

ARTIFICIAL REALITIES

30 January 2016 - 30 June 2017

Jacob Hashimoto, Gossamer Cloud, 2006, Paper, bamboo, dacron, acrylic colours, Courtesy of Studio la Città, Verona. Photographer: © Michele Alberto Seren



- *The East Wing Biennial committee of The Courtauld Institute of Art is pleased to present 'Artificial Realities', the twelfth instalment of contemporary art which occupies the working Institute of Art*
- *31 international exhibitors, including Tracey Emin, Antony Gormley and Rachel Whiteread, have been selected by a student committee to engage with a curatorial theme*
- *The selection of works by both established and emerging artists will challenge and expose "ingrained" realities through highlighting the dynamic relationship between the real and the virtual*
- **PRIVATE VIEW: Friday 29 January 2016, 7:30 - 10:00pm**, The Courtauld Institute of Art, Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 0RN (guest list only)
- *For further information and press images, please contact Evy Cauldwell French on evy.cauldwell@courtauld.ac.uk*

Founded by Art Impresario Joshua Compston in 1991, the East Wing Biennial will return to promote contemporary art within The Courtauld Institute of Art at Somerset House in early 2016. The 18-month exhibition *Artificial Realities*, will feature works by 31 international artists, including Tracey Emin, Antony Gormley, Jacob Hashimoto, Rachel Whiteread, Jim Lambie and Laure Prouvost.

Artificial Realities takes the viewer through the spaces of the Courtauld Institute, where the works of art gesture towards the transition from the real to illusion, truth to fiction, and the ambiguous borders between the two. The works themselves are experienced through the transitional spaces and minor rooms of the Courtauld, revealing traces and layers of perception by interfering with the daily experience of the Institute's inhabitants, and confronting the viewer with the uncanny.

The opening of *Artificial Realities* is a special occasion for The Courtauld Institute: 2016 marks the 25th year since the inauguration of the East Wing Biennial in 1991. The concept of East Wing stems from the individual vision of then-student Joshua Compston, who was keen to provide the walls of the Courtauld with more examples of "living art". Opening on 27 January 1991, the exhibition presented the works by Gilbert and George, Howard Hodgkin and Damien Hirst, among others.

While the Courtauld is famed for its inimitable collection of Impressionist works, the East Wing Biennial is renowned for complementing this magnificent collection with a host of established and emerging living artists. The setting of the exhibition within the working Institute of Art in the East Wing of Somerset House, acts to emphasise the exhibition theme.

The experience of walking through the narrow paths, confined corridors and spiralling staircases of the Courtauld takes on a particular meaning as each space is allocated a compartmentalized sub-theme, and falls within the concept of physical, as well as conceptual uncertainty. Making our way up the four intricate stories of the Courtauld, we find ourselves discovering peculiar excavations, scratching the multiple surfaces of the Institute's walls, continuously reminding us that reality must be grasped in layers.

As a means of linking the disparate, maze-like character of the Courtauld Institute, Alan Chandler, Helen Howard and Gilles Retsin have come together to employ a process of stratigraphy. They have created a number of site-specific mini-excavations directly into the physical fabric of the walls, excavating layers of paint, mortar, and memory. This phenomenological interplay of real and imagined is expressed through various media: including the large scale installations of Megan Geckler, Marco Maggi, and Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva; the sculptures of Gabriel Kuri and Ignacio Valdes; a video from Sam Gough Yates; as well as a novel site-specific scent-installation by the Perfume Curator Anastasia Brozler.

At the request of the artist Leon Krige, both '3606-Roma-Termini-Informal-T' and '3354-Roma-Vatican-Arches-T' will be put forward for silent auction during the opening weekend, the proceeds from which will be given to the migrant crisis appeal.

LIST OF EXHIBITORS

Clive Barker	Gabriel Kuri
Amina Benbouchta	Leon Krige
Anastasia Brozler	Emmanuelle Leblanc
Daniel Buren	Samuel Levack and Jennifer Lewandowski
Alan Chandler	Marco Maggi
Edmund du Waal	Pau Marinello
Tracey Emin	Gordon Matta-Clark
Falcone	Filippo Minelli
Raf Fellner and Tegen Williams	Irene Montemurro
Adrian Fisk	Laure Prouvost
Megan Geckler	Gilles Retsin
Samuel Gough-Yates	Oliver Schwarzwald
Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva	Paula Subercaseaux
Jacob Hashimoto	Ignacio Valdes
Paul Hawdon	Yonatan Vinitzky
Jenny Holdzer	Rebecca Ward
Chris Kenny	Rachel Whiteread

NOTES TO EDITORS

For further information and images, please contact Evy Cauldwell French
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East Wing Biennial: *Artificial Realities* will be open from 30 January 2016 until June 2017.
Entry is free, booking required through the website.

Artist Talks:

10th February – Kenneth Clark Lecture Theatre, Courtauld Institute of Art - 17:30-18:30
(Un)Real: A Panel Discussion: Anastasia Brozler, Alan Chandler, Paul Hawdon and Chris Kenny

17th February – Kenneth Clark Lecture Theatre, Courtauld Institute of Art 17:30-18:30
(Un)Real: Artists Talk: Adrian Fisk and Samuel Gough-Yates

24th February – Research Forum, Courtauld Institute of Art – 17:30 - 18:30
(Un)Real: Artists Talk: Alan Chandler and Chris Kenny

About East Wing Biennial

The [East Wing Biennial](#) is the student-organised contemporary-art exhibition of the Courtauld Institute of Art, London. Based at Somerset House, The Courtauld is an independent college of the University of London, and one of the world's leading centres for the study of the history and conservation of art and architecture, and its gallery houses one of Britain's best-loved collections. The current East Wing Biennial Committee has been meeting since the beginning of 2015 and numbers approximately 40 students.

'Faced with seminar rooms of such bareness, that the eye and mind revolted... I decided, by hook or by crook, to find some contemporary art to destroy all the vestiges of such nudity, and by this act restore to its rightful position art in everyday surroundings' - Joshua Compston, 1991

This was the vision of Joshua Compston, student at the Courtauld Institute 1989-1992 and founder of East Wing. Titled the Courtauld Loan Collection, the first show opened on 27th November 1991 and exhibited the likes of Gilbert and George, Howard Hodgkin, and Damien Hirst, many of whom were recently graduated and stretching the boundaries of the British art scene.

Whether consciously or not, Compston provided a legacy for students of the Courtauld Institute, with the organisation of a biennial show occurring for the last twenty years. Never losing sight of the original concept of East Wing, the shows have progressed and bloomed into the vast project that we see today. Over the years themes such as the transitory nature of art, and the struggle of inner and outer self have been explored through a whole host of media crammed into the labyrinthine layout of the building.

The committee is headed by Poppy Field and Rebecca Anthony. *Artificial Realities* is curated by Poppy Field, Rebecca Anthony, Clara Krzentowski, Elvira Valdes and Jonathan Chaplow-Hanson.

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East Wing Biennial is proud to be sponsored by Williams and Hill, CASS Art, digiQualia, Art Versed, Bourdeaux Index, Bridgeman Images, The Burlington Magazine, Mandatum Ink, 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair, ACE Cultural Tours and LabGenius.

About The Courtauld Institute of Art and Gallery

The Courtauld Institute of Art is the world's leading centre for the study of the history and conservation of art and architecture. Through its unique integration of activities, facilities and resources, The Courtauld provides an exceptional environment for research, learning and professional development. Facilities for students are exceptional, including outstanding libraries, the Research Forum which offers access to visiting speakers from around the world and The Courtauld Gallery's outstanding collection. Open to the public daily, The Gallery is famous for its iconic Impressionist and Post-Impressionist masterpieces, as well as numerous other important paintings and works of art from the Renaissance through to the 20th century. The Courtauld Gallery regularly presents major exhibitions and special displays which are consistently acclaimed for their outstanding quality and originality.

Find out more at courtauld.ac.uk