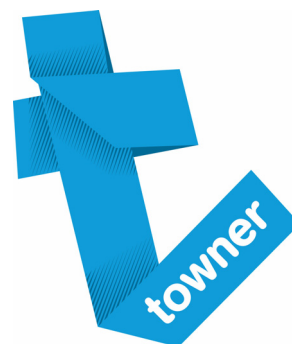


# ARTIST ROOMS

ON TOUR WITH THE

**ArtFund**



**PRESS RELEASE 14 September 2010**

## **Towner presents Robert Mapplethorpe – photography with sculpture**

***ARTIST ROOMS on Tour with the Art Fund***

**25 September 2010 – 21 November 2010**

Provocateur. Innovator. Icon. Towner plays host to the South Coast's first ever exhibition of work by one of the most significant photographers of the 20th century, Robert Mapplethorpe. The exhibition comes to Towner, Eastbourne's award-winning new contemporary art museum, as part of *ARTIST ROOMS on Tour with The Art Fund*, a nationwide initiative designed to display the outstanding new national art collection donated by Anthony d'Offay. Towner's exhibition will feature around 60 iconic Robert Mapplethorpe images from the ARTIST ROOMS collection, whilst offering a fresh perspective on this groundbreaking artist with a selection of his sculptural works never before seen in a UK public gallery.

Following the success of 2009, 18 museums and galleries across the UK in 2010 are showing 25 ARTIST ROOMS exhibitions and displays from the collection created by the curator and collector, Anthony d'Offay, and acquired by the nation in February 2008. *ARTIST ROOMS on Tour with the Art Fund* has been devised to enable this collection held by Tate and the National Galleries of Scotland, to reach and inspire new audiences across the country, particularly young people.

ARTIST ROOMS at Towner will feature 60 of Mapplethorpe's most defining photographic works from the 1970s and 80s – encompassing career-spanning self portraits, depictions of the male form and iconic photographs of his contemporaries (including Patti Smith, Andy Warhol, Marianne Faithfull and Lisa Lyons).

Towner's addition of a group of sculptural pieces sourced from private collections adds a new dimension to the ARTIST ROOMS collection, shedding light on an area of Robert Mapplethorpe's practice unknown to many. The sculpture includes wall mounted star and arrow works and mirrored pieces.

**TATE**



**NATIONAL  
GALLERIES OF  
SCOTLAND**

Anthony d'Offay said "By bringing previously unseen works into the UK and mounting a Robert Mapplethorpe exhibition that includes his sculpture for the first time, Towner presents an ambitious exhibition that builds on the ARTIST ROOMS collection to provide an exciting insight into the world of this unique and important artist."

Matthew Rowe, Artistic Director of Towner, added "Robert Mapplethorpe was one of the most important photographers of the 20th century. I am delighted that we have been able to work with ARTIST ROOMS to bring this extraordinary collection of his work, made available through the exceptional generosity of Anthony d'Offay, to Eastbourne."

"The addition of his sculpture means that the people of the South East will be able to enjoy a UK first and experience another side to Robert Mapplethorpe – and the exhibition is entirely free of charge."

Born in 1946, American artist Robert Mapplethorpe produced some of the most striking images of the last 50 years. Garnering fame and notoriety in equal measure for the often challenging nature of his photographs, Mapplethorpe's celebrated body of work spans acclaimed depictions of the male form, delicate flower studies, enduring celebrity images and vivid documentation of his native New York's underground scene. His work holds a significant place in the history of artistic struggle to depict the world as it is with honesty and truth, and Towner seeks to provide a rounded and insightful view of Mapplethorpe the artist.

The exhibition coincides with Brighton Photo Biennial 2010, a celebration of cutting edge contemporary photography. Mapplethorpe's work provides a historical context whilst reinvigorating the contemporary debates around photography.

To find out more information about ARTIST ROOMS on Tour please visit [www.artfund.org/artistrooms](http://www.artfund.org/artistrooms). To see the full ARTIST ROOMS collection please visit [www.tate.org.uk/artistrooms](http://www.tate.org.uk/artistrooms) and [www.nationalgalleries.org/artistrooms](http://www.nationalgalleries.org/artistrooms)

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#### **Notes to Editors:**

- Towner is Eastbourne's new contemporary art museum and home of the visual arts in the South East, which opened in early April 2009. With 1,250 m<sup>2</sup> of display space, Towner is now the largest gallery space in the South East region. Towner presents a unique programme of major exhibitions of contemporary and historic visual art alongside displays from the internationally renowned Towner Collection.
- Towner is open Tuesday – Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays, 11am – 5pm. Admission to Towner is free.
- Towner is funded by Eastbourne Borough Council and Arts Council England.
- Towner is only 1 hr 27 mins by train from London Victoria and London Bridge; trains leave every half hour.

#### **Robert Mapplethorpe**

- The American photographer Robert Mapplethorpe pushed the boundaries of his medium with both his subject matter and innovative techniques. Originally trained as a sculptor, his understanding of the human body in relation to the light which reveals it also extends his photographs beyond the boundaries of sculpture in a way that has yet to be surpassed in either medium. His distinctive style possesses a classical quality that revels in the sensual quality of nature and the human body. His work was often considered controversial but Mapplethorpe triumphed over legal campaigns testing the right to individual freedom of expression. His work therefore also holds a significant place in the history of artistic struggle to depict the world as it is with honesty and truth. The group of photographs in ARTIST ROOMS, probably the best collection in the world after the Guggenheim Museum, includes studies of flowers, portraits of many of the most influential artists, writers and musicians of the period, including Andy Warhol, Truman Capote and Patti Smith, and iconic self-portraits. For more information visit [www.mapplethorpe.org](http://www.mapplethorpe.org)

## ARTIST ROOMS

- The collection of 725 works, representing one of the most important holdings of post-war and contemporary international art in private hands, was assembled by Anthony d'Offay, whose London galleries played a key role in the promotion and understanding of twentieth-century art in the UK over a period of more than 30 years.
- The 2010 ARTIST ROOMS tour venues are Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh; Tate Britain and Tate Modern, London; Dean Gallery, Edinburgh; Manchester Art Gallery; Talbot Rice Gallery, Edinburgh; Hunterian Museum, Glasgow; Perth Museum & Art Gallery; Kettle's Yard, Cambridge; Nottingham Contemporary; An Lanntair, Stornoway; The Ulster Museum, Belfast; Towner, Eastbourne; Highland Touring Circuit (Swanson Gallery Thurso; Timespan, Helmsdale; Inverness Museum and Art Gallery); BALTIC, Gateshead; Oriel Mostyn, Llandudno; and New Walk Museum and Art Gallery, Leicester.

## ARTIST ROOMS at Towner

- Towner's exhibition will feature 2 images of Lisa Lyons not shown before as part of ARTIST ROOMS, as well as Andy Warhol's silkscreen portrait of Mapplethorpe alongside Mapplethorpe's self-portraits.

## Anthony d'Offay

- Born in Sheffield in 1940, Anthony d'Offay studied art at Edinburgh University, graduating in 1962. Whilst at the University, he fell in love with the collections of the National Gallery of Scotland. Years later he described walking round the galleries on The Mound as "the defining experience of my life". In 1969, the year in which the gallery moved to Dering Street, he organised the ground breaking *Abstract Art in England 1913-1915*, which became an Arts Council touring show. He became interested in contemporary art and began to include shows by living artists in the gallery's programme; these included Lucian Freud in 1972, Gilbert and George, 1972, Michael Andrews, 1974, William Coldstream, 1976, Eduardo Paolozzi 1977, Frank Auerbach, 1978, Richard Long, 1978 and Richard Hamilton in 1980. In 1977 he married Anne Seymour, a curator with many years experience in the Modern Collection at the Tate Gallery, who had a special interest in avant-garde international art. In 1980 they opened a gallery for contemporary art 23 Dering Street, a uniquely large space for London at that time. They, together with Marie-Louise Laband, Director of the gallery, inaugurated a programme of international contemporary art, starting with a seminal exhibition by Joseph Beuys, *Stripes from the House of the Shaman* in August 1980. The intention was to show the greatest contemporary art being made, much of which was largely unknown to the British public at that time. Over the years, the gallery in London presented a large number of highly acclaimed exhibitions by some of the greatest artists of our time. Many of these shows later travelled to public institutions in Britain and abroad. In addition to the shows made for the spaces in London, the Gallery was involved in organising important exhibitions for museums and public galleries around the world. The gallery closed in 2001.

## Brighton Photo Biennial 2010

- Brighton Photo Biennial 2010 presents *New Documents*, curated by the internationally renowned photographer, editor and curator Martin Parr. The Biennial runs from 2 October to 14 November. For more information visit [www.bpb.org.uk](http://www.bpb.org.uk)

## The Art Fund

- The Art Fund is a membership charity that helps museums and galleries buy works of art for all to enjoy through awarding grants, campaigning and fundraising. Recent highlights include leading the £3.3 million campaign to save the Staffordshire Hoard, and helping to buy a new commission, Antony Gormley's *6 Times*, for the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art. The Art Fund is financed by the generosity of its 80,000 members and supporters who have a passion for art and the institutions that house great collections. For more information contact the Press Office on 020 7225 4888 or visit [www.artfund.org](http://www.artfund.org).

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