

HAYWARD GALLERY

Press Release

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Linder: Danger Came Smiling

11 February - 5 May 2025



IMAGE CREDITS IN NOTES TO EDITORS

The Hayward Gallery will present the first London retrospective of acclaimed British artist Linder from 11 February to 5 May 2025. Offering an illuminating overview of this iconic artist's 50 year-long career, the exhibition will include a selection of Linder's trailblazing photomontages and explore the full range of her artistic practice, underscoring the experimental and feminist impulses of her thought-provoking work.

Danger Came Smiling will present the full trajectory of Linder's artistic production, from the early work that grew from her involvement in the punk scene of 1970s Manchester to new works that have never

been shown before. Linder's distinct visual language is characterised by a playful irreverence, which investigates the sexual commodification of the female body within magazine culture in order to examine our shifting attitudes to aspirational lifestyles, sex, food and fashion.

Linder first achieved prominence in the 1970s, within the dynamic landscape of punk and post-punk music, gaining widespread recognition with her band, Ludus, and for her groundbreaking album covers. Her photomontage for the cover of *Buzzcocks'* 1977 single 'Orgasm Addict' endures as one of the emblematic images of the British punk scene. Five decades later, Linder is an internationally recognised artist renowned for her multifaceted practice.

Linder's journey has been one of relentless exploration, venturing into realms as varied as fashion, music, performance, perfume, textiles, and film. Beyond the raw and abrasive energy of the DIY punk aesthetic, her artistic vision is informed by a rich tapestry of influences spanning religious art, surrealism, mysticism, pornography and the shifting landscape of social media. The artist's work is animated by her biting and sometimes outrageous sense of humour.

Linder has used photomontage throughout her career. Working with a medical grade scalpel she draws on the violent and creative power of cutting to dissect, reshape and comically deflate the commercial representation of gender norms and sexual identities. Often drawing on images of the body, Linder exposes the weighty stereotypes imposed on both ends of the gender spectrum and their evolution over time. In her striking series of photographs, such as *SheShe* (1981), Linder is pictured taking on various satirical feminine personae to navigate concepts of personal invention and the performative dimensions of identity.

Invoking the original essence of glamour— a powerful fusion of enchantment and magic – Linder's work delivers a humorous and cutting feminist critique. At the heart of her artistic practice lies a profound engagement with the poetics of protest, in which artistic inquiry intertwines seamlessly with radical thinking.

Linder says: *"I'm thrilled to share a lifetime's work at the Hayward Gallery. Its Brutalist architecture is the perfect foil for the delicacy of the print ephemera I've worked with for over half a century. The cuts made by my blades and scissors are perpetually liberating. Each restores agency across print and page. The found images in my work are often quite fragile both materially and conceptually, it doesn't take much then to hijack them and to take them somewhere far more surreal."*

Rachel Thomas, Roden Chief Curator at the Hayward Gallery, says: *"For 50 years, Linder has been one of the great maverick artists of the British scene, transforming the poetics of punk design into works of art that provocatively redefine the female image. Linder's iconic photomontage works invite a reevaluation of conventional narratives, intricately weaving together threads of feminism and mysticism to propose new paradigms for the future."*

Ralph Rugoff, Director of the Hayward Gallery, says: *"Linder's work is as arresting, compelling and pointedly funny today as it was half a century ago. In pairing her exhibition with Mickalene Thomas: All About Love, the Hayward Gallery is dedicating this season to two masters of contemporary collage and the provocative, multi-leveled thinking it makes possible."*

The exhibition will be accompanied by a publication featuring essays from historian Marina Warner, writer and critic Chris Kraus and Roden Chief Curator Rachel Thomas. It will also include an in-conversation between Linder and Associate Curator Gilly Fox. Examining the broad spectrum of her work, these essays will delve into themes of spirituality, mysticism, surrealism, punk DIY, and transformation.

This exhibition supports the Southbank Centre's commitment as an engine of creative practice to producing new productions and exhibitions. It is curated by Hayward Gallery Roden Chief Curator, Rachel Thomas, with Associate Curator, Gilly Fox, Assistant Curator, Katie Guggenheim, and Curatorial Assistants Charlotte Dos Santos and Hannah Martin.

An adapted version of *Linder: Danger Came Smiling* will be curated by Hayward Gallery Touring and will tour nationally to Inverleith House, Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh; Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Swansea, and more.

This exhibition will be presented alongside **Mickalene Thomas: All About Love**. Please find more information on this [here](#).

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Image Credits (left to right)

- Linder, SheShe, 1981. Silver bromide photographs from original negative. Courtesy of the artist; Modern Art, London; Blum, Los Angeles, Tokyo, New York; Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm, Paris and dépendance, Brussels. Photo: birrer
- Linder, Principle of Totality (Version I), 2012, detail. Image: © Linder. Courtesy of the artist; Modern Art, London; Blum, Los Angeles, Tokyo, New York; Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm, Paris and dépendance, Brussels.

About Linder

Linder was born in Liverpool in 1954, and lives and works in London. A retrospective of her work, *Femme/Objet*, was organised in 2013 by the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, later travelling to the Kestner Gesellschaft, Hanover. Her first institutional survey in the UK, *Linderism*, was mounted in 2020 at Kettle's Yard, Cambridge, later travelling to the Hatton Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne. Linder has presented recent solo exhibitions at Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Paris (2023); Blum, Los Angeles (2022); Modern Art, London (2019); Glasgow Women's Library (2018); Nottingham Contemporary (2018); Chatsworth House, Derbyshire (2018); The Hepworth Wakefield (2013); and Tate St Ives (2013). She has participated in recent two-person and group exhibitions at dépendance, Brussels (2022); Tate Liverpool (2021); the Royal Academy, London (2020); Camden Art Centre, London (2020); the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh (2019); and Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen (2019). In 2017, she was awarded the Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award. Linder's works are held in collections including the Arts Council Collection, London; the DESTE Foundation for Contemporary Art, Athens; the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; Museum of Modern Art, New York; and Tate, London.

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 Roden Chief Curator

The role of Chief Curator of the Hayward Gallery, held by Rachel Thomas, is generously supported by Stuart and Bianca Roden.

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) 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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