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Barbican announces reopening

The Barbican today announced it will reopen its Art Gallery and Conservatory on Monday 13 July 2020 followed by The Curve on Tuesday 11 August 2020. In line with government guidelines, new safety measures will be in place including operating at reduced capacity, timed entry slots to ensure a safe flow of visitors through the space, and tickets needing to be booked online at barbican.org.uk in advance of a visit.

The reopening programme includes critically acclaimed exhibition ***Masculinities: Liberation through Photography***; epic new installation ***A Countervailing Theory*** by artist **Toyin Ojih Odutola**; and the chance to explore the Barbican Conservatory.

Barbican Art Gallery

Barbican Art Gallery will welcome visitors back to *Masculinities: Liberation through Photography* from Monday 13 July 2020. Featuring striking photography and film from the 1960s to the present day, the group show explores the ways in which masculinity is experienced, performed, coded and socially constructed. Having previously opened for just four weeks before the Barbican temporarily closed in March, the show's run has been extended until 23 August 2020.

The Curve

A Countervailing Theory, the first-ever UK commission from Toyin Ojih Odutola, will open for the first time in The Curve on Tuesday 11 August. An epic cycle of new work explores an imagined ancient myth conceived by the artist, unfurling across the 90-metre long gallery and featuring an immersive soundscape by sound artist **Peter Adjaye**. This free exhibition invites visitors to experience Ojih Odutola's compelling mode of storytelling.

Barbican Conservatory

The Barbican Conservatory is home to more than 1,500 species of tropical plants and trees, and three indoor ponds for exotic fish and terrapins. For the first time, the Conservatory will be open to the public during the week – starting from Monday 13 July 2020 and running throughout summer. There will be no entrance charge to visit the space but tickets will need to be booked in advance.

Also opening in late July, is the Barbican Library, which is managed by the City of London Corporation. Details of when the Barbican's other venues and public spaces will reopen will be announced in due course. Venue hire will also resume in the future, in accordance with government guidance.

Sir Nicholas Kenyon, Managing Director of the Barbican said: *'We are delighted to invite you back to the Barbican to start to enjoy culture and creativity together again. The safety of our audiences and staff remains our top priority and you'll find detailed information on our website to help you feel confident about your visit here. We want to make it as easy as possible for people to return but we know that not everyone will be able to join us in person, so we will continue to make thought-provoking digital content – including video tours of both our *Masculinities* and *A Countervailing Theory* exhibitions – freely available soon via our website. On behalf of everyone at the Barbican, we look forward to welcoming you back.'*

Jane Alison, Head of Visual Arts, Barbican, said: *'It's so brilliant to have the opportunity to reopen our Masculinities: Liberation through Photography exhibition, which had met with such acclaim earlier in the year. Now is your chance! Opening in August, we also invite you to experience Toyin Ojih Odutola's epic cycle of works. This stunning project was almost ready to open just as lockdown happened - and again, I couldn't be more delighted that we are finally able to introduce Ojih Odutola's work to a London audience as part of our free programme of Curve artist commissions.'*

Safety measures in place when the Barbican reopens will include social distancing, limited visitor capacity, one-way routes through the building, sanitisation points and regular cleaning. Access to all venues will be via the main entrance on Silk Street with lifts available for those who need them.

The Barbican is encouraging people to walk or cycle to the Centre and is installing additional cycle parking points to make this easier. For those who will be travelling by public transport, adjusted opening times of both our Art Gallery and Conservatory have been introduced so that people are able to avoid the busiest travel times.

The Barbican's restaurants, bars, cafes, main shop and cloakroom facilities will remain closed during this phase but there will be takeaway refreshments and a pop-up Art Gallery shop on the Conservatory Terrace on Level 4, as well as toilet facilities available. Detailed visitor information will be available on the Barbican's website at <https://www.barbican.org.uk/>

To support the Barbican in reopening and offering the widest possible audience access to culture and creativity, donations can be made at <https://www.barbican.org.uk/join-support/support-us>

Programme and ticketing information

Visitor information can be found on the Barbican's [website](#).

Barbican Art Gallery

[Masculinities: Liberation through Photography](#)

13 Jul–23 Aug 2020

Lead sponsor: CALVIN KLEIN

This exhibition is also made possible through support from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and a Jonathan Ruffer Curatorial Research Grant from Art Fund

Barbican Art Gallery reopens ***Masculinities: Liberation through Photography***, a major group exhibition that explores the ways in which masculinity is experienced, performed, coded and socially constructed as expressed and documented through photography and film from the 1960s to the present day. The exhibition brings together over 300 works by over 50 pioneering international artists, photographers and filmmakers such as **Laurie Anderson, Richard Avedon, Rineke Dijkstra, Rotimi Fani-Kayode, Peter Hujar, Isaac Julien, Annette Messager, and Catherine Opie** alongside a lesser-known and younger generation of artists including **Cassils, Sam Contis, George Dureau, Karen Knorr, Elle Pérez, Paul Mpagi Sepuya, Hank Willis Thomas, Karlheinz Weinberger** and **Marianne Wex** among others.

With ideas around masculinity and terms such as 'toxic' and 'fragile' masculinity filling endless column inches, the exhibition will chart the representation of masculinity in all its myriad forms, rife with contradiction and complexity. Touching on themes of patriarchy, power, queer identity, race, sexuality, class,

female perceptions of men, heteronormative stereotypes, and fatherhood, the works in the exhibition present masculinity as a largely unfixed performative identity shaped by cultural, political and social forces, with photography and film central to the way in which masculinity is shaped and understood.

Tickets

Tickets will need to be booked online at barbican.org.uk in advance of your visit with timed entry slots to ensure a safe flow of visitors through the space. There will be a reduced capacity to allow for social distancing. Tickets will go on sale via the Barbican website to Barbican Members, Business Members and Patrons on Wednesday 1 July. Tickets will go on general sale on Thursday 2 July.

Shop

The Art Gallery shop has been moved to a new temporary site near the exhibition's exit on Level 4 of the Barbican.

Exhibition catalogue

The *Masculinities* catalogue is organised by six themed chapters with essays by writers and academics including Chris Haywood, Edwin Coomasaru, Tim Clark, Jonathan D. Katz, Alona Pardo and Ekow Eshun in the fields of art, history, culture, and queer studies. On sale at £39.99, the catalogue will be available for a reduced price of £34.99 if purchased in the shop. If purchased online at the same time as booking an exhibition ticket, it will be available for £27.99. <https://shop.barbican.org.uk/products/masculinities-catalogue>

Toyin Ojih Odutola: A Countervailing Theory

11 Aug 2020 – 24 Jan 2021, The Curve

Free Admission, advance booking required

The first-ever UK exhibition by Nigerian-American artist **Toyin Ojih Odutola**, this epic cycle of new work will explore an imagined ancient myth, with an immersive soundscape by artist **Peter Adjaye**.

Executed in pastel, charcoal and chalk, the installation features a series of 40 new large-scale drawings, each work acting as an individual episode within an overarching narrative. Ojih Odutola encourages the viewer to piece together the fragments of the stories she presents. Set within a surreal landscape inspired by the rock formations of Plateau State in central Nigeria, the works depict a fictional prehistoric civilisation, dominated by female rulers and served by male labourers. Drawing on an eclectic range of sources, from ancient history to popular culture, Ojih Odutola considers the power dynamics at play within this community.

Ojih Odutola's work is concerned with drawing as a process of storytelling. She weaves speculative tales, which question familiar histories and pose alternative realities. She approaches her practice as an investigation, intensely engaging with the process of mark-making to explore its potential to create new meaning.

Tickets

There will be no entry fee charged for this exhibition, though tickets will need to be booked in advance of visiting. Ticketing information will be announced nearer the time.

Exhibition catalogue

A Countervailing Theory is accompanied by an illustrated publication available to pre-order for dispatch from August 2020. Offering an insight into this

remarkable body of work, the accompanying publication features a new text by writer **Zadie Smith**.

<https://shop.barbican.org.uk/products/toyin-ojih-odutola-catalogue>

Barbican Conservatory

13 Jul – throughout summer (subject to availability)

Free Admission, advance booking required

Designed by the Barbican's architects Chamberlin, Powell and Bon, the Barbican Conservatory is bursting with lush and varied plant life and three indoor ponds. The Conservatory houses more than 1,500 species of plants and trees, some of which are rare and endangered in their native habitat. The species are a vibrant mix of temperate and arid types ranging from areas as diverse as the rocky deserts and bushland of South Africa to the coastline of Brazil. A varied assortment of the extraordinary flora from around the world includes the iconic tree fern, bamboo, the Swiss cheese plant, and coffee and ginger plants all under one roof. Meanwhile, the ponds are home to koi, ghost, and grass carp from Japan and America, with an additional pool providing a safe haven for terrapins.

Tickets

Please book tickets online at barbican.org.uk in advance of your visit. There will be timed entry slots to ensure a safe flow of visitors through the space and a reduced capacity to allow for social distancing. Tickets will be available to book online via the Barbican website to Barbican Members, Business Members and Patrons on Wednesday 1 July and to the general public on Thursday 2 July.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

Press information

For further information, images or to arrange interviews please contact:

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For information and images for *Masculinities: Liberation through Photography*, please visit: www.barbican.org.uk/MasculinitiesNews

For information and images for *Toyin Ojih Odutola: A Countervailing Theory*, please visit:
www.barbican.org.uk/ToyinOjihOdutolaNews

Press tickets

To ensure the safe flow of visitors through the Barbican, all press tickets will need to be booked 48 hours in advance by contacting a member of the Barbican's Communications team. You will be unable to enter without a pre-booked ticket and so please do get in touch prior to your visit. We look forward to welcoming you back to the Barbican.

About the Barbican

A world-class arts and learning organisation, the [Barbican](#) pushes the boundaries of all major art forms including dance, film, music, theatre and visual arts. Its creative learning programme further underpins everything it does. Over a million people attend events annually, hundreds of artists and performers are featured, and more than 300 [staff](#) work onsite. The architecturally renowned centre opened in 1982 and comprises the Barbican Hall, the Barbican Theatre, The Pit, Cinemas 1, 2 and 3, Barbican Art Gallery, a second gallery The Curve, public spaces, a library, the Lakeside Terrace, [a glasshouse conservatory](#), conference facilities and three restaurants. The City of London Corporation is the founder and principal funder of the Barbican Centre.

The Barbican is home to Resident Orchestra, [London Symphony Orchestra](#); Associate Orchestra, [BBC Symphony Orchestra](#); Associate Ensembles the [Academy of Ancient Music](#) and [Britten Sinfonia](#), Associate Producer [Serious](#), and Artistic Partner [Create](#). Our Artistic Associates include [Boy Blue](#), [Cheek by Jowl](#), Deborah Warner, [Drum Works](#) and [Michael Clark Company](#). The [Los Angeles Philharmonic](#) are the Barbican's International Orchestral Partner, the [Australian Chamber Orchestra](#) are International Associate Ensemble at Milton Court, and [Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra](#) are International Associate Ensemble.

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