

WADDINGTON CUSTOT

Press Release

Peter Blake at Frieze Masters

At Work with Peter Blake

5–8 October 2017

Preview Day: Wednesday 4 October 2017



Waddington Custot will present a tribute to British artist Peter Blake (b.1932) at Frieze Masters 2017, in collaboration with designer Robin Brown and producer Anna Pank. The booth will bring together the artist's work, collections and studio content to recreate his private creative environment which will highlight the human aspect of Blake's practice and how this informs his work.

Featuring a fractured structure, the installation will appear as if torn from Blake's studio. Exposed brick walls, floating steel beams and windows will retain the industrial spirit of the building in West London, which will then blend into and be surrounded by artworks and unexpected finds from a personal career of collecting.

At the centre of the booth two large tables will echo Blake's workstation. Piles of books, papers, photographs and cut-out figures lifted directly from Blake's studio desk will cover surfaces, whilst neatly labelled cardboard boxes and the artist's own collections of miscellaneous objects will fill the booth, each one telling their own unique story. Wrestling memorabilia will shine a light on Blake's childhood trips to wrestling matches, and images of popular art and culture will reveal the crossover of themes within Blake's collection and the artworks he creates.

Key works from Blake's expansive career will be integrated into the booth, including seminal early work loaned by private collections shown alongside important works that have remained in the artist's collection for a number of years, never seen by the public until now.

Peter Blake is known as one of the leading figures of the British Pop art movement, and central to his work is his interest in images from popular culture. His first exhibition at Waddington Galleries was in 1972 and this

landmark presentation at Frieze Masters celebrates him as both an artist and individual in a career which spans over 6 decades. Providing a unique insight into his working practice, the booth presents Blake as an artist in the truest sense and his continued joy in making work.

‘Through this immersive installation at Frieze Masters, Waddington Custot celebrates the career and imagination of Peter Blake, an artist the gallery has an enduring relationship with. By recreating Blake’s private environment we hope to provide a window into the mind of one of Britain’s most iconic and important artists’

Roxana Afshar, Director, Waddington Custot

‘We are excited by this new Waddington Custot commission, a collaboration with the artist, to explore Peter Blake’s private studio working practice for the first time. Surrounded by Blake’s colourful and ongoing passion for collecting the installation is itself a collage exploring Blake’s interests in pulling together disparate fragments and journeys to demonstrate his unique imaginative connections and stories’

Robin Brown and Anna Pank

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NOTES TO THE EDITORS

Peter Blake (b. 1932, Dartford, Kent) is a British painter, sculptor, draughtsman and printmaker. He is known as one of the leading figures of British Pop art. Peter Blake studied at Gravesend School of Art before being accepted into the Royal College of Art, London (graduating in 1956), where many of the key British Pop artists, including David Hockney, R. B. Kitaj, Joe Tilson, Allen Jones, Peter Phillips and Derek Boshier, also studied.

After completing his National Service, he received the Leverhulme Research Award to study popular art whilst travelling throughout Europe. Blake's first one-man exhibition was held in 1962 at the Portal Gallery; solo shows followed at the Robert Fraser Gallery (1965) and at Leslie Waddington Prints (1969). Since the early 1970s his work has been exhibited regularly in one-man shows throughout the world, including the Nishimura Gallery, Tokyo (1988) and the Govinda Gallery, Washington D.C. (1992).

Blake’s first retrospective exhibition was held as early as 1969 at the City Art Gallery, Bristol. Subsequent retrospectives were held in 1973 at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (touring to Hamburg and Brussels) and at the Tate Gallery in 1983. In 1994 he was made the Third Associate Artist of the National Gallery, London. Peter Blake was elected a member of the Royal Academy in 1981, and was knighted in 2002. A major monograph written by Marco Livingstone, *Peter Blake: One Man Show*, was published in 2011 by Lund Humphries. In 2007 Tate Liverpool held a major retrospective of Peter Blake's work which toured to Museo de Bellas Artes, Bilbao, Spain, in 2008.

Robin Brown and Anna Pank create original and memorable art-based installations, which include the internationally acclaimed *The Collector* (Frieze Masters 2014, Helly Nahmad Gallery, London). This challenged traditional notions of art fair display showing works by a series of major European artists amongst the obsessive clutter of a fictional collector's four-room 1968 Paris apartment. Robin Brown is a visual artist and set designer who specialises in creating tangible landscapes, fictional settings, and exacting period recreations that draw character and narrative through environment. An art historian by training, Anna Pank combines art historical knowledge with a strong visual sensibility and extensive production skills. She has worked as a producer with top fashion houses and art directors on catwalk shows and live events.

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Table top detail of Peter Blake's desk
Photo: Robin Brown