



The

Great

Big

Firstsite

Art

Exhibition

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We are making The Great Big Art Exhibition, and everybody is invited to take part.

While the doors to our museums and galleries are shut, let's unleash our national flair and creativity. Using our front windows, gardens or balconies to display what we make.

The following pages of this pack provide all of the information you need to take part. It also includes ideas by leading artists and treasures from museum collections across the country, to inspire you to get making.

So, whether you are a pro, enthusiast, dabbler or complete novice, join us to make the largest exhibition ever staged!

We have more artists lined up to offer inspiration over the coming weeks, and will continue to add ideas to the pack. Be sure to sign up to our newsletter to hear about these new activities as soon as they become available.

Sign up at www.firstsite.uk/newsletter

Thank you for joining us to celebrate the creativity of the nation. We're excited to see what you make!

Take Part

Make

Your artwork can be made through any medium – including, but not limited to painting, sculpture, drawing, video, performance, photography or collage.

You can work on your own, as a household, devise collaborations with your friends, work colleagues, team members, tower block, street, school, or place of worship. Anything goes.

Please remember to be Covid-safe and to follow the guidance when collaborating. Full details can be found online at gov.uk/coronavirus

Show

Display your artwork. This could be on the inside of your window facing out, inside your home to be photographed for social media, or in your garden or outdoor space where it can be seen by other people if possible. Please be careful when installing your artwork and get the help of a responsible adult wherever possible.

Share

Take a photograph of your artwork and share with us on your chosen social media channels. If you are under the age of 13 and don't have a social media account, ask your parent or guardian to share for you. Don't forget to use the hashtag #thegreatbigartexhibition2021 and tag us using the handles below:

Facebook: @firstsite

Twitter: @firstsite

Instagram: @firstsitecolchester

When sharing please tell us your name, the closest town or city to where you live, and provide a one sentence description of your artwork. You can also make a short (30 second) video or audio clip of your description if you'd prefer.

Visit the Firstsite website to take a look at the artworks shared so far and be inspired to make your own. www.firstsite.uk

About Firstsite

Firstsite is free, fun and for everyone.

Our iconic and award winning building is in Colchester, Essex where we show the very best historic, modern and contemporary art from around the world. In our gallery and online, we provide new creative opportunities and promote imaginative responses to contemporary issues.

Find out more about Firstsite and how to support our work at www.firstsite.uk

Firstsite
Lewis Gardens
High Street
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CO1 1JH

Registered charity no. 1031800

Support Us

Firstsite's award winning building designed by Rafael Viñoly is ten years old this year! Please help us keep supporting artists and providing fun, free creative activities for people everywhere.

Donate at www.firstsite.uk/donate. Whatever you can give will make a HUGE difference!

Plus Tate

The Great Big Art Exhibition is supported by Plus Tate. Plus Tate is a dynamic network of visual arts organisations stretching across the UK that exchange ideas, knowledge, skills and resources and collaborate on joint programmes.

Find out more about Plus Tate and its members by visiting tate.org.uk/about-us/national-international-local/plus-tate

Our Partners

[Art UK](#), [The Big Draw](#), [Voluntary Arts](#)

Antony Gormley

What you make doesn't have to be big to have fun making it. We often do this round the dining table after dinner and instead of a sweet everybody gets a ball of clay. Sometimes people are shy but on the whole once it gets going everybody gets into it and a lovely kind of engaged silence with occasional giggles descends.

I insist on certain rules.

1. You can't use tools.
2. What you make has to be made in the hand.
3. Keep it together.

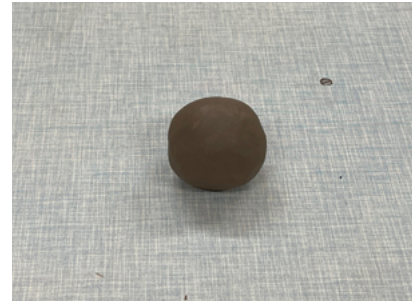
I have found that making bits and trying to stick them together just simply doesn't work. There is something magic about taking the ball and squeezing out like an amoeba, making pseudopodia-like extensions that become head, tail, arms and legs.

It's always tricky trying to get the things to stand up. I put the legs of this dog in front of the blower heater but a hairdryer will do. They are skinny and dry out quickly, then it's quite easy for them to stand.

The last dog in the sequence is raw fired, which just meant dipping it in glaze and then firing it once – it comes out hard as stone and has a better chance of survival.

Most of the door frames and windowsills of this house now are covered in a menagerie of these kinds of things, all different. As they fall we make new ones, they get changed.

Have fun!



The National Gallery



Claude Monet (1840–1926)
The Water-Lily Pond, 1899
Oil on canvas, 88.3×93.1 cm

© The National Gallery, London

In 1893 Monet bought some land next to his house and created a water garden. He looked at it again and again over time, and inspired by its shapes, light and colour, he created over 250 paintings. Do you have a view from where you live which changes over time and which might inspire you to make an artwork?

Dr Gabriele Finaldi,
Director, National Gallery

View the artwork online at nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/search-the-collection

British Museum



Burhan Doğançay (1929–2013)
A Look at the Bright Side
from the *General Urban Walls* series
Gouache on paper, 1970. 73×54 cm

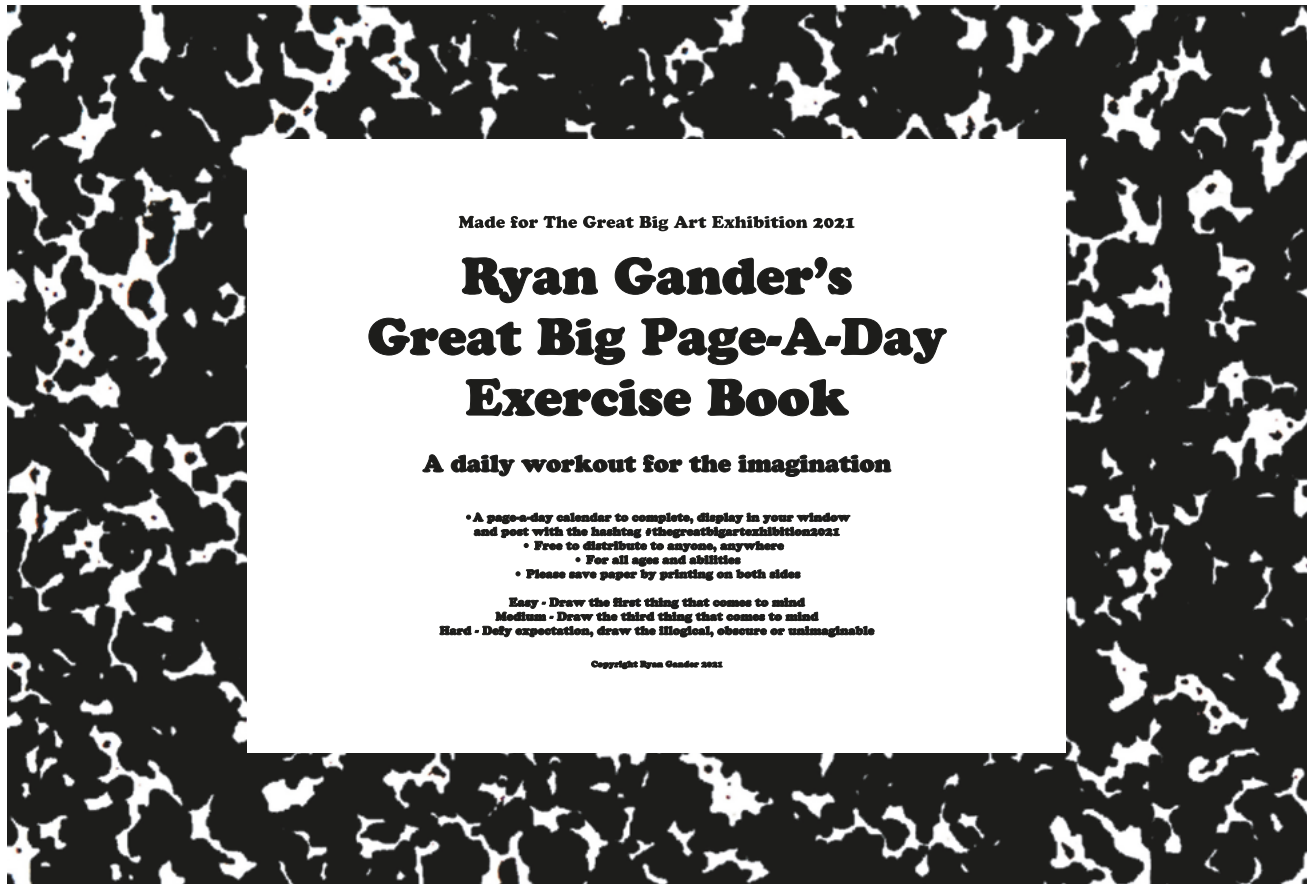
© The Trustees of the British Museum. 2010,6007.5.
Gift of Joanna G. Freistadt in honour of Alice Schwarz-Gardos.

This abstract work was inspired by the appearance of urban walls that the Turkish artist Burhan Doğançay encountered when he arrived in New York in 1963. He described them as 'speaking walls, where people express their frustrations and aspirations'. We hope you will be inspired to look more closely at the textures and layers of the walls around you, and consider how you might use collage differently in your next work of art.

Venetia Porter,
Curator of Islamic and Contemporary Middle East Art,
British Museum

View the artwork online at britishmuseum.org/collection

Ryan Gander



Visit www.firstsite.uk/ryan-gander-exercise-book
to download the complete Exercise Book

Examples from the book:

On this day, I drew something new...
On this day, I drew something sewn...
Today I drew something easy...
Today I drew a cube...
Today I drew something valuable...
Today I drew something sweet...
Today I drew something red...

The Courtauld



Berthe Morisot (1841–1895)
Berthe Morisot drawing with her daughter, 1889
Etching, 13.8 cm × 19 cm

© The Courtauld, London (Samuel Courtauld Trust)

In this picture, Morisot captures herself quietly drawing with her daughter – a shared moment of calm and enjoyment that we hope will be familiar to all those who have found new inspiration in the last year, or found time to enjoy art as a family.

Ernst Vegelin van Claerbergen,
Head of The Courtauld Gallery

View the artwork online at courtauld.ac.uk/gallery/collection

David Shrigley



PUT
A THING
IN AN
ODD
PLACE

The Royal Academy of Arts



Yinka Shonibare (b. 1962)
Cheeky Little Astronomer, 2013
Fibre glass life-sized mannequin
dutch wax printed cotton textile,
leather, resin, chair, globe and telescope
123×47×90 cm

© Royal Academy of Arts

We chose this work because the child appears to be sitting at home seeking adventure – a longing shared by so many of us this year. What do you imagine the child is seeing as they look through their telescope? Could you make an artwork that shows what you have discovered? Could you have a go at making your own looking device? Something that changes the way you see the world around you.

Axel Rüger,
Secretary & Chief Executive, Royal Academy of Arts

View the artwork online at royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists

National Portrait Gallery



Darvish Fakhr
Akram Khan, 2008

Composite of 9 panels in oil, 50×50 cm each

© National Portrait Gallery, London
Commissioned with help from the Jerwood Charitable Foundation
through the Jerwood Portrait Commission, 2008

Akram Khan is one of Britain's most acclaimed choreographers and dancers. In this portrait by Darvish Fakhr, he is shown performing his interpretation of the nine rasa, or emotions, that underpin all Indian classical dance forms. Why not create your own multiple portrait and use the different sections to convey feelings or moods, using varied physical positions or facial expressions.

Dr Nicholas Cullinan,
Director, National Portrait Gallery

[View the artwork online at \[npg.org.uk/collections\]\(http://npg.org.uk/collections\)](http://npg.org.uk/collections)

Sonia Boyce

Someone That Means So Much

This pandemic has heightened our sense of those people that matter most in our lives.

Think about someone that means so much to you. Can you picture them? Is there a word that describes them? Is there an object that reminds you of them? Is there a photograph that you could copy from? Don't worry, copying and tracing is an act of devotion.

National Museums Liverpool



Édouard Vuillard (1868–1940)
Madame Hessel au Sofa, c. 1905
Oil on board, 54.6×54.6 cm

© Walker Art Gallery, National Museums Liverpool

Vuillard and the sitter were good friends. The painting suggests friendship, the comfort of home, the value of conversation, life on the sofa! All things that we have understood better and experienced during the pandemic. If this work had been painted today, Madame Hessel would be in conversation via Zoom, but I'm sure would have the same animated appearance. It is a painting that always makes me smile.

Sandra Penketh,
Executive Director of Art Galleries & Collections Care,
National Museums Liverpool

View the artwork online at liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/collections

Ashmolean Museum



Camille Pissarro (1830–1903)
View from my Window in Cloudy Weather, 1886–88
Oil on canvas, 65×81 cm

© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford

This beautiful picture is by Camille Pissarro, the artist considered ‘the father’ of Impressionism. It shows the view from a window in his house in the village of Eragny-sur-Epte in northern France. Pissarro looks down on his garden from a height, like a person stuck indoors, giving the painting a sense of detachment.

Xa Sturgis,
Director, Ashmolean

View the artwork online at collections.ashmolean.org



The Ardabil Carpet
unknown, 1539–1540, Iran
Museum no. 272-1893

© Victoria and Albert Museum, London

The Ardabil Carpet is one of the greatest treasures of the V&A. Acquired on the advice of William Morris, this 16th century masterpiece, with its remarkable mix of intricacy and enormity, has inspired artists for generations. It played an important role in the introduction of Persian design into British culture, but it is also a favourite for visitors to South Kensington today. I hope you enjoy getting as lost in its beauty and craftsmanship as I do.

Dr Tristram Hunt,
Director, Victoria and Albert Museum

[View the artwork online at vam.ac.uk/collections](http://vam.ac.uk/collections)

Tai Shani

A performance score

Any action, gesture or movement can be a performance if you decide that it is. This happens both by how it is done, and how you think about what you are doing. Drinking a glass of water for example, if you decide that it is a performance, one approach would be to 'perform' it by being theatrical, drinking water tragically or voraciously as if it was the first glass of water after walking through the desert, or very carefully like it was the last glass of drinkable water in the world. The second approach is one of attention, drinking your water as you normally would but thinking about and paying attention to each little movement, where you look, or how it feels.

A performance score is a series of simple actions that anyone can perform and you can perform any way you like, be it fully operatic or very naturally. It is called a score because it is a series of simple notes for a DIY performance, which is forever changing and evolving. Below are 7 notes for actions which are to be performed at the window once a day.

1. The first action is to place six yellow objects in the window arranging them as a sculpture.
2. The second action is to wear your favourite going out outfit and strike a pose in the window.
3. The third action is to be a ghost at the window. What would a ghost be to you? What would they do?
4. The fourth action is to sing along to your favourite song with your back to the window.
5. The fifth action is to stand at the window holding an object from your bedroom in your left hand and an object from the kitchen in your right hand.
6. The sixth action is to write a short message to someone you love dearly, after dark switch the lights on and off using morse code.
7. The seventh action is to write a new score of seven actions, the seventh always being the writing of a new score, or score instruction such as doing it backwards, in the dark, with a family member.

Arts Council Collection



Melanie Manchot (b.1966)
Dance (All Night, London), 2017
3 channel video installation comprising 4K and HD video
double stereo sound, 30 minutes

Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London. © Melanie Manchot. Gift of the artist 2017.
Commissioned by Art Night for the Arts Council Collection, made possible by Art Fund.
Image courtesy of the artist. All Rights Reserved, DACS

My selection from the Arts Council Collection is an inspirational film by Melanie Manchot called *Dance (All Night, London)* 2017 that brings communities together through dance (from Cuban rueda to Argentina tango) as a collective experience.

Deborah Smith,
Director, Arts Council Collection

[View the artwork online at artscouncilcollection.org.uk/collection](https://artscouncilcollection.org.uk/collection)

Wallace Collection



Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640)
The Rainbow Landscape, c. 1636
Oil on oak panel, 137 × 233.5 cm

© The Trustees of the Wallace Collection

Since the start of the pandemic, vibrant images of rainbows have appeared across the country in windows, in social media and even as street graffiti. Often a symbol of hope for many cultures, the rainbow perhaps embodied a similar significance for Rubens, who had sought in his diplomatic activities to bring peace to the Netherlands.

Dr Xavier Bray,
Director, The Wallace Collection

[View the artwork online at wallacelive.wallacecollection.org](http://wallacelive.wallacecollection.org)

Jeremy Deller

‘A work of art
is above all
an adventure
of the mind’

Eugène Ionesco

National Galleries Scotland

This is one of a series of four life-sized embroidered panels by Pheobe Anna Traquair. In this final image from the group, the life-less figure of a young man, representing the human soul, is awakened from death by the kiss of a red-haired angel. In our troubled times, this image of hope and renewal triumphing over despair, with the delicately entwined figures set against a background of resonant colours, will surely be a comfort and an inspiration.

Sir John Leighton,
Director-General,
National Galleries of Scotland

View the artwork online
at nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists



Phoebe Anna Traquair (1852–1936)
The Progress of a Soul: The Victory, 1902
Silk and gold thread embroidered on linen
188.2 × 74.2 cm
Bequest of the artist 1936
National Galleries of Scotland

© National Galleries Scotland

Tate



Lubaina Himid (b.1954)
Freedom and Change, 1984
Wood, textiles, cardboard, paint, graphite,
coloured pencil, chalk and ink
590 x 309.6 x 6 cm

© the artist, Tate

Lubaina is an artist of global significance, who lives and works in Preston. Just the title of this work speaks to what we are all looking for right now – freedom from difficult restrictions and change for the better. Painted onto a pink bedsheet, the central image shows two black women dancing or running barefoot holding hands and joyfully challenging convention. I hope this painting might encourage people to take what is to hand around them and deploy it to imagine a different future.

Maria Balshaw,
Director, Tate

[View the artwork online at \[tate.org.uk/about-us/collection\]\(https://www.tate.org.uk/about-us/collection\)](https://www.tate.org.uk/about-us/collection)

National Museum Wales



Bedwyr Williams (b. 1974)
Tyrrau Mawr, 2016
4K Video Installation
20 minutes video loop.

Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales.
Acquired through the Artes Mundi Derek Williams Trust Purchase Prize 2017.
© the artist

Bedwyr Williams's *Tyrrau Mawr* was one of the shortlisted entries for the Artes Mundi prize in 2016, and was acquired by Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales with the support of the Derek Williams Trust. The work radically reimagines an iconic location in Snowdonia in Wales, often depicted in Welsh art over the centuries, in ways that for me are mesmeric, inspiring and deeply unsettling. It liberates us all to return to familiar places and see them with new eyes.

David Anderson,
Director General,
National Museum Wales

View the artwork online at museum.wales/collections

Thanks

Thank you to all the contributing artists: Etel Adnan and Simone Fattal, Sonia Boyce, Jeremy Deller, Ryan Gander, Antony Gormley, Anish Kapoor, Tai Shani, David Shrigley, and Ai Weiwei.

Thanks also to the Directors and staff at the following institutions: Arts Council Collection, Ashmolean Museum, British Museum, the Courtauld, National Gallery, National Galleries Scotland, National Museum Wales, National Museums Liverpool, National Portrait Gallery, Royal Academy of Arts, Tate, V&A, and the Wallace Collection.

Thanks also to our project partners: Art UK, The Big Draw, Voluntary Arts and the members of Plus Tate. Thank you for their overwhelming support in helping to promote this project across your audiences and encourage everyone across the UK to take part.

We continue to be overwhelmed by the positive response from the museums, galleries and artist communities. We are thrilled to be able to collaborate with such amazing people and institutions to bring creativity to the nation, helping everyone get through this challenging time.

Most importantly our thanks to you for being creative and being involved. Art is for everyone! Please remember to share whatever you make, use the hashtag #thegreatbigartexhibition2021 and tag us using the handles below.

Facebook: @firstsite

Twitter: @firstsite

Instagram: @firstsitecolchester

The Great Big Art Exhibition is generously supported by Arts Council England.

Designed by Fraser Muggeridge studio



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

PLUS TATE NETWORK



Terms and conditions

By submitting your Artwork to The Great Big Art Exhibition you irrevocably and unconditionally agree that Firstsite (and third parties authorised by us):

- may use your Artworks as part of The Great Big Art Exhibition and in any way we see fit in any and all media throughout the world in perpetuity without further liability or acknowledgement to you (and you hereby give us all necessary consents and waivers, (including waivers or moral rights) for such purposes);
- may identify you by name, your social media name and use these and the Artworks that you submit for publicity, marketing and advertising for The Great Big Art Exhibition and other connected material as we so elect;
- shall be entitled to edit, crop, and adapt your Artwork in any way in our sole discretion;
- shall be entitled to display the Artwork via any medium as part of an Exhibition at Firstsite and other chosen locations at our discretion in connection with The Great Big Art Exhibition;
- shall be entitled to use an image of the Artwork, or part of the Artwork to promote and publicise The Great Big Art Exhibition, including future presentations of The Great Big Art Exhibition at Firstsite and other chosen locations at our discretion;
- The copyright of the Artwork remains with you but Firstsite will have the right to use it in perpetuity throughout the world.

You must comply with the following:

- You confirm that to the best of your knowledge and belief you own and control all the rights in and to the Artwork;
- You must not include any third party material in your Artwork unless you have obtained permission from the rights holder for it to be included and for it to be used as set out in these terms;
- You must not include anything defamatory, illegal, infringing, hateful, obscene or offensive in your Artwork;
- Submitting your artwork to The Great Big Art Exhibition does not guarantee that your Artwork will be featured and/or be included within The Great Big Art Exhibition;

- If you are under 13 you will need a parent/guardian to submit your artwork via social media.
- If you include any children in your Artwork you must have parental/legal guardian permission to do this;

Firstsite is registered as a data processor in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation. We will process your personal data, such as your name, contact details, age etc (including any Special Categories personal data such as your political opinion or religious belief) which may be expressed on your Artwork) in accordance with these terms, our privacy policy (<https://firstsite.uk/privacy-policy/>) and the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation.

You acknowledge and agree that neither we nor any of our assignees or licensees shall have any liability to you for any loss or damage arising out of the use of your Artwork in accordance with these terms to the extent permitted under applicable law.

You agree that our rights under these terms may be freely licensed and/or assigned by us.

These terms shall be governed by and construed in accordance with English and Welsh law and will be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of England and Wales.