

News Release

Friday 18 August 2017

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY ACQUIRES LARGEST GROUP OF PORTRAITS OF AFRO-CARIBBEAN SITTERS FOR ITS PRIMARY COLLECTION



Naomi Campbell by Simon Frederick, 2016 © Simon Frederick; **Sir Trevor McDonald** by Simon Frederick, 2016 © Simon Frederick

The National Portrait Gallery has acquired thirty-seven portraits of black Britons chosen for their achievements in politics, business, culture, religion and science, it was announced today, Friday 18 August. It is the Gallery's largest acquisition of portraits of Afro-Caribbean sitters into its primary collection and will be the subject of a major display at the Gallery in November 2018.

The sitters, representing a group of people at the height of their achievements, were photographed by Simon Frederick for a BBC TWO documentary *Black is the New Black*. Shown in 2016 the sitters disclosed heartfelt stories and opinions to paint a unique portrait of modern Britain's past, present and future. With the support of OATH, Simon Frederick has offered the entire portfolio of thirty-nine prints as a gift to the National Portrait Gallery.

These include model Naomi Campbell, newsreader and journalist Sir Trevor McDonald, actress Thandie Newton, musicians Jazze B of Soul II Soul, Dizzee Rascal and Tinie Tempah, footballer Les Ferdinand and recently appointed Editor in Chief of British *Vogue* Edward Enninful.

Other popular figures include Maggie Aderin-Pocock, presenter of *The Sky at Night*; David Harewood, celebrated for his role in the Showtime series *Homeland*; former Children's Laureate Malorie Blackman, who has explored racism

through her writing for children and young adults; Lord Morris, who became the first black leader of a major trade union in 1992; and John Sentamu who was appointed Archbishop of York in 2005, becoming Britain's first black Archbishop.

Artist and director Simon Frederick constructed still portrait photographs as well as filming the participants for *Black is the New Black*, a four-part documentary in which Frederick employed the power of talking heads with no archive footage or voiceovers.



Laura Mvula by Simon Frederick, 2016 © Simon Frederick; **Edward Enninful** by Simon Frederick, 2016 © Simon Frederick; **Thandie Newton** by Simon Frederick, 2016 © Simon Frederick; **Tinie Tempah** by Simon Frederick, 2016 © Simon Frederick

The acquisition is announced prior to a public talk by Simon Frederick at the National Portrait Gallery on Thursday 24 August 2017. Selected for the Gallery's annual Slavery Remembrance Day talk, Simon Frederick will discuss the impact that the Gallery's painting *The Anti-Slavery Society Convention* by Benjamin Robert Haydon of 1840 had on him as a child visiting the Gallery with his mother and how it led him to create *Black is the New Black*, allowing black people's voices to be heard and their experiences to be understood. The event at 7pm is free but ticketed www.npg.org.uk

This event follows Simon Frederick's last appearance at the Gallery in 2016 when he took part in a panel discussion about identity and achievement with three of the sitters in *Black is the New Black* Oswald Boateng, Ekow Eshun and Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock.

Dr Nicholas Cullinan, Director, National Portrait Gallery, London, says: 'These striking portraits of black British sitters powerfully reflect the diversity and variety of contemporary British achievement in public life. The National Portrait Gallery is delighted to receive Simon Frederick's very generous gift of photographs.'

Dr Phillip Prodger, Head of Photographs, National Portrait Gallery, London, says: 'Photographing with sensitivity and insight, Simon Frederick has made extraordinary portraits of some of the most influential Britons of our time. We are proud to welcome these works into our collection, where they will be seen, enjoyed, and celebrated for generations to come.'

The acquisition represents an addition and update to Donald McLellan's *Black Power* series, displayed and acquired by the Gallery in 1998. This portfolio includes some sitters not already represented in the Collection including journalist Gary Younge and singer Alesha Dixon.

Artist, photographer and director Simon Frederick's work spans from celebrity portraiture to art exhibitions to global advertising campaigns and TV. He is known for his recent role as a lead judge and co-host alongside Isabella Rossellini on the Sky Arts programme *Master of Photography* and for his series *Black is the New Black* on BBC TWO.

THE ACQUISITION *Black is the New Black* portfolio P2034-2072

by Simon Frederick, 2016

39 archival inkjet prints, each approx. 380 x 260 mm image size on paper 420 x 295 mm

DISPLAY *Black is the New Black*

National Portrait Gallery, November 2018 – January 2019

CAPTIONS **Naomi Campbell** by Simon Frederick, 2016 © Simon Frederick; **Sir Trevor McDonald** by Simon Frederick, 2016 © Simon Frederick; **Laura Mvula** by Simon Frederick, 2016 © Simon Frederick; **Edward Eninful** by Simon Frederick, 2016 © Simon Frederick; **Thandie Newton** by Simon Frederick, 2016 © Simon Frederick; **Tinie Tempah** by Simon Frederick, 2016 © Simon Frederick

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To download Press images visit: www.npg.org.uk/press

National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place WC2H 0HE, opening hours Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday: 10am – 6pm (Gallery closure commences at 5.50pm) **Late Opening:** Thursday, Friday: 10am – 9pm (Gallery closure commences at 8.50pm) **Nearest Underground:** Leicester Square/Charing Cross **General information:** 0207 306 0055 **Recorded information:** 020 7312 2463 **Website/Tickets:** www.npg.org.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS – THE SITTERS

The sitters are: architect and designer **David Adjaye**; space scientist and science educator **Maggie Aderin-Pockock**; dancer and choreographer **Ashley Banjo**; children's writer **Malorie Blackman**; fashion designer **Ozwald Boateng**; musician and music producer **Jazzie B**; model **Naomi Campbell**; menswear designer **Charlie Casely-Hayford**; film director **Noel Clarke**; singer, dancer and rapper **Alesha Dixon**; ballet dancer **Shevelle Dynott**; founder and owner of SB.TV **Jamal Edwards**; Editor in Chief of British *Vogue* **Edward Eninful**; writer and broadcaster **Ekow Eshun**; footballer and football coach **Les Ferdinand**; electronic music artist and DJ **Goldie**; actor **David Harewood**; comedian, actor writer and television presenter **Sir Lenny Henry**; writer, television producer and director **Terry Jervis**; singer, radio presenter and actress **Beverley Knight**; heptathlete and Olympian **Denise Lewis**; physician and surgeon **Christopher B. Lynch**; journalist and newsreader **Sir Trevor McDonald**; trade unionist **Bill Morris**, **Lord Morris of Handsworth**; musician **Laura Mvula**; DJ and presenter **Trevor Nelson**; actress **Thandie Newton**; rapper and grime artist **Dizzee Rascal**; barrister and Attorney-General for England and Wales **Patricia Scotland**, **Baroness Scotland of Athal**; Archbishop of York, England's first black archbishop **Archbishop John Sentamu**; artist **Yinka Shonibare**; singer and musician **Tinie Tempah**; MP and Labour politician **Chuka Umunna**; civil servant and CEO of Ofcom **Sharon White**; comedian **Gina Yashere**; DJ and presenter **Reggie Yates**; and journalist, author and broadcaster **Gary Younge**.