

Press Release

26 January 2023

Hurvin Anderson: Barbershop / Hurvin Anderson Curates

26 May - 5 November 2023

In spring 2023, The Hepworth Wakefield will present a major solo exhibition of paintings and drawings by Hurvin Anderson, including new works. The exhibition will focus on Anderson's *Barbershop* series as a lens through which to understand Anderson's wider practice and unique sense of history, memory and place.

Anderson first painted a Birmingham-based barbershop in 2006. For more than 15 years, Anderson has repeatedly reworked the same barbershop in a multitude of ways to experiment with key concerns in modern and contemporary painting, such as the tension between abstraction and figuration, and the painterly possibilities of capturing memories and experiences. By deconstructing and recreating the scene with objects derived from photographic documentation, Anderson explores the resonance of an image, raising questions about seeing, history, authenticity and the nature of experience.

To reveal Anderson's creative process, a section of the exhibition will evoke his studio, displaying the sketches and drawings from his planning stages, 3D models he has made of the barbershop, and objects and archival material he has sourced to reconstruct the scene.

The exhibition will present the most comprehensive presentation of the *Barbershop* series, from the very first painting and initial studio drawings made in 2006 to a new large-scale drawing and new painting begun in 2022, which will be the largest and final works in the *Barbershop* series. On display will be some of the most political works within this series, such as *Is it OK to be Black?* 2015, which was a 70th Anniversary Commission for the Arts Council Collection with New Art Exchange, Nottingham and Thomas Dane Gallery. This work includes depictions of significant figures in the Civil Rights movement, Martin Luther King and Malcolm X, whose ideas and legacy remain important in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement. The title

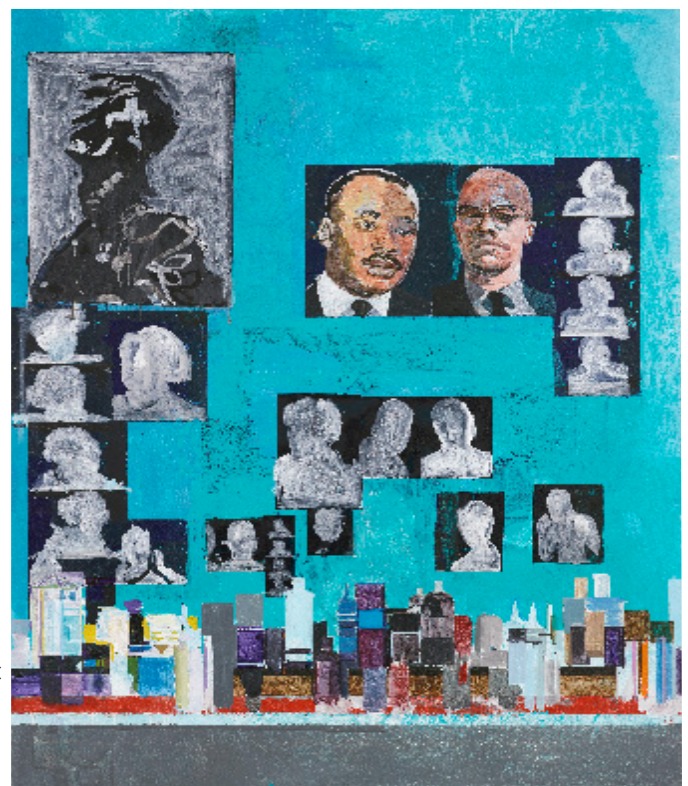


Image: Hurvin Anderson, *Is It Ok To Be Black?*, 2015. A 70th Anniversary Commission for the Arts Council Collection with New Art Exchange, Nottingham and Thomas Dane Gallery, Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London. © Hurvin Anderson. Courtesy the artist and Thomas Dane Gallery. Photo: Richard Ivey.

responds to a mis-hearing of the typical barbershop question 'is it ok at the back?' and highlights the underlying social context of the barbershop.

Alongside the *Barbershop* exhibition, Anderson will curate an exhibition of Modern British painting that will take visitors on a journey through his formative influences and highlight visual conversations between these works. On display will be paintings from throughout the 20th century to the present day which reveal points of dialogue with his own practice, including work by Michael Andrews, Frank Auerbach, Francis Bacon, Sonia Boyce, Patrick Caulfield, Prunella Clough, Duncan Grant, Denzil Forrester, Claudette Johnson, Leon Kossoff, Therese Lessore, Walter Sickert, Stanley Spencer and more.

About the exhibition, Hurvin Anderson said: 'I am looking forward to unveiling the final works in the *Barbershop* series at The Hepworth Wakefield. The *Barbershop* is a subject that I have returned to throughout my career, as a site that was a point of connection to Caribbean culture. In repeating the image, deconstructing it and putting it back together again, the series has also become a meditative exploration of painting itself. Presenting this series alongside *Hurvin Anderson Curates* feels like the perfect moment to pause and reflect on how I reached this point, considering influences, references and conversations with British painters past and present'.

Eleanor Clayton, Senior Curator, said: 'Hurvin Anderson is one of the most captivating painters working in Britain today. His works manage to be both visually beautiful and poetically poignant, capturing moments of experience and asking questions about memory and identity through his unique process of image-making. It is a huge honour to show for the first time the final works of his most celebrated series. We are grateful to Hurvin for his generosity in revealing his layered and intricate processes – something we know will be fascinating to our audiences and hope will encourage and inspire young and aspiring artists.'

Anderson was born in Birmingham in 1965 to Jamaican parents. He completed his BA at the Wimbledon School of Art in 1994, before receiving his MA from London's Royal College of Art in 1998. Anderson was shortlisted for the Turner Prize in 2017 and his work is represented in public collections around the UK, USA and Europe.

A new book, edited by Eleanor Clayton and published by The Hepworth Wakefield, will accompany the exhibition. Anderson is also creating a limited edition print to support The Hepworth Wakefield's work which will be released for sale in May 2023.

The exhibition will tour to Hastings Contemporary (17 November 2023 – 3 March 2024) and then onto Kistefos, Norway in Spring / Summer 2024.

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High-res press images can be downloaded from The Hepworth Wakefield's media centre:
hepworthwakefield.org/press/

ABOUT THE HEPWORTH WAKEFIELD

Designed by the acclaimed David Chipperfield Architects, The Hepworth Wakefield is set within Wakefield's historic waterfront, overlooking the River Calder and The Hepworth Wakefield Garden designed by Tom Stuart-Smith. Named after Barbara Hepworth, one of the most important artists of the 20th century who was born and brought up in Wakefield, the gallery presents major exhibitions of the best international modern and contemporary art. It is also home to Wakefield's growing art collection – an inspiring resource comprising outstanding works of modern British and contemporary art. The gallery runs engaging programmes for schools, families and local community groups to provide inspiring creative learning opportunities and a vibrant workshop, talks and events programme, including regular art fairs and markets.

hepworthwakefield.org

ABOUT HASTINGS CONTEMPORARY

Hastings Contemporary champions modern and contemporary art. An ambitious programme of temporary exhibitions showcases work by important Modern British artists, internationally celebrated artists and emerging practitioners, often in Kunsthalle-style displays throughout the building. The gallery has developed a reputation for its focus on painting. Innovative programming, partnerships and collaborations support a commitment to outreach, learning |and participation. The award-winning building is located on the town's historic fishing beach among the net huts and working structures of the fishing fleet.

hastingscontemporary.org

ABOUT KISTEFOS

Kistefos was established in 1996 by Norwegian businessman and art collector Christen Sveaas on the former site of his grandfather's pulp mill. Today, Kistefos offers world-class architecture, industrial history, art exhibitions, and an expansive sculpture park in scenic surroundings. Every year, Kistefos presents new art exhibitions by highly recognized national and international artists in its two galleries, The Twist and Nybruket Gallery. The Twist has won several prizes for its cutting-edge design and is a gallery, a bridge, and a sculpture, all in one. Nybruket Gallery is located in one of the old factory buildings of the wood pulp factory. The industrial heritage has been preserved and creates a beautiful framework for contemporary exhibitions. The sculpture park expands with one or more sculptures each year. Today there are 51 works by prominent contemporary artists such as Pierre Huyghe, Carol Bove, Ida Ekblad, Yayoi Kusama, John Gerrard, Claes Oldenburg, Lynda Benglis, Tony Cragg, Olafur Eliasson and Anish Kapoor. All recent sculptures are site-specific, inspired by the cultural heritage, nature and history of Kistefos.

kistefosmuseum.com