

**SOTHEBY'S TO HOST A DEDICATED SALE OF
BRITISH CONTEMPORARY AND POP ART
FROM THE COLLECTION OF
ENTREPRENEUR AND PHILANTHROPIST, DAVID ROSS**



“This is Tomorrow: Works from the David Ross Collection”

AUCTION | 7-15 SEPTEMBER
EXHIBITION | 10-15 SEPTEMBER

“Wandering around Bridget Riley’s retrospective at the Dia Chelsea in New York in 2000 was the moment that first opened my eyes to collecting, and more specifically to collecting British art. I remember being totally transfixed by the evolution of her work, eager to delve under its surface to unpick the idea the artist was trying to inspire. Every piece in my collection has its own story, connected to a memory if you will, and now I want them to once again inspire those who may only just be starting their journey as an art collector” - David Ross

Sotheby’s London, 21 July 2021: This September, Sotheby’s will offer more than 60 works from the collection of British entrepreneur, philanthropist and renowned art collector, David Ross. Assembled since 2000, Ross’ collection mainly focuses on British Pop and Contemporary art, dating to the year he was born, 1965, onwards.

The auction takes its title, “This is Tomorrow”, from a 1956 British art exhibition of the same name staged at the Whitechapel Art Gallery. Just as the artists in this show presented their vision of Contemporary art, Ross’ assemblage of works similarly presents his vision of collecting British art, which will now be shared with others. With many offerings estimated at entry-level prices, the auction will provide an opportunity for aspiring collectors to acquire affordable pieces by the leading names of the British art scene, all handpicked by a collector who has dedicated over twenty years to seeking out the Best of British.

Among the offerings is a large scale red interior by Tony Bevan, a serene abstract pastel piece by Sean Scully, a Gilbert & George, playful screenprints by Damien Hirst, which carry titles such as 'MEATBALLS', 'DUMPLING' and 'SANDWICH', Peter Newman's sky-scapes, and a porcelain installation by Edmund de Waal. Open for bidding online from 7-15 September, the dedicated single owner auction will be accompanied by an exhibition in Sotheby's New Bond Street galleries from 10-15 September.

"I first met David in Sotheby's galleries in 2005, when he acquired an exquisite Glenn Brown painting from us. Sixteen years later, it will be a special moment to see works from his collection displayed in these same rooms. David's repertoire truly holds a mirror up to some of the best British creators of the last fifty years, and his singular and studied focus on the artists of his lifetime has resulted in a unique collection that complements the deep knowledge of the collector behind it. Indeed, no exhibition of works from this genre would be complete without a piece generously loaned from David, who has always felt it his responsibility to ensure his collection is viewed and appreciated by all." - **Oliver Barker, Sotheby's European Chairman**

It was a lunch at Chatsworth House and a conversation with the late Deborah, Duchess of Devonshire, that first inspired Ross to focus his collection on British art. Ross recalls: *"The Duchess talked in a very animated way about how her responsibility was to keep the Chatsworth collection current for her generation. I was struck by the passion that she got not only from collecting, but also from acquiring works by artists that were her friends. This is what really directed me to build a collection that was current for my generation, and which also focussed on British artists. I worked out in my heart of hearts that if I was collecting artists from abroad I would never have enough time to meet them all, therefore, a focus on only British artists, working within my lifetime, would give me the opportunity to really channel my collection."*

Ross has since nurtured relationships with almost every artist whose works he has acquired, and comes armed with personal stories relating to them all, including Patrick Caulfield, Marc Quinn (whose brother he lived with at university), Ray Richardson, Tony Bevan, Glenn Brown, Sir Peter Blake and Allen Jones. Speaking to the latter's *Bus Paintings*, for instance, Ross said: *"They were all conceived while on the bus going to art college in Croydon, and on occasion, with Bridget Riley. Jones was fascinated by the dialogue between what was happening in the outside world and what he was thinking about while sitting on the bus. Once he'd told me this, I suddenly started looking at this body of work in a new light, it's like he'd granted me access into his mind so I could better understand what he'd been trying to achieve."*

Over twenty years of collecting, Ross has now amassed too many artworks to accommodate at home, and so has made the decision to pass a selection on to a new generation of collectors: *"I love all my pictures, but the reality is I no longer have room to hang them on my walls. I don't believe in pictures being in storage, it's part of my philosophy. I have always said that my collection should be on view, otherwise I feel duty bound to give somebody else the opportunity to enjoy them."*

Proceeds from the auction will benefit the David Ross Foundation, which provides world class educational opportunities and cultural initiatives to inspire young people to achieve the best that they can. Since its inception in 2007, the Foundation has given nearly £26 million to charitable causes around the UK.

In addition to his philanthropic endeavours, Ross is Chair of the National Portrait Gallery, The University of Nottingham's Development Committee, and a board member of the British Olympic Association. In November, Ross was also named the buyer of David Hockney's portrait of Sir David Webster, former CEO of the Royal Opera House. Consigned to auction by the Opera House to raise vital funding, Ross stepped in to buy the work for £12.9 million / \$16.8 million, with the pledge that the painting will go back on permanent display once again when the establishment reopens in 2023.

Sotheby's Made in Britain auction will run concurrently online from 7-15 September 2021.

HIGHLIGHTS



[right] Gilbert & George

Head over Heels

1973

Mixed media, in artist's frames, in 10 parts

277 x 54 cm



[above] Sir Peter Blake

Shrine to Marilyn Monroe, in a Texas Diner

1989-90

Mixed media on three panels

126 x 448 x 66 cm



Keith Haring

Pop Shop Quad IV (Littmann p. 142)

1989

Screenprint in colours

68.6 x 83.6 cm



Tony Bevan
Red Interior
1999
Acrylic and charcoal on canvas
211.5 x 217.5 cm



Sean Scully
12.12.12
2012
pastel on paper
57 x 76 cm



Glenn Brown
Drawing 16 (after Van Dyck/Van Dyck)
2017
Indian ink and acrylic paint on film over panel, in artist's frame
67 x 50.8 cm



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34-35 New Bond St. Galleries, London, W1A 2AA

Images available upon request.

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