



NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

News release

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New commission by Sir Steve McQueen brings his work into National Portrait Gallery's Collection, as portrait of Sir Nicholas Serota is unveiled

Commissioned with support from Scott Collins, in partnership with Outset Contemporary Art Fund, the portrait will be displayed in the Gallery's transformed Weston Wing when it re-opens to the public on 22 June 2023.

The work is the first by artist and film-maker Sir Steve McQueen to enter the Gallery's Collection.



NPG 7139. Sir Nicholas Serota by Sir Steve McQueen (2022) © Steve McQueen. Courtesy the artist, Thomas Dane Gallery and Marian Goodman Gallery. Photo: Richard Ivey.

Today, the National Portrait Gallery announces its commission of a portrait of Sir Nicholas Serota by artist and film-maker, Sir Steve McQueen. The portrait was commissioned with support from Scott Collins, in partnership with Outset Contemporary Art Fund and will be displayed for the first time when the Gallery reopens on 22 June 2023, marking the artist's entry into the National Portrait Gallery's Collection. The portrait will hang in the Weston Wing, the new permanent home for the Gallery's contemporary collection.

Born in London in 1946, Sir Nicholas Serota is Chair of Arts Council England. He studied art history at Cambridge and the Courtauld Institute of Art and was appointed Director of The Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, in 1973 and Director of Whitechapel Gallery, London, in 1976, before notably serving as Director of Tate between 1988 and 2017. There he extended the Gallery's commitment to sharing its



collection with audiences across the country and led the creation of Tate St Ives and Tate Modern, which became the most visited museum of modern and contemporary art in the world. Under Serota's leadership, Tate's field of interest was broadened to include 20th century photography, film, performance and architecture, as well as collecting from Latin America, Asia, the Middle East and Africa. Curating important exhibitions such as Cy Twombly: Cycles and Seasons (2008), Gerhard Richter: Panorama (2011) and Henri Matisse: The Cut-Outs (2014) at Tate Modern, Serota is an advocate for modern and contemporary art and artists. Throughout his career, he has supported emerging artists who have subsequently become some of the world's best-known figures. Serota was awarded a knighthood in 1999 and was appointed a Companion of Honour in 2013.

Sir Nicholas Serota by Sir Steve McQueen (2022) will be displayed in the Gallery's newly restored Weston Wing. Supported by the Garfield Weston Foundation, the creation of the Weston Wing ensures that more space than ever before is dedicated to the display of the extensive and growing contemporary collection, bringing original gallery spaces back to public use. These stunning top-lit galleries will display the Gallery's most exciting contemporary commissions and acquisitions, including this portrait by Sir Steve McQueen.

"Sir Nicholas Serota is one of this country's most influential figures in arts and culture, so I am delighted that the Gallery has commissioned this portrait by Sir Steve McQueen, an artist whose work Nick has championed from the beginning. This feels like the perfect match of artist and sitter. The intimate photograph conveys a quiet gravitas, reflecting the ways in which Nick thinks from all angles, constantly looking to the future. I look forward to its display in our newly refurbished galleries when we reopen again on 22 June. My sincere thanks to Outset Contemporary Art Fund for making this possible."

Dr Nicholas Cullinan

Director, National Portrait Gallery

"This portrait by Steve McQueen makes reference to the history of still photography and its intersection with cinema and film, but as ever in his work, Steve adds new language to that tradition, choosing to represent me in a way that quite literally shows more than one side. My friendship with Steve was the foundation for this portrait and I am delighted and honoured that it is the first of Steve's works to enter the National Portrait Gallery's Collection. I look forward to seeing it on the walls when the building re-opens."

Sir Nicholas Serota

Chair, Arts Council England

Steve McQueen was born in 1969 in London; he lives and works in London and Amsterdam. Large-scale surveys of McQueen's work have been held at Pirelli Hangar Bicocca, Milan, in 2022; Tate Modern, London, in 2020; Schaulager, Basel, in 2013; and the Art Institute of Chicago in 2012. Recent solo presentations include Year 3, Tate Britain, London, (2019–2021), and exhibitions at the Institute of Contemporary Art Boston, Massachusetts (2017); The Whitworth, Manchester (2017); the Pérez Art Museum, Miami (2017); The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2017); the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois (2017); and The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2016). McQueen has previously participated in Documenta XI (2002) and X (1997), and the Venice Biennale (2015, 2013, 2007 and 2003), representing Great Britain in Venice in 2009. He has been the recipient of numerous awards, including KBE (Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire; 2020), Johannes Vermeer Prize (2016), Harvard University, W.E.B. Du Bois Medal (2014), CBE (Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire; 2011), OBE (Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire; 2002) and the Turner Prize, Tate Gallery, London, England (1999). McQueen has directed four feature films: Hunger (2008), Shame (2011), 12 Years a Slave (2014), and Widows (2018), as well as the series Small Axe, an anthology of five films shown on BBC and Amazon (2020). He won the Caméra d'Or award at the Cannes Film Festival for Hunger in 2008 and the Oscar for the Best Motion Picture for 12 Years a Slave in 2014.

This portrait of Sir Nicholas Serota by Sir Steve McQueen is the third work in the Gallery's Collection to have been supported by Outset. Previously commissioned works were Shirin Neshat's portrait of girls' education activist Malala Yousafzai and Andreas Gursky's portrait of designer Sir Jonathan Ive.

Sir Nicholas Serota by Sir Steve McQueen (2022) also features in the new book, National Portrait Gallery: The Collection, published to coincide with the Gallery's reopening on 22 June 2023, following its major transformational redevelopment project, Inspiring People. Inspiring People has been made possible by major grants from the Blavatnik Family Foundation and The National Lottery Heritage Fund, thanks to money raised by National Lottery players, as well as major donations from the Garfield Weston Foundation, the Ross Foundation, Mildred and Simon Palley, Julia and Hans Rausing, the David and Claudia Harding Foundation, Bjorn and Inger Saven, the Law Family Charitable Foundation, the Deborah Loeb Brice Foundation and Art Fund. The National Portrait Gallery is grateful to these visionary supporters, alongside others who are making the building project and its related activity possible.

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Notes to editors

National Portrait Gallery: The Collection, which features Sir Nicholas Serota by Sir Steve McQueen, is available to pre-order from the Gallery's online shop: npgshop.org.uk/products/national-portrait-gallery-the-collection-paperback-book

National Portrait Gallery

Founded in 1856, the National Portrait Gallery tells the story of Britain through portraits, using art to bring history to life and explore living today. From global icons, to unsung heroes, our Collection is filled with the stories that have shaped, and continue to shape a nation. We celebrate the power of portraiture and offer encounters with some of the world's greatest and most exciting new artists, promoting engagement with portraiture in all media to a wide-ranging public by conserving, growing and sharing the world's largest collection of portraits.

The Gallery in St Martin's Place, London is currently closed until 22 June 2023, while essential building works take place on the Inspiring People redevelopment project, which will transform the Gallery, including a complete refurbishment of the building and a new learning centre. During the closure period, we have continued to share our Collection digitally, as well as through a series of nationwide partnerships and collaborations. www.npg.org.uk

Collaborators on the Inspiring People project include Jamie Fobert Architects; conservation architects, Purcell; structural engineers, Price & Myers; services engineers, Max Fordham; project manager, Gardiner & Theobald; main contractor, Gilbert-Ash; and interpretation designers, Nissen Richards Studio.

Outset Contemporary Art Fund

Established in 2003, Outset Contemporary Art Fund is the leading international, independent charity supporting innovative art projects that engage the widest possible audiences. With a presence in nine countries, the charity has raised over £16 million worldwide in support of the creative ecosystem. Outset is recognised for creating influential models of responsive arts philanthropy with its innovative public-private schemes and initiatives. Practising catalytic philanthropy means not only offering crucial funding support but also activating networks and initiating new relationships and partnerships. The charity was the first to introduce a pioneering paradigm of cross-institution collective patronage to fund challenging artistic projects in the UK and is now proud to operate on a global scale. Outset is powered by inspiration, driven by expertise, renowned for its engagement, and focused on effective energy and ideas, with a commitment to being there at the outset of impactful change. www.outset.org.uk.

The Blavatnik Family Foundation

The [Blavatnik Family Foundation](http://www.blavatnikfamilyfoundation.org) supports world-renowned educational, scientific, cultural, and charitable institutions in the United States, the United Kingdom, Israel, and across the globe. Led by Sir Leonard Blavatnik, founder and chairman of Access Industries, the Foundation advances and promotes innovation, discovery, and creativity to benefit the whole of society. Over the past decade, the Foundation has contributed more than \$1 billion to over 250 organizations.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund

Using money raised by the National Lottery, we Inspire, lead and resource the UK's heritage to create positive and lasting change for people and communities, now and in the future. www.heritagefund.org.uk.

Follow @HeritageFundUK on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/HeritageFundUK), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/HeritageFundUK) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/HeritageFundUK) and use #NationalLotteryHeritageFund

Since The National Lottery began in 1994, National Lottery players have raised over £46 billion for projects and more than 670,000 grants have been awarded across the UK. More than £30 million raised each week goes to good causes across the UK.

The Garfield Weston Foundation

Established in 1958, the Garfield Weston Foundation is a family-founded charitable grant-making trust, which gives away around £90 million a year to charities across the UK.

Each year the Foundation gives away its income and donations have continued to grow. Since it was established, it has donated over £1.4 billion, of which over half has been given away in the past 10 years alone. In the most recent financial year, the Foundation gave away nearly £90 million to over 1,980 charities across the UK.

The Ross Foundation

The Ross Foundation was created in 2007 with a core mission to help children and young people discover their strengths by offering them a wide range of world-class educational opportunities. We support organisations that inspire young people and encourage them to take the chance to embrace new skills and passion.