

Press release:

**ROAD
SHOW**



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
**KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA**

Tuesday 24th April

**The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
(Exhibition) ROAD SHOW**

28 July to 5 August 2012

www.exhibitionroadshow.co.uk

Sculptures housing bees, a real meteorite embedded in the ground, a bicycle orchestra, a pop-up ballroom hosting waltzes to line-dancing and a particle accelerator, are just some of the spectacular highlights of **Exhibition ROAD SHOW**, a major culture and science festival taking place over the first nine days of the Olympic Games, commissioned by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. The festival offers a platform for emerging and uncompromising creative talent, and will bring together live performances, scientific experiments, large-scale games and playful interventions that celebrate the area's unsurpassed cultural heritage.

From **28 July to 5 August**, a wealth of creativity, inspired by Exhibition Road's institutions and galleries, will converge in a 'landscape of wonder', populated by new art commissions from **Katie Paterson**, **Tomáš Libertiny** and **Graeme Miller**; live music performances from **Patrick Wolf** to **Eliza Carthy** to **Mike Westbrook** and **the Roving Crows**; readings from a book of short stories, **Road Stories**, specially commissioned for Road Show, written by such luminaries as **Michel Faber** and **Ali Smith**; and the **Exhibitionists**, an ensemble of young, recently trained dancers and acrobats from around the world assembled for Road show.

Much of the live action will take place from pop-up stages, in the form of customised trailers, which will move in and out of Exhibition Road over the course of the afternoon and evening. Each day will surprise and delight in different ways, taking the visitor on a lively journey, and allowing them to see the iconic institutions and buildings of London's cultural heartland in a new light.

A celebration of science and discovery is at the heart of the **ROAD SHOW** programme with a series of activities extending the reach of the visual art commissions: exploring the cosmos through a live meteor monitoring station on the Road; exploring the role of the Polymath ranging from arts to sport to science; investigating dedicated patterns in nature inspired by Liberty's use of honeycombs from industrial design to printmaking to architecture. A particle accelerator and science busking will cater to inquisitive minds in this landscape of wonder.

"The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea wants to contribute to the success of the London 2012 Olympics. That's why three years ago we commissioned a festival to celebrate the Games and the creativity of the Royal Borough. ROAD SHOW is the result of our commitment to promoting our people, our place and the new public space of Exhibition Road. Exhibition Road is of national and international importance, housing iconic scientific and cultural collections. Its institutions lead research in both the arts and sciences, reflecting the legacy of the 1851 Great Exhibition. ROAD SHOW uses the themes of innovation, risk taking, creativity and human endeavour, to create a very special street party to welcome the world and mark an important moment in the history of our city" says Councillor Sir Merrick Cockell, Leader of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

Over the course of nine days the programme will include:

Road Music: The international music programme will span classical, contemporary, pop and folk music. Artists include twice nominated Mercury Music prize musician **Eliza Carthy**, radical English singer-songwriter **Patrick Wolf** and experimental group, **Kammer Klang**. The trailers will also host a house 'orchestra' for a nightly ballroom of tango, waltzes, jives, Scottish reels and jigs.

The length and breadth of the Road will be filled with high energy acrobatics provided by resident troupe, **The Exhibitionists**, an international ensemble of dancers and acrobats specially brought together for the festival under the direction of Sue Broadway, Circus Director for the Opening Ceremony of the Sydney Olympics.

In keeping with Exhibition Road's importance to both the arts and science, three major new contemporary art works have been commissioned from young and up and coming artists. For her 2007 degree show at the Slade, **Katie Paterson** famously displayed her mobile phone number in neon on the gallery's wall inviting visitors to call the number and listen to the crackling ice of Vatnajökull, Europe's largest glacier. This work became so popular that over 10,000 people from 47 countries called the number. Since then Paterson has gone on to exhibit her work globally – in London, New York and Vienna. For **ROAD SHOW** Katie has used her fascination with science and astronomy to take a meteorite sourced in Arizona and recast it. She will display its new form outside on Exhibition Road, encouraging the public to touch and feel the cosmic rock.

Theatre maker, composer and artist **Graeme Miller** emerged from the bold and influential stage work of Impact Theatre Co-operative in the 1980s. For **ROAD SHOW**, Miller will build an observation tower on the roof of the Science Museum, from where he and a host of thinkers, performers, sports commentators and poets, will make live observations on the day to day proceedings of the festival. Slovakian artist **Tomáš Libertiny** creates live sculptures inhabited by living bees and will be bringing a unique new ecosystem to the festival, creating a visually stunning home for the bees to populate.

Road Games: Games tables set up on the Road will feature board games from the V&A's extensive collections from the 18th and 19th Century to the present day. Games include The Mansion of Happiness a morality game published in 1900 and dedicated to the Duchess of York, A Cycle Game from 1900 and Pachisi, an Indian strategy game now better known as Ludo, introduced into the UK by Jaques of London, medal winners at the Great Exhibition and still going strong.

Road Cycling: Over the first weekend, 28 and 29 July, in recognition of the Olympic Road Cycle Race leaving and returning to London along the Brompton Road (just a few minutes walk from Exhibition Road) **ROAD SHOW** will feature cycling, including recitals from **The Olympianist**, the **Levenshulme Bicycle Orchestra** and our resident brass ensemble from the **Royal College of Music** will play cycling music throughout the day. There will also be exhibition of cycling through the ages, the vintage cycle run, the tweed cycle run and fashion for cycling.

Road Stories: The Royal Borough has invited a number of writers to write short stories featuring the institutions on Exhibition Road. **Road Stories** includes work by **Deborah Levy**, **Clare Wigfall**, **Kamila Shamsie**, **Abdulrazak Gurnah**, **Hanan al-Shaykh**, **Iain Sinclair**, **Eleanor Thom**, **Ali Smith**, a final work from that master storyteller **Russell Hoban** and **Michel Faber**, whose book ***Under the Skin*** has been made into major feature film starring Scarlett Johansson. The stories will be read live by the authors during the Festival at selected locations, as well as being published in a special edition, distributed by Faber, and on sale during and after the event.

Website: www.exhibitionroadshow.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/exhibitionroadshow

Press enquiries:

Print PR: Arthur Leone PR

Anna Arthur / Andrew Greer on 020 7836 7660 email andrew@arthurleone.com

Digital PR: Margaret_

Stephanie Knox / Emma Pettit on 020 7923 2861 email steph@margaretlondon.com

Notes for editors

Exhibition ROAD SHOW is produced for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea by Di Robson (DREAM), one of London's leading arts and cultural events producers, with an

international reputation and extensive experience in high profile theatre, visual arts, music, literature and festival production.

Di Robson is a former artistic director of Glasgow's Mayfest, she has also directed the UK's Special Olympics' opening ceremony and the Design and Art Director's Festival of Excellence. Robson is well-versed in running prestigious, large scale inner city cultural events, including London's celebration of Jewish culture: Simcha in the Square and Covent Garden Festival. She recently completed producing The Re-enchantment, a national programme of four artist's commissions exploring ideas around "place" and funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

Di was International Festival Director of Jaipur International Festival, Rajasthan (2003 – 06), has run projects with Visiting Arts and the British Council and was Consultant Producer for SPILL 2007, London's first international festival of experimental theatre. She has also imported work from Russia, New Zealand, Australia, China and India.

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea is delivering a dedicated programme of new 2012 projects with three main legacy ambitions:

- Better recognition of the Royal Borough as the best place in London to experience creative urbanism
- More residents participating in local civic life
- More residents taking part in regular sport and physical activity, particularly in the north of the borough

Capitalising on the Games as a once in a lifetime opportunity to make a real difference to how we live our lives, these projects will forge a stronger sense of community, nurture a warmer welcome to residents and our visitors and build a more vibrant place to do business. The Council is committed to realising these benefits and to delivering a strong message of living life locally through the three legacy themes, delivering programmes through to December 2012.

In addition, the Royal Borough is an official London 2012 competition venue with the indoor volleyball competition at Earls Court, and hosts part of the road cycle races route. (<http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/london2012>)

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