
The Free Art Fair

Your last chance to
become an art
collector for free...

October 12 – 18
The Barbican Centre



© Artists Anonymous

50 acclaimed artists give away their works for free in the last ever Free Art Fair

Returning for the third and final time during Frieze week, The Free Art Fair promises to be bigger, better and more fun than ever. Staged at the Barbican Centre, The Free Art Fair will use the format of a curated museum scale exhibition, with a difference: on the last day of the show, the visiting public will be able to take away one piece of art of their choice.

An established fixture of the busiest week in the UK contemporary art scene, The Free Art Fair is a serious alternative to the commercial art fair frenzy, and a chance to remember that art is about more than just money. Organised entirely without any budget, the fair has been described as “the most radical departure from art fair commercialism”. Even the artworks displayed are responding to the idea of free; the artists have been invited to create unique substantial pieces incorporating the concept of free, making the work they’ve always wanted to, without commercial constraint.

Marlene Dumas, Bob & Roberta Smith, Robin Mason, Harry Pye, Artists Anonymous, and Geraldine Swayne are just some of the contributing artists. After having been acclaimed in commercial exhibitions and major public shows they are now showcasing their work in the unique concrete interiors of the Barbican Centre, alongside a programme of performance art curated by artists and curators Lee Campbell and Frog Morris.

Visitors are invited to select the artwork they like the most. On the closing day, Sunday 18th, the public will queue to claim their choice; the first to choose a particular piece of art will be the lucky Free Art Fair Collector to take it home, until all the works have been allocated.

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In 2008 the Free Art Fair's artists gave away over £ 100,000 worth of art works; 2000 catalogues were given away, and thousands of people visited the exhibition. The giveaway was discussed as a counterpoint to the commercialisation of the art world in global media.

We are delighted to be home to the Free Art Fair for its grand finale. We hope as many people as possible will come to the Barbican to explore our spaces, discover wonderful works of art, and hopefully get to take something home with them on the last day of the exhibition. Kate Bush, Head of Galleries, Barbican Art Gallery



People queuing on the last day of the Free Art Fair, 2008



A Free Art Fair Collector with her choice of painting by Stephen Farthing, 2008



Free Art Fair collectors holding a sculpture by Rose Gibbs, 2008

Participating artists include:

Artists Anonymous
Phil Ashcroft
Centre of Attention
Lee Campbell
Maria Chevaska
Matthew Collings
Sacha Craddock
Stuart Cumberland
Adam Dant
Marlene Dumas
Stephen Farthing
Rose Finn-Kelcey
Jaime Gili
Rose Gibbs
Alex Hamilton
Peter Harris
Pablo Helguera
Russell Herron

James Howard
Catrin Huber
Saron Hughes
Lee Johnson
Sayshun Jay
James Jessop
Jasper Joffe
Sonia Khurana
Peter Lamb
Cathy Lomax
Amanda Loomes
Robin Mason
Bruce McLean
Hugh Mendes
Frog Morris
Alex Gene Morrison
Chloe Mortimer
Stephen Nelson

House of O'Dwyer
Henrik Potter
Harry Pye
Danny Rolph
Martin Sexton
Bob & Roberta Smith
Terry Smith
Eva Stenram
Matthew Stone
Geraldine Swayne
Chris Tasic
Josef Valentino
Markus Vater
Edward Ward
Michael Ward
Douglas White
Charlie Woolley

I thought we should do something different from what everyone else is doing at this time of year and non – commercial, and something that excites people and values art not selling. This gives anyone the chance to own a serious piece of art. Jasper Joffe, founder of the Free Art Fair

Editor's Notes

The Free Art Fair

The Free Art Fair was established in 2007 by contemporary artist Jasper Joffe, with the participation of 25 artists, all giving their art away for free. Criticising the relentless commercialism of commercial fairs, The Free Art Fair aimed to focus on the art, rather than on prices and numbers. Everything in The Free Art Fair was entirely put on for free, and given in kind including the gallery space, the catalogue, and even the insurance. Viewers really engaged with the concept and the individual artworks and the contributing artists enjoyed the direct relationship with the public. In response to great demand the fair was organised again in 2008 doubling the artists, and including a performance art strand, and a more substantial catalogue with essays by writers including Lewis Hyde. Coinciding with the global economic crisis, The Free Art Fair asked even more questions on the overheated art market. It showcased a mix of very established artists and emerging ones, and more site specific pieces. In 2008 The Free Art Fair became a major part of the debate about the value of art.

The Free Art Fair has allowed a diverse range of people to become art collectors. Including a nurse, students, teachers, homeless people, and many people who thought they could never own a really great piece of art.

www.freeartfair.com

The Barbican Centre

The Barbican Centre is one of the world's leading arts centres, founded and run by the City of London Corporation. It provides all the arts - music, theatre, dance, cinema, the visual arts and education - under one roof and one creative direction. For more information visit:

www.barbican.org.uk

Barbican Art Gallery presents the best of international visual art with a dynamic mix of art, architecture, design, fashion and photography. From acclaimed architects to Turner prize-winning artists, the Gallery exhibits innovators of the 20th and 21st centuries: key players who have shaped developments and stimulated change.

For press information about the Barbican, contact: Ann Berni, Media Relations Manager, 020 7382 7169 ann.berni@barbican.org.uk

Jasper Joffe

Jasper Joffe born 1975 is a painter, writer, and curator. He is known for 24 paintings in 24 hours at the Chisenhale Gallery and solo shows in London, Milan, Brno, and Rome. First novel *Water* published by Telegram Books in 2006. Founder of The Free Art Fair and paintings collected by Charles Saatchi. He recently sold everything he owns in his "Sale of a Lifetime".

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