

**Art on the Underground Announces a Year-long Programme
of Exclusively Women Artists for 2018**

PRESS RELEASE
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Art on the Underground will commission a year-long programme of women artists in 2018, which marks 100 years since the Representation of the People Act, enabling all men and some women over the age of 30 to vote for the first time.

To mark this, Art on the Underground, Transport for London's public art programme, has commissioned work by an international selection of women artists with highlights including:

- A major project with British artist **Heather Phillipson** filling the 80 metre long disused platform at Gloucester Road station
- A major new billboard commission by British artist **Linder** at Southwark station
- Tube map covers by Romanian artist **Geta Brătescu** and French artist **Marie Jacotey**
- The first commission in a new programme at Brixton station taking the Brixton murals as an initial point of departure, by Nigerian-born artist **Njideka Akunyili Crosby**

Throughout history, women artists have questioned feminist identities, gender roles and sexual politics to push for social change. The programme will give space to the diverse publics that make up our society, addressing structural gender imbalance which is prevalent in the arts and in particular the public arts.*

“The spaces of our cities are not neutral, and neither is space afforded to public art. Wider social inequalities are played out in the structures of urban life”, said Eleanor Pinfield, Head of Art on the Underground. “Through 2018, Art on the Underground will use its series of commissions to reframe public space, to allow artists' voices of diverse backgrounds and generations to underline the message that there is no single women's voice in art – there are however many urgent voices that can challenge the city's structures of male power.”

The programme will have mass presence across London; at street level on billboards at Brixton and Southwark, on the cover of over 25 million Tube maps, and in a hugely ambitious sculptural intervention on an 80 metre long platform at Gloucester Road Station. There are almost six million journeys taken on London Underground each day, and Art on the Underground's 2018 programme will put women at the forefront of public space.

ART ON THE UNDERGROUND

In June 2018, Art on the Underground will present a major project with British artist **Heather Phillipson** for the disused platform at Gloucester Road station. Phillipson will fill the platform with a scene of avian calamity. Relationships between human and non-human animals are a recurring theme in her work and, for this commission she focuses on eggs, raising questions of use, fragility and waste. Phillipson's work often operates through fantastic interjection; she takes recognisable images and augments and departs from them, provoking new understandings. Her project for Gloucester Road proposes the egg as a representation of reproduction, birth and futurity, but also, crucially, (over)production, consumption, exploitation and junk. Through the use of wildly overscaled three-dimensional hen's eggs and household objects, multi-screen video, replica computer gaming graphics and trembling limbs, the scene will become a kinetic panorama.

In Spring 2018, for the 28th edition of the pocket Tube map, Art on the Underground have commissioned Romanian nonagenarian artist **Geta Brătescu** to create a new artwork, marking her first public commission in the UK. Brătescu's extensive career has comprised drawing, collage, tapestry, photography, experimental film and performance. Having studied drawing and worked for many years as a graphic designer, her practice has a sustained engagement with the drawn line, whether through collage, a technique she calls "drawing with scissors", in fabric, or through her meticulous draughtsmanship. Gender and motherhood are recurrent themes in Brătescu's work, and are often explored through literary figures; she rejects the concept of feminism in favour of a celebration of femininity.

London-based French artist **Marie Jacotey** has been commissioned as the 4th Night Tube map cover for Spring 2018, a series working with emerging artists. Jacotey's work is a snapshot of contemporary relationships and social interactions in comic-strip form. Illustrated in coloured pencil, crayon and pastel on paper, interspersed with text, they are deeply material against the backdrop of our screen-based age. Collated from overheard conversations and images from social media, they are painful, tender, dark and comic ruminations on human encounters.

A new programme at Brixton station will be launched in September 2018, the programme responds to its location, taking the Brixton murals as an initial point of departure. Murals have a rich history as social and political tools; they are artefacts, site-specific and often commemorate themes important to a specific community. Stylistically, murals have fallen out of fashion and mural making has significantly waned in recent decades; this new site will give artists the opportunity to examine the potential of mural making as a critical public art-form.

Nigerian-born, Los Angeles-based artist **Njideka Akunyili Crosby** has been invited for the first commission in the new Brixton programme. Akunyili Crosby's work explores her cultural identity, combining strong attachments to the country of her birth and her current home. Her layered images appear to focus on everyday domestic scenes and social gatherings; however, through the use of photo-

collage they are also complex reflections on history, community and politics, much like the original Brixton murals.

Feminist and established figure of the Manchester punk and post-punk scene, **Linder** will create a major new commission on a street-level billboard at Southwark station. It will launch alongside a cover commission for the 29th pocket Tube map, placing contemporary art into the hands of millions. Linder is known for her collages created from images lifted from pornographic, women's fashion and domestic magazines. The collages manipulate and disrupt to challenge cultural expectations of women and in particular the female body as commodity.

Developing Art on the Underground's activity surrounding the new Northern Line Extension in South London, **Nina Wakeford** will undertake a two year residency in the area. Wakeford is an artist and sociologist, and from January 2018 will be Reader in Contemporary Art at the Royal College of Art. As an artist she makes work that begins with what she thinks of as the unfinished business of past social movements, and the challenges of revisiting the demands and energies that these movements created.

Eleanor Pinfield stated: "The 2018 programme is an opportunity to bring artists of an international renown to the spaces of our city - not *because of*, or *in spite of*, or *in celebration of* gender. But, because these artists have powerful voices for today and question dominant power structures of the city in myriad ways."

Further details of new projects and commissions as part of the programme will be announced in 2018. The programme is part of #BehindEveryGreatCity –a major new campaign by the Mayor of London to draw attention to the progress that has been made by women over the past 100 years and champion the achievements and contributions that women make to London.

Notes to Editors

About Art on the Underground

Art on the Underground invites artists to create projects for London's Underground that are experienced by millions of people each day, changing the way people experience their city. Incorporating a range of artistic media from installation, sculpture, digital and performance, to prints and custom Tube map covers, the programme produces critically acclaimed projects that are accessible to all, and which draw together the city's diverse communities. Since its inception, Art on the Underground has presented commissions by UK-based and international artists including Jeremy Deller, Beatriz Milhazes, Mark Wallinger, and Tania Bruguera, allowing the programme to remain at the forefront of contemporary debate on how art can shape public space. Art on the Underground is funded by Transport for London.

About Heather Phillipson

Heather Phillipson works across video, sculpture, music, drawing and poetry. Her forthcoming projects include the Fourth Plinth, Trafalgar Square, in 2020, a new online commission for Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, a screening at the International Film Festival Rotterdam, and a major solo show at BAL TIC Centre for Contemporary Art, all in 2018. Recent solo projects include: Screens Series, New Museum, New York; Whitechapel Gallery, London; Frieze Projects New York; 32nd São Paulo Biennale, Brazil; Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, the 14th Istanbul Biennial and Performa New York. Phillipson is also an award-winning poet and has published four volumes of poetry. She was named a Next Generation Poet in 2014, received Poetry magazine's Friends of Literature prize in 2016,

and writes a regular column for ArtReview magazine. She received the Film London Jarman Award in 2016.

About Geta Brătescu

Geta Brătescu (b. 1926, Ploiești, Romania) has been a central figure of Romanian contemporary art since the 1960s. An artist with a rich and long career, Brătescu developed a complex body of work that comprises drawing, collage, engraving, tapestry, object, photography, experimental film, video, and performance. She studied at the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy and concurrently at the Fine Arts Academy in Bucharest and worked as an artistic director for the magazine *Secolul 20* [20th Century], renamed *Secolul 21* at the turn of the millennium. In 2016, Hamburger Kunsthalle mounted an extensive retrospective exhibition on Brătescu's work.

The artist's recent exhibitions include a solo show at Tate Liverpool in 2015; *MATRIX 254 / Geta Brătescu*, a solo show at Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive in 2014; as well as participations in *The Encyclopedic Palace*, La Biennale di Venezia in 2013; La Triennale, Paris, Palais de Tokyo, in 2012; and the 12th Istanbul Biennial in 2011. Brătescu's works are in important collections such as MoMA, New York; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Tate Modern, London; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw; The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Bucharest; MUMOK, Vienna; Kontakt Collection, Vienna; Moderna Galerija, Ljubljana; and FRAC Lorraine, Metz. In 2017, Brătescu takes part in Documenta 14, Athens and Kassel, has a solo exhibition shown at the Camden Arts Centre and then at the MSK Gent, her first New York solo show at Hauser & Wirth and represents Romania in the Venice Biennale with the solo show *Apparitions*, curated by Magda Radu.

About Marie Jacotey

Marie Jacotey (b. 1988 Paris) has exhibited her work internationally. *Morning Defeats* (September – November 2017) was her third solo show at Hannah Barry Gallery in London (following *Everything I used to love about us is dead* in 2015 and *Dolly* in 2014). Jacotey is working on her first animation *Filles bleues / Peur blanche* (*Blue girls / White fear*) written by Lola Halifa-Legrand. The animation won two awards at the Annecy Festival in June 2017 and will be produced by MIYU productions in 2018. Jacotey is included in the group exhibition *XOXO* (17 November – 22 December 2017) at Soy Capitán, Berlin, curated by Katharina Weinstock and will also have a solo project with curatorial collective Ballon Rouge in Paris in the autumn of 2018. Her publication *Nights of Poor Sleep*, a collaboration with poet Rachael Allen, has just been published by Test Centre with support from Arts Council England.

About Njideka Akunyili Crosby

Njideka Akunyili Crosby was born in Enugu, Nigeria in 1983 and currently lives and works in Los Angeles. She is the recipient of a 2017 MacArthur Fellowship and was shortlisted for the 2017 Future Generation Art Prize. She was awarded the Prix Canson Prize and named one of the Financial Times' Women of the Year in 2016, as well as one of Foreign Policy's Leading 100 Global Thinkers of 2015. Also in 2015, Akunyili Crosby was the recipient of the Joyce Alexander Wein Artist Prize and won the Smithsonian American Art Museum's James Dicke Contemporary Art Prize in 2014.

Recent solo exhibitions include *Njideka Akunyili Crosby: Predecessors*, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, OH (15 July – 1 October 2017), which is currently on view at the Tang Museum at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY (through 31 December 2017); *Front Room: Njideka Akunyili Crosby*, The Baltimore Museum of Art (on view until 18 March 2018); *Portals*, Victoria Miro, London (2016); *I Refuse to be Invisible*, Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach (2016); and *The Beautiful Ones, Art + Practice*, Los Angeles (2015), staged concurrently with a solo presentation at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2015). Akunyili Crosby was recently included in *a good neighbour*, the 15th Istanbul Biennial curated by Elmgreen & Dragset, and is currently taking part in *Prospect.4: The Lotus in Spite of the Swamp*, New Orleans, Louisiana, curated by Trevor Schoonmaker (until 25 February 2018).

Akunyili Crosby's work is in the collections of major international museums including the Tate, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, The Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, The Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach, Florida, and Zeitz MOCAA, Cape Town, South Africa..

About Linder

Linder Sterling (b.1954, Liverpool, UK) is known for her photography, radical feminist collage, confrontational performance art, and ties to the British punk scene. Sterling first achieved widespread attention in 1977 when she created cover art for the single *Orgasm Addict* by the Buzzcocks. This iconic collage features a naked woman with an iron instead of a head and smiles instead of breasts. This work is typical of her collage practice, which combines images from domestic or fashion magazines with cutouts from pornographic magazines like *Playboy*. From 1978–83 Sterling was the lead singer in punk band *Ludus*, which moved her artistic practice into the realm of performance. During a show in 1982, for instance, Sterling decorated tables in a nightclub with red stained tampons and cigarettes and wore a dress made of chicken meat while distributing meat wrapped in pornography to the audience. In 1992, continuing her interest in the music world, Sterling published a book of photographs of musician Morrissey titled *Morrissey Shot*. Sterling continues to make radical collages, photographs and performance art today.

Sterling's work has been included in solo exhibitions at Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Tate St. Ives and Museum of Modern Art PS1, and her work has been included in group exhibitions at Saatchi Gallery, Museum of Modern Art, Tate Britain, and Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.

About Nina Wakeford

Nina Wakeford is an artist and sociologist, and from January 2018 will be Reader in Contemporary Art at the Royal College of Art. As an artist she makes work that begins with what she thinks of as the unfinished business of past social movements, and the challenges of revisiting the demands and energies that these movements created. Recently, drawing on a personal collection of feminist materials from the 1970s and 1980s, Nina has made a series of film and performance works that involve singing as a way of attaching herself to objects or images. She is the co-editor of *Inventive Methods: The Happening of the Social* (Routledge, 2012) which explores, amongst other things, how research might better work with openness and ambiguity. Her performances have been shown at BFI, ICA and the Wellcome Collection.

Research citation

*An updated 2017 study conducted by the Freeland Foundation 'Are female artists still under represented in the arts?' states that of the UK's most popular public artworks created since 2000 (just 13% were by women) and recently listed post-war public art sculptures (just 17% were by women). This gender imbalance is not just prevalent in the public arts but across the arts from commercial galleries to major public institutions.

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