



# GSK CONTEMPORARY

## Press Release

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#### **A multidisciplinary season of cutting-edge visual culture at The Royal Academy of Arts supported by GlaxoSmithKline (GSK)**

Royal Academy of Arts, 6 Burlington Gardens  
1 November 2008 – 19 January 2009

Supported by



**This November, the Royal Academy of Arts will launch *GSK Contemporary*, an eclectic three-month season of exhibitions and events and a unique extension of contemporary programming. *GSK Contemporary* will introduce international artists, survey emerging trends and provide a new platform for experimentation, discussion and debate in London's West End. The season will be presented in the Royal Academy's galleries at 6 Burlington Gardens, and will be held each autumn for the next three years.**

Conceived to explore the dynamics of contemporary art and its relationship to other art forms, the *GSK Contemporary* season is curated by David Thorp. A broad range of international artists from Europe, Asia and the US will participate in over 100 exhibitions, live events, film screenings, symposia, performance, experimental theatre and music. The season has been made possible thanks to the generous support of GlaxoSmithKline, the Royal Academy's first title sponsor.

*GSK Contemporary* will be presented over two parts. *Part 1: Molten States*, from 1 November – early December, will explore the links between art, performance and experimental theatre, and will include live performance from Berlin dramatist René Pollesch, multiple screen installation film works from Catherine Sullivan and Julian Rosefeldt, and a film portrait of the 19<sup>th</sup> century architect Rodakis, by German artist Olaf Nicolai.

From mid-December, *Part II: Collision Course* will examine visions of a post apocalyptic world, as well as the dynamic created through the collision of different art forms and media. *Collision Course* will include one of the largest overviews to date of the life, work and influence of the American 'beat' author, William Burroughs. Portraits of Burroughs by Robert Mapplethorpe and David Hockney RA will be presented alongside Burroughs' collaborations with artists such as Keith Haring, George Condo and Brion Gysin, as well as remarkable footage of Burroughs performing his own works. The Malcolm McLaren multi-media work, *Shallow*, presenting 21 'Musical Paintings' - original musical 'cut-ups' set to spliced, repeated and manipulated film portraits of people thinking, desiring, wanting and wishing from old films – will also be shown.

The season will also see East End restaurant *Bistrotheque* set up as *FLASH*, a temporary restaurant designed especially for *GSK Contemporary*. South London artist curators, *temporarycontemporary*, will host an Art Bar with its own programme of artist-led performance and exhibitions from a mix of London-based artists.

**Charles Saumarez Smith, CEO and Secretary of the Royal Academy of Arts:**

*"Since inception, the Academy has always supported and helped to develop the work of living artists. Our Royal Academicians include over 80 artists living and working in the UK and some of the best students in the world attend the Royal Academy Schools.*

*GSK Contemporary is a bold and exciting extension of the RA's historic role in contemporary art. It complements the core work of the institution with an experimental and dynamic programme, a welcome forum for debate and discourse as well as an alternative evening destination in the West End. The season is a platform for established and emerging artists, up-and-coming curators and experimental film makers and will be the focus of Mayfair's resurgent contemporary art scene."*

**Justine Frain, Vice President Global Community Partnerships for GlaxoSmithKline:**

*"We have a long standing commitment to the arts, and indeed have supported the Royal Academy of Arts in different capacities for more than 20 years. We are a business that depends on creativity and innovation to bring improvements in health and wellbeing, so we value creative thinking and discussion. We are proud to be the title sponsor of this new and exciting endeavour by the Royal Academy of Arts."*

## SUPPORTERS

### GlaxoSmithKline

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), one of the world's leading pharmaceutical and healthcare companies, is committed to improving the quality of human life by enabling people to do more, feel better and live longer. In 2007, GlaxoSmithKline's community investments were valued at £282 million (the equivalent to almost 4% of pre-tax profits) and targeted health and education programmes in almost 100 countries. GlaxoSmithKline has a long history of supporting art initiatives that encourage creative thinking.

**GlaxoSmithKline** are title sponsors of GSK Contemporary

2008 season supported by **Sotheby's** EST. 1784

**The Henry Moore Foundation** generously supports the Art Bar by temporarycontemporary

**The Goethe Institute London** generously supports the performance *'Tod eines Praktikanten'* by René Pollesch

**The IFA** (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen e.V.) generously supports the installation of works by Olaf Nicolai and Julian Rosefeldt

**The Swiss Cultural Fund in Britain** generously supports the installation of works by Maya Roos and Rémy Markowitsch

**Angela Nikolakopoulou-Koulakoglou** generously supports the cinema programme

### Media Partner



## DATES

Open to public: Saturday 1 November 2008 – Monday 19 January 2009

Opening times: Sunday & Monday 12pm – 10pm, Tuesday & Wednesday 12pm – 6pm,  
Thursday, Friday & Saturday 12pm - midnight

## ADMISSION

£6 for single ticket; £25 for Multiple Visit Carnet (8 Tickets)

## TICKETS

Tickets for GSK Contemporary are available daily at the Royal Academy of Arts, 6 Burlington Gardens. To book tickets in advance please print: 08716 20 4020 or visit [www.royalacademy.org.uk/gskcontemporary](http://www.royalacademy.org.uk/gskcontemporary)

## IMAGES

Publicity images for GSK Contemporary can be obtained from Picselect, the Press Association's image

service for press use. Please register at [www.picselect.com](http://www.picselect.com) and once registered go to the Royal Academy folder in the Arts section.

## **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

### **David Thorp**

Independent curator, David Thorp, works with a wide ranging group of contemporary artists presenting visual arts exhibitions and events at numerous international institutions and galleries, including PS1, New York and Platform China, Beijing. Previously director of the South London Gallery, London, David Thorp has always worked with living artists at the forefront of experimental visual culture and has been working on the programme for GSK Contemporary for the last two years.

### **Bistrotheque**

Established in 2004 by Pablo Flack and David Waddington, Bistrotheque is a restaurant, bar and cabaret space based in London's Bethnal Green. Under head chef Tom Collins the kitchen prepares a menu inspired by the classic French Bistro. With their proximity to the art world, they have become a social hub for the surrounding galleries, hosting numerous arts events for clients including: Gagosian Gallery, Victoria Miro, Maureen Paley, and Wolfgang Tillmans. With strong links to the fashion world, regulars include: Giles Deacon, Katie Grand, Agyness Deyn, and Marc Jacobs.

### **temporarycontemporary**

Artist-curators Anthony Gross and Jen Wu - aka temporarycontemporary, a nomadic art space from South London - have been invited to occupy a series of stunning neo-classical spaces in 6 Burlington Gardens as part of this year's GSK Contemporary Programme. Nearly a dozen major London-based artists have been invited to participate, including Turner Prize and Trafalgar Square Plinth nominees, to make new, site-specific installations. Believing in 'art as social space' Gross and Wu will also be providing the artistic identity for a café/bar hangout open daily with films, fashion shows and music.

For public information please print 020 7300 8000 and [www.royalacademy.org.uk/gskcontemporary](http://www.royalacademy.org.uk/gskcontemporary)  
Royal Academy of Arts, 6 Burlington Gardens, London W1S 3EX

For further press information, please contact Claire Walsh/Benjamin Ward at Brunswick Arts on tel: 020 7936 1290 or email: [royalacademy@brunswickgroup.com](mailto:royalacademy@brunswickgroup.com)

For further information on GSK, please contact Rebecca Harvey on tel: 020 8047 5525 or Alice Hunt on tel: 020 8047 5514 or [www.gsk.com/community](http://www.gsk.com/community)

19/06/08