HAYWARD GALLERY

Press Release
Date: Tuesday 2 September 2025
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Hayward Gallery announces solo exhibitions from two boundary-pushing artists creating large-scale immersive installations in February 2026

Chiharu Shiota: *Threads of Life* and Yin Xiuzhen: *Heart to Heart*
17 February - 3 May 2026






IMAGE CREDITS IN NOTES TO EDITORS

From 17 February - 3 May 2026, the Hayward Gallery will be transformed by two innovative and globally celebrated artists who use ordinary materials to create extraordinary works on a monumental scale: Chiharu Shiota and Yin Xiuzhen. Featuring new commissions and key existing pieces, these concurrent exhibitions explore the different ways both artists interweave textiles and found objects into deeply personal reflections on memory, identity and the human condition. Both presentations build on the Southbank Centre's commitment to introducing international artists to new audiences and form part of its nationwide 75th anniversary celebrations, which run throughout 2026 and span events across London and the UK.

Yung Ma, Senior Curator of the Hayward Gallery, says: *“These solo exhibitions celebrate Yin and Shiota’s clearly distinct artistic styles and approaches, reflecting the different generations, places and teachings that have impacted their work. Yet, these artists can be seen as united by a sensibility - one that elevates their own personal perspectives to reflect on our wider shared experiences."*

Ralph Rugoff, Director of the Hayward Gallery, says: *“‘Continuing the Gallery’s legacy of showcasing artists whose installations interact with the Hayward’s iconic architecture, this will be a very exciting and moving pair of exhibitions. Both Yin and Shiota elevate humble, everyday materials into profound and poetic artistic statements. Exploring the tension between personal and collective memory and the transience of contemporary life, each artist’s work emphasises intimacy through tactile traces of human presence, while their immersive installations draw audiences into reflective, almost meditative spatial interactions. Transforming the objects we live with and leave behind, each artist offers a deeply human and emotionally charged experience .”*

Chiharu Shiota: *Threads of Life*

Threads of Life is Berlin-based Japanese artist Chiharu Shiota’s first major solo exhibition in a London public gallery. The intricate takeover will see the artist weave immersive works from floor-to-ceiling across the Hayward Gallery’s top floor, following recent critically-acclaimed exhibitions in Beijing, Osaka, Tokyo and Paris. Accompanied by new large-scale sculptures, drawings, early performance videos and photographs, Shiota’s signature weblike works will respond to the gallery’s iconic brutalist architecture in a truly atmospheric presentation.

Shiota is a leading figure in the international art scene who returns to the Hayward Gallery for the first time since her participation in the group show *Walking in My Mind* (2009). Best-known for her large-scale installations which engulf ordinary objects - such as shoes, keys, beds, chairs and dresses - within huge structures of woolen thread, her work explores the body, memory, consciousness and the fragility of existence. Predominantly using red, black or white wool, her evocative pieces make visible the intangible connections we make throughout life. The resulting works are immersive and deeply emotive, often drawn from personal experiences that expand into universal human concerns such as life, death and relationships.

The exhibition will feature new iterations of Shiota’s past monumental installations, including *The Locked Room* (2016) and *During Sleep* (2002). As if painting three dimensionally in a space with string, these delicately woven structures allude to the shared experiences that interconnect us while creating a cocoon-like area that encloses visitors as they walk through it. Additionally, *Threads of Life* will include documentation of Shiota’s early performances, which probed the boundaries between the body, life and nature, as well as her latest collaboration with writer Yoko Tawada. For Tawada’s daily series *The Trainee* (2023–24), published in Japan’s Yomiuri newspaper, Shiota created around 400 watercolor and charcoal drawings, each stitched with her signature red threads.

Chiharu Shiota says: *"This exhibition reflects the often-hidden connections between us, with each thread becoming a trace of our shared existence, weaving visible forms from the invisible threads of life. Through my work, I try to make sense of life and its uncertainties; each installation has grown from personal experiences, such as losing my father, facing death and questioning what it means to be human. While we live our lives separately, we are, at the same time, deeply connected. With this exhibition, I want to highlight the marvelous aspects of ordinary existence."*

A fully illustrated catalogue will accompany this exhibition, including a newly produced essay by exhibition curator Yung Ma and an interview between Shiota and Yoko Tawada.

Yin Xiuzhen: *Heart to Heart*

Running concurrently, the first major UK survey of work by leading Chinese artist Yin Xiuzhen invites visitors to step into her spellbinding world. Spanning the entire lower-level galleries, the exhibition will bring together seminal projects from the past three decades, alongside new commissions and historic works reimagined for the space. Through large-scale installations made from everyday objects, industrial materials and used items of clothing, *Heart to Heart* invites us to see the familiar in new ways, revealing the personal and collective stories these overlooked items carry.

Yin is a pioneering artist of her generation who first emerged on the contemporary Chinese art scene in the early 1990s. Like many of her contemporaries, her career developed at the same time as major cultural, economic and social changes in China. Observing the country's fast economic growth, urbanisation and global integration, Yin was keen to explore how living in an increasingly connected world can impact identity. She began working with mundane materials - including cement, ceramics, glass, clay, food and household objects - to uncover the traces of memory, personal history and time embedded within them.

Heart to Heart will comprehensively present Yin's artistic journey across installation, sculpture, photography, video, wall-based works and archival materials of her early performances. The exhibition takes its name from a new commission: a huge, immersive textile installation shaped like a human heart. Inviting visitors to step inside, the work will be built from used clothing items collected from a wide array of people, signifying the gathering of our shared memories to create a space for reflection on how our individual and collective experiences intertwine.

> **Yin Xiuzhen says:** *"The heart is our human engine and, in my culture, it transcends the mind. 'Heart-to-heart' is a way to connect and I am delighted to have this chance to engage in a heart-to-heart dialogue with visitors of the Hayward Gallery, drawing on my thirty-plus years of practice; this exhibition is an opportunity for mutual exchange, one I hope will generate sparks."*

A fully illustrated catalogue will accompany the exhibition, including a newly commissioned essay by curator and writer Lydia Yee alongside a conversation between Yin and exhibition curator Yung Ma.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Image Credits

Left (top to bottom):

- Chiharu Shiota, *The Locked Room*, 2016. Installation: old keys, wooden doors, red wool. KAAT Kanagawa Arts Theatre, Yokohama, Japan. Photo by Masanobu Nishino and courtesy of the artist © DACS, London, 2025 and Chiharu Shiota.
- Chiharu Shiota, *The Key in the Hand*, 2015. Installation: old keys, wooden boats, red wool. Japan Pavilion at 56th Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy. Photo by Sunhi Mang © DACS, London, 2025 and Chiharu Shiota.

Right (top and bottom):

- Yin Xiuzhen, *Thought*, 2009. Used clothes, steel, 340 x 510 x 370 cm. Installation view, Pace Gallery, Beijing. Photo: Courtesy of the artist, Beijing Commune, and Pace.

Exhibition Listing Information

Chiharu Shiota: Threads of Life and ***Yin Xiuzhen: Heart to Heart***
17 February – 3 May 2026
Hayward Gallery, Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX
Full price standard ticket which grants access to both exhibitions: £19
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
TikTok: @southbank.centre
Instagram: @hayward.gallery
Facebook: www.facebook.com/haywardgallery/

About Chiharu Shiota

Chiharu Shiota (b. 1972 Osaka, Japan), has lived and worked in Berlin since 1999. Shiota has exhibited across the world at institutions such as Istanbul Museum of Modern Art (2025); Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2025); Museum für Kunst + Geschichte, Fribourg (2025); Azkuna Zentroa, Bilbao (2025); Kunsthalle Praha, Prague (2025); Jupiter Museum of Art, Shenzhen (2025); Red Brick Art Museum, Beijing (2025); Casa Wabi, Puerto Escondido (2025); Grand Palais, Paris (2024); Nakanoshima Museum of Art, Osaka (2024); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2023); Queensland Art Gallery of Modern Art (QAGoMA), Brisbane (2022); ZKM | Zentrum für Kunst und Medien, Karlsruhe (2021); Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington (2020); Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2019); Gropius Bau, Berlin (2019); Art Gallery of South Australia (2018); Yorkshire Sculpture Park, UK (2018); Power Station of Art, Shanghai (2017); K21 Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf (2015); Smithsonian Institution Arthur M.Sackler Gallery, Washington DC (2014); the Museum of Art, Kochi (2013); and the National Museum of Art, Osaka (2008) among others. She has also participated in numerous international exhibitions such as Oku-Noto International Art Festival (2017), Sydney Biennale (2016), Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale (2009) and Yokohama Triennale (2001). In 2015, Shiota was selected to represent Japan at the 56th Venice Biennale.

She was awarded the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's Art Encouragement Prize in Japan again in 2024, after receiving the prize as a new artist in 2008.

About Yin Xiuzhen

Born 1963 in Beijing, Yin Xiuzhen has held numerous notable solo exhibitions internationally, including Piercing the Sky at the Power Station of Art in Shanghai (2024–25), Yin Xiuzhen: Sky Patch at CHAT – Centre for Heritage Arts and Textile in Hong Kong (2020), Slow Release at the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art in Moscow (2016), at the Groninger Museum in the Netherlands and Kunsthalle Düsseldorf in Germany (2012–13), and a solo presentation at Museum of Modern Art in New York entitled Projects 92: Yin Xiuzhen (2010).

Yin has also participated in many group exhibitions and collection displays. Her work was featured in Connecting Bodies: Asian Women Artists at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea (2024–25); Global(e) Resistance at the Centre Pompidou (2020–21); Asian Art and China after 1989: Theater of the World at the Guggenheim Museum (2017–18); The World Is Yours at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art (2009); and Global Feminisms at the Brooklyn Museum (2007). Furthermore, Yin has been widely shown in international biennials and triennials. She exhibited in the Chinese Pavilion at the 52nd Venice Biennale in 2007 and returned to the 58th Venice Biennale in 2019 as part of the main exhibition. Yin's works can be found in the numerous public and private collections worldwide, such as Tate Modern, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Mori Art Museum, Tokyo; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; M+, Hong Kong; and National Art Museum of China, Beijing, among others.

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 arts centre, occupying 11 acres along the river and its 4 venues anchor London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. We exist to present great cultural experiences that bring people together and we achieve this by providing the space for artists to create and present their best work and by creating a place where as many people as possible can come together to experience bold, unusual and eye-opening work. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. Southbank Centre is made up of the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery as well as being home to the National Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. It is also home to six Resident Orchestras (Aurora Orchestra, Chineke! Orchestra, London

Philharmonic Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Philharmonia Orchestra). www.southbankcentre.co.uk



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