

News Release

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National Portrait Gallery's iconic Tudor and Bloomsbury portraits to feature in major new exhibitions in Bath, Liverpool, Sheffield and York

Gallery announces partnership exhibitions featuring dozens of portraits from the national Collection, including works that have rarely left the Gallery in London



L-R Queen Elizabeth I by Unknown English artist, circa 1588; Jane Seymour after Hans Holbein the Younger, circa 1537; Sir Henry Unton by Unknown artist, circa 1596. All images © National Portrait Gallery, London



L-R Virginia Woolf by George Charles Beresford, 1902, © National Portrait Gallery, London; The Memoir Club by Vanessa Bell, circa 1943, © estate of Vanessa Bell; E.M. Forster by Dora Carrington, 1920, © National Portrait Gallery, London

The Tudors: Passion, Power and Politics - The Holburne Museum, Bath, January - May 2022; Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, 21 May – 29 August 2022

Beyond Bloomsbury: Life, Love and Legacy - Millennium Gallery, Sheffield, 25 November 2021 - 13 February 2022; York Art Gallery, 4 March - 5 June 2022

The **National Portrait Gallery, London** is partnering with four UK Galleries to stage two major new exhibitions featuring some of the best-loved works from the Gallery's Collection. ***The Tudors: Passion, Power and Politics*** will open at **The Holburne Museum** in Bath in **January 2022** with twenty-five of the Gallery's most famous Tudor portraits, followed by an expanded exhibition at the **Walker Art Gallery** in Liverpool in **May 2022**, featuring sixty-eight works. It is the first time that such

a significant number of the Gallery's renowned Tudor portraits have been lent for exhibition. Also on loan together for the first time, will be fifty-eight of the Gallery's portraits of the Bloomsbury Group and their closest associates in ***Beyond Bloomsbury: Life, Love and Legacy***, opening at the **Millennium Gallery** in Sheffield in **November 2021** before traveling to **York Art Gallery** in **March 2022**.

The Tudors: Passion, Power and Politics presents the five Tudor monarchs, Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I, some of the most familiar figures from English history and instantly recognisable in the portraits that have preserved their likenesses for five hundred years. The dynasty's reign over sixteenth-century England, from 1485 to 1603, encompassed the tumultuous years of the Reformation; a literary renaissance; conflict with Scotland, France and Spain and conquest and colonisation in Ireland and America.

The cast of characters will be introduced in the exhibition at The Holburne Museum in Bath, encompassing some of the most famous portraits in the National Portrait Gallery Collection. The exhibition will then be expanded in the larger exhibition space at the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool, which will feature around one hundred objects. This includes sixty-eight works from the National Portrait Gallery, a selection of additional loans, and paintings from the Walker Art Gallery's collection.

Portraits on display will include the Tudor monarchs, alongside their counsellors and courtiers, Thomas More, Thomas Cromwell, Robert Dudley, William Cecil and Francis Walsingham. Some of the works included in the exhibition have never been shown outside of London, including a portrait of Jane Seymour, after Hans Holbein the Younger and the highly unusual Sir Henry Unton portrait.

Beyond Bloomsbury: Life, Love and Legacy explores the lives and works of an extraordinary group of writers, artists and thinkers, known as the Bloomsbury Group. Key figures include the great writer and pioneer of feminist thought Virginia Woolf, her sister the painter Vanessa Bell, and the circle of friends that gathered around these young women and became well-known as the 'Bloomsbury Group', named after the area of London where they lived in the first decades of the twentieth-century.

Primarily drawn from the National Portrait Gallery's Collection and enhanced with key works from Sheffield Museums and York Museums Trust, this exhibition includes portraits of those most intimately associated with the Bloomsbury Group, but also fascinating friends and colleagues who were not central to the original group. The works include paintings, sculpture, drawings and photographs. Most of these representations are informal and intimate and were often made as tokens of friendship and sometimes of love – when displayed together they bring to life an intensely creative group of people who were passionate about their work and about each other. The exhibition will also include new works by the artist Sahara Longe specially commissioned by York Museums Trust and Sheffield Museums to respond to the exhibition and the work of Bloomsbury artists.

The National Portrait Gallery is continuing to share its Collection across the UK through a nationwide programme of activities and partnerships while the building in St Martin's Place is closed for major redevelopment works. In addition to these two new major exhibitions, the Gallery's transformational *Inspiring People* project includes new partnerships with museums, local community groups and schools, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Art Fund.

Exhibitions and displays opening in the coming months include:

- Two new exhibitions created in partnership with **Brent Museum and Archives**. ***People Powered: From the ground up***, 6 Sept – 3 Dec 2021, exploring portraits and stories of people with connections to Wembley Stadium, and ***Icons of Colour: Portraits of Brent's Change Makers***, 13 Dec 2021 – 20 Feb 2022, which will see the first public display of the Gallery's recently commissioned portrait of Zadie Smith by Toyin Ojih Odutola.
- The ***Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize 2021*** exhibition, opening at **Cromwell Place** South Kensington from 10 November 2021 – 2 January 2022.
- Collaborative displays at newly opened museums and galleries as part of the Gallery's National Skills Sharing Partnership. Works from the Gallery's Collection will be on show at **The Box, Plymouth** in late September 2021 and **Gainsborough's House, Sudbury** in February 2022.
- ***Creative Connections Coventry*** a collaborative project between an artist and young people exploring the portraits and stories of inspirational figures from their neighbourhood, culminating in the creation of new artwork and new acquisitions for the National Portrait Gallery Collection to be exhibited in the **Herbert Art Gallery** in Coventry from March 2022.

Quotes

Dr Nicholas Cullinan, Director, National Portrait Gallery, London said: "We are delighted to be partnering with our colleagues in Bath, Liverpool, Sheffield and York to create this once in a generation opportunity to see some of the nation's best-loved portraits exhibited together outside of London. Through all our projects and partnerships we hope to be able to share our Collection with new and different audiences across the UK, some of whom may not have had the opportunity to visit the Gallery in London."

Chris Stephens, Director, Holburne Museum said: "Portraiture is one of the mainstays of the Holburne's collection so it is entirely fitting that we should mount an exhibition that explores artists' depictions of the key players in the drama of dynastic, political and religious conflict enacted on both a national and international stage. We are delighted and honoured to be working with colleagues at the National Portrait Gallery and National Museums Liverpool to bring to the South West a display of paintings of such extraordinary richness. It is a rare opportunity to show such iconic works together at the Holburne."

Sandra Penketh, Executive Director of Galleries and Collections Care, National Museums Liverpool, said: "This exhibition at the Walker Art Gallery provides an opportunity to see some of the most iconic Tudor portraits in the world, here in Liverpool. It's difficult to overemphasise what a rare and special moment this will be, and we can't wait to share it with our visitors."

It's wonderful to have the opportunity to work in partnership with the National Portrait Gallery to create this exciting show. In addition to the National Portrait Gallery paintings, we will be exhibiting a number of other extraordinary Tudor items from venues across the UK. We're looking forward to revealing more about some of these unique pieces over the coming months."

Kirstie Hamilton, Director of Programmes at Sheffield Museums said: "The Bloomsbury Group had a profound impact on British art and literature and their own story is no less compelling than the work they created. We're delighted to be working with the National Portrait Gallery and York Museums Trust to explore the lives and achievements of those at the group's heart and the remarkable figures around them."

Becky Gee, curator of fine art at York Museums Trust said: "We are thrilled to bring these significant portraits to York to tell the stories of not only the artists, but the writers, dancers, activists and philanthropists that were connected to the Bloomsbury Group. The exhibition will allow us to celebrate the LGBTQ+ relationships of the Group and explore these histories in our own collection. We are delighted to be working with painter Sahara Longe who has produced four new portraits that will sit beautifully alongside those from the National Portrait Gallery collection."

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Notes to Editors

Publications

In *The Bloomsbury Group* author Frances Spalding, a leading authority on the group, presents their fascinating biographies. All of which are illustrated with paintings and intimate photographs created by members of the group, demonstrating how this network of artists, lovers and patrons recorded one another obsessively in both words and images. *The Bloomsbury Group* is published by the National Portrait Gallery, London and will be available from 30 September 2021.

The Tudors: Passion, Power and Politics presents a comprehensive history of the Tudor period including the international impact of the Tudors and their legacies, featuring new research and a range of specialist contributors. Beautifully illustrated, it will feature some of the most famous royal and court figures from the sixteenth century. *The Tudors: Passion, Power and Politics* is published by the National Portrait Gallery, London and will be available from 13 January 2022.

National Portrait Gallery

The National Portrait Gallery was founded in 1856 to encourage through portraiture the appreciation and understanding of the people who have made and are making British history and culture. Today it promotes engagement with portraiture in all media to a wide-ranging public by conserving, growing and sharing the world's largest collection of portraits.

www.npg.org.uk

Inspiring People

Inspiring People is the National Portrait Gallery's biggest ever development since the building in St Martin's Place opened in 1896. The project, supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund will see a transformed

National Portrait Gallery, including a comprehensive re-display and re-interpretation of the Gallery's Collection from the Tudors to now across 40 refurbished galleries, combined with a complete refurbishment of the building, restoring historic features, creating a new and more welcoming visitor entrance and public forecourt on the building's North Façade, and enhancing the Gallery's accessibility.

The designs by Jamie Fobert Architects, working in partnership with Purcell, will also see the return of the Gallery's East Wing to public use as the new Weston Wing, including restoring the original gallery spaces, the creation of new retail and catering facilities and its own dedicated entrance at street level; and a new Learning Centre for visitors of all ages with studios, breakout spaces and high quality practical facilities. The Gallery's existing entrance will also remain, with new step-free access.

In order to complete the project efficiently and to safeguard visitors, members of staff and the Collection, the Gallery in St Martin's Place has temporarily closed to the public from 29 June 2020 until spring 2023, while essential building works take place. During this time the Gallery is continuing to share its unique Collection of portraits with the nation in a major programme of activities across the UK.

The Holburne Museum

The Holburne Museum's mission statement is 'Changing Lives Through Art', signalling its commitment to opening up the enjoyment of art to people of all ages and from every walk of life. The Holburne was founded in 1882 with the gift of Sir William Holburne's collection of 16th and 17th century Italian and Dutch paintings, silver, sculpture, furniture, porcelain and diverse *objets d'art* of national and international significance. That founding gift has been augmented with a collection of 18th century paintings by such artists as Gainsborough, Lawrence, Ramsay, Stubbs and Zoffany. Set within the historic Sydney Pleasure Gardens, the Museum reopened in May 2011 after ambitious renovations and with a new, award-winning extension by Eric Parry Architects. The Holburne has since secured a national reputation as an outstanding museum which holds critically acclaimed exhibitions. Its programme of exhibitions, commissions and events sets out to bring to Bath great art of all periods and from around the world, seeking to set the art of the past in dialogue with contemporary practice in exciting and dynamic new ways. www.holburne.org

Sheffield Museums

Sheffield Museums Trust is the independent charity that operates six of the city's leading museums and heritage sites: Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet, Graves Gallery, Kelham Island Museum, Millennium Gallery, Shepherd Wheel and Weston Park Museum. Established in 2021, the charity cares for the city's collections of art, archaeology, social and industrial history, and natural science, alongside the Guild of St George's John Ruskin collection and provides a home for the Ken Hawley Collection Trust's Hawley Tool Collection. We work with our communities to tell the remarkable story of Sheffield and its people, and celebrate its reputation for excellence in craft, making and innovation. Together with local, regional and national partners, we showcase home-grown creative talent and bring outstanding cultural experiences to the city. www.sheffieldmuseums.org.uk

Walker Art Gallery

The Walker Art Gallery houses an internationally renowned collection of paintings, sculpture and decorative art. It is one of Europe's finest galleries, with a collection that ranges from outstanding modern and contemporary works to Medieval and Renaissance masterpieces. Some of the greatest British artists of the last century are represented in the modern and contemporary galleries, from Lucian Freud and David Hockney to Barbara Hepworth and Lubaina Himid, while its Pre-Raphaelite and Impressionist collections are not to be missed. The Gallery's Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque displays (Rooms 1-4) are currently closed to facilitate a major redevelopment programme, funded by the Department for Digital, Media, Culture and Sport. The new galleries will showcase iconic works of art from the collection, as well as introducing some less familiar pieces. The displays will reveal fascinating new stories and enable the Gallery to explore how we exhibit and talk about historic art today. liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/walkerartgallery

York Art Gallery

York Art Gallery's collection of paintings spans more than 600 years and works range from 14th century Italian panels and 17th century Dutch masterpieces to Victorian narrative paintings and 20th century works by LS Lowry and David Hockney. The Gallery also holds the most extensive and representative collection of British Studio Ceramics, thanks to the acquisition of collections from Dean Milner-White, WA Ismay and Henry Rothschild and the recent long term loan of Anthony Shaw's collection. Highlights are on show in the Centre of Ceramic Art (CoCA). The Gallery and its collections are cared for by the charity York Museums Trust, established in 2002.

www.yorkartgallery.org.uk