



mima media release: 14 July 2009

# GERHARD RICHTER

## MODERN TIMES

28 August – 15 November 2009

**PRESS VIEW:** Thursday 27 August 2009 (by arrangement)

**PREVIEW:** Thursday 27 August 2009, 6-8pm

ARTIST  
ROOMS

ON TOUR WITH



Supported by



*Modern Times*, an exhibition by Gerhard Richter, one of the world's greatest living artists, is presented at mima Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art from 28 August until 15 November 2009.

A highlight of mima's 2009 exhibitions programme, *Modern Times* has been designed to create a varied and memorable presentation of this extraordinary artist's work.

The exhibition notably draws upon ARTIST ROOMS, a new national collection of international contemporary art donated jointly to National Galleries of Scotland and Tate by Anthony d'Offay, and forms part of the inaugural year of exhibitions and displays from the collection being shown nationally, with the support of independent charity The Art Fund and in Scotland, of the Scottish Government. Throughout 2009, 18 museums and galleries across the UK will be showing over 30 ARTIST ROOMS exhibitions, presenting many works previously unseen in public.

Complementing this unique and distinctive collection and building on mima's growing reputation as a centre for excellence for drawing, are a series of pencil and graphite drawings, oil paintings on paper and over-painted photographs, carefully selected from Kunstmuseum Winterthur and a number of private collections, many of which have not previously been exhibited in the UK.

The exhibition comprises four distinctly themed rooms. Room 1 presents a meditative installation of monochrome and abstract works, including *Eckspiegel, braun-blau*, (*corner mirror, brown-blue*) and *Eckspiegel, gruen-rot* (*corner mirror green-red*), 1991. Like mirrors, their uniform surface is only broken by random interventions such as the reflection of visitors to the gallery.

Room 2 houses *Two Sculptures for a Room* by Palermo, 1971. One of the very few sculptures ever made by Gerhard Richter, the work consists of two plaster heads, painted with grey oil paint, one a self-portrait of Richter, the other a portrait of the German artist Blinky Palermo. One of the most written about and referred to works in Richter's oeuvre, it has rarely been seen.

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TATE

Room 3 showcases a number of abstract paintings, including *Abstraktes Bild*, 2002 created using brushes, squeegees and palette knives, so that the layers overlap or are completely obliterated by new ones. *Self-portrait Standing, Three Times*, 1991, is a rare excursion into depicting his own appearance by the normally reclusive artist. Poignantly it depicts the artist looking backwards in a series of six photographic stills each one gradually erasing the artist with gradations of crimson paint.

Perhaps most poignant of all however, is a series of thirty rarely seen drawings, combining both abstract and figurative works and offering a remarkable insight into the artist, occupying Room 4 of the exhibition.

One of the most significant artists in modern times, Gerhard Richter's career spans nearly five decades. Currently living and working in Cologne, he has influenced the world of art and culture greatly. With works held by almost every major museum in the world, he is said to have 'brought painting back to life.'

This exhibition comes close on the heels of a number of exhibitions that have widened the public's view of Richter including a major retrospective at The National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh, a groundbreaking survey of his portraits at the National Portrait Gallery, London, and the unforgettable *4900 Colours: Version II* at the Serpentine Gallery in London.

For this exhibition mima is expanding its existing education and public programme to create enhanced opportunities to work with 14-21 year olds. The production of *The Modern Times*, a newspaper designed by, and for young people will present new ways of looking at the exhibition through news, interviews, photographs, thoughts, and comments, and will be distributed free to 48,000 homes in Middlesbrough. The Art Fund has supported this programme as part of its overall funding package for the nationwide tour of ARTIST ROOMS.

Coinciding with the exhibition mima sound space will present *For Philip Guston*, by Morton Feldman, 1984. *For Philip Guston* is a tribute to the abstract expressionist painter, for many years a close personal friend of Feldman. The work is a meditative examination of a small handful of notes played slowly over a vast expanse of time, with textures often reduced to just one instrument playing alone. One of Feldman's most beautiful and moving pieces, the performance here by the S.E.M. Ensemble (Petr Kotik, Joseph Kubera, Chris Nappi) recorded in 1995 is simply one of the finest.

Morton Feldman is recognised as one of the twentieth century's most influential composers. His artistic principles were shaped in the early 1950s by his association with composers John Cage, Christian Wolff, Earle Brown and David Tudor, and painters Philip Guston, Mark Rothko, Jackson Pollock and Robert Rauschenberg, amongst others. Copies of the recording will be available in mima shop during the presentation.

Throughout 2009, 18 museums and galleries across the UK will be showing over 30 ARTIST ROOMS from the collection created by the dealer and collector, Anthony d'Offay, and acquired by the nation in February 2008. This is the first time a national collection has been shared and shown simultaneously across the UK, and has only been made possible through the exceptional generosity of independent charity The Art Fund and, in Scotland, of the Scottish Government.

Anthony d'Offay's guiding principle for the creation of ARTIST ROOMS was the concept of individual rooms devoted to particular artists. *ARTIST ROOMS on Tour with The Art Fund [supported by The Scottish Government as above]* has been devised to take those displays beyond the collection's owners, Tate and National Galleries of Scotland, and to reach and inspire new audiences across the country, particularly of young people.

The Art Fund is giving £250,000 per year to *ARTIST ROOMS on Tour with The Art Fund supported by the Scottish Government*. The Scottish Government is giving £175,000 over three years.

**Ends**

## **Notes to Editors**

### **Gerhard Richter**

Gerhard Richter was born in Dresden in 1932 to a middle class family. After studying art in Düsseldorf from 1961 until 1964, he had his first solo exhibition in 1964. This show marked the introduction of his photo-based painting style. His work used subjects taken directly from photographs. In his paintings the images were intentionally blurred, modernising a painting style grounded in artistic tradition and introducing the use of photographs as a source of material.

In the early 1960's, he began working with an artistic collective: The Capitalist Realists. Their work, and Richter's in particular, became highly influential in Germany, and international art circles. Richter emerged to become one of the most sought after contemporary artists. He is said to have 'brought painting back to life.'

In 1967 Richter won the Kunstpreis Junger Westen, and in 1972 was chosen to represent Germany at the Venice Biennale. The same year, he exhibited at Documenta in Kassel, where he showed again in 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997 and 2007. At Documenta in 1982 Richter was awarded the Arnold Bode Prize and in 1985 in Vienna the Oskar Kokoschka Prize.

Richter has no interest in the purity of art. His chosen subject matter varies from ridiculous, to tragic, to beautiful renditions of the ordinary. Publicly, he has shied away from offering insight into his art. Instead, his works remain ambiguous to his interpretation, leaving admirers and critics guessing.

In 2002, MoMA in New York City held a retrospective of Richter's work, drawing attention to his mastery of such a variety of artistic techniques as well as his ability to diversify his style. The show, 'Forty Years of Painting,' ranged from his blurred photo paintings to his abstract works. This exhibition reflected the nature of Richter's work and has sparked continued discussion from the critics. His disregard for 'traditional' stylistic progression and use of photographs has led to an increased interest in the artist.

Currently living and working in Cologne, Gerhard Richter has influenced the art world greatly. The artist was recently commissioned to design a stained glass window for the historic Cologne Cathedral and was made an honorary member of the city. In the past year he has held 3 exhibitions at leading UK art institutions: Gerhard Richter: Paintings from Private Collections at the Royal Academy in Edinburgh, Gerhard Richter: Portraits at the National Portrait Gallery in London, and 4900 Colours: Version II at the Serpentine Gallery, in London, each diverse in their content and each to great acclaim. He remains one of the world's greatest living artists.

### **ARTIST ROOMS**

The collection of 725 works, representing one of the most important holdings of post-war and contemporary international art in private hands, was assembled by Anthony d'Offay, whose London galleries played a key role in the promotion and understanding of twentieth-century art in the UK over a period of more than 30 years.

The acquisition for the national collection was made under a part gift/part sale at cost agreement. The cost of the collection to Anthony d'Offay was some £26.5 million, and he asked for and received £26.5 million, i.e. the original costs of these works. The collection was valued in 2008 at £125 million. The costs of the acquisition, which included the purchase of the artworks and set up and accessioning was £28 million. These costs were met by £10 million each from both the Scottish and British Governments, £7 million from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, and £1 million from The Art Fund. All taxes were paid in full.

In 2009 ARTIST ROOMS will be shown at Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh; Tate Britain, Tate Liverpool, Tate Modern and Tate St Ives; Wolverhampton Art Gallery; Tramway, Glasgow Museums; Inverness Museum and Art Gallery; Ulster Museum,

Botanic Gardens, Belfast; National Museum Cardiff; Pier Arts Centre, Stromness, Orkney; Aberdeen Art Gallery; De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill; New Art Gallery, Walsall; Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art; Graves Gallery, Museums Sheffield; The Lightbox, Woking; and firstsite, Colchester.

### **The Art Fund**

The Art Fund is the UK's leading independent art charity. It offers grants to help UK museums and galleries enrich their collections; campaigns on behalf of museums and their visitors; and promotes the enjoyment of art. It is funded from public donations and has 80,000 members. Since 1903 the charity has helped secure 860,000 works of art for museums and galleries across the UK. In addition to helping secure Anthony d'Offay's collection, ARTIST ROOMS, for Tate and National Galleries of Scotland (NGS), last year it also helped save Rubens' sketch for the ceiling at Banqueting House, Whitehall, for Tate and pledged £1m to help NGS acquire Titian's *Diana and Actaeon* with The National Gallery. For more information contact the Press Office on 020 7225 4888 or visit [www.artfund.org](http://www.artfund.org). The Art Fund is a Registered Charity No. 209174

### **mima Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art**

mima is one of the UK's leading galleries for modern and contemporary art and craft. The landmark building designed by Erick van Egeraat Architects is situated in the heart of Middlesbrough. mima opened to international critical acclaim in January 2007.

Hosting temporary exhibitions of fine art and craft from 1900 to the present, mima showcases work by internationally acclaimed artists. The quarterly programme includes painting, drawing, ceramics, jewellery, sound, film, mixed media, photography and sculpture. Exhibitions change every quarter and admission is free.

mima is part of Middlesbrough Council and is funded by Middlesbrough Council and Arts Council England. The building was realised with support from: One NorthEast – SRB and Single Programme, Government Office North East, Northern Rock Foundation and The Foyle Foundation.

### **FURTHER PRESS INFORMATION**

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