

Two new exhibitions to explore art and diversity in 20th century London

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Rabbi and Rabbitzin, 1914, by Mark Gertler (1891-1939)

The Ben Uri Gallery and Museum is to receive almost £354,000 for a celebration of a century of art, tracing the experience of the capital's Jewish community within the context of identity and migration.

No Colour Bar - Black British Art in Action 1960 -1990 is a project that will look at Black contributions to British 20th century culture. Managed by the Friends of the Huntley Archives at London Metropolitan Archives, it is supported by an HLF grant of £297,400.

Blondel Cluff, Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund London Committee, said: “These two projects tell the stories of two of London’s most vibrant migrant communities, each a significant dimension of the capital’s 20th century cultural landscape. Art has existed as long as humanity itself, reflecting the emotions and experiences of artist and observer alike. Both projects will enable new audiences amongst those that live, work and visit London, to have their own, personal experience of London’s global identity from the perspective of others. A truly unifying experience that should be embraced.”

[quote=Blondel Cluff, Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund London Committee, said]Both projects will enable new audiences amongst those that live, work and visit London, to have their own, personal experience of London’s global identity from the perspective of others.[/quote]**Art, Identity and Migration: 100 Years of Ben Uri 1915-2015**

Based in small, temporary premises in St John’s Wood, north west London, Ben Uri Gallery and Museum currently has insufficient space to display its internationally recognised 1300-strong collection of predominantly 20th century and contemporary art.

The HLF grant will enable it to celebrate its centenary with a major free exhibition in the Inigo Rooms at Somerset House showcasing examples of world-class artwork from renowned artists including David Bomberg, Jacob Epstein and Mark Gertler, who lived and worked in London; Frank Auerbach and Leon Kossoff, who still do, and their continental émigré contemporaries, including Marc Chagall, Chaim Soutine, and Georg Grosz.

The exhibition will also feature lesser-known but no less historically important artists, enhanced by a range of archival materials never previously shown. These will help tell the stories of social and political upheaval which have been features of the Jewish émigré experience over the past century whilst reflecting much of the wider émigré experience in London. It will be augmented by a broad community engagement programme addressing issues of 'identity' and 'belonging' shared by other migrant groups. New academic partnerships will also be forged involving students from King's College London and volunteers from a range of community partners who will help in creating a separate digital virtual exhibition.

David Glasser, Executive Chair of Ben Uri, said: “Ben Uri is a 100 year-young art museum, founded by émigré Jews in Whitechapel in July 1915. Our heritage is the source and inspiration for our strategy of a large encompassing Museum of Art, Identity and Migration celebrating the contribution of all immigrant communities to the modern and contemporary cultural landscape of London. We are hugely appreciative of the significant support from the HLF in facilitating this important testimony to the scale and depth of contribution that Jewish and other immigrant communities add to the rich cultural mosaic of our country and great capital city.“

No Colour Bar - Black British Art in Action 1960-1990

The project takes as its impetus the Bogle L’Overture Press, a publishing house as well as a Black bookshop and cultural hub founded by Eric and Jessica Huntley. A six-month exhibition at the Guildhall Art Gallery will show a selection of work from a range of visual artists, including paintings, sculpture, pottery and photographs, and will recreate the bookshop as an installation displaying a wide range of objects including original documents, letters, images and press cuttings that highlight its work over a 30-year period.

Also in the exhibition will be artefacts from the Huntley Archive reflecting the turbulent socio-economic backdrop of the period from the perspective of the African-Caribbean and Third World migrant-settler communities. Aspects of the display will also form the basis of a number of touring exhibitions. Accompanying the exhibition will be an events and education programme that will include an intergenerational conference in the Autumn of 2015 led by Friends of the Huntley Archives at London

Metropolitan Archives's (FHALMA) 'Next-generation'.

Colin Prescod of FHALMA said: "Expect an absorbing exhibition and exposition of startling and radical imaginative works, addressing grand British cultural and historical matters, and touching on themes of existential and social restlessness."

Further information

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Art, Identity and Migration: 100 Years of Ben Uri 1915-2015

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www.benuri.org.uk

No Colour Bar - Black British Art in Action 1960-1990

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