

mima

Middlesbrough  
Institute of Modern Art

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## Ben Nicholson

### The intimate surface of modernism

### 22 July - 6 November 2011

Kindly supported by mimafriends

Presenting many unseen works, *The intimate surface of modernism* showcases works drawn largely from a substantial long-term loan to mima by a private collector. Through this exhibition mima is delighted to be able to provide the opportunity to glimpse the private side of one of the major figure's in British modernism.

This collection presents the more intimate side to Nicholson's output in contrast to the work that has been presented through retrospective exhibitions and group shows in recent years.

In 1920 Nicholson married his first wife, fellow artist, Winifred, and spent much of his time living between London and Cumberland. It is largely this early period of the artist's life that is represented here.

This work is grounded with a sense of family and place, including gifts made as presents. An inscription on the reverse of one work "To Jackie with love Christmas 1940 from Ben" helps us connect with artist as a person, rather than just the well-known art historical figure.

Several works such as *Venice* and *St Ives*, honour Nicholson's more recognised and alternative approach to drawing that resonates with mima's focus on collecting post-war drawing; a collection which explores new approaches to drawing and refuses to define the term in the traditional way.

"I'm just interested in meditating on certain ideas, and I like to draw: that's my way of thinking." Ben Nicholson

mimafriends have kindly supported the Ben Nicholson exhibition. mimafriends support contribute towards the development of mima and the purchase of key works for the collection. Mimafriends also organise exclusive art trips, behind the scenes tours and exclusive studio visits.

The exhibition runs from 22 July - 6 November 2011

<ENDS>

## Notes to Editors

### Other exhibitions showing at mima:

#### Transmitter/Receiver

The persistence of collage

From the Arts Council Collection

22 July – 6 November 2011

Colourful exhibition tracing the use of collage in British art. Featuring Eileen Agar, Steven Claydon, Richard Hamilton, Margaret Harrison and John Stezaker.

#### Richard Forster

Fast & Slow Time

29 July – 18 November 2011

Major solo exhibition of unique drawings by this North East based artist.

**Ben Nicholson** (1894-1982) is regarded as a major figure in British modernism.

He is an artist, who rose to artistic prominence during the 1920s, and his work has been widely interpreted and presented through retrospective exhibitions and group shows. Born to the artists William Nicholson and Mabel Pryde, Ben Nicholson trained at the Slade School of Fine Art where he studied alongside Paul Nash and Stanley Spencer, both artists who have work in mima collection.

### 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. Exhibitions change throughout the year and admission is free. mima is a partner of Tate, and exchanges programmes, ideas and skills with the Plus Tate network of visual arts organisations. [www.visitmima.com](http://www.visitmima.com)

### Plus Tate

mima is a partner of Tate, and exchanges programmes, ideas and skills with the Plus Tate network of visual arts organisations across the UK. [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)



### For further press information, images or interviews contact:

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### Why does mima matter?

**In increasingly challenging times ahead for many UK arts organisations, we want to shout about why mima matters. Here are a few of our biggest achievements to date:**

#### mima has...

- welcomed over 19,000 students from schools, colleges and universities
- been gifted with over 100 works for Middlesbrough's collection

- been identified as one of the prime reasons for overnight visitors and day visitors in the Tees Valley and ranks at the top of local visitor attractions
- generated £1.85 for the local economy for every £1 invested in mima in 2009/10
- been awarded £1 million by the Art Fund to buy works for the collection
- been endorsed by many important partners and is one of Tate's 'Plus Tate' partners helping to bring even more great works of art to Middlesbrough
- helped raise Middlesbrough's profile with frequent national media coverage, and reached millions of viewers world-wide in a special *Top Gear* programme in 2009

**A copy of the full *Why mima matters* report is available to read online or download from our website at [visitmima.com](http://visitmima.com)**



Supported by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

