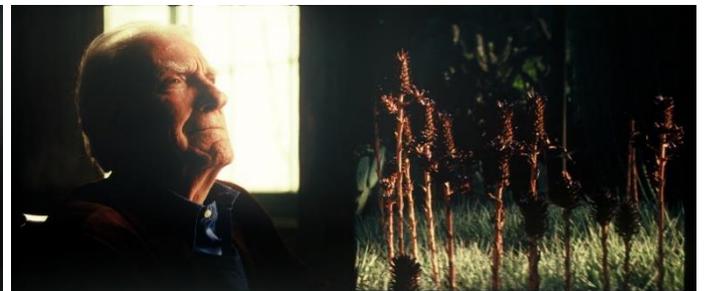


News Release

STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 10.00am on WEDNESDAY 14 MARCH 2018

TACITA DEAN'S NEW FILM PORTRAITS OF ACTORS STEPHEN DILLANE, DAVID WARNER AND BEN WHISHAW GO ON DISPLAY FOR THE FIRST TIME IN NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY EXHIBITION



Stephen Dillane, Ben Whishaw and David Warner viewing *His Picture in Little* at the National Portrait Gallery, photograph by Jorge Herrera; *His Picture in Little*, 2017 by Tacita Dean. 35mm anamorphic colour film, silent, reduced to spherical 16mm for exhibition as a miniature, 15 ¼ minutes, continuous loop. Film still; *Providence*, 2017 by Tacita Dean. 35mm anamorphic colour film, silent, reduced to spherical 16mm for exhibition, 5 ½ minutes, continuous loop. Film still. Both works Courtesy the artist; Frith Street Gallery, London and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/Paris

Two new film portraits depicting actors Stephen Dillane, David Warner and Ben Whishaw by artist Tacita Dean will go on public display for the first time in a major new exhibition *Tacita Dean: PORTRAIT* at the National Portrait Gallery, London opening on Thursday 15 March. The exhibition is part of an unprecedented collaboration between

the National Portrait Gallery, Royal Academy of Arts and the National Gallery: *LANDSCAPE, PORTRAIT, STILL LIFE*. The three exhibitions are shaped by Dean's response to the individual character of each institution and explore genres traditionally associated with painting.

Borrowing its title from a line in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, *His Picture in Little* (2017) depicts three actors of different generations, David Warner, Stephen Dillane and Ben Whishaw, all of whom have played the Danish prince on the London stage. The anamorphic film is miniature in scale and was conceived in dialogue with the National Portrait Gallery's collection of late sixteenth and early seventeenth-century portrait miniatures. The work is displayed within the Gallery's Collection, among a group of works that provide a glimpse of the context in which miniatures were created, through reference to their function and patronage, and their traces in the imaginative world of the English Renaissance. The selection includes works by the foremost practitioners of the art of miniature painting in England, Nicholas Hilliard and Isaac Oliver, and portraits of writers, such as William Shakespeare and John Donne, who wove miniatures into contemporary culture through references in their plays and poems.



His Picture in Little, 2017 by Tacita Dean. 35mm anamorphic colour film, silent, reduced to spherical 16mm for exhibition as a miniature, 15 ½ minutes, continuous loop. Film stills. Courtesy the artist; Frith Street Gallery, London and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/Paris; Unknown man, possibly George Clifford, 3rd Earl of Cumberland 1588 © National Portrait Gallery, London; John Donne by Unknown English artist, circa 1595 © National Portrait Gallery, London; William Shakespeare associated with John Taylor, circa 1600-1610 © National Portrait Gallery, London; Stephen Dillane, Tacita Dean, David Warner and Ben Whishaw in the display at the National Portrait Gallery London, photograph by Jorge Herrera

Through the use of specially created stencils that slip inside the camera's aperture gate and expose different parts of the film frame, Dean was able to invite the actors in *His Picture in Little* to sit side-by-side without them ever having necessarily met. The artist uses the same technique, first developed for *FILM* (2011), in her second new film, *Providence* (2017), a portrait of David Warner with humming birds displayed in the main exhibition space. Here Dean creates a dialogue between the actor and a hummingbird in one frame, uniting them photochemically as they have never been united in life.

Tacita Dean said: "By masking and then revealing parts of the aperture gate to light I have found a way to bring together disparate people, places and events. The photochemical film frame is therefore a magical place of pictorial intimacy where one is bound together by chemistry. Applied to portraiture, it is the ultimate miniature, where the finest execution of medium can indeed stand up to the closest inspection. But it is what this blind co-habitation in the film frame does to the individual and collective behaviour that elicits the greatest pleasure. In *His Picture in*

Little, we see three actors, three generations, three men each filmed alone in his own space but nonetheless in the company of his peers.”

Dr Nicholas Cullinan, Director, National Portrait Gallery, London said: “We are excited to show for the first time two new films by Tacita Dean, *Providence* and *His Picture in Little* as part of our *Tacita Dean: PORTRAIT* exhibition. The latter is a direct response to the Gallery’s holdings of Elizabethan and Jacobean portrait miniatures, and we are delighted to be able to display Tacita Dean’s own miniature alongside some of the finest examples of late sixteenth and early seventeenth-century portrait miniatures from our Collection.”

Tacita Dean: PORTRAIT (15 March - 28 May 2018) at the National Portrait Gallery focuses on portraiture primarily through the medium of 16mm film. This exhibition is the first in the Gallery’s history to be devoted to the medium of film, and also reveals the artist’s own longstanding and personal interest in portraiture as a genre. Works on display include Dean’s films of influential figures such as her major six-screen installation with Merce Cunningham in *Merce Cunningham performs STILLNESS... (six performances, six films)* (2008), alongside her film of Claes Oldenburg in *Manhattan Mouse Museum* (2011) and her film diptych of Julie Mehretu *GDGDA* (2011), all previously unseen in the UK, as well as *Mario Merz* (2002), *Michael Hamburger* (2007), Cy Twombly in *Edwin Parker* (2011), and David Hockney in *Portraits* (2016). Also on show for the first time in the UK are two photographic works: *GAETA (fifty photographs plus one)* (2015), taken in the studio of Cy Twombly and *The Line of Fate* with Leo Steinberg. Dean has also made two new films, *Providence*, for the exhibition, and *His Picture in Little*, made specifically for presentation within the Gallery’s permanent collection.

Tacita Dean (b.1965) is a British European artist based in Berlin and Los Angeles who works with many mediums but primarily in film. Dean first came to prominence in the 1990s and is now considered to be one of the most influential artists working today. She was elected a Royal Academician in 2008. As Adrian Searle wrote for the Kurt Schwitters Prize Jury statement, awarded to Dean in 2009: ‘Dean’s films, drawings and other works are extremely original. Her films express something that neither painting nor photography can capture. They are purely film. And while Dean can appreciate the past, her art avoids any kind of academic approach. Her art is carried by a sense of history, time and place, light quality and the essence of film itself. The focus of her subtle but ambitious work is the truth of the moment, the film as a medium and the sensibilities of the individual.’

-ENDS-

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Notes to Editors

About Tacita Dean

Tacita Dean grew up near Canterbury, England, the granddaughter of Basil Dean, the theatre and film director and producer who founded Ealing Studios. She graduated from Falmouth School of Art in 1988 and after a scholarship year at the Supreme School of Fine Art in Athens, Greece, studied for a higher diploma degree in Painting at the Slade School of Fine Art (1990-1992). Dean was nominated for the Turner Prize in 1998 for the exhibition which included her 16-minute 16mm colour film *Disappearance at Sea*; a work inspired by the story of Donald Crowhurst (1932–1969), who died tragically whilst attempting to be the first to sail alone non-stop around the globe. She has received a number of awards including the BT New Contemporaries Award, 1992; 2000-2001 DAAD scholarship in Berlin; the sixth Benesse Prize at the 51st Venice Biennale, 2005, and the Hugo Boss Prize at the Guggenheim Museum in 2006, which included her film *Kodak*, 2006 and the Kurt Schwitters Prize, Hanover in 2009. In 2007, Dean was elected into the Akademie der Künste in Berlin. In 2011, she was commissioned to create a unique artwork for the Tate Modern’s Unilever Series in the Turbine Hall; Dean described the final piece, entitled *FILM*, as ‘a portrait of film itself’. Dean’s recent solo exhibitions include a major exhibition in 2016 at the Museo Tamayo, Mexico City;

Instituto Moreira Salles, Rio de Janeiro, 2013; Botin Foundation, Santander, Spain, 2013, Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, 2013 and New Museum, New York, 2012. Her works are held in public collections worldwide including the Art Institute of Chicago, Museum of Modern Art, New York, Musée d'art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris and Tate Modern, London. Dean is a founding member of saveform.org. Future solo exhibitions in 2018 include Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh and Kunsthau Bregenz.

Tacita Dean: PORTRAIT

15 March - 28 May 2018 at the National Portrait Gallery, London

National Portrait Gallery Spring Season 2018 sponsored by Herbert Smith Freehills LLP

Tickets with donation: Full price £14 /Concessions £12.50

Tickets without donation: Full price £12 /Concessions £10.50

Free for Members and Patrons

npg.org.uk/tacitadean

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Tacita Dean: STILL LIFE

15 March - 28 May 2018 at the National Gallery

Free Admission. Donations Welcome.

nationalgallery.org.uk

Exhibition supported by Christian Levett, and Miss Dasha Shenkman OBE.

Sponsored by Hiscox, Contemporary Art Partner of the National Gallery.

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Tacita Dean: LANDSCAPE

19 May – 12 August 2018 at the Royal Academy of Arts

Supported by Art Fund, the Cockayne Foundation, The London Community Foundation

Tickets £14.00 (£12.00 without Gift Aid donation). 50% off with National Art Pass.

www.royalacademy.org.uk

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