNESDAY 20TH - 10AM-8PM

THURSDAY 21ST - 10AM-6PM

FRIDAY 22ND - 10AM-1PM

ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART

KENSINGTON GORE, SOUTH KENSINGTON,

LONDON, SW7 2EU

PUBLIC ENTRY WEDNESDAY 20TH, 1PM-8PM  
ENTER NEAR ROYAL ALBERT HALL, OPPOSITE DOOR 8  
OTHER TIMES BY APPOINTMENT