

The Gilbert & George Centre opens to the public on 1 April 2023

Submitted by: The Gilbert & George Centre

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"Our art is the friendship formed between the viewer and the pictures" - Gilbert & George

"We want our art to bring out the bigot from inside the liberal and conversely bring out the liberal from inside the bigot" - Gilbert & George

The Gilbert & George Centre will provide a permanent home for an unrivalled artistic legacy and will be a place for visitors to convene from across the globe to experience pictures by Gilbert & George. The belief that underpins the art of Gilbert & George is 'Art for All', and The Gilbert & George Centre is an extension of this ethos.

The Gilbert & George Centre, set in a courtyard on Heneage Street in Spitalfields London, has been designed by SIRS Architects in collaboration with Gilbert & George. The Centre comprises three state-of-the-art exhibition spaces over three levels of differing scale and feel. Visitors will enter through a secluded cobbled courtyard to the reception area reminiscent of Gilbert & George's restored Georgian home and studio on Fournier Street. Gilbert & George envision that the Centre will become a leading cultural institution in London and a place for research and scholarship on the art of Gilbert & George.

The inaugural exhibition at The Gilbert & George Centre will be THE PARADISICAL PICTURES, exhibited in London for the first time. Gilbert & George take their place in this disquieting vision of a heavenly place in a manner resembling psychical reports or transmissions from a journey deep into an enchanted forest or overgrown park. It is as though a psychedelic landscape, more given to poetic realism and Arthurian legend, had secretly envisioned science-fiction.

This particular paradise, inhabited or traversed by Gilbert & George, is a place where the very air is drugged. From picture to picture the artist are subject to biomorphic alteration into vegetable states - a turn of events that would be cartoon-like and absurd were it not so equally sinister. The dead yet watchful eyes of Gilbert & George stare sleeplessly from grotesque detritus of fruits and flowers; from masks of dead leaves - details of spirit faces, as the artist themselves are seen first pursued by unseen wonders or horrors, then finally exhausted, worn out, in a sleep that seems to promise no rest.

Gilbert & George commented: "We will start with THE PARADISICAL PICTURES because we realise that most people think of paradise as 'the after party' and we think of this as the pre-cum party."

THE PARADISICAL PICTURES at the Gilbert & George Centre will coincide with the unveiling of their new THE CORPSING PICTURES at White Cube Mason's Yard, London and White Cube West Palm Beach, Florida. Their most confrontational and personal pictures to date, THE CORPSING PICTURES by Gilbert & George will open to the public on 29 March 2023 and 12 April 2023 respectively.

SIRS Architects have embedded two clear aesthetic visions in The Gilbert & George Centre: sensitivity to the conversion of a 19th century building in keeping with the artist's view of London's architecture as the legacy of the city, while creating contemporary exhibition spaces suitable for their art at the same time. The overall design approach considers the sustainability of the building in its broadest sense, by integrating environmentally conscious features and whole lifecycle considerations.

The Gilbert & George Centre is managed by a Board of Trustees. It is anticipated that the Centre will host one to two exhibitions a year showcasing both historical and new pictures by Gilbert & George.

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