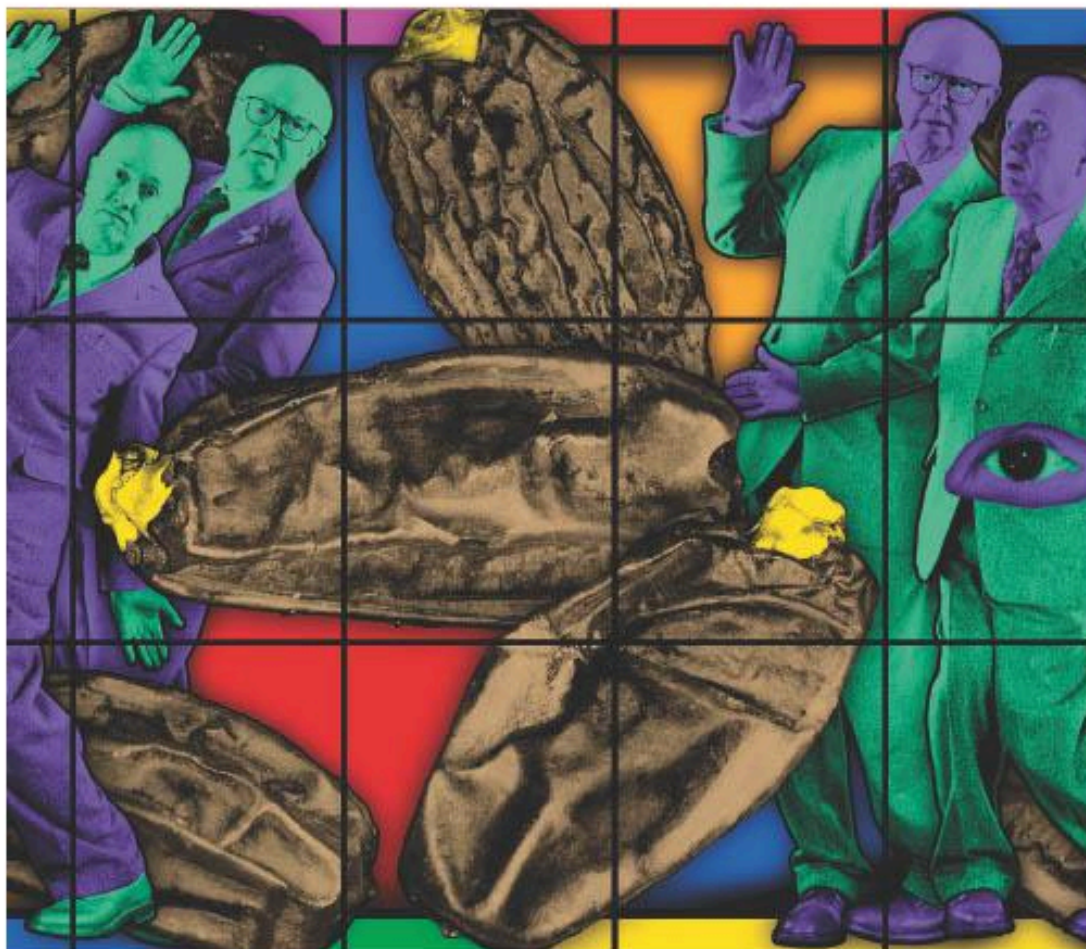


# SOUTHBANK CENTRE



Gilbert & George, DATE DANCE, 2010, Courtesy the Artist and White Cube.

## Gilbert & George: 21ST CENTURY PICTURES

PREPARATION STORY  
7 OCT 2025 – 11 JAN 2026

**HAYWARD  
GALLERY**

## Preparing for your visit

This information is for you to use as much or as little as you like, to help you to **prepare for your visit to the exhibition**. In this handout, you can find pictures of the route through the exhibition and information about what you will experience along the way.

For our **Relaxed Hours events on Tuesday 4 November 2025 (10am – 1pm) and on Wednesday 26 November 2025 (3pm – 6pm)** we are making small changes to help our visitors who require a more relaxed environment, including turning up the lights where possible and reducing the number of visitors in the galleries for these hours.

There are **spotlight talks** with Hayward Gallery Tour Guides, a **printed companion resource** to inspire your explorations of the exhibition, and a **chill-out space**. We don't expect visitors to be quiet during these hours. **It is a time and space for you to be yourself.**

When you arrive at the Southbank Centre site, look for the building with the **pyramid shapes** on the roof, or **ask any staff inside the Royal Festival Hall for directions**.

Entrance to the exhibition is via the **Hayward Gallery main entrance**. Please arrive as close to your time slot as possible.

## External installations

As you approach the Hayward Gallery, there are **three installations** located around the outside of the building.

*Thinking Fountains* by Klaus Weber is an **outdoor sculpture featuring two water-spouting bronze figures** and a narrow waterfall cascading from an elevated concrete walkway. This installation is located near the entrance to the Hayward Gallery Foyer.



*Their Jumpers* is a **painting** by Nicola Tyson which shows **two figures standing** against a **yellow brick wall**. They appear to be engaging in a **dance** or **striking a pose** – or perhaps something more unsettling is taking place and their arms are raised in surrender. We are **never quite certain** of the narratives unfolding in Nicola Tyson's artworks. This artwork is located on the side of the Queen Elizabeth Hall and is opposite the Hayward Gallery Foyer.



*Mother Tongue* is a **bronze sculpture** by Teresa Solar Abboud that is **bubblegum pink** in colour. It depicts **two tongues intertwining into one dancing figure**. The artist explores the process of translation and assimilation that she experiences within her family context. With an Egyptian mother and a Spanish father, she has grown up in the constant intermingling between these two cultures.



## Hayward Gallery facilities

### Cloakroom

The cloakroom is open and there is a **charge of £2** per item to leave anything here. **Please note that we do not accept cash, and all payments are made by card.** You won't be able to bring any bags over 40 x 25 x 25cm (for example, a large backpack or luggage) into the exhibition, **so please leave large bags at home.**



You can request to **borrow a gallery stool** to use while you explore the exhibition. These stools are foldable and lightweight to carry. There are also **two wheelchairs available to borrow if needed.** We recommend pre-booking the wheelchairs where possible.

**Sensory backpacks** are available if you think they could support your visit. They contain adult, teen and child-sized **ear defenders** and **fidget equipment.**



## Toilets

There are three **gender-inclusive toilets** (this means everyone can use them) located in the Hayward Gallery Foyer between the Hayward Gallery Shop and the cloakroom. **One of these toilets is an accessible toilet.**

There are **additional toilets within the galleries**, located halfway up the front staircase. These toilets are separated for women and men.

## Foyer lift

The foyer lift goes to the following floors: Level 0 in the car park (**step-free access route from street level**), Level 2 (Hayward Gallery Foyer and Shop, toilets and HENI Project Space) and Level 3 (the cafe). This is a **small lift that can comfortably fit one wheelchair user and a companion**. There is a **mirrored wall** facing you as you enter the lift.



## Gallery lift

The gallery lift is located on the right, just inside the entrance to the Lower Galleries. It takes you to the Upper Galleries and back down again. This is a **large lift, with silver-coloured walls and a black carpet**.



## Seating

There are **benches, chairs and stools for visitors to sit on in some of the rooms**. These have been upholstered in faux leather. You can also borrow a foldable gallery stool from the cloakroom if you prefer. A Hayward Gallery Visitor Assistant will always be **happy to bring you a stool if you need one**. Just ask the nearest member of staff with a yellow lanyard.



## Hayward Gallery Cafe and finding a quiet space

The **Hayward Gallery Cafe is located on Level 3** and can be accessed either by the staircase in the Hayward Gallery Foyer or by taking the lift in the foyer to Level 3.

The Hayward Gallery Cafe is open **Tuesday to**



**Friday, and Sunday, from 10am to 6pm, and Saturday, from 10am to 8pm.** The cafe stops serving 30 minutes before closing.

You can buy **food and drink** from the cafe and use the **tables and chairs** in this area, or sit outside on the balcony. The **coffee machine** in the cafe is loud during the brewing process and the release of steam and compressed air.

**If you need a quiet space, please speak with a member of staff who will be happy to help.**

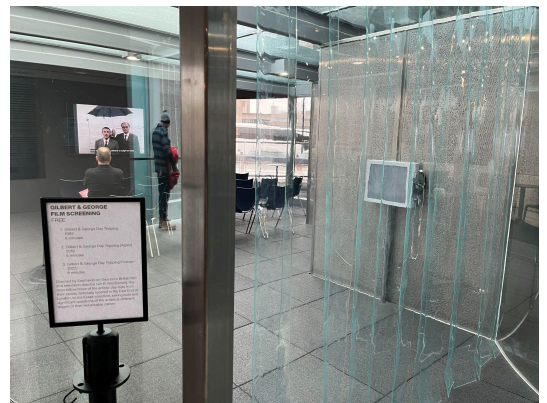


### **Dan Graham Waterloo Sunset Pavilion**

The Dan Graham Waterloo Sunset Pavilion is located **next to the Hayward Gallery Cafe.**

This is an **oval-shaped glass pavilion with views over Waterloo Bridge.**

There are three Gilbert & George films projected onto a **large screen**, which are shown on a continuous loop. The first two films last six minutes each and the third lasts eight minutes. You can join at any time. Push aside the **slatted curtain** to enter. You are welcome to sit on the chairs and watch as much or as little of the films as you would like.



The films follow three of the artists' day trips from their studio, famously located in the East End of London, to the **Essex coastline**, asking bold and significant questions of the artists at different stages of their remarkable career.

You do not need an exhibition ticket to watch this film.

You are welcome to sit in this room, the cafe or outside on the balcony, if the weather is fine.



### **HENI Project Space**

The HENI Project Space is an additional exhibition space where you can **experience art by both emerging and established artists**. It is located in the Hayward Gallery **Foyer** and there is only one entrance and exit. **Pull the glass door to enter**.

*Val Lee: The Presence of Solitude* is the current exhibition in this space and runs from 7 October 2025 to 11 January 2026. This is a **free exhibition** and you do not need a ticket to enter.

You will see a large square-shaped room with a **film projected onto a large screen** and some **seats** for you to sit on, a **slide projection** and **photographs** on the wall. The **lighting levels are low** and there are **spotlights on the artwork**.

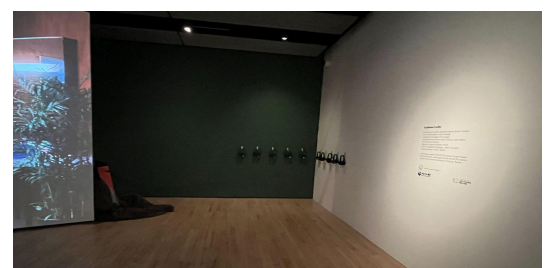
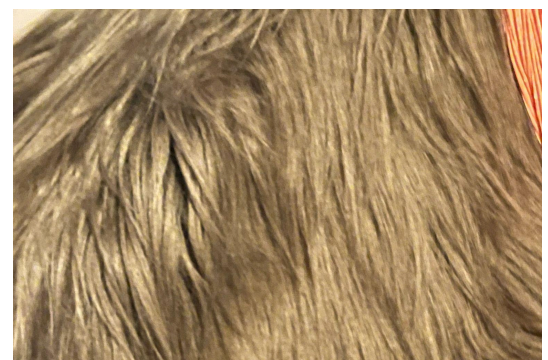
This is a multidisciplinary exhibition from Taiwanese artist Val Lee (李奧森), continuing her exploration of **isolation, intimacy and hope**.

The exhibition features new iterations of two existing works: *Valley in the Minibus* (2024) and *The Sorrowful Football Team* (2025), which explore the concept of transitory 'non-spaces', and political repression in Taiwan during the White Terror, respectively.




Please note there are **three life-sized Yeti-like figures** in the room and they resemble the character featured in the film. They are all **wearing orange-coloured face masks** and **shaggy, brown fur-like outfits**. One is seated as though watching the film, another is sitting on the floor leaning up against the screen, and the third is sitting behind the edge of the screen near the headphones. These are **mannequins** and will not move or speak. They are friendly figures! Please do not touch.

In order to hear the film soundtrack, please pick up one of the **headphones** hanging on the wall in the corner of the room. Please replace them when you are ready to leave.

You are welcome to stay and explore the exhibition for as long as you like.



## Exhibition rules

	Please do not touch
	Photography is allowed with no flash
	No food or drink in the galleries

### Barriers

To keep the artworks safe, many have **floor tape** around them. This means that you shouldn't lean over or step into this area. Although you can look closely, **please do not touch the artworks.**



### Hayward Gallery Visitor Assistants

All our Hayward Gallery Visitor Assistants wear **bright yellow lanyards** and **black Hayward Gallery T-shirts.**

Our Visitor Assistants' priority is to ensure you have a positive and safe experience at the Hayward Gallery. They are friendly, knowledgeable and passionate about visual art, **and if you need help or have a question about anything in the gallery, they'll be happy to assist.**

**What happens when you arrive at the**



## Hayward Gallery

There may be **short queues to enter the building** and the exhibition. If you are not able to queue or need further assistance, our staff are here to help you.

When you arrive at the Hayward Gallery entrance, the **Visitor Assistant at the entrance will ask to see your e-ticket and check the time you have booked for.** The Visitor Assistant will direct you to the **Ticket Office if you need to buy a ticket.**

You will be directed to the entrance to the exhibition by a Visitor Assistant, who will **scan your e-ticket and tell you about the rules** of the Hayward Gallery.

## Bloomberg Connects app

The Southbank Centre has launched a **new, digital guide on Bloomberg Connects**, the **free app** that makes it easy to access and engage with arts and culture from mobile devices, anytime, anywhere.

It is available for download from Google Play or the App Store. Search for 'Hayward Gallery' and select the *Gilbert & George: 21ST CENTURY PICTURES* exhibition from the 'What's On' section.

The content of the app includes short **audio recordings** with a **transcript** of the exhibition's curatorial team discussing the various themes encountered in Gilbert & George's work. You can enjoy listening to this from home before or after your visit or use it on the day you come to the Hayward Gallery.

You can still enjoy the exhibition without using the app. There are **wall texts on the gallery walls** describing the artwork, or a **large-print handout** if you prefer.

You can collect a large-print handout from the foyer or take one from wall boxes within the galleries.

You will be given a Gilbert & George **handout** as you enter the exhibition.



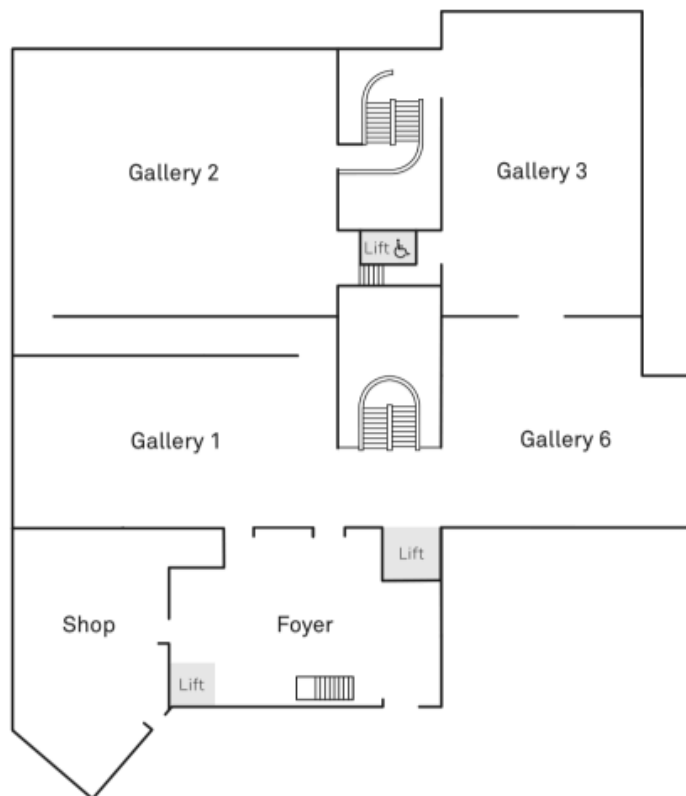
## **Touchable materials**

We ask that visitors **do not touch any of the artworks in the exhibition.**

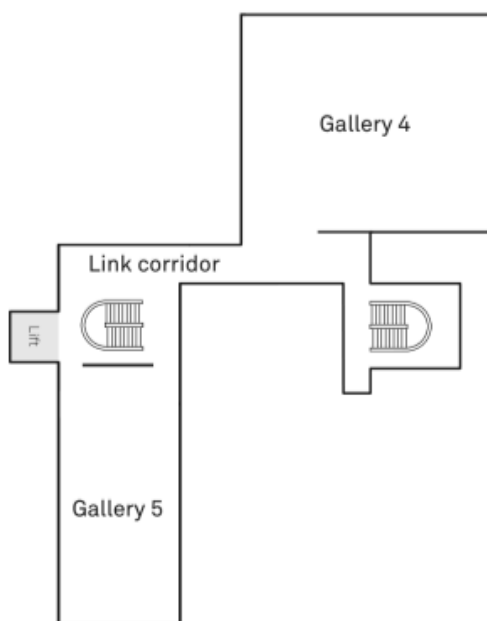
However, there are some **specific touchable materials** inside the galleries, and **you are welcome to touch these.**



# Lower Galleries



# Upper Galleries



## Gilbert & George: 21ST CENTURY PICTURES

Discover the artists' pictures from the **past 25 years**, with **vibrant, large-scale images** that centre the human experience and reflect their motto, '**Art for All**'.

This exhibition showcases Gilbert & George's artistic journey, highlighting new pictures created since the start of the millennium.

With **bold, single-word titles**, each piece delves into societal norms and taboos, spanning the mundane and the illicit, with their art challenging boundaries of taste and propriety.

Gilbert & George are **two people (but one artist)** who have been working together since the 1960s, merging their individual identities into a single artistic entity. They refer to themselves as '**Living Sculptures**' and feature in nearly all their pictures. Their works are made up of a **grid-based photo collage style**, which often uses **vivid colours** and focuses on themes of modern urban life.

The **exhibition is located in the Lower and Upper Galleries**. There are **six rooms** to explore, showcasing 63 artworks.

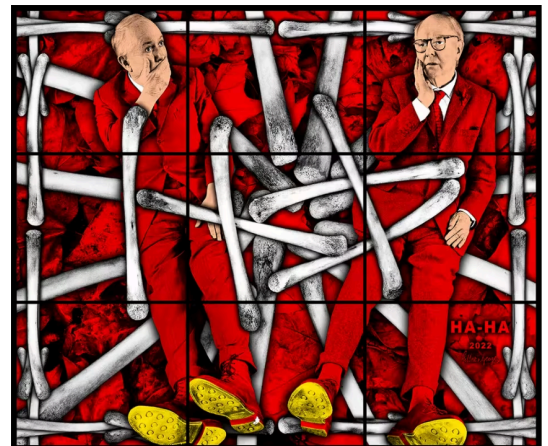
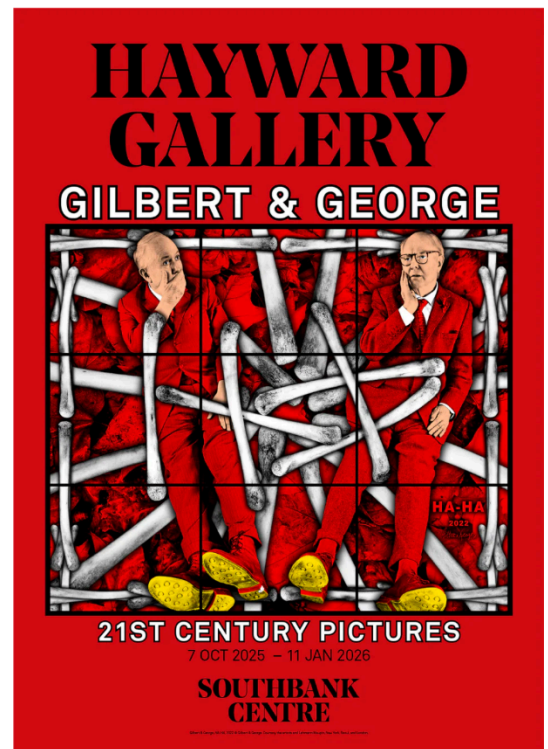
You can leave the exhibition at any time if you need to. You can go in again, as long as it is on the same day.

You **do not need to look at every artwork** and the **Visitor Assistants are happy to help** you if you wish to avoid certain areas.

### Content warning

The exhibition contains **images and language** that some viewers may find **offensive**, including **swear words, sexually explicit and violent language**.

There is **no age guidance** for this exhibition, but please be prepared to have **age-appropriate conversations** about the content of the work as needed. Our **staff are available to support you** if you would like any further information.



## Gallery 1:

As you enter the Lower Galleries, you are now in Gallery 1. There are **large-scale, brightly-coloured and highly patterned artworks** hanging on the walls.

The **lighting levels are low** and there are **spotlights** shining on the artwork, which cause **shadows** on the walls and floor and **reflections** on the shiny tiled floor of the gallery.

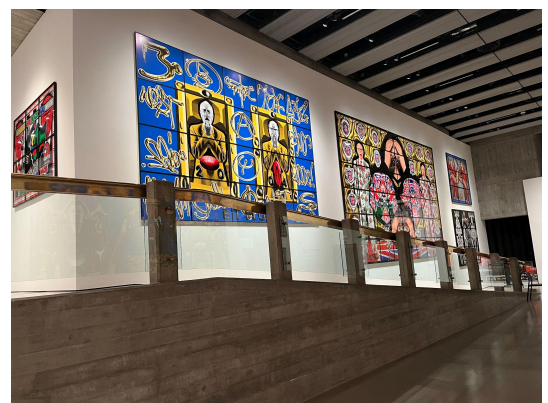
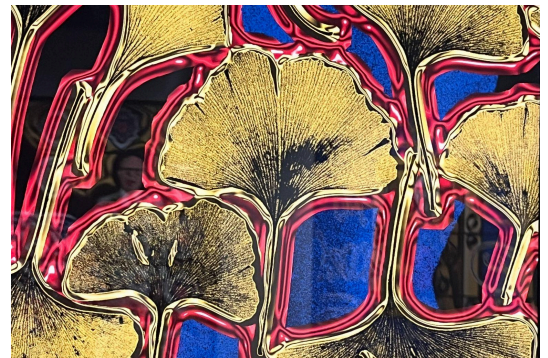
There is **floor tape** around the works so please stay behind the lines and **do not touch**. You are welcome to sit on the benches if you wish.

The **introductory text** about the exhibition is located on the wall to your right as you enter the exhibition.

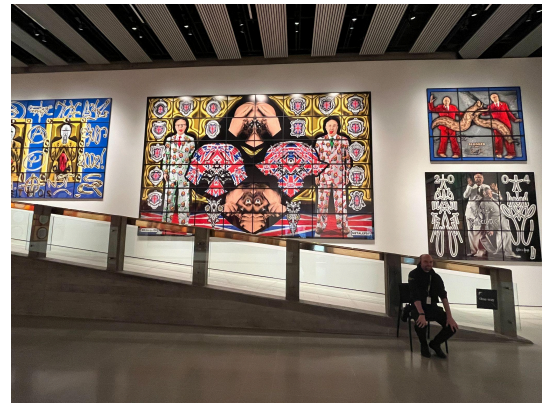
On your left as you enter there is a work called *FATES*, which is from a series called *The Ginkgo Pictures* from 2005. Gilbert & George were on a trip to New York and first noticed **ginkgo trees** in Gramercy Park but later realised they grow everywhere, including in London. They were taken with the **shape and symmetry of the leaves** (two halves making one whole leaf), which speaks to their ideology of **two people but one artist**. The trees are resilient and have even survived atomic bomb blasts. The leaves **symbolise love, friendship, hope and connection**.

The work on the back wall made up of yellow and red squares is called *AGES* and from a series called *New Horny Pictures*. This is the **oldest work** in the exhibition and dates from 2001. It is the only work exhibited before Gilbert & George embraced digital technology in their creation process. It was made by combining analogue photographic negatives with hand-dyeing.

Over a number of years Gilbert & George collected **advertisements** they found in newspapers, in phone boxes and on the streets. They **categorised** them by different criteria and this work is grouped by advertisements that state the **ages** of the male escorts featured. The work represents the sexual underbelly of London and reminds us of gravestones or names on a war memorial.



Gilbert & George collect **photographs, images, charms, leaves, twigs**, etc, and store them in their studio. The work in the middle of the ramp is called *METALEPSY* and is from the *JACK FREAK PICTURES* (2008). For this series they used their collection of **medals** and looked at exaggerated ideas of nationhood and patriotism. The work incorporates their fragmented bodies, the Union Jack, and other symbols that are layered over each other.



Go **up the ramp** when you are ready to move to the next room. There is a one-way system up the ramp as the addition of another wall has rendered the **ramp narrower** than usual.

## Gallery 2:

This is a **large room** with artworks on the walls and two benches in the middle of the floor for you to sit on if you wish. **There is floor tape in front of some of the artwork. Please stay behind the lines.**

The overhead spotlights cast **shadows** on the walls and floor and **reflections** on the **shiny tiled floor of the gallery**.



*SEX, MONEY, RACE, RELIGION* is a quadripartite picture, composed of **four large photo-based panels**, each dedicated to one of the words in the title. In the background of these panels, **postmarks** are scattered among **brightly coloured leaves**.



The **dates** on the postmarks are significant, corresponding to periods when the named topics preoccupied the artists and society. *SEX* features postmarks from the 1960s and early 1970s, *MONEY* from the late 1970s and 1980s, *RACE* from the 1980s, and *RELIGION* from the 1990s and beyond, as the artists noted religion's growing socio-political force in the 21st century.

For *TWENTY-EIGHT STREETS*, Gilbert & George took **street names** from the **E1 postcode** and displayed them **alphabetically** using **white text on a black background**. The piece reflects the urban landscape and culture of the area where the artists have lived and worked since the 1960s.



The two artists appear as **ghostly figures** who are surveilling their neighbourhood.

*PIXIE HILL* is from a series called *SONOFAGOD PICTURES* (2005) and explores how systems of belief, power and hierarchy work in society. They are particularly interested in the boundaries between superstition and religion. You can see various **charms, crosses** and a **grotesque toy-like pixie figure** in the work.

There is a **bench** for you to sit on if you wish. When you are ready to move on, go **down the steps** to Gallery 3. Take your time and hold on to the **metal handrail** when descending the eight wooden steps. You will hear the **sound of your footsteps** as you descend the **wooden staircase**.

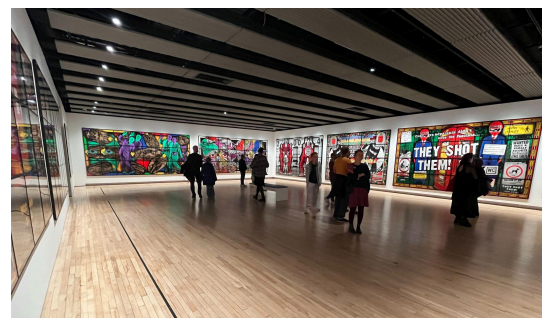
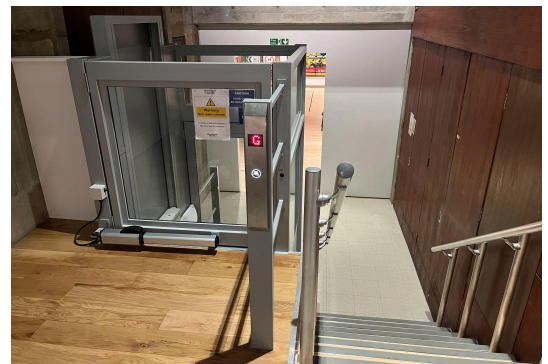
You can also use the **platform lift if you need step-free access**. Please note that the lift door will open outwards, so leave plenty of space to allow this. **Push and hold the button when you are inside the lift**. This lift makes a **buzzing noise** as it moves up and down. Ask the Visitor Assistant if you would like any help.

### Gallery 3:

This room is a long rectangular space with a wooden floor that has been divided into two parts by free-standing walls. The **lighting levels are low** and there are **spotlights** on the artwork, which cause **shadows on the walls** and **reflections on the wooden floor** of the gallery.

*DATE DANCE* from the series *THE PARADISICAL PICTURES* (2019) features the artists wandering through **lush, fantastical, and intensely colourful** natural worlds that suggest an **unsettling** vision of paradise. The artists are shown **awkwardly dancing** through the date-filled landscape. They look at the afterlife as a continuous journey, exploring what it means to different people.

The other series that dominates this room is the *UTOPIAN PICTURES* (2014) which focuses on the urban landscape around them. They draw upon what they see, for example, **graffiti, stickers, posters**, to depict the modern world in which there is authority,



resentment of authority, rules and rebellion, public information and advertising. They are interested in the **chaos** of the city around them and what that means for them.

In *MOOLAH*, Gilbert & George's suits are covered in a **colourful mosaic of stickers** they found on lampposts, bus stops and street corners near their home.

*HOOLIGANS* is the only work on show from the series *THIRTEEN HOOLIGAN PICTURES* (2004). The word hooligan was being used a lot in the media at the time. In the image it is unclear if Gilbert & George have become hooligans, are warding off hooligans or making fun of hooligans. As with all of their works, it is ambiguous and open to interpretation.

You will see a doorway on the left and this is where you can take the **stairs** up to the Upper Galleries. There is **wall text** in the lower stairwell area and one artwork displayed on the wall at the top of the staircase. Please note, there are **50 steps** to climb, so if you would rather **take the lift**, walk to the opposite end of this room and you will see the lift through the open doorway on the left hand side.

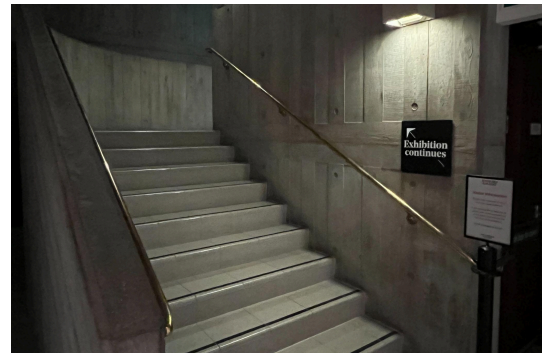
If you take the lift to the Upper Galleries, turn left then head straight down to the end of the corridor to reach Gallery 4.

#### Gallery 4:

This is a square-shaped room with artworks hanging on all four walls. The **lighting levels are a little brighter** in this room.

There are **two benches** in the middle of the room and you are welcome to sit here and look at the artworks for as long as you like.

*NUMBER TWELVE* is from a series called *NEW NORMAL PICTURES* (2020) which was created at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. They claim to have used the phrase 'New Normal' before the media was using it. Unlike their earlier work, in which they would 'look up', for this series they intentionally looked down. This shift in perspective made them



focus on the discarded litter of daily city life, like discarded balloons and drug bags.

Number 12 is the artists' home address and this work is an **invitation** to come in and have a **cup of tea** with them. They would often invite strangers, particularly during the pandemic, to come in and have tea. The man whose image is featured twice is George Crompton, who was living on the streets near them and became a friend.



*MARLEY WALK* is from the same series and references a street in their East London neighbourhood. The artwork was directly inspired by the increasing **drug use** they observed in their area and the work includes images of small drug bags that they found on the streets around them.

*SCAPEGOATED (A Triptych)* is from the series *SCAPEGOATING PICTURES* (2013), which is arguably the most controversial series that they have done. The title of the series refers to the exploration of modern city life and the scapegoating that can occur within a multicultural world. The themes are **paranoia, religious fundamentalism** and **victimhood**. This work was made in the wake of the murder of the British army soldier, Lee Rigby, by Islamic extremists. The artists were witnessing an overly-polarised society and culture and wanted to draw attention to this through this series.



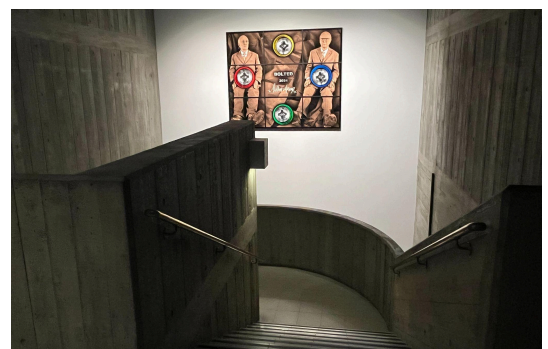
When you are ready to move on, retrace your steps and **head down the Connecting Corridor** and enter Gallery 5.



### **Connecting Corridor:**

There are many artworks lining both sides of the **corridor** and also one situated above the **rear staircase**.

There are two works that have never been seen by the public before: *TWIG* and *BOLTED* from the series called *SCREW PICTURES* (2024 – 2025). The series confronts themes of mortality and introspection, incorporating **everyday objects** from their own environment, like **screws, nuts and twigs**.



*DAVID* is from the series called *SCAPEGOATING PICTURES* (2013). This is a **bin man** that Gilbert & George saw in the street and thought he looked like the **footballer, David Beckham**. They took a picture of him and called the work *DAVID*.

*GATED* is from the series called *THE CORPSING PICTURES* (2022). **Corpsing** is an **actor's term** for **losing composure**, which breaks the illusion of a performance. For this series the two artists lie side-by-side like corpses, sometimes covering their mouths, eyes, or ears. They are performing a kind of 'death' of their public character. They lie amongst twigs, decaying leaves and bones in this series. The **soles of their shoes** are always **gold**, referencing the saying from the story *Dick Whittington and His Cat* that the streets of London are 'paved with gold'.

There is a quotation on the wall: 'We want our Art to: bring out the Bigot from inside the Liberal and conversely to bring out the Liberal from inside the Bigot.' Gilbert & George want visitors to come out of the exhibition thinking something new about what they have seen or **questioning** something in a new way.

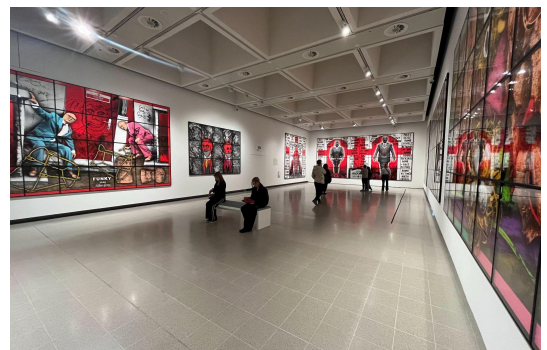
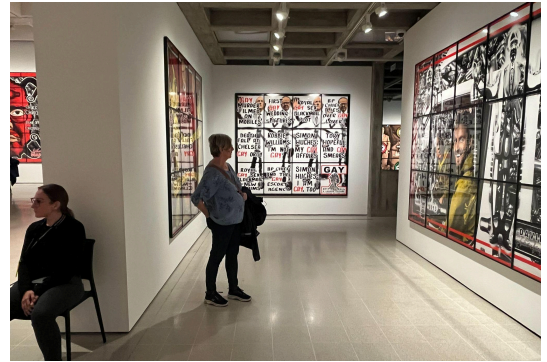
### Gallery 5:

This is a rectangular-shaped room with artworks on the walls. The **lighting levels are a little brighter** in this room.

There is a **bench** in the middle of the room and you are welcome to sit here and look at the artworks for as long as you like.

*BOMB (A Triptych)* from the series *SIX BOMB PICTURES* (2006) which addresses the **fear** and cultural acclimatisation to **violence** following the 2005 London bombings.

The text is from **newspaper placards** from the London Evening Standard featuring **headlines** that contain the words **bomb, bombing and bombers**. The headlines are displayed like **tombstones** and the artists stand like memorialised figures. By placing



themselves within the images, the artists confront the difficult subject of **terrorism** in a way that is personal and reflects the social landscape of the time. This work is a **memorial** to collective trauma. *ON THE BENCH* is from *THE PARADISICAL PICTURES* (2019) series and depicts the artists **slumped** on a cemetery bench near their home, either asleep or unconscious.



When you are **ready to move on**, either **walk down** the **front staircase** or take the **lift down** to the **Lower Galleries**.



### Gallery 6:

This is a square-shaped room with an open doorway leading to Gallery 3, which you will have already visited. The **lighting levels are low** and there are **spotlights** shining on the artwork, which cause **reflections** on the shiny tiled floor of the gallery. There is a **bench** for you to sit on if you wish.



*BEARD SPEAK*, *GOD SAVE THE BEARD* and *BEARD CROSS* are from the series called *THE BEARD PICTURES* (2016). The pictures feature the artists as central figures with their faces obscured by **digitally manipulated beards** composed of various materials, from leaves to barbed wire.



The artists are looking at what **beards** have meant at different times in different cultures. When they were younger, men had to present themselves as **clean-shaven** and **smartly dressed** in suits in order to get a job. They mock the hipster trend of facial hair and touch on controversial themes, such as anxieties surrounding terrorism and national identity.

When you are **ready to leave** the *Gilbert & George: 21ST CENTURY PICTURES* exhibition, go through the exit door in Gallery 1 into the foyer.



Exit through the **Hayward Gallery Shop** when you are ready to leave the Hayward Gallery.

## After your visit

We hope you enjoyed our *Gilbert & George: 21ST CENTURY PICTURES* exhibition. **Thank you for visiting the Hayward Gallery.** We look forward to seeing you at our next exhibition.

We are committed to ensuring all visitors feel **welcome** and have an **enriching and positive experience** when they visit the Hayward Gallery. We are keen to hear about your experience and ways you feel we may be able to keep improving. Our staff in the gallery would like to hear what you think – **speak to them directly or give feedback by completing one of our forms** in the Hayward Gallery Foyer.

To receive emails about *Relaxed Hours* at the Hayward Gallery, please email:  
[haywardrelaxedhours@southbankcentre.co.uk](mailto:haywardrelaxedhours@southbankcentre.co.uk)

More information about our Access Scheme can be found on our **website**. To stay up to date and receive information about our year-round programme of accessible events, please email:  
[artsandwellbeing@southbankcentre.co.uk](mailto:artsandwellbeing@southbankcentre.co.uk)

## Upcoming events

***Relaxed Hours: Gilbert & George:  
21ST CENTURY PICTURES***

**Tuesday 4 November, 10am – 1pm**

**Wednesday 26 November, 3pm – 6pm**

### About Relaxed Hours at the Hayward Gallery

We welcome everyone to the gallery throughout our opening hours but we also recognise that some visitors may require a more **relaxed approach to noise and movement** in the space, or **additional support** to experience exhibitions fully.

We make **changes** to ensure the gallery is even more of a **welcoming environment**, where you can enter and exit more freely, and exhibition **capacity is**



**reduced.** We don't expect visitors to be quiet. It is a time and space for you to **be yourself.** We have **tour guides** on hand and encourage you to prioritise your own needs when visiting. **Relaxed, chill-out** spaces away from the exhibition are available.

These events are **open to all** and we particularly welcome those with **sensory processing differences, neurodivergent visitors** or those living with **neurological conditions**, as well as **early-year visitors, parents** and **carers.** If you have a particular **access requirement** or any questions ahead of your visit, do let us know – we will do all we can to accommodate any requests.

There are *Relaxed Hours* sessions for every exhibition at the Hayward Gallery. Dates are shared on our website in advance. **Advance booking is essential** and you'll be asked to choose a time slot when you book. For this event your ticket allows you to arrive, leave and re-enter at any time during the *Relaxed Hours* event.



**Book online for *Relaxed Hours*:**  
*Gilbert & George* [here](#).