

Media information: Thursday 9 June 2011



NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY AND BALTIC UNITE TO REVOLUTIONISE ART EDUCATION

Today Northumbria University and BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art announce a ground breaking partnership that will transform higher education in contemporary visual art and introduce unique learning opportunities for students world-wide.

The collaboration creates a globally recognised learning environment that unites academic research excellence and cutting edge contemporary art practice. It will establish a new Institute of Contemporary Art within Northumbria University's School of Art and Social Sciences, providing full time PhD opportunities to national and international students.

The Institute will be directed by a BALTIC Professor, appointed in the autumn and expected to be of international standing, to provide world class learning and mentorship in Contemporary Art PhD research. They will be supported by an advisory group comprising senior members of BALTIC's staff including BALTIC Director and Chief Curator.

This appointment will extend BALTIC's educational programme enabling it to guide and encourage participation in visual art from pre-school to PhD. By working with the BALTIC Professor the gallery will enhance its public programme and deepen its commitment to artist professional development. In addition it will significantly increase the creative and learning opportunities open to Northumbria University students as well as enrich Northumbria's appeal as the university of choice for undergraduate, masters and PhD study and research in the field of art and design.

This innovative collaboration will be recognised on 9 June when Northumbria University receives the gallery naming rights for BALTIC's Level 3 Gallery, which receives some of its most prestigious exhibitions. An exhibition by the acclaimed American artist Robert Breer will be the first to be held in the newly named Northumbria Gallery, followed later this year by the prestigious Turner Prize 2011 exhibition. This is the first time an exhibition space within BALTIC has carried a partner name and signifies BALTIC's commitment to this special collaboration.

Speaking about the launch of the partnership, Professor Andrew Wathey, Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive of Northumbria University said: “This is an important, innovative new partnership between two outstanding institutions which will significantly increase the creative and learning opportunities open to students, and to staff in both organisations. It greatly enriches Northumbria’s appeal as the university of choice for undergraduate, masters and PhD study and research in the field of art and design.

“This affiliation will give students – and PhD students in particular – access to a unique fusion of art and artists of the highest calibre, high-quality teaching and research and BALTIC’s notable library, archive and curatorial teams.”

Godfrey Worsdale, Director of BALTIC, echoed the Vice Chancellor’s words: “The coming together of BALTIC and Northumbria University is centred around the appointment of a BALTIC professor which will drive forward our joint international ambition, enrich the offering of both institutes and position the region as a global hub for Contemporary Art learning and practice.

“The support of the University makes BALTIC’s research capabilities stronger, helping us to work more closely with students at all levels, broaden our audience and strengthen BALTIC’s learning and curatorial research.”

Alison Clark-Jenkins, Regional Director, Arts Council England, said “There is a real value in arts organisations and universities working together to develop talent, practice and sharing civic leadership. The potential for students and lecturers to work strategically with BALTIC will support education and young people which are at the heart of our mission, great art for everyone.”

ENDS

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NOTES TO EDITORS

NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY

With 35,000 students, Northumbria University is the largest research and teaching university in the North-East of England and the sixth largest provider of Higher Education in Britain – visit us at www.northumbria.ac.uk.

**BALTIC CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART
ROBERT BREER EXHIBITION
Saturday 11 June – Sunday 25 September 2011
The Northumbria Gallery**

This major exhibition by American artist Robert Breer spans both Level 4 and The Northumbria Gallery on Level 3. It brings together his paintings, ground-breaking films and radical sculptures from the last 60 years. Considered one of the most influential animator/film-makers in history, this is the artist's most comprehensive exhibition to date.

BALTIC is a major international centre for contemporary art situated on the south bank of the River Tyne in Gateshead, England. BALTIC presents a constantly changing, distinctive and ambitious programme of exhibitions and events, and is a world leader in the presentation, commissioning and communication of contemporary visual art. BALTIC has welcomed over 3.9 million visitors, since opening to the public in July 2002.

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Admission: FREE

Opening hours: Monday - Sunday 10.00 - 18.00 / Except Tuesdays 10.30 – 18.00 /
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