

**Press Release**  
2 April 2012

## **Damien Hirst**

4 April – 9 September 2012

Sponsored by the Qatar Museums Authority  
Tate Modern

Admission £14 (£12.20 concessions) or £15.50 (£13.50 concessions) with Gift Aid donation  
Open every day from 10.00–18.00 and late until 22.00 on Friday to Sunday  
For public information and tickets please print [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk) or 020 7887 8888

Tate Modern presents the first substantial survey of Damien Hirst's work ever held in the UK. Hirst is widely regarded as one of the most important artists working today and has created some of the most iconic works in recent history. Sponsored by the Qatar Museums Authority, the exhibition provides a journey through two decades of Hirst's inventive practice. It also forms part of the London 2012 Festival, the culmination of the Cultural Olympiad.

Damien Hirst first came to public attention in London in 1988 when he conceived and curated *Freeze*, an exhibition of his own work and that of his friends and fellow Goldsmiths College students, staged in a disused London warehouse. Many of the works he created at that time will be on display at Tate Modern for the first time since the 1980s. In the nearly quarter of a century since then, Hirst has gone on to become one of the most influential artists of his generation.

Bringing together over seventy of the artist's seminal works, the exhibition includes key sculptures from the early 1990s, such as *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living*, in which a shark is suspended in formaldehyde, and *Mother and Child Divided*, a four-part sculpture of a bisected cow and calf. Also on show are important vitrines, such as *A Thousand Years* 1990, in which the cycle of life is represented by a cow's head, flies and insect-o-cutor. Alongside these sculptures are cabinets displaying rows of pills, medical packaging and surgical implements, as well as paintings made throughout Hirst's career from his spot, spin, butterfly and fly series. In addition, two major installations are on display: *In and Out of Love* 1991, which includes a room full of live butterflies and has not been shown in its entirety since its creation, and *Pharmacy* 1992.

Damien Hirst said:

"We have been planning this show for so long I can't believe it's finally happening – I think I was avoiding looking back but now I've done it it's exciting! It's nearly twenty-five years of my life. There is something for everyone and I'm glad people will get the opportunity to see my work and judge for themselves."

Damien Hirst was born in 1965 in Bristol, UK. He lives and works in London and Devon. He is one of the most prominent artists to have emerged from the British art scene in the 1990s. Hirst's exploration of imagery is notable for its strong associations to life and death, and to belief and value systems.

*Damien Hirst* is curated by Ann Gallagher, Head of Collections (British Art), Tate, with Loren Hansi Momodu, Assistant Curator, Tate Modern and is coordinated by Sophie McKinlay, Project Manager, Tate Modern. The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue by Tate Publishing.

**For further information please contact Duncan Holden / Kate Moores, Tate Press Office**  
Call 020 7887 8731/4939      Email [pressoffice@tate.org.uk](mailto:pressoffice@tate.org.uk)      Visit [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)

## Notes to editors

Damien Hirst has participated in numerous group exhibitions including the Venice Biennale in 1993 and 2003; *Twentieth Century British Sculpture*, Jeu de Paume, Paris, 1996; *Extreme Abstraction*, Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, 2005; *Into Me / Out of Me*, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York, 2006; *Re-Object*, Kunsthhaus Bregenz, 2007 and *Color Chart: Reinventing Color 1950 to Today*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2008. Solo exhibitions include *Internal Affairs*, ICA, London, 1991; Astrup Fearnley Museum, Oslo, 1997; *The Agony and the Ecstasy*, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples, 2004; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston 2005; *For the Love of God*, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 2008 and Palazzo Vecchio, Florence, 2010/11. He received the DAAD fellowship in Berlin in 1994 and won the Turner Prize in 1995.

## About Qatar Museums Authority

Qatar Museums Authority (QMA) was founded in 2005. Under the leadership of its Chairperson, H.E. Sheikha Al Mayassa, QMA is transforming the State of Qatar into a cultural hub for the Middle East. The globally acclaimed Museum of Islamic Art, designed by I.M. Pei, was inaugurated in 2008. In 2010, Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art opened, creating a focus for the emerging modern and contemporary art scene in the region. The National Museum of Qatar is currently being developed in a major new building designed by Jean Nouvel. The current programme of large-scale exhibitions by international artists, showing in the Middle East for the first time, includes *Cai Guo-Qiang: Saraab*, *Louise Bourgeois: Conscious and Unconscious*, and *Murakami: Ego*. In December last year, the new MIA Park, designed by Pei Partnership Architects, was inaugurated featuring the first public artwork by Richard Serra in the Middle East.

For further information, please visit [www.qma.org.qa](http://www.qma.org.qa)

## About the Cultural Olympiad and London 2012 Festival

The London 2012 Cultural Olympiad is the largest cultural celebration in the history of the modern Olympic and Paralympic Movements. Spread over four years, it is designed to give everyone in the UK a chance to be part of London 2012 and inspire creativity across all forms of culture, especially among young people.

The culmination of the Cultural Olympiad will be the London 2012 Festival, a spectacular 12-week nationwide celebration bringing together leading artists from across the world with the very best from the UK, from Midsummer's Day on 21 June and running until the final day of the Paralympic Games on 9 September 2012. The London 2012 Festival will celebrate the huge range, quality and accessibility of the UK's world-class culture including dance, music, theatre, the visual arts, fashion, film and digital innovation, giving the opportunity for people across the UK to celebrate the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Principal funders of the Cultural Olympiad and London 2012 Festival are Arts Council England, Legacy Trust UK and the Olympic Lottery Distributor. BP and BT are Premier Partners of the Cultural Olympiad and the London 2012 Festival.

For more details on the programme and to sign up for information visit [www.london2012.com/festival](http://www.london2012.com/festival)

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## Damien Hirst's iconic *For the Love of God* on show in Tate Modern's Turbine Hall



*For the Love of God* 2007  
© Damien Hirst. All rights reserved. DACS 2011  
Photographed by Prudence Cuming Associates

To accompany Tate Modern's major survey of Damien Hirst's work, the artist's iconic diamond-covered skull *For the Love of God* 2007 is on show in the Turbine Hall. Presented as a free display to coincide with the opening twelve weeks of the *Damien Hirst* exhibition, sponsored by the Qatar Museums Authority, the work is housed in a special viewing room from 4 April to 24 June 2012.

*For the Love of God* is a life-size platinum cast of an eighteenth century human skull, covered by 8,601 flawless diamonds, inset with the original skull's teeth. At the front of the cranium is a 52.4 carat pink diamond. Since it was first exhibited in 2007, *For the Love of God* has become one of the most widely recognised works of contemporary art. It represents the artist's continued interest in mortality and notions of value. Alluding to the iconography of the skull in art as a *memento mori* – a reminder of the fragility of life – the work can be viewed alternatively as a glorious, devotional, defiant or provocative gesture in the face of death itself.

*For the Love of God* is on display in the east end of the Turbine Hall and is free for visitors to Tate Modern to view. Having been exhibited at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam in 2008 and the Palazzo Vecchio, Florence in 2010-11, its display at Tate Modern is the first time it has been shown in a public gallery in the UK.

Ann Gallagher, Head of Collections (British Art), Tate and curator of the exhibition said: "We are delighted to be showing this key work by Damien Hirst to coincide with our major exhibition at Tate Modern in 2012. Visitors have the opportunity to view *For the Love of God* as an independent exhibit or as a culmination of many of the themes revealed in the exhibition, which surveys Hirst's work from the late 1980s onwards."

Damien Hirst said:

"I am really pleased that the diamond skull is on exhibition again in London, having been away for five years. The Turbine Hall at Tate Modern is a great place to show it and I hope lots of people enjoy seeing it there this spring."

*For the Love of God* is on display from 4 April to 24 June 2012. *Damien Hirst* is at Tate Modern from 4 April to 9 September 2012 and is the first substantial survey of the artist's work ever held in the UK. The exhibition is curated by Ann Gallagher, Head of Collections (British Art), Tate, with Loren Hansi Momodu, Assistant Curator, Tate Modern and is coordinated by Sophie McKinlay, Project Manager, Tate Modern.

**For further information please contact Duncan Holden / Kate Moores, Tate Press Office  
Call 020 7887 8731/4939 Email [pressoffice@tate.org.uk](mailto:pressoffice@tate.org.uk) Visit [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)**

**Damien Hirst**

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Left: *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living* 1991. Right: *Sympathy in White Major – Absolution II* 2006 (detail)



Left: *Beautiful, childish, expressive, tasteless, not art, over simplistic, throw away, kid's stuff, lacking integrity, rotating, nothing but visual candy, celebrating, sensational, inarguably beautiful painting (for over the sofa)* 1996. Right: *A Thousand Years* 1990

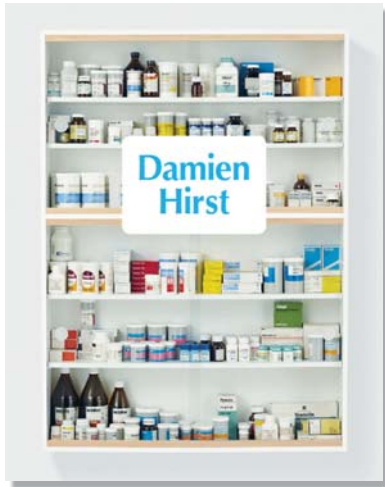


Left: *Mother and Child Divided* 2007. Right: *Sinner* 1988

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## Press Release



# Damien Hirst

Edited by Ann Gallagher

Born in Bristol in the UK in 1965, Damien Hirst is one of the most important and highly regarded artists of his generation. His wide-ranging practice, which includes installation, painting, sculpture and drawing, challenges the boundaries between art, science and popular culture. Published to accompany Hirst's first major survey exhibition in the UK, staged as part of the London 2012 Festival, the culmination of the Cultural Olympiad, this book will trace Hirst's career from his emergence on the art scene in the late 1980s to his present status as one of the best-known artists working today.

### Details

Published to accompany  
the Tate Modern exhibition  
04 April 2012

275 x 230 mm  
224 pp  
140 colour illustrations

Hardback  
ISBN 978 1 84976 014 0  
**£35.00**

Paperback  
ISBN 978 1 84976 010 2  
**£24.99**

With an introduction by curator Ann Gallagher, a new interview by Nicholas Serota, Director of Tate, and essays by curator Andrew Wilson, author and critic Brian Dillon and art historian and critic Thomas Crow, as well as shorter texts on key moments in Hirst's career by Michael Craig-Martin and Michael Bracewell, this superbly illustrated survey is a fitting tribute to Hirst's ground-breaking achievements. Surveying 25 years of the artist's practice, from young Turk of the British art scene to internationally respected figure, this book makes a major contribution to our understanding and appreciation of one of the most significant artists of our time.

### Notes to editors

Ann Gallagher is Head of Collections (British Art) at Tate, and the editor of *Susan Hillier*.

Contributors include Michael Bracewell, Michael Craig-Martin, Thomas Crow, Brian Dillon, Ann Gallagher, Nicholas Serota and Andrew Wilson.

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