

**IN MY
SHOES**

**ART &
THE SELF
SINCE
THE 1990S**

**An Arts Council Collection
Touring Exhibition**



Hayley Newman
You Blew My Mind (1998)

In My Shoes Art & the Self since the 1990s

Self-portraiture has provided a source of inspiration to artists across time. In recent years artists have updated the genre by incorporating action, performance and storytelling. *In My Shoes* explores the ways in which UK-based artists have included themselves in their work since the 1990s. Featuring film, photography, drawing and sculpture, the exhibition takes a broad view of these dynamic approaches. *In My Shoes* also reflects upon the current public interest in self-expression: the rise of the 'selfie', for example, or the construction of digital identities through social media.

In My Shoes considers the influence of so-called 'young British art'. The exhibition includes early works by artists including Tracey Emin, Sarah Lucas and Gavin Turk, who gained international recognition during the 1990s for direct and often self-referential work. The exhibition also represents the work of a younger generation of artists who have maintained an active presence in their work. *In My Shoes* includes some of the most recent works to enter the Arts Council Collection, enabling the latest developments in self-expression to emerge.

Despite the breadth of artistic approaches, a number of shared concerns can be found in these works. A sense of performance, whether actual or implied, provides a strong common thread, with film and photography often used to capture actions. Many artists have used film and photography in innovative ways, applying new technologies or investigating sculptural approaches to push boundaries. Finally, a knowing sense of humour and a lightness of touch can be found in many of the

works, with artists choosing a playful approach to serious philosophical questions.

The works in *In My Shoes* are arranged in thematic groups to highlight four core themes: the physical self, the artist's world, the self as other, and notions of the past. This guide investigates these themes in further detail and offers more information about the work on display.

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Jananne Al-Ani *Untitled* (1998)

Physical Evidence

Many artists have looked to the physicality of the human body to investigate consciousness, mortality and transformation.

Helen Chadwick's work often examined the inside of the human body: our flesh, excretions and microbiology. She incorporated a wide range of substances into her work, including meat, viruses and urine. Her experimental and visceral approach influenced a younger generation of artists to broaden their choice of materials. For her lightbox piece, *Self Portrait* (1991), Chadwick presented a human brain for contemplation, inviting us to reflect upon the physical centre of our thoughts, feelings and our sense of individuality.

A similar focus on bodily fragments can be found in other works on display, often with an undercurrent of discomfort or violence. **Marc Quinn's** work, *I need an axe to break the ice* (1992), features a cast of the artist's head which appears trapped and distended inside a glass vitrine.

Lindsay Seers has used her mouth as a camera to create *Dee's Tree* and *Kiss* (2005). These tiny circular images convey a sense of drama; red and agape like the mouths of vampires.

Emma Hart, winner of the 2017 Max Mara Art Prize for Women, is represented by her recent work *Fork Face* (2017). One of a series of ceramic satellite dishes decorated with symbolic patterns, *Fork Face* features the stylized image of a woman, simultaneously prodded and held up by forks. The work reflects the artist's own feelings of being at once pushed and supported, her direction contingent on her relationships with others.



Emma Hart *Fork Face* (2017)

John Coplans
Upside Down No.1 (1992)

I photograph my body. I generalize it by beheading myself to make my body more like any other man's. Nakedness removes the body from the specificity of time; unclothed, it belongs to the past, present, and future. It is classless, without country, unencumbered by language, and free to wander across cultures at will.

The natural aging of body and mind plays a role in my work. The body's response to age is personally felt and can be observed by all. The mind, however, is another story. Personal and hidden, subject to the quirks stored in my memory's attic and in my genetic cells, scrambling art, history, science, politics, anthropology, and especially important to me, the ideas of Jung and

Freud—all of this demands my attention and recognition.

When I photograph, I have to tell an assistant such things as what part of my body I want photographed, the scale of the image and its position in relation to the space, for the photograph to be made. I also have to discuss control of the shadows thrown by the artificial lighting I use. ... You can deduce that I don't actually DO anything. Other than signing the print when it is finished I make my art by telling other people what to do. I talk it into being.

John Coplans, *A Body: John Coplans*, powerHouse Books, New York, 2002 p. 7.



The Artist's World

A number of the artists in this exhibition have made direct reference to their daily lives, routines and surroundings in their work. Often, the aim is to convey a sense of authenticity, or to reflect upon intimate moments and interactions.

Richard Billingham's fly-on-the-wall photographs document the relationships between his close family members with apparent unmediated honesty, as if 'looking through my eye'. In the film, *Dancing in Peckham* (1994), **Gillian Wearing** takes centre stage in a shopping centre, dancing to imaginary music with a hedonism usually confined to the nightclub or one's bedroom. The use of film or photography in these works increases the sense of directness and honesty. The experience of observing such private moments in a public context could also be seen to anticipate the rise of reality television and fly-on-the-wall documentaries later in the decade.

Going beyond the immediacy of photography and video, some artists have worked with sculpture and installation to communicate aspects of their lives. **Jesse Wine** uses the expressive potential of clay to capture specific experiences and routines. *I really care V* is one of a series of works from 2014 which represent the meals he made for himself over a period of time. *I don't normally SMS women* (2012) appears more abstract, yet the title refers to a random snippet of conversation overheard by the artist while going about his daily business.

Notions of shared experience and empathy underpin **Bedwyr Williams'** installation *Walk a mile in my shoes* (2006). Taking the form of a shoe shop, this installation invites visitors to consider the artist's life through an assessment of his size 13 footwear collection.



Jesse Wine *I Really Care V* (2014)

Sarah Lucas
Self Portraits (1990–98)

It was sort of an accident, the images-of-me thing. But it did help because it cemented a relationship between myself and the work.

To me the photographs are more mysterious than the sculptures in terms of knowing where I am. They seem to be so much a matter of taking a stance, but even I find it quite difficult to know why they work, or why, when I'm looking through a whole bunch of shots, a particular one works. I think that question, 'Where Am I?' is the ambiguous area of the whole enterprise.

It would be wrong to say that the photos are dead ordinary exactly, but there are plenty of things that certainly you wouldn't particularly aspire to... The imperfections are part

of it, perhaps the most important part. The stance isn't about being perfect. It's almost an ideal not to be perfect. It can only be adequate, really. And there's a kind of dream in that, where you see the ideal but you have to live with the imperfections.

Well whose identity is it? What identity am I talking about? This is the biggest idea buried in the whole thing. That's the real idea of it. The idea of wanting to be your own self, even if anyone really had a clue what that is, and even supposing they actually wanted to know.

Artist statements from Matthew Collings, *Sarah Lucas*, Tate Publishing, 2002, pp.59–70.

IMAGE: *Self Portrait with Fried Eggs* (1996)





**Stewart Home and
Chris Dorley-Brown**
from *Becoming (M)other* (2004)

Self as Other

Many artists have assumed other roles to explore a wide range of issues including identity, family, class or community. Some have used performance and acting skills; others have transformed their appearance using clothing, make-up and digital manipulation.

Much 'young British art' combines socio-political commentary with a light touch and dark humour. **Michael Landy's** room-sized installation, *Scrapheap Services* (1995), reflected on the ruthlessness of capitalist systems. In making this work, Landy created a fictitious cleaning company to eradicate unwanted sections of society who 'no longer play a useful role in life'. Uniformed operatives swept miniature bodies into a vast shredder.

Some artists have used role playing to challenge discrimination and prejudice. In *Self-Portrait 'Black Men Public Enemy'* (1990), **Donald Rodney** used images of himself to highlight negative media stereotypes of race and crime. For *Untitled* (1998), **Jananne Al-Ani** adopted the conventions of early photographic studio portraiture to explore her ongoing interest in representations of the female body, documenting herself, her mother and sisters in 'Eastern' and 'Western' clothing.

Family relationships have provided rich source material for artists. For the series, *Becoming (M)other* (2004), **Stewart Home** collaborated with the photographer Chris Dorley-Brown, layering portraits of himself and his late mother, Julia Callan-Thompson, to create poignant unified images. **Veronica Ryan** has explored sibling closeness and loss in her photographic series, *Lamentations in the Garden* (2000). For this work she has altered a childhood photograph of herself and her sister using a sensitive process of concealment and revelation.

Rachel Maclean

Feed Me (2015)

My work takes inspiration from lots of different people and places. At art college I became interested in artists that use themselves within their work, but as a grotesque or comic masquerade rather than in a confessional sense. Specifically, people like Leigh Bowery, Cindy Sherman, Paul McCarthy and Pipilotti Rist.

Each film I create is its own self-enclosed world with unique characters. ... for *Feed Me* (2015), I'd just been to China and some aspects of the landscape emerge out of the experience of visiting uniquely dense cities like Shanghai and Chongqing. For those watching I wanted it to feel

geographically more specific, a kind of homogenised metropolis.

I am interested in how we imagine childhood, how we visualise it in the media and stories and television, and the image of childhood as a utopian version of the adult world ... In films like *Feed Me*, I play child characters who oscillate between the innocent and the horrific, creating an uncomfortable blurring of the boundaries between innocence and corruption, the child and the adult.

Excerpts from 'Rachel Maclean in conversation with Bren O'Callaghan', *Rachel Maclean: What u :-) about?*, Home Manchester / Hayward Publishing 2016, pp. 98–100.



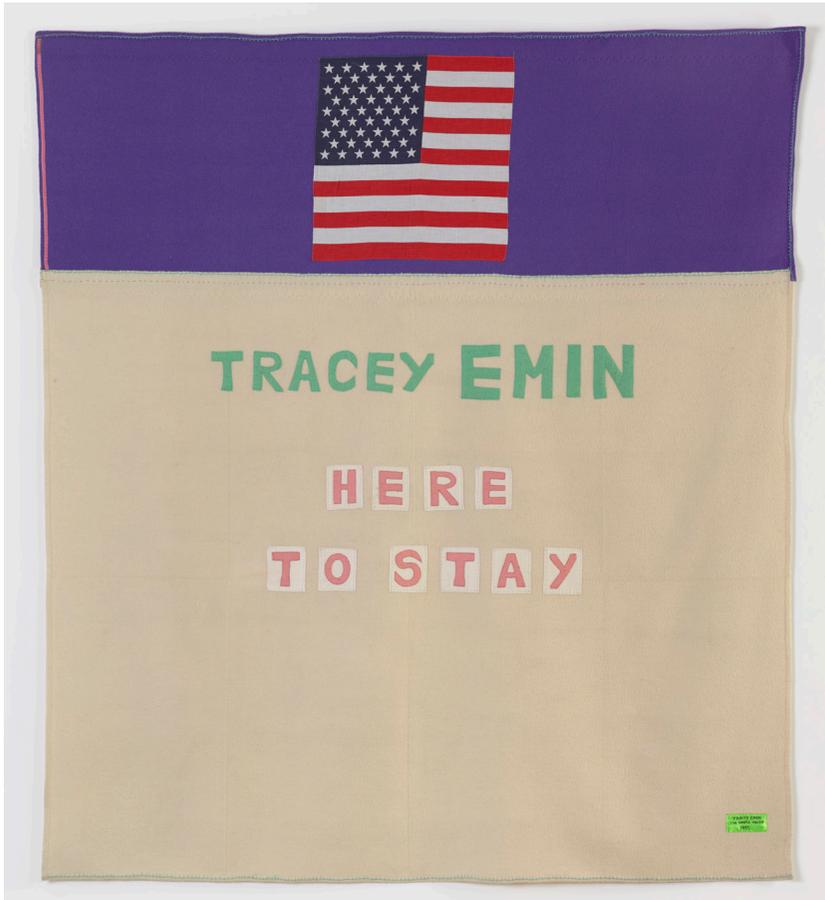
Past & Present

Self-portraits can act as historical documents, capturing artists at particular moments in time. The conventions of the memorial, the diary or the biography have informed the work of a number of artists.

For artists at a vulnerable early stage in their careers, naming has provided a valuable strategy. **Tracey Emin**'s *The Simple Truth* (1993) is an early blanket piece featuring the appliquéd words *Tracey Emin Here To Stay*. Emin stitched the work following an early trip to the US at a time when success and recognition felt elusive to her. The work is a literal expression of the artist's resolve to make her name.

Gavin Turk failed his MA at the Royal College of Art by presenting a mock historical blue plaque bearing the words 'Gavin Turk Sculptor worked here 1989–1991'. Ironically, this subtle intervention has become one of Turk's most iconic works. A similar sense of humour informs the collaborative work by **Ryan Gander and Bedwyr Williams**, *Both before and after, I had to write your obituary* (2008). To make this work, the artists wrote each other's eulogy, imagining the year 2050. They have used a retrospective form of writing to define exploits that have yet to happen.

Some artists have appropriated historical forms of art to make new personal statements. For his series *Senza Titolo* (2012), **Jonathan Monk** wanted to explore the idea that 'a portrait could be altered or undone'. He drew inspiration from Graeco-Roman bust portraiture, which is often displayed damaged. Monk produced jesmonite casts of himself and invited other artists to participate in 'putting his nose out of joint'. This work intertwines a sense of past and present, self and other, performance and documentation.



Tracey Emin
The Simple Truth (1995)

Aaron Williamson
Lives of the Saints (2002)

The acts and tales recounted in medieval *Lives of the Saints*, such as De Voragine's *Golden Legend*, are sometimes reminiscent of those found in histories of performance art. Aside from the graphic viscosity, both traditions present a legacy predicated on (often dubious) witness accounts, anecdotes, and the kind of motives that sustain extreme individualism. In recent years, as with the medieval saints, classic performance art has also become an iconic tradition and the subject of a passionate cultural belief system.

... I worked in isolation direct to a remote-control camera, building

up performances using props I had assembled; recording and watching back footage as each piece evolved (roughly over the course of one or two days). In keeping with the legends of both performance art and the lives of the saints, the results were suitably bizarre, 'miraculous', body-centred, blackly humorous and covertly documented.

Aaron Williamson, *Aaron Williamson Performance / Video / Collaboration*, Live Art Development Agency and KIOSK, 2008, pp26-7.

IMAGES (top to bottom):
St Anthony, St Christina, St Catherine



List of works

Please note: not all works will be shown at all venues
Unless otherwise stated, all works are Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London
Measurements: centimetres, height × width × depth

Jananne Al-Ani
Untitled 1998
C-type photographs
2 parts, each 122 × 122
Acquired 2001

Darren Almond
Multiple Working
(from *Screen Portfolio*) 1997
Embossed screenprint
73 × 89
Acquired 1998

Richard Billingham
Untitled (RAL 47) 1995
SFA4 colour photograph on aluminium
120 × 80
Gift of Charles Saatchi 1999

Richard Billingham
Untitled (RAL 49) 1995
SFA4 colour photograph on aluminium
50 × 75
Acquired 1997

Helen Chadwick
Ego Geometria Sum VIII: The Horse age
11 1982–83
Wood and silver magic
57.5 × 101.9 × 61.9
Acquired 1983

Helen Chadwick
Self-Portrait 1991
Photographic transparency, glass, aluminium frame and electric lights
50.9 × 44.6 × 11.8
National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh. Gift from the Contemporary Art Society through the Henry Moore Foundation, 1996

John Coplans
Self Portrait (Upside Down No.1) 1992
Silver gelatin print
220 × 114.5
Acquired 1996

Tracey Emin
The Simple Truth 1995
Wool, cotton and felt
235 × 216
Acquired 1998

Tracey Emin
Why I never became a dancer 1995
Single screen projection and sound (shot on super 8)
Duration: 6 minutes 40 seconds
Acquired 1998

Ryan Gander and Bedwyr Williams
Both before and after, I had to write your obituary 2008
Two fictive obituaries from 2050 written by Ryan Gander and Bedwyr Williams
55 × 81
Collection of Bedwyr Williams

Douglas Gordon
Monster Reborn 1996/2002
Colour coupler print
70 × 113
National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh. Purchased with assistance from the Patrons of the National Galleries of Scotland, 2006

Emma Hart
Fork Face 2017
Glazed ceramic and steel
67 × 71 × 100
Acquired 2017

Stewart Home and Chris Dorley-Brown
Becoming (M)other 2004
Giclée prints
62.2 × 51.7, 69.1 × 58.4
Acquired 2014

Michael Landy
We Leave the Scum with No Place to Hide 1995
Aluminium, ink, wood and perspex
94 × 19 × 19
Acquired 1995

Michael Landy
Scrapheap Services 1995
Ink on paper
76 × 46
Acquired 1995

Michael Landy
Our limit is that of the desire and imagination of the human mind 1996
Colour photograph in artist's frame
101.5 × 58 × 3.5
Gift of Karsten Schubert 2010

Sarah Lucas
Self Portraits 1990–98
Iris prints
Acquired 2000

Eating a Banana 1990
Self Portrait with Knickers 1994
Self Portrait with Fried Eggs 1996
Divine 1991
Self Portrait with Mug of Tea 1993
Fighting Fire with Fire 1996
Human Toilet II 1996
Self Portrait with Skull 1997
Got a Salmon On #1 1997
Smoking 1998
Summer 1998
Human Toilet Revisited 1998

Rachel Maclean
Feed Me 2015
HD video, colour and sound
Duration: 1 hour
Acquired 2016. Commissioned by FVU and Hayward Touring. Supported by Arts Council England and Creative Scotland

Jonathan Monk
Senza Titolo VII 2012
Jesmonite bust with nose broken by the artist
45.5 × 21 × 26
Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery

Hayley Newman
You Blew My Mind 1998
Black and white photograph mounted on aluminium
92.5 × 91
Acquired 2004

Grayson Perry
Map of Nowhere 2008
Etching from five plates on one sheet
153 × 113
British Council Collection

Grayson Perry
Spirit Jar 1994
Earthenware
45.7 × 20.3 × 20.3
Acquired 2002

Marc Quinn
I Need an Axe to Break the Ice 1992
Steel, glass, latex, silicone and rubber
187 × 94 × 76
Gift of Charles Saatchi 2002

Marc Quinn
Template for My Future Plastic Surgery
(from *London Portfolio*) 1992
Screenprint
85.7 × 68.2
Acquired 1995

Donald Rodney
Self-Portrait 'Black Men Public Enemy' 1990
Lightboxes with Dyratran prints
5 parts, total 190.5 × 121.9
Acquired 1990

Veronica Ryan
Lamentations in the Garden 2000
Acrylic on silver bromide print
5 parts, each 43 × 27.9
Acquired 2001

Giorgio Sadotti
Giorgio's Balls (1–9) 1994
Watercolour on paper
9 parts, each 25.4 × 35.5
Acquired 1995

Lindsay Seers
Kiss 2005
C-type mouth photograph
6 (diameter)
Acquired 2010

Lindsay Seers
Dee's Tree 2005
C-type mouth photograph
6 (diameter)
Acquired 2010

Gavin Turk
Oi! 1998
r-type photographs
3 parts, each 242 × 297
Acquired 1999

Gavin Turk
Cave 1995
Silkscreen on plastic
Diameter: 48.25
British Council Collection

Mark Wallinger
Self Portrait as Emily Davison 1993
Colour photograph on aluminium
89 × 137
British Council Collection

Gillian Wearing
Dancing in Peckham 1994
Video
Duration: 3 minutes 42 seconds
Government Art Collection

Gillian Wearing
Me as an artist in 1984 2014
Photograph
133 × 161 × 3.2
Government Art Collection

Bedwyr Williams
Walk a mile in my shoes 2006
Installation with size 13 shoes, written notes, poster, shelving and foot rests
Dimensions variable
The Saatchi Gallery, London

Aaron Williamson
Lives of the Saints 2002
12 digital prints
Each 19 × 23.8
Acquired 2004

Hermione Wiltshire
My Touch 1993
Cibachrome photograph, glass, silicon glue & aluminium
100 × 200 × 40
Acquired 1993

Jesse Wine
I don't normally SMS women 2012
Ceramic
49 × 35 × 20
Acquired 2014

Jesse Wine
I really care V 2014
Glazed ceramic
7 × 53 × 56
Acquired 2014

What is the Arts Council Collection?

The Arts Council Collection is the most widely shared collection of modern and contemporary British art. Founded in 1946, the Collection features over 8000 works of art by more than 2000 of the UK's most prominent artists. The Collection grows every year and is an important cultural resource.

You can see works from the Arts Council Collection in our touring exhibitions and through loans to galleries and museums across the UK and overseas. We also lend works of art to hospitals, schools, universities and other public buildings to ensure that as many people as possible can see and enjoy the Collection.

The Arts Council Collection collaborates with a number of National Partner galleries to deliver a special programme of exhibitions, learning and digital projects. Supported by Arts Council England, the National Partners for 2016–19 are: Birmingham Museums Trust, Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne, Walker Art Gallery, National Museums Liverpool and Yorkshire Sculpture Park (until 2018).

The Arts Council Collection is managed by the Southbank Centre, London, on behalf of Arts Council England. It is based at the Hayward Gallery, London and at Longside, Yorkshire Sculpture Park. The centre at Longside enables the Arts Council Collection team to extend its sculpture conservation and lending programmes, and to increase public access through exhibitions and learning opportunities.

To find out more about the Arts Council Collection visit www.artscouncilcollection.org.uk

In My Shoes

Art & the Self since the 1990s

An Arts Council Collection Touring Exhibition

30 March – 17 June 2018

Longside Gallery, Yorkshire Sculpture Park

7 July – 2 September 2018

Attenborough Arts Centre, University of Leicester

6 October 2018 – 6 January 2019

PACCAR Room, Royal Shakespeare Company,
Stratford-upon-Avon

19 January – 12 May 2019

Aberystwyth Arts Centre, Aberystwyth University

6 July – 22 September 2019

The Harley Gallery, Welbeck

Exhibition curated by Natalie Rudd,
assisted by Rachel Graves

Texts: Natalie Rudd

Editing: Rachel Graves

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Lucas: courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London.

Maclean: Commissioned by Film and Video Umbrella (FVU)
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www.artscouncilcollection.org.uk

Lindsay Seers *Kiss* (2005)

**Jananne Al-Ani
Darren Almond
Richard Billingham
Helen Chadwick
John Coplans
Chris Dorley-Brown
Tracey Emin
Ryan Gander
Douglas Gordon
Emma Hart
Stewart Home
Michael Landy
Sarah Lucas
Rachel Maclean
Jonathan Monk
Hayley Newman
Grayson Perry
Marc Quinn
Donald Rodney
Veronica Ryan
Giorgio Sadotti
Lindsay Seers
Gavin Turk
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Hermione Wiltshire
Jesse Wine**



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