

HAYWARD GALLERY

Press Release

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Gilbert & George 21ST CENTURY PICTURES 7 October 2025 - 11 January 2026



IMAGE CREDITS IN NOTES TO EDITORS

"WE LOVE 21ST CENTURY. IT IS OUR BEST CENTURY SO FAR!" - Gilbert & George.

The Hayward Gallery presents Gilbert & George: 21ST CENTURY PICTURES, a landmark exhibition of art by the pioneering London-based artists (7 Oct 2025 – 11 Jan 2026). The presentation highlights Gilbert & George's evolution over the past 25 years, exploring how technology has made their reflections of today's society bigger and bolder than ever before. Transforming the space with over 60 floor-to-ceiling installations, the artists debut new pictures alongside acclaimed pictures in a larger-than-life journey through the modern world as they see it.

Gilbert & George are iconic artists, epitomised by their monumental commitment to being 'living sculptures' spanning the last five decades. Inspired by our modern world, they act as visual archaeologists of our times by capturing elements of our changing society. From newspaper headlines to road signs, postcards and overheard conversations, the artists blend images and text from everyday life to create vivid pictures that encourage dialogue about today's social norms and taboos. The resulting art is often provocative and challenging in its refusal to deliver simple messages about sex, religion, class, nationalism, corruption and death.

Debuting two new works from their 2025 *SCREW PICTURES*, Gilbert & George's pictures increasingly confront their own mortality. Surrounded by everyday objects gathered from their home and nearby streets - such as screws, nuts, bolts and twigs - the pictures show their attention turning inwards in recent years. Retaining their characteristic wit, the title plays on the multiple meanings of the word screw whilst finding inspiration in the shifting rhythms of later life.

Showcasing pictures across key series made since 2000 such as NEW HORNY PICTURES (2001), LONDON PICTURES (2011), THE BEARD PICTURES (2016) and THE CORPSING PICTURES (2022), the exhibition traces the increased scale and complexity of Gilbert & George's work since 2000, highlighting how the artists began digitally distorting their pictures to conjure a vivid spectrum of anxieties, fears and desires.

Rachel Thomas, Roden Chief Curator of the Hayward Gallery, says: *“Gilbert & George: 21ST CENTURY PICTURES reaffirms the artists’ singular position within the landscape of British art, exploring the complexities of human existence and confronting the social issues of our time. Speaking directly to the viewer, their images dismantle boundaries of class, culture, and taste, guided by an unwavering belief that art is for all. This exhibition is not only a celebration of their extraordinary practice across this millennium, but an invitation to step into the immersive and contradictory theatre of contemporary life - as only Gilbert & George can conjure it.”*

Championing the motto ‘art for all’, Gilbert & George have rejected the notion that art requires knowledge of formal theory to be understood, instead encouraging viewers to respond emotionally and intellectually to their art and the attitudes it represents. As an open space for the nation's enjoyment, the Southbank Centre similarly strives to spark new thinking about the society in which we operate by working with the leading artists of today.

Mark Ball, Artistic Director of the Southbank Centre, says: *“The Southbank Centre is proud to welcome back the legendary cultural provocateurs Gilbert & George, 28 years after their last Hayward Gallery show. As a great disruptive force in Britain’s art industry, their work helps us look at the world around us afresh and reconsider the familiar - this time modern London - through their unique perspective. No art historical knowledge is needed and everyone is welcome - just bring yourself, be yourself, and think for yourself.”*

Gilbert & George: 21ST CENTURY PICTURES is curated by Hayward Gallery Roden Chief Curator, Rachel Thomas, with Assistant Curators, Suzanna Petot and Hannah Martin, and Curatorial Assistant, Ananya Jain. The exhibition was realised with the generous support of Thaddaeus Ropac and White Cube. Additional support provided by Max and Monique Burger and the TOY family, Trevor Burgess and Gary Hess, Lehmann Maupin, and Sprüth Magers.

Ralph Rugoff, Director of the Hayward Gallery, says: *“In tracing how Gilbert & George’s art has continued to evolve and develop in bold new directions over the past 25 years, this exhibition highlights their remarkable resilience, unflagging creative energy, and their profound commitment to exploring – from their own idiosyncratic perspective – the changing cultural landscape of 21st century London. As always, their art incisively probes the relationship between individual identity and larger social formations - including religion, nationalism, and legalised codes of morality. Over the years, it increasingly confronts us with disturbing signs of the times, providing some of the most direct and provocative societal portraits of this era.”*

A fully illustrated catalogue accompanies the show, with in-depth texts by Michael Bracewell and Rachel Thomas, plus a new interview with the artists with Hans-Ulrich Obrist.

Responding to the exhibition, a [panel discussion](#) moderated by actor Russell Tovey brings together cultural journalist Tim Adams, writer and novelist Michael Bracewell and the Hayward Gallery's Roden Chief Curator Rachel Thomas to delve into the world of the artists on 19 November 2025.

Gilbert & George: 21ST CENTURY PICTURES runs simultaneously to [Val Lee: The Presence of Solitude](#) in the Hayward Gallery's free HENI Project Space, as well as Teresa Solar Abboud's [Mother Tongue](#): a monumental new public art commission which will officially launch outside the gallery on 16 October 2025.

[Gilbert & George: 'DEATH HOPE LIFE FEAR...'](#) complements the Hayward Gallery's presentation in spanning the artists' work from 1984 to 1998 and is on view at The Gilbert & George Centre until February 2026.

-ENDS-

NOTES TO EDITORS

Image Credits (L-R)

- Installation view of *Gilbert & George: 21ST CENTURY PICTURES*. Photo: Mark Blower. Courtesy of the Hayward Gallery.
- Installation view of *Gilbert & George: 21ST CENTURY PICTURES. REST (2019)*. Photo: Mark Blower. Courtesy of the Hayward Gallery.
- Installation view of *Gilbert & George: 21ST CENTURY PICTURES*. Photo: Mark Blower. Courtesy of the Hayward Gallery.

Exhibition Listing Information

Gilbert & George: 21ST CENTURY PICTURES

7 October 2025 - 4 January 2026

Hayward Gallery, Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX

Full price standard: £20

Concessions available & Southbank Centre Members go free

The Hayward Gallery opening times:

Tue – Fri, 10am – 6pm

Sat, 10am – 8pm

Sun, 10am – 6pm

Further information:

www.southbankcentre.co.uk

Twitter: [@haywardgallery](https://twitter.com/haywardgallery)

Instagram: [@hayward_gallery](https://www.instagram.com/hayward_gallery)

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About Gilbert & George

Gilbert was born in the Dolomites, Italy in 1943 and George was born in Devon, UK in 1942. Gilbert & George live and work in London. Solo exhibitions include their recent solo exhibition at Auckland Art Gallery Toio Tāmaki, New Zealand (2022), and their touring retrospective exhibition at Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (2021), Kunsthalle Zurich, Switzerland (2020), Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2019), Astrup Fearnley Museum, Oslo (2019), and LUMA, Arles, France (2018). Other solo exhibitions include Casa Rusca Museum, Locarno (2020); Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris (2019); Helsinki Art Museum, Finland (2018); Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart, Australia (2015); The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2015); Centro de Arte Contemporáneo Málaga, Spain touring to Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb (2010); Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania (2008); Tate Modern, London touring to Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany, Castello di Rivoli, Turin, Italy, De Young Museum, San Francisco, California, Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York and Milwaukee Art Museum, Wisconsin (2007–08); Serpentine Gallery, London (2002); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1996); Milwaukee Art Museum, Wisconsin touring to The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (1985); and Whitechapel Gallery, London touring to Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam and Kunstverein Düsseldorf, Germany (1971). They have participated in numerous group exhibitions including ICA, Miami (2018); HangarBicocca, Milan (2017); The Museum of Modern Art, New York

(2011); Barbican Art Gallery, London (2007); 51st Venice Biennale (2005); 5th Biennale de Lyon, France (2000); Carnegie International (1985); and Turner Prize, Tate Gallery, London (1984). In spring 2023, the Gilbert & George Centre in Spitalfields, East London, opened to the public.

About the Hayward Gallery

The Hayward Gallery, part of the Southbank Centre, has a long history of presenting work by the world's most adventurous and innovative artists including major solo shows by both emerging and established artists and dynamic group exhibitions. They include those by Bridget Riley, Bruce Nauman, Anish Kapoor, Lee Bul, Andreas Gursky, Tracey Emin, Jeremy Deller, Kader Attia and Matthew Barney, as well as influential group exhibitions such as *Africa Remix*, *Light Show*, *Psycho Buildings* and *Space Shifters*. Opened by Queen Elizabeth II in July 1968, the gallery is one of the few remaining buildings of its style. The Brutalist building was designed by a group of young architects, including Dennis Crompton, Warren Chalk and Ron Herron and is named after Sir Isaac Hayward, a former leader of the London County Council.

About the Southbank Centre

The Southbank Centre is the UK's largest multi-arts centre and engages the most diverse audiences of any performing arts organisation in the UK. Our biggest venue, the Royal Festival Hall (2,700 seats) is the lasting legacy of the 1951 Festival of Britain and the ambition and values of that project – that arts, ideas, innovation and culture can heal communities and should be available and accessible to everyone – are still our guiding principles today. The Southbank Centre is uniquely able to offer a wide-ranging, inclusive and world-class artistic programme spanning contemporary visual arts, music, dance, performance, literature, comedy and spoken word across the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room, the Hayward Gallery and our free spaces. We are also home to the National Poetry Library, the National Academy for Social Prescribing (NASP), two resident organisations (Kinetika Bloco and Tomorrow's Warriors) and six resident orchestras (Aurora Orchestra, Chineke! Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Philharmonia Orchestra).

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