



Large
Print

From Life

The Sackler Gallery

Rooms 1, 2, 3 and 4

Do not remove from gallery

From Life

In the Sackler and Tennant Galleries

11th December 2017 to 11th March 2018

Virtual reality in partnership with



VIVE

Project partners

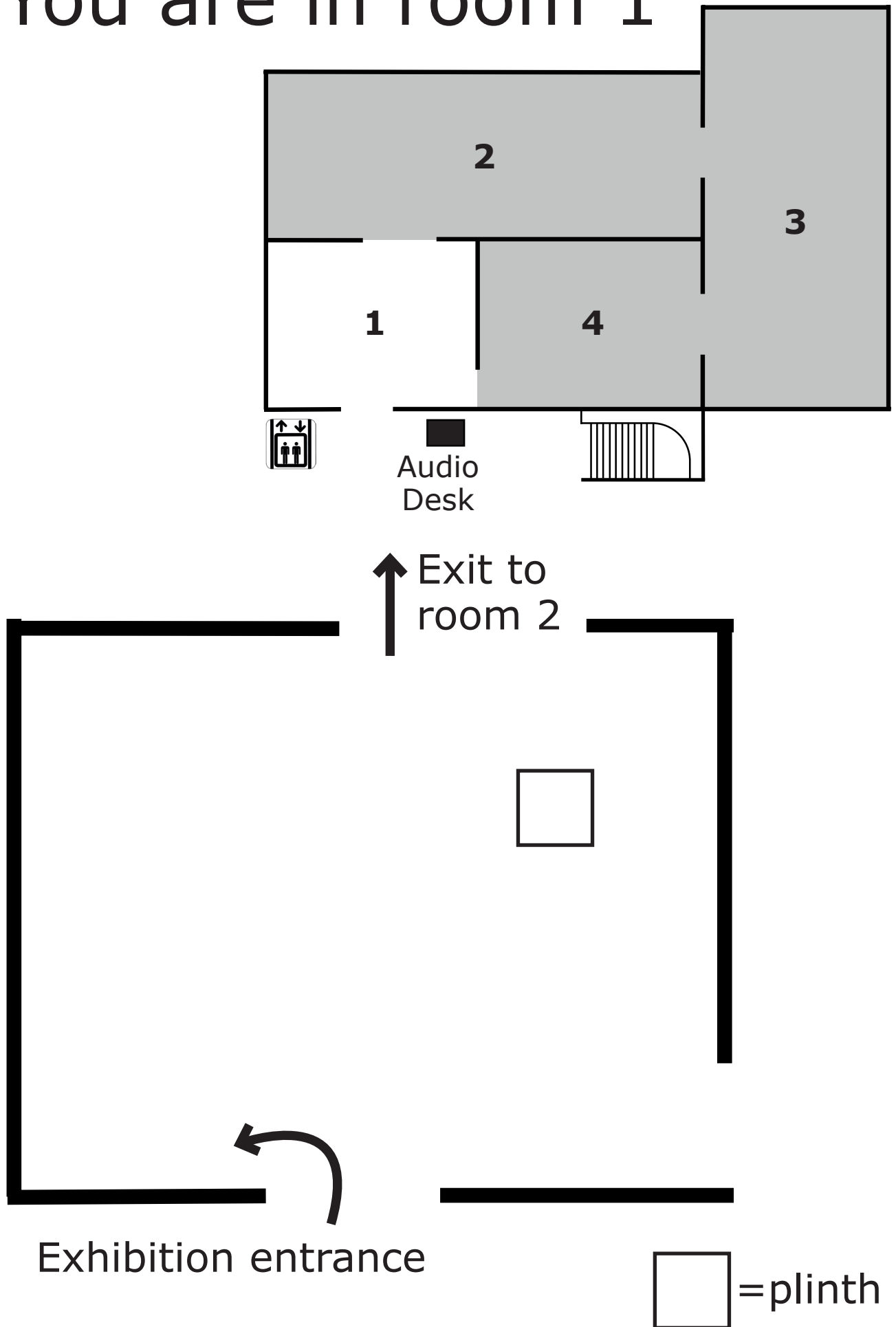


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The production of RA large print guides is generously supported by Robin Hambro

You are in room 1



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Exhibition continues in the Tennant Gallery.

Introduction

'From Life' examines the role of life drawing and, by association, the life room, within the established teaching methods of the academy or art school.

Conventionally, life drawing was seen as a fundamental skill that every aspiring artist had to master in order to pursue a career.

In the traditional education of the Royal Academy Schools, from its foundation in 1769, students had first to demonstrate their drawing skills through studying historic and usually Classical Greek or Roman and Renaissance casts which were proactively collected, along with illustrated books on antiquity, as teaching tools.

In the 1970s and 1980s, life classes were seen as both increasingly irrelevant and retrograde in art schools across the UK.

Goldsmiths College, for example, banned any form of life drawing because it was believed to objectify women.

The Royal Academy Schools' so-called Antiquities Class was made voluntary in 1903 but life classes, although now no longer compulsory, continue to be taught to the present day.

Alongside paintings, works on paper and historic casts drawn from the collections of the Royal Academy, numerous contemporary works are displayed that reveal how different artists work from life as well as demonstrating how casts continue to engage artists.

Using different approaches in pencil, pastel and paint, artists continue to be fascinated by the human body, whether their own or those of close friends and family or total strangers.

'From Life' likewise explores how artists have engaged with new technologies, from photography to sophisticated scanning devices, that allow them to work in previously unimaginable ways.

Room 1 list of works

Richard Harraden

After Thomas Rowlandson and
Augustus Charles Pugin

Drawing from Life at the Royal
Academy (Somerset House)

1808

Etching, aquatint and watercolour

Royal Academy of Arts, London

From left to right

Attributed to Johan Zoffany

The Antique School of the Royal Academy at New Somerset House, 1780–83

Oil on canvas

Royal Academy of Arts, London

Unknown artist

A Life Class,
early nineteenth century

Oil on canvas

Royal Academy of Arts, London

Lucian Freud

(1922–2011)

A Beginning, Blond Girl, 1980

Oil on linen

Private collection

David Dawson

(b. 1960)

Absence Fills the Room, 2017

Oil on linen

Private collection

Freud, one of the most prominent portrait painters of the past hundred years, divided his studio into two distinct areas, each with its own easel. One part, overlooking the garden, was reserved for painting during the day in natural light.

The other, overlooking the street but with the curtains always drawn, was for painting at night in artificial light.

Famous for his nudes, Freud painted numerous portraits from life over multiple sittings, working on several paintings at any one time.

David Dawson, his close friend and assistant for more than twenty years, posed for Freud on numerous occasions, often alongside one of his whippets.

Dawson's painting of the daylight studio, where one can see the daubs of paint Freud left on the window frame, is one of a series in which he paints Freud's empty studio, a place replete with memories.

These studies capture both the potency of the studio and the sense of loss that Dawson has experienced since Freud's death six years ago.

Antony Gormley

A plaster mould, 2000

Plaster

Antony Gormley Studio

Liane Lang **(b. 1973)**

Ars Equina, 2006

C-type analogue hand printed on aluminium

Courtesy the artist

During her final year as a student in the Royal Academy Schools, Lang created a portfolio, 'Casts (Royal Academy)', in which she directly engaged with the historic collection of Classical and Renaissance statuary that was collected and used as a teaching aid from the foundation of the Schools in 1769.

(continued over)

Lined with these plaster copies, the central passageway of the RA Schools is still known as the 'Cast Corridor'.

By juxtaposing the casts with naked female figures, sensuous but never erotic, Lang's work reanimates them. These are no ordinary people, however, as close observation reveals that they are also reproductions, latex casts of her fellow students, intentionally left unchased (in other words the moulding or casting joints are left visible).

Casts of statues are interspersed with casts of people. 'Ars Equina' references the self-taught artist George Stubbs (1724–1806), celebrated for his lifelike studies of horses, who purchased horse cadavers from slaughterhouses and flayed them in order better to understand and render their anatomy in his paintings.

From left to right

Johan Zoffany

**A Life Class at St Martin's Lane
Academy, 1761–62**

Oil on canvas

Royal Academy of Arts, London

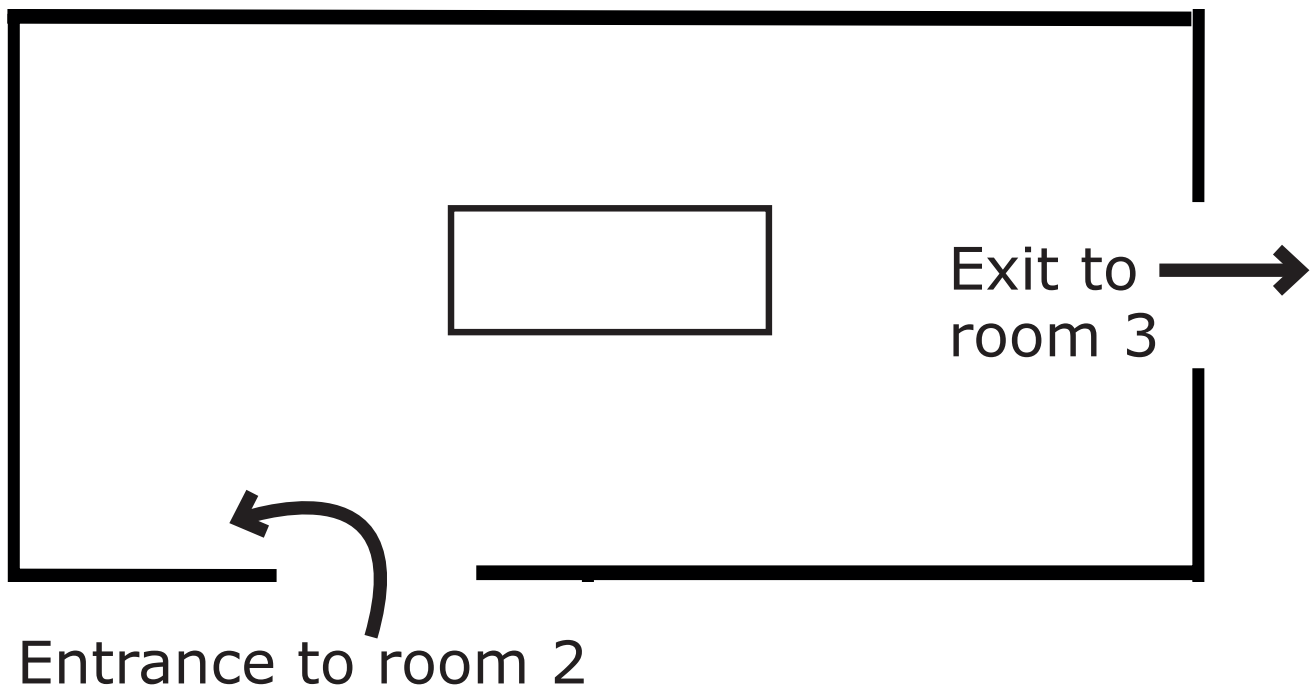
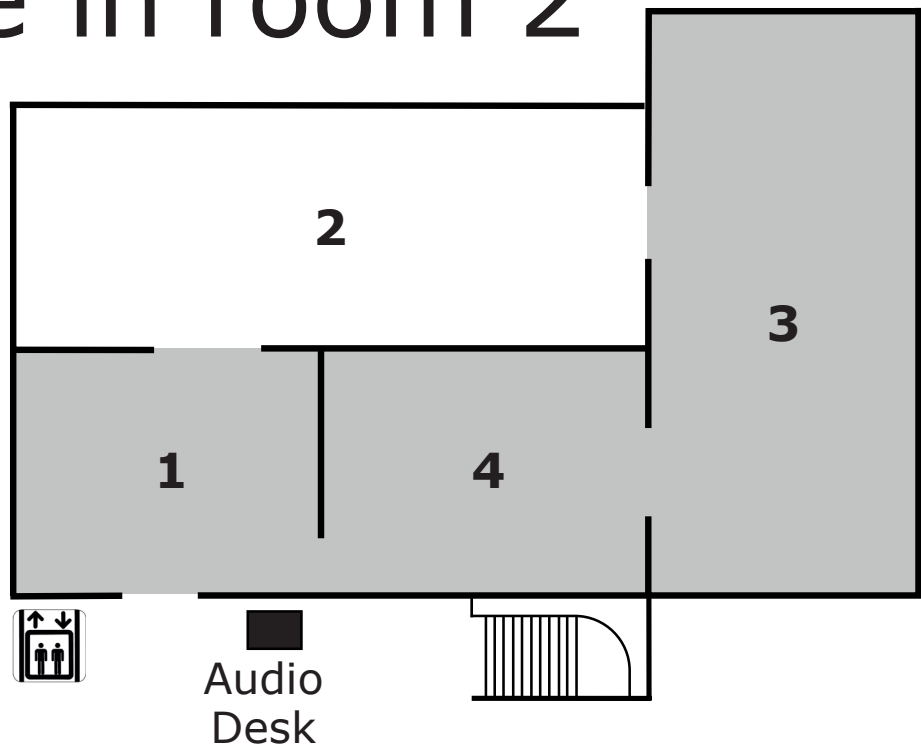
John Hamilton Mortimer

An Academy, c.1759–60

Oil on canvas

Royal Academy of Arts, London

You are in room 2



 = plinth

Room 2 list of works

Jeremy Deller (b. 1966)

Iggy Pop Life Class, 2016

Brooklyn Museum Collection

“Iggy Pop has one of the most recognisable bodies in popular culture. A body that is key to an understanding of rock music, it has been celebrated and scrutinised through the years in a way that is unusual for a man.

It is a body that has witnessed and endured a lot and has aged very much in public. I wanted him to be the subject of a life class because I hoped drawing him could add something different to our appreciation of such an important figure.”

Jeremy Deller

(continued over)

On 21 February 2016, the artist Jeremy Deller conducted a life class with musician Iggy Pop as the model. He posed in front of 22 participants from the New York area. All the drawings from the class were automatically donated to the Brooklyn Museum.

Pop began performing in the late 1960s and is known for his confrontational stage presence, in which he is almost always topless. Often participatory and ritualistic, these performances (which continue to this day) have redefined the role of the singer in a rock band.

For Deller, the life drawing class offered the opportunity to study Pop's body in a way that differed from photography. The artist notes, "I am the first to admit there is a degree of absurdity in the idea of convincing someone who is known for his restless stage presence to be still for four hours."

Alongside the life-class drawings is a display

of casts selected by Deller from the Royal Academy's historical collection that depict other male nudes that have served as models and inspiration for artists to this day.

Iggy Pop Life Class by Jeremy Deller New York 21 February 2016

Organised by the Brooklyn Museum

Photos: Elena Olivo, Brooklyn Museum

**Artists names, clockwise in order
of hang.**

Guno Park

Kallyiah Merilus

Michael Grimaldi

Angel Ramirez

Seiji Gailey

Jeremy Day

Guno Park

Tobias Hall

Andrew Shears

Deirdra Hazeley

Robert Hagan

Danielle Rubin

Okim Woo Kim

Margaret Fisher

Kinley Pleteau

Maureen McAllister

Mauricio Rodriguez

Charlotte Segall

Patricia Hill

Taylor Schultek

Jeanette Farrow

Robert Reid

Levan Songulashvili

Dancing Faun
After Roman original
Nineteenth century

Plaster cast

Royal Academy of Arts, London

Figure A

From the west pediment of the
Parthenon, Athens, after Phidias
Pre-1816

Plaster cast

Royal Academy of Arts, London

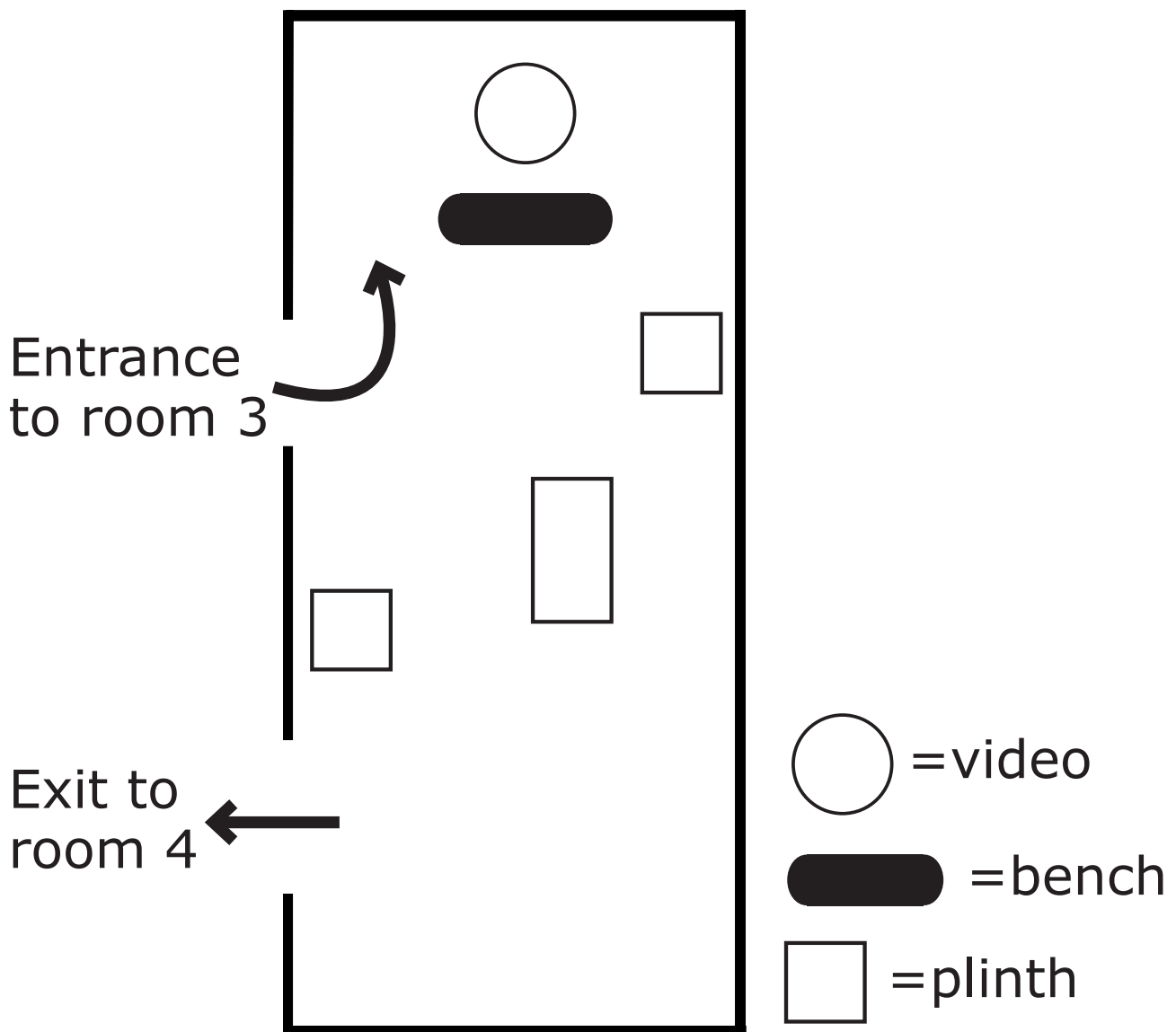
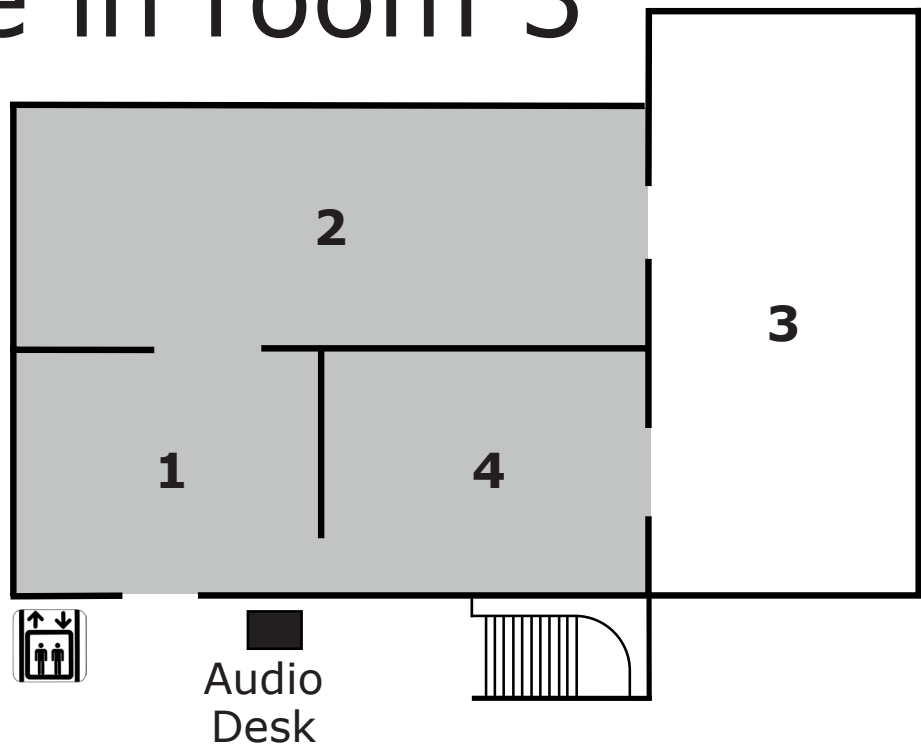
Male torso

After Roman original
Early nineteenth century

Plaster cast

Royal Academy of Arts, London

You are in room 3



Room 3 list of works

Cai Guo-Qiang (b. 1957)

One Thousand Youngsters Drawing David, 2010

Single-channel video projection: 9 minutes 55 seconds

Commissioned by XIV Biennale Internazionale di Scultura di Carrara Collection of the artist

'One Thousand Youngsters Drawing David' was first shown at the XIV International Sculpture Biennale of Carrara in 2010.

On the opening night of the biennale, it was projected onto the colossal snow-white façade of the Barattini Michelangelo quarry in the Apuan Alps.

(continued over)

During the exhibition, Cai placed one of the plaster busts of 'David' used in the film on top of a massive marble block onto whose smooth surface the documentary was projected.

To create this artwork, Cai filmed several hundred students at the Black and White Drawing Studio, Beijing, sketching monumental plaster reproductions of Michelangelo's 'David', the original of which is in the Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence.

Art training in China does not simply ask students to draw the physical form of the plaster busts, but to observe the relationship between the object and the surrounding world. The magnificent scene shows the students sitting in a long hall, working to capture every line and curve in charcoal.

During the Renaissance, marble quarried at Carrara was transformed into

masterpieces that have graced piazzas, churches and museums worldwide. At the beginning of the twentieth century, plaster casts of a limited number of these works arrived in China from France.

Over time, these in turn were reproduced to such an extent that they degraded, and took a shape and form that departed from the original.

‘One Thousand Youngsters Drawing David’ illustrates how civilisation disseminates from its origin and blossoms into fruition elsewhere, and how that evolution leads to distortion.

As the video is projected onto a white façade, it seems as though the clock has been turned back, the seasons have been reversed and the past has been linked with the present.

Cai Guo-Qiang

(b. 1957)

Untitled [David]

Charcoal on paper, 1983

Reproduction

Collection of the artist.

© Photo by Cai Guo-Qiang,

Courtesy Cai Studio

Head of Castor

After Roman original

Eighteenth century

Plaster cast

Royal Academy of Arts, London

Yinka Shonibare MBE

(b. 1962)

Discobolus (after Naukydes), 2017

Unique fibreglass sculpture, hand-painted with Dutch wax Batik pattern, bespoke hand-coloured globe and gold leaf

Courtesy of the artist and Stephen Friedman Gallery, London

Yinka Shonibare MBE

(b. 1962)

The Townley Venus, 2017

Unique fibreglass sculpture, hand-painted with Dutch wax Batik pattern, bespoke hand-coloured globe

Courtesy of the artist and Stephen Friedman Gallery, London

Known for his powerful explorations of race and class, Shonibare questions national and cultural definitions, describing himself as a “post-colonial hybrid”.

For ‘From Life’, Shonibare scanned two of the Royal Academy Schools’ historic casts and recast them as exact copies, painting them with the rich colours of Indonesian patterned cloth and replacing their heads with hand-made globes that serve to express their universality.

Shonibare challenges the commonly held belief that Classical marble sculpture, which became revered for its physical beauty and artistic accuracy during the Renaissance, was always meant to be appreciated for its pure whiteness.

Like the stone sculptures created by cultures as diverse as the Assyrians and the Aztecs, Greek statues were vibrantly coloured.

Adolf Hitler famously held up a Roman marble copy of a lost Greek bronze figure of a discus thrower, the so-called 'Lancellotti Discobolus' (named after the family that owned it), as a perfect example of the Aryan race, an irony that Shonibare is keen to highlight in this work.

Gillian Wearing (b. 1963)

Portraits of me,
by people I don't know, 1993

Pen on paper

Courtesy Gillian Wearing and Maureen Paley, London

Gillian Wearing

(b. 1963)

Self-portrait, 1985

Oil on panel

Courtesy Gillian Wearing
and Maureen Paley, London

Gillian Wearing

(b. 1963)

Rock 'n' Roll 70, 2015

Framed c-type prints

Courtesy of Maureen Paley, London

Gillian Wearing

(b. 1963)

Rock 'n' Roll 70 wallpaper, 2014

Printed wallpaper

Courtesy Gillian Wearing and Maureen Paley, London

Gillian Wearing works from life in markedly different ways. In an early self-portrait painted when she was 21, she was influenced by the perspective of Lucian Freud's 'Reflection with Two Children (Self-portrait) (1965)'.

For 'Portraits of me, by people I don't know' she approached strangers in the street and asked them to draw her spontaneously.

Wearing's best-known body of work revolves around a complex and time-consuming process of creating highly detailed silicone masks (and at times body suits) of members of her family or her "spiritual family" (artists with whom she has a deep artistic affinity, such as Claude Cahun [1894–1954] and Robert Mapplethorpe [1946–89]).

These masks have no eyes, meaning that when the viewer looks at the work they see Wearing's eyes beneath the surface, making them multi-layered self-portraits – the artist assumes the identity of another.

Using forensic artists' age-progression technology in 'Rock 'n' Roll 70', Wearing digitally projects an image of what she might look like when she is 70.

From left to right

**Jonathan Yeo
(b. 1970)**

The Simulacra, 2017

Oil on canvas

Courtesy of Jonathan Yeo

**Jonathan Yeo
(b. 1970)**

**Homage to Eduardo Paolozzi
(Self-portrait), 2017**

Bronze

Courtesy of Jonathan Yeo

Jonathan Yeo

(b. 1970)

The Unteleported Man, 2017

Oil on canvas

Courtesy of Jonathan Yeo

One of the most celebrated and in-demand portrait painters working today, Yeo works from life as well as from the numerous photographs he takes during sittings.

For 'From Life', Yeo has produced two new bodies of work reflecting his ongoing interest in new technology.

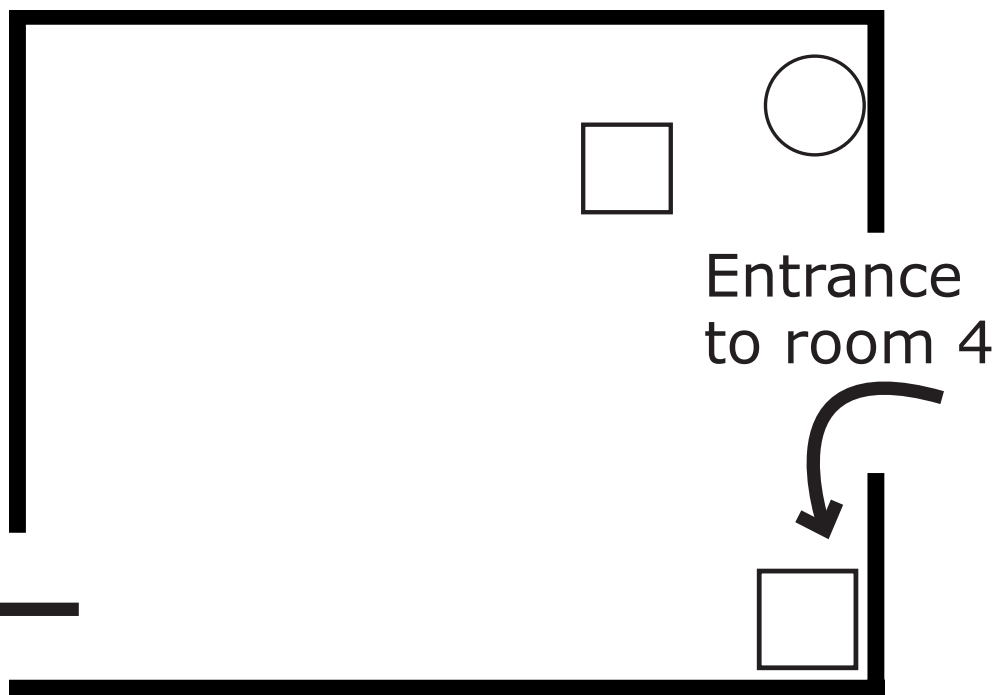
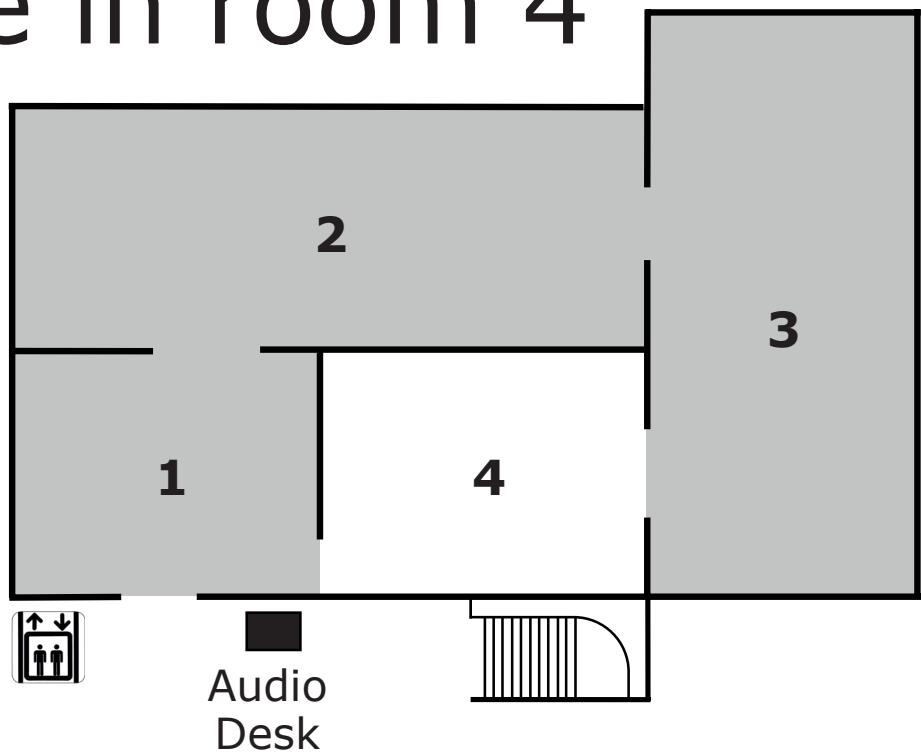
The first is a group of three self-portraits, all named after works by the science fiction writer Philip K. Dick, that emerged from a scan that was made of his body in California using highly advanced equipment normally reserved for the film industry.

These extraordinarily detailed scans have allowed Yeo to view and paint himself from angles that would not normally be possible. The bust is the result of experimenting with a new virtual reality (VR) technology, Tilt Brush by Google.

Yeo is the first artist to capture the virtual brush strokes generated on a computer and manifest them in a physical sculpture. This pioneering work is exhilarating in its apparent lightness and transitory nature.

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You are in room 4



Exit from
The Sackler Gallery.
Exhibition continues in
the Tennant Gallery.

○ = video
□ = plinth

Room 4 list of works

Humphrey Ocean (b. 1951)

Life Drawing, 1971

Pencil on paper

Courtesy of the artist

Humphrey Ocean (b. 1951)

Natural History, 2017

Wood, resin, plywood, paint

Courtesy of the artist

Ocean produced 'Life Drawing' in 1971 while he was at Canterbury School of Art.

This drawing is no ordinary study, but is the result of a remarkable session tutored by Ian Dury (1942–2000), who believed that students were looking but not really seeing in life classes.

In order to focus their attention and encourage them fully to engage with their subject, Dury held a four-day life class with the rule that if any student left before it was over they could not return.

Ocean describes it as “the most important drawing I ever did” as it taught him how to really look at things, a discipline he has applied ever since.

Breaking free from traditional constraints, Ocean views all objects that he paints or sketches, whether animate or inanimate, as from life, conveys to a greater or lesser degree of emotional or personal attachment.

His experimental sculpture of a car seat reflects this approach, in which nothing has been left to fortune: "We have created a world in our image."

Michael Landy (b. 1963)

Landy Family. Gillian, 2007

Graphite on paper

Courtesy of Trinity Fine Art, London

This is one of four portraits of Gillian Wearing from a series of 80 portraits, including self-portraits, that Landy began in 2007, all of them taking the same approach. Over a twelve-month period, seven days a week, Landy drew the faces of his family, friends and fellow artists.

Each subject sat for two eight-hour sessions. When Landy completed the series in 2008, they were exhibited at Thomas Dane Gallery. The power of physical observation and emotional connection between artist and sitter is evident.

This forceful experience was often unsettling for the sitters who, according to Landy, “found it disconcerting having to sit so close to me over that length of time” and found his “concentration face” rather off-putting.

For Landy, however, the project was not only about re-engaging with those people in his life who were so familiar that he no longer ‘looked’ at them but also about redirecting his creative energies away from conceptual art to ways of seeing through intense, focused drawing.

Jenny Saville

(b. 1970)

Entry, 2004–05

Oil on canvas

ISelf Collection

Jenny Saville

(b. 1970)

Umbilical (study), 2009

Graphite on watercolour paper

Private collection

“I want to be a painter of modern life, and modern bodies, those that emulate contemporary life, they’re what I find most interesting.”

Working on an extraordinary scale, filling large canvases often with only the head of the subject, sometimes in graphic detail, or from unconventional photographic perspectives, Saville has redefined portraiture.

These uncompromising works have portrayed women in new and daring ways, such as before, during or after cosmetic surgery. "Beauty is always associated with the male fantasy of what the female body is. I don't think there is anything wrong with beauty. It's just what women think is beautiful can be different."

The paintings are raw and potent, removing the viewer from a place of comfort, challenging them in unexpected ways thereby forcing them into new ways of seeing. For 'Umbilical (study)' Saville worked from photographs taken by a close friend during the birth of the artist's first child.

From left to right

**Chantal Joffe
(b. 1969)**

**Naked Self-portrait in the
Garden, 2016**

Pastel on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Victoria Miro, London /
Venice

**Chantal Joffe
(b. 1969)**

**Self-portrait in the Garden at
Night I, 2016**

Pastel on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Victoria Miro, London /
Venice

Chantal Joffe

(b. 1969)

Self-portrait with Hand on Hip, 2016

Oil on board

Courtesy of the artist and Victoria Miro, London /
Venice

Chantal Joffe

(b. 1969)

Self-portrait Naked in the Garden, 2016

Pastel on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Victoria Miro, London /
Venice

Chantal Joffe

(b. 1969)

Self-portrait in the Garden at Night V, 2016

Pastel on paper

Courtesy of the artist and Victoria Miro, London / Venice

Joffe is known for her highly expressive paintings and charcoal drawings, which are almost entirely devoted to self-portraits and portraits, painted either from life or photographs.

The majority of these depict women, whether family, close friends, actors or literary heroines. Fascinated by the female body, including her own, Joffe creates intimate images often on a surprisingly large scale intensified by unusual perspectives.

An acute observer of life, she captures the physical likeness of the sitter as well as their character in her rapid brushwork.

The potency of the painting is heightened not only through that sense of urgency as well but also the obvious energy that Joffe expends in producing the finished work.

She uses painting like words, as a way of creating a memoir, and to this end has painted herself and her daughter, Esme, as well as close friend and fellow artist Ishbel Myerscough, among others, consistently over many years.

Ellen Altfest

(b. 1970)

The Butt, 2007

Oil on canvas

Private collection

Altfest first started painting the series of male nudes which includes 'The Butt' in 2006.

Although she deliberately breaks the body down into recognisable parts, the sitter remains anonymous, their identity inconsequential: "I like that the parts of the body become their own things, separate from the person they belong to."

Originally trained as a painter of still-lives, Altfest turned her attention to figures, choosing unusual compositions that focus on areas of the body not often depicted.

Despite taking several months to complete each work, she always works from life, engaging with the subject to an unparalleled degree, noting each feature in minute, almost forensic, detail, creating paintings of extraordinary intensity and bewildering stillness in the process.

As Altfest states, "The paintings of men seem to have an inverse relationship to still-life, with the men becoming less like human subjects and more like still-life objects."

Antony Gormley

(b. 1950)

Scan 360, 2014

Video

Antony Gormley Studio

Antony Gormley

(b. 1950)

Gaze III, 2015

Cast iron

Antony Gormley Studio

Gormley has engaged with the body, particularly his own, throughout his career, whether to produce sculpture, using his hands to fashion it, most notably in 'Field for the British Isles (1991)', or using his bodily fluids to create drawings.

(continued over)

Starting with plaster casts, a laborious and painful process, Gormley created a body of distinctive work directly from life that was placed in unexpected locations both inside and outside of the gallery, such as 'Another Place (2005)', permanently installed on Crosby Beach, Liverpool.

Over the years he has continued to follow developments in technology, like the sophisticated body scanner shown here, that have allowed him to extend the possibilities of what he can do with his body in new and exciting ways as well as incorporating different materials.

His fascination with the human form (positive space), as well as its relationship to place, have, alongside the void left by casting his body (negative space), led him successfully to challenge conventional approaches to sculpting the body.

Your feedback, please

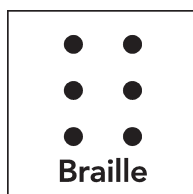
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Thank you.

Molly Bretton, Access Officer



InTouch at the RA

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Large
Print

From Life

The Tennant Gallery

Room 5

Do not remove from gallery

From Life

In the Sackler and Tennant Galleries

11th December 2017 to 11th March 2018

Virtual reality in partnership with



VIVE

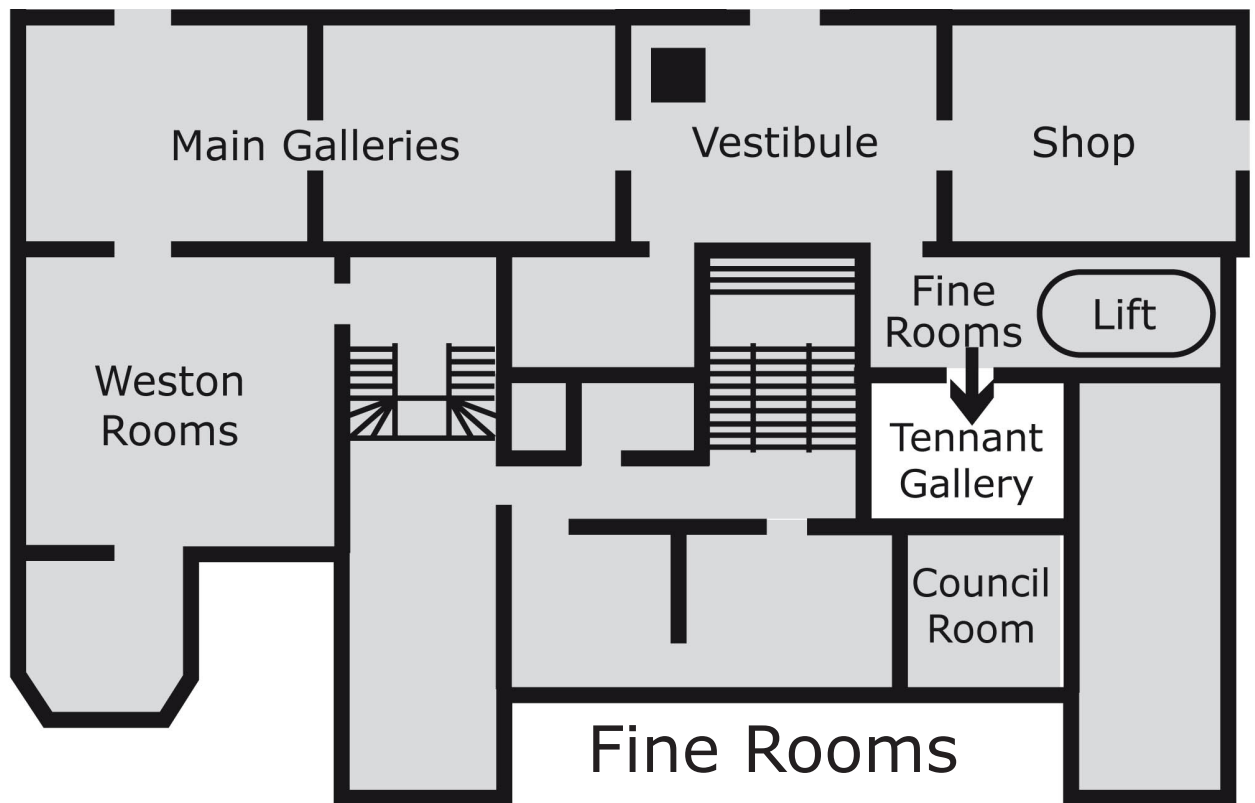
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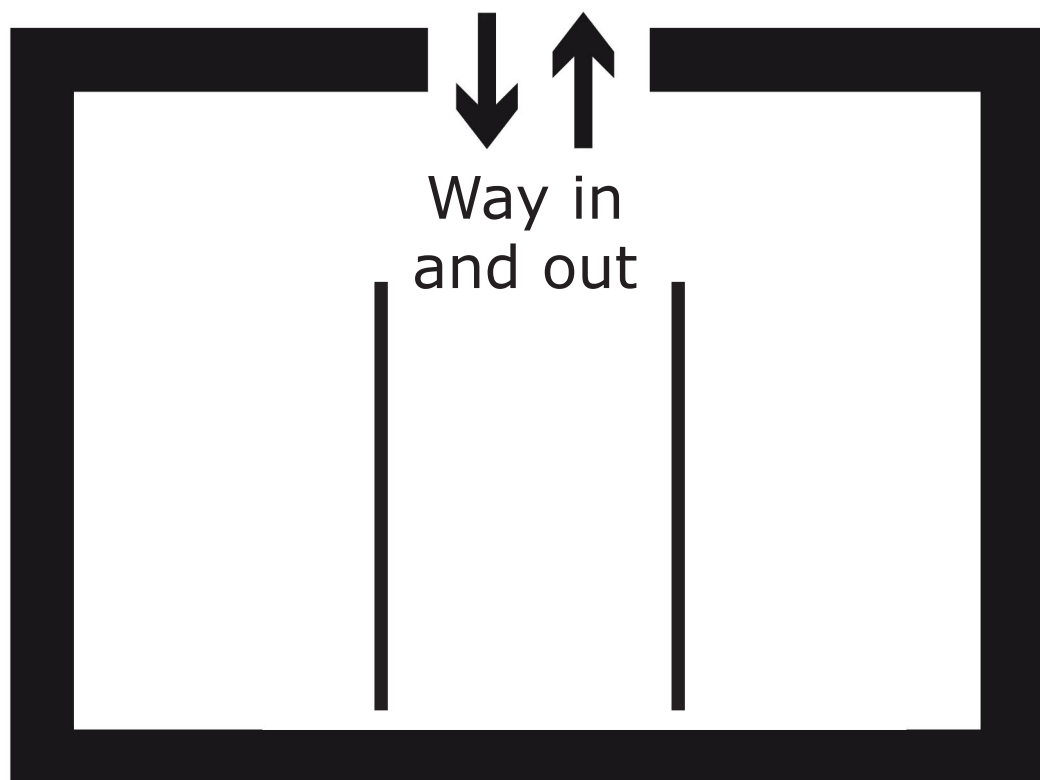
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You are in room 5
The Tennant Gallery



Exhibition continues in The Sackler Gallery

From Life Room 5

New technologies have impacted on artists throughout history. From the 'camera obscura' of the sixteenth century to the camcorders of the early 1980s, artists have experimented with new ways of seeing, recording, creating and exhibiting.

Here in the Tennant Gallery three Royal Academicians have conceived distinct experimental works specially for 'From Life'.

These embrace some of the latest advances in virtual reality technology offered through HTC Vive hardware alongside creative software such as Unity and Tilt Brush by Google, providing us with a glimpse of the potential that technology has to further ways of making and interacting with art.

Yinka Shonibare's experiential 'Venus presenting Helen to Paris (with Townley Venus) (2017)' draws us through the 1785 painting by Gavin Hamilton, a voracious collector of Classical casts, on a journey of discovery into the world of ancient Greek mythology.

Through 'The Virtual and Architecture (2017)', architect Farshid Moussavi allows us to experiment directly with the ribbed dome, a type of vault that dates back to Byzantine and early Italian Renaissance architecture.

By changing its shape and form we are left to marvel at the seemingly limitless possibilities this architectural innovation provides us while encouraging us to think like an architect.

Humphrey Ocean's 'What Next (2017)' invites us into a room in which a chair he designed is surrounded by statements made by him while he experimented with these digital tools for the first time.

Once inside this virtual but markedly personal space Ocean asks us to create our own artwork to a soundtrack he composed.

Further information as well as additional content on 'From Life' can be found on our website:

royalacademy.org.uk/exhibition/from-life

Your feedback, please

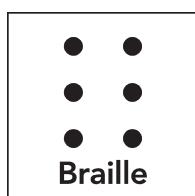
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