

PRESS RELEASE: 23 October 2019

UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS LONDON PRESENTS COUNTER ACTS

AN EXHIBITION TO CELEBRATE ITS CONNECTIONS WITH THE TURNER PRIZE OVER 35 YEARS

- Featuring artists with a connection to both UAL and the Turner Prize alongside recent graduates
- Over half of all Turner Prize winners studied or worked at UAL
- Participating artists include Jeremy Deller, Bill Woodrow, Mona Hatoum, Yinka Shonibare and Gillian Wearing
- Recent UAL graduates showcased include Alix Marie, Madelynn Mae Green and Jimmy Merris

Press Preview: 28 November 2019, 9-11am

Exhibition Dates: 29 November 2019 - 22 January 2020

This winter, University of the Arts London (UAL) presents *Counter Acts* (29 Nov 2019 – 22 Jan 2020), an exhibition that explores the relationships between generations of the artists who studied and taught at UAL and their connections to the Turner Prize, the UK's foremost contemporary art prize. Held at the historic Lethaby Gallery, Central Saint Martins, the exhibition brings together artists who form part of UAL's artistic communities (alumni, teachers and recent graduates) to mark the 35th anniversary of the Turner Prize.

Curated by **Osei Bonsu**, UAL alumni and Curator of International Art at Tate Modern, *Counter Acts* will span 35 years of artistic practice highlighting UAL's significant and continued contribution to the British art scene. Over half of all Turner Prize winners have studied or worked at one of the university's six colleges - Camberwell College of Arts, Central Saint Martins, Chelsea College of Arts, London College of Communication, London College of Fashion, Wimbledon College of Arts. This is the first-time artists from all six colleges have come together in a cross-college exhibition. *Counter Acts* demonstrates the unique role UAL's artists have played in shaping the art world and acting as an incubator for artistic talent.

Taking the year of 1984 as a pivotal point of departure, *Counter Acts* will uncover the relationship between artists, art schools and contemporary society, highlighting artworks that have helped to redefine contemporary art by disrupting historical, political and cultural narratives. Drawing on a diverse range of perspectives and approaches, the exhibition will reflect on art practices that have defined the university's past, as well as those which will shape its future.

Exhibition curator and UAL alumni Osei Bonsu comments: *'As freedom of speech becomes an issue of polarised debate, visual art remains a powerful instrument of*

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communication. Artists in Britain have always articulated progressive viewpoints, and their ability to transform our perception of social realities is more relevant than ever.'

Participating artists include Turner Prize winner **Jeremy Deller**, a student at London College of Printing (now London College of Communication), who was awarded the Prize in 2004 for his video study of Texas entitled *Texas Memory Bucket*. Turner Prize nominees include British sculptor **Bill Woodrow RA** (1986 nominee) and installation artist **Yinka Shonibare** (2004 nominee) who both studied at Central Saint Martins. Exploring how UAL has influenced the practice of international artists, is Palestinian artist and Central Saint Martins alumni **Mona Hatoum** (1995 nominee) and British-Laotian artist **Vong Phaophanit** (1993 nominee) who served as visiting lecturer at both Chelsea College of Arts and Wimbledon College of Arts.

The exhibition coincides with the Turner Prize 2019 presentation at Turner Contemporary in Margate, reinforcing how the Prize has remained a topic of national conversation, informing the way in which contemporary art is seen and understood within the public imagination. *Counter Acts* is also a fringe event during [Margate Now](#), an ambitious and dynamic festival of art, events and performances held in Margate and beyond to celebrate the Prize coming to Turner Contemporary.

A full line up of artists and their works, along with a public events programme of events will be announced later this month. For further information please visit arts.ac.uk

- ENDS -

For further information on *Counter Acts* please contact Hope Butler at Sutton Communications.
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LISTINGS

COUNTER ACTS

Exhibition Dates: 29 November 2019 - 22 January 2020. Closed between 21 December 2019 – 4 January 2020

Address: Lethaby Gallery, Central Saint Martins, Granary Building, 1 Granary Square, Kings Cross, London N1C 4AA

Opening Times:

Tue-Fri: 11:00am – 6:00pm

Sat: 12:00pm – 5:00pm

Ticket Prices: Free entry

Facebook: www.facebook.com/UniversityoftheArtsLondon/

Twitter: @UAL

Instagram: @unioftheartslondon

Website: www.arts.ac.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS

About University of the Arts London (UAL)

University of the Arts London (UAL) offers an extensive range of courses in art, design, fashion, communication and performing arts. Our graduates go on to work in and shape the creative industries worldwide. UAL is ranked second in the world for Art and Design in the 2019 QS World University Rankings by Subject ®. The University has a world-class reputation and is made up of six equally

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renowned Colleges: Camberwell College of Arts, Central Saint Martins, Chelsea College of Arts, London College of Communications, London College of Fashion and Wimbledon College of Arts. arts.ac.uk

About Osei Bonsu, Curator of International Art at Tate Modern and UAL Alumni

Osei Bonsu is a British-Ghanaian curator, critic and art historian based in London and Paris. His activities encompass exhibition programming, publishing and cultural strategy in the field of visual arts. He has developed projects focused on transnational histories of art, collaborating with museums, galleries and private collections internationally. In 2017, he curated the 10th edition of Satellites, an exhibition co-commissioned by Jeu de Paume and CAPC: Centre for Contemporary Art, Bordeaux. He has also worked on the development of a number of projects focusing on African art, including 'Pangaea II: New Art from Africa and Latin America' (Saatchi Gallery, 2015) and 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair (2013-14). He holds a Masters in History of Art from University College London, where he earned a distinction for his dissertation on Surrealism and African sculpture. Bonsu is a contributing editor at frieze magazine.

About the Lethaby Gallery

Founded in 1896, the gallery was named after the founding head of the Central School of Art and Design – later Central Saint Martins – William Richard Lethaby, whose teaching bridged the gap between the academic and the practical, the thought and the thing, a practice which continues at the College today. With its doors opening onto Granary Square at King's Cross, the Lethaby Gallery delivers an ever-changing insight into one of the world's best arts and design colleges.

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