

"Tate Modern has changed the place of the visual arts in our culture"
Tate director Sir Nicholas Serota



There are around 34,000 visual artists and 25,000 craftspeople in the UK
The UK Cultural Sector, Policy Studies Institute, 2001

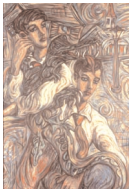


July 2002 saw the opening in the north-east of England of the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art (above), built on the site of a former flour mill and transformed into Britain's biggest visual art centre outside London. In 2003 work is due to begin to develop the arts space Arnolfini, on the site of a six-storey dockyard warehouse in Bristol, into a national centre of excellence for contemporary art. The development was made possible in 2001 when the project was awarded a £7.5 million grant by the Arts Council.

Tate Modern was opened in May 2000 to rapturous reviews, and the huge public interest in this exciting art space has not diminished. The gallery displays international art from 1900 to the present day, including works by Salvador Dalí, Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Mark Rothko and Andy Warhol, and by international contemporary artists. In its first year, Tate Modern had 5.25 million visitors, enabling it to proclaim itself the most popular modern art gallery in the world, with a daily average attendance of 8,000. The gallery is situated in a former power station on the south side of the River Thames in London, the focus of local regeneration.

Tate Britain, situated up and across the river, is the national gallery of British art from 1500 to today, including works by William Blake, JMW Turner, John Constable, David Hockney, Stanley Spencer and Henry Moore. It's also the venue for the annual Turner Prize exhibition, awarded to a British artist under 50 for an outstanding exhibition or presentation. The 2002 recipient was Keith Tyson, who received the £20,000 prize in a ceremony broadcast live in the UK by Channel 4.

"Culture-vouring city slickers" by Adrian Wisniewski, exhibited by the British Council



But the Tate London galleries are only part of a family of four around Britain. Tate St Ives opened in a spectacular setting in the Cornish seaside town in 1993. In this intimate space, visitors can view works by artists and sculptors such as Ben Nicholson, Barbara Hepworth and Patrick Heron, plus ceramicist Bernard Leach, experiencing the surroundings, atmosphere and quality of light that inspired them. Tate Liverpool is one of the largest galleries of modern and contemporary art outside London, housed in a beautiful converted warehouse in the Albert Dock area of the city. It attracted more than six million visitors between 1988 and 1998.



St Ives potter Bernard Leach

The Chelsea Crafts Fair, held over two weeks every October since 1979 at the Chelsea Old Town Hall in south London, is an international focus for contemporary craft. It encompasses both the traditional and the avant-garde in glass, ceramics, wood, silverware, furniture, leather, jewellery and textiles. To ensure an exciting and extensive range each year, a panel of specialists considers more than a thousand applications, and takes these down to some 220 exhibitors. The fair now has about 25,000 visitors each year.



Chelsea Craft fair

The Tate gallery, St Ives, Cornwall

Wales' newly-launched Artes Mundi (Artists of the World) prize, worth £40,000, is the biggest purse ever offered to an individual artist. The biennial competition will be open to artists worldwide, whose entries will be shown at Cardiff's National Museum and Gallery. The first prize is due to be awarded in March 2004, during an exhibition featuring the seven to ten shortlisted artists.

The Jerwood Painting Prize, worth £30,000, has been instrumental in rekindling interest in this area. The Jerwood not only acknowledges the work of established artists, but has identified lesser known artists, underlining its status as an award for excellence and talent based on the work submitted, not the reputation of the artists. Shortlisted works are exhibited each year at the Jerwood Gallery in London, then tour to the Glasgow Gallery of Modern Art.



The Yorkshire Sculpture Park was established in 1977 as the UK's first such permanent park, and has since gained an important international reputation as a leading open-air gallery. Over 200 acres of historic landscape are used for the display of sculpture in nine distinct open-air spaces and two indoor galleries. Around ten exhibitions, displays and projects are curated each year, with half the works involving international

artists, some showing in the UK for the first time. Works in the collection include Barbara Hepworth, Elizabeth Frink, Anthony Caro and Antony Gormley, while ten to fourteen of Henry Moore's monumental sculptures are also displayed in an area of rough terrain covering just under 100 acres. Strengthened by its education and community work, the park receives over 200,000 visitors a year.



Part of the Family of man series in Aldbrough by Barbara Hepworth

Below: Public sculpture at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park

Cover: Tree roots by Bill Woodrow, briefly exhibited in Trafalgar Square



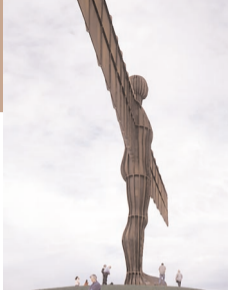
The New Art Gallery Walsall opened to great public and media acclaim in February 2000. Situated in the West Midlands conurbation, it houses the Garman Ryan Collection, created by Lady Kathleen Garman and Sally Ryan in the 1960s and early '70s. Garman's husband the sculptor Sir Jacob Epstein is among those represented in the gallery. Its philosophy is to be not only a place for passive spectators, welcome as they are, but to encourage visitors to participate in the arts and express their own creativity in different ways. The Children's Discovery gallery engages children with its interactive features to lead them to understand how artworks are made and encourages them to explore diverse artistic processes and styles.



Art on the Riverside is the largest programme of public art in the UK. Situated along the banks of the Rivers Tyne and Wear in the north east of England, the programme has commissioned nearly 150 artworks and design features since its 1995 launch. National and international artists have been commissioned to create large-scale pieces, and local artists have worked with members of the local community, some of whom had lived on estates near the riverside years before and have since been rehoused. The integration of the arts into the social regeneration of these rundown areas was present from the start, rather than being an add-on when the work was nearing completion. This may well explain why so many community groups were involved in the programme and why it is such a source of pride in the region.

Centre: St Michael slaying the Devil, by Epstein, outside Coventry Cathedral

'Decoy' by David Leapman, exhibited by the British Council



'Angel of the North' by Antony Gormley, Gateshead

The An Tuirram Arts Centre, previously the old Fever Hospital, has been in existence in Portree, the capital of the Isle of Skye off north-west Scotland, for a number of years, but underwent a major refurbishment and reopened in 1998 with an art gallery, a smaller gallery devoted to crafts and a workshop/temporary exhibition space. Its education department has organised many events, including a month-long Scribble Festival, which set out to involve a range of community groups in drawing and received an Innovative Visual Arts Education Award from the Scottish Arts Council for its educational content.



New Walsall Art Gallery children's section



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Visual Arts

Britain is experiencing a genuine, powerful renaissance of interest in the visual arts. The immense popularity of Tate Modern in London, media interest in Brit Art and experimental artists such as Tracey Emin and Damien Hirst are all playing their part. But high-profile public art, galleries, art centres, crafts and many other artists are also making significant contributions.

