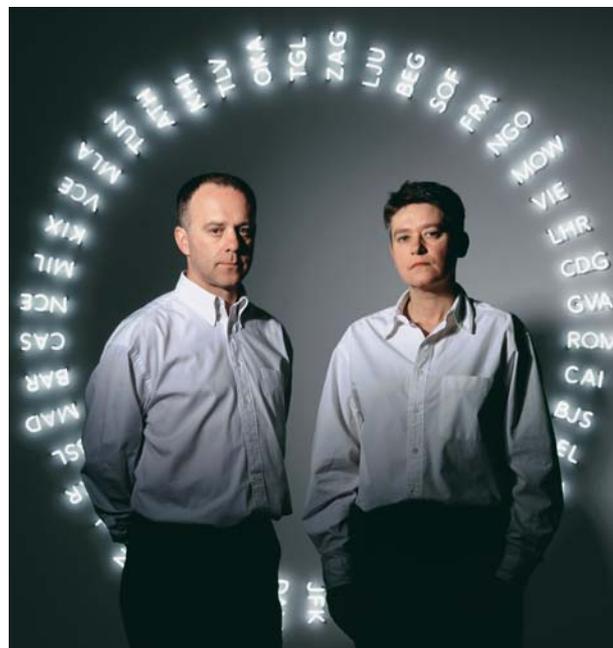


# TURNER PRIZE 2004

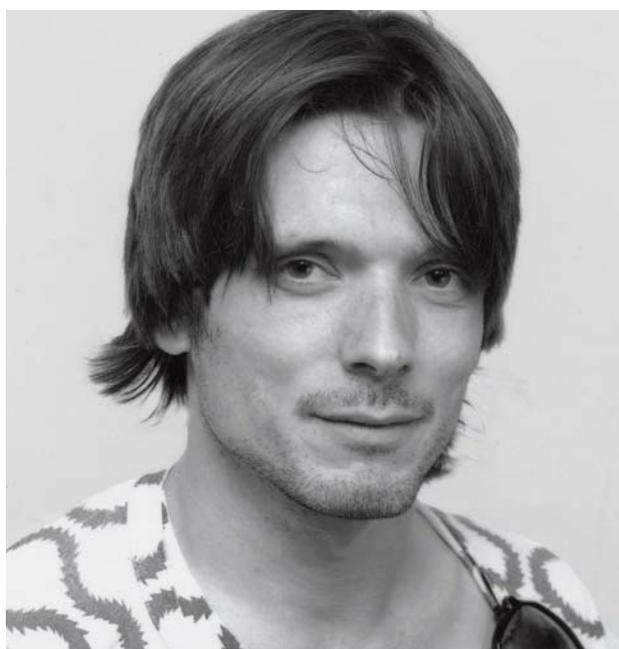
TATE BRITAIN, 20 OCTOBER – 23 DECEMBER 2004



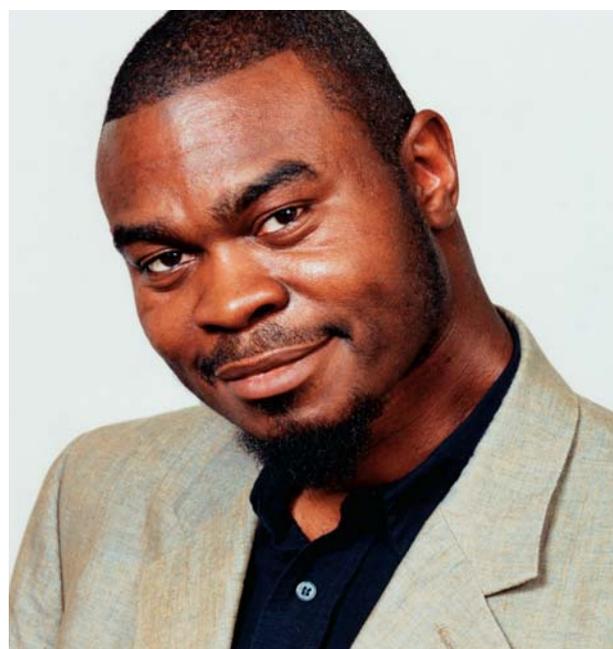
KUTLUG ATAMAN, 2002 © EAMONN MCCABE



(BEN) LANGLANDS AND (NIKKI) BELL © ANTHONY OLIVER



JEREMY DELLER



YINKA SHONIBARE, COURTESY THE ARTIST AND STEPHEN FRIEDMAN GALLERY

## TEACHER AND STUDENT NOTES WITH KEY WORK CARDS

8 A4 CARDS WITH INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION, FULL COLOUR IMAGES, DISCUSSION POINTS, LINKS AND ACTIVITIES. FOR USE IN THE GALLERY OR CLASSROOM. SUITABLE FOR KEY STAGE 3–5. BY ANGIE MACDONALD

## INTRODUCTION TO THE EXHIBITION

The Turner Prize is awarded to a British artist under fifty for an outstanding exhibition or other presentation of their work in the twelve months preceding 9 May 2004. The four nominees for the shortlist this year are Kutlug Ataman, Jeremy Deller, Ben Langlands & Nikki Bell (who work as a partnership) and Yinka Shonibare. Work by the artists will be shown at Tate Britain from 20 October – 23 December 2004. The winner will be announced at Tate Britain on Monday 6 December during a live broadcast by Channel 4.

The Turner Prize was established in 1984 by the Tate's Patrons of New Art and, although controversial, it is widely recognised as one of the most important awards for the visual arts in Europe. For the first time, Gordon's Gin is sponsoring the prize and they have increased the prize money to £40,000.

The members of the Turner Prize 2004 jury who judge the prize are:

- **Catherine David**  
Director, Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam
- **Adrian Searle**  
Art Critic, The Guardian
- **Robert Taylor**  
Representative of the Patrons of New Art
- **David Thorp**  
Curator, Contemporary Projects, Henry Moore Foundation
- **Nicholas Serota**  
Director, Tate and Chairman of the Jury.

There is a useful and informative section on the Turner Prize and its history on the Tate website at: [www.tate.org.uk/britain/turnerprize/history](http://www.tate.org.uk/britain/turnerprize/history)

## VISITING THE EXHIBITION

Free group exhibition tickets for schools are available in advance only from Education Bookings on 020 7887 3959. There are a limited number of group tickets available so please book well in advance. School groups and university groups – £3 per head. If you would like to use the Schools Area to have lunch or use lockers spaces please book these when you book your tickets (there is limited space available).

As all exhibitions at Tate can be busy, you cannot lecture, but discuss works in a conversational manner to groups of no more than six students at a time. If possible, brief your students before they enter the exhibition, and if you have a large group, we suggest that you divide into smaller groups and follow the suggestions in this pack.

## HOW TO USE THIS PACK AND STRUCTURE YOUR VISIT

The aim of this pack is to provide an introduction to the exhibition and some of the issues raised by the artists, information about key works on display, and suggestions of themes and issues to consider and discuss. It also suggests ways of looking at contemporary art and links to the wider Tate collection. The key work cards can be used to help focus work in small groups in the exhibition, and to prepare or follow up with in the classroom.

## RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN THE GALLERY

In the final room of the exhibition there is an **Interpretation Room**. This is a seating area with a film on the artists, press clippings, comments cards and books related to the artists.

There is a **free audio guide** available to all visitors.

The **Turner Prize 2004 broadsheet** is available at the entrance to the exhibition, price £2.50.

The **Tate Gallery shop** has a selection of books, journals, catalogues, post cards and related materials.

## WEBSITES

**Tate Online** [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)

**Turner Prize** [www.tate.org.uk/britain/turnerprize](http://www.tate.org.uk/britain/turnerprize)

**Tate Learning** [www.tate.org.uk/learning](http://www.tate.org.uk/learning)

This site includes the Staff Room, a dedicated area for teachers and group leaders, teacher resource notes for all major Tate exhibitions including past Turner Prize exhibitions.

## FURTHER READING

### General

Buck, Louisa, *Moving Targets 2*,

*A User's Guide to British Art Now*, 2000 Tate Publishing

Button, Virginia, *The Turner Prize Twenty Years*, 1997, Tate Publishing

Button, Virginia, & Esche Charles, *Intelligence, New British Art 2000*, 2000, Tate Publishing

Kent, Sarah, *Shark Infested Waters: The Saatchi Collection of British Art in the 90s*, 1994, London

Nesbitt, Judith & Watkins, Jonathan, *Days Like These, Tate Triennial Exhibition of Contemporary British Art*, 2003, Tate Publishing

### The exhibiting artists

Deller, Jeremy, *Jeremy Deller: Life is to Blame for Everything*, Salon3, 1999

Deller, Jeremy, *Acid Brass*, Mute Records, 2001

Deller, Jeremy, *The English Civil War Book*, Artangel, 2002

Deller, Jeremy, *After the Gold Rush*, Artdata, 2003

Hoptman, Laura, *Kutlag Ataman: Long Streams*, Serpentine Gallery Trust, 2003

Langlands & Bell, *Exhibition Catalogue*, Serpentine Gallery, 1996

Langlands & Bell, *the Artist's Studio*, Langlands & Bell, 2003

Langlands & Bell, *Language of Places*, Christea, 2003

Shonibare, Yinka, *Double Dutch, Exhibition Catalogue*, Boijmans Museum, 2004

Shonibare, Yinka, *The Eye, Illuminations*, 2004, VHS Video

## **Q WHEN DID THE TURNER PRIZE START?**

**A** 2004 is the twenty first year of the prize: the first Turner Prize was awarded in 1984.

## **Q HOW DID IT BEGIN?**

**A** The prize was founded by a group called the Patrons of New Art. They were formed in 1982 to help buy new art for the Tate Gallery's collection, and to encourage wider interest in contemporary art.

## **Q WHY DID THEY CALL IT 'THE TURNER PRIZE'?**

**A** The Patrons wanted a name associated with great British art. They chose JMW Turner (1775–1851) partly because he had wanted to establish a prize for young artists. He also seemed appropriate because his work was controversial in his own day.

## **Q WHO PUT UP THE PRIZE MONEY?**

**A** The first sponsor was Oliver Prenn, though he remained anonymous at the time. He was a founder member of the Patrons of New Art. The prize money was £10,000 for the first three years. He was followed in 1987 by Drexel Burnham Lambert International Inc., an American investment company. They sponsored the prize until 1989. The prize was suspended for a year in 1990 when the company went bankrupt. From 1991 Channel 4 was the sponsor and the prize money was raised to £20,000. Gordon's Gin are sponsoring the Prize this year as part of a three-year sponsorship and they have increased the value of the Turner Prize to £40,000.

## **Q WHO WAS THE FIRST WINNER?**

**A** Malcolm Morley.

## **Q WHY DID SOME OF THE EARLY SHORTLISTS INCLUDE PEOPLE WHO WEREN'T ARTISTS?**

**A** At first the prize was awarded to 'the person who, in the opinion of the jury, has made the greatest contribution to art in Britain in the previous twelve months'. This meant that critics and art administrators were eligible as well as artists.

## **Q HAS THERE ALWAYS BEEN A SHORTLIST?**

**A** In the early days there were concerns about the shortlisting process. In 1988 it was decided not to announce the shortlist publicly, and instead of an exhibition of work by shortlisted artists, the winner was offered a solo show the following year. In 1989 the jury published a list of 7 'commended' artists. The shortlist was reinstated in 1991, and restricted to 3 or 4 artists.

## **Q IS THERE AN AGE LIMIT?**

**A** There was no age limit at first, but in 1991 it was decided to restrict the Prize to artists under 50, so that younger artists just setting out weren't pitted against artists at the height of their careers.

## **Q IS THERE A LIMIT TO HOW OFTEN AN ARTIST CAN BE SHORTLISTED?**

**A** There was no limit at first, but in 1987 it was ruled that any artist nominated for two years wouldn't be eligible for the following two years. This was changed again in 1991; since then there has been no limit to the number of times an artist can be shortlisted.

## **Q WHAT ABOUT THE PROTEST GROUPS?**

**A** Since 1991, when the award ceremony was first broadcast live, various groups have staged protests. These have included a group called Fanny Adams, protesting against male domination of the art world, the K Foundation (formerly the pop band KLF) who awarded £40,000 to Rachel Whiteread as the 'worst shortlisted artist' in 1993, and FAT (Fashion, Architecture and Taste) who objected to the 'cultural élitism' of the art establishment.

To find out more about the history of the Turner Prize visit:  
[www.tate.org.uk/britain/turnerprize/history/history.htm](http://www.tate.org.uk/britain/turnerprize/history/history.htm)

To find out more about all the artists who have ever exhibited in the Turner Prize visit:  
[www.tate.org.uk/britain/turnerprize/history/artists.htm](http://www.tate.org.uk/britain/turnerprize/history/artists.htm)

Listed below are some of the most notable comments made by the press.

For further details please look at [www.tate.org.uk/britain/turnerprize/history/critics.htm](http://www.tate.org.uk/britain/turnerprize/history/critics.htm)

## 1984

'Turner must be rotating in his grave at the Prize given in his name by the Tate Gallery.' OBSERVER REVIEW, 4 NOVEMBER 1984

'The British art establishment, having already shown unforgivable ignorance and wickedness in its dealings with Turner's own Bequest to the nation, is now bandying his name about in the hope of giving some spurious historical credibility to a new prize cynically concocted to promote the interest of a small group of dealers, gallery directors and critics.' WALDEMAR JANUSZCZAK, GUARDIAN, 6 NOVEMBER 1984

## 1986

'The Turner Prize is attempting to impose the taste of an arid bankrupt aesthetic.' PETER FULLER, SPEECH GIVEN AT THE TURNER SOCIETY, NOVEMBER 1986

## 1989

'The trouble with the Turner Prize right from the beginning has been that no one seems to be certain what it is for.' JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR, THE TIMES, 20 NOVEMBER 1989

'The Turner is neither as alluring as the Booker or as controversial as Miss World.' WILLIAM FEAVER, OBSERVER, 10 NOVEMBER 1989

## 1990

'The Turner Prize was out in orbit and talking to itself; chronically lonely, with delusions of grandeur that often go with such cases, the Prize drifted on for another year and then this year, when Drexel finally collapsed, it blew away altogether.' MATTHEW COLLINGS, ART MONTHLY, DECEMBER 1990

## 1991

'...had this show not been connected with the hype generated by the Turner Prize and simply called 'Four Young Contemporaries', I think we would all have been impressed.' RICHARD DORMENT, DAILY TELEGRAPH, 27 NOVEMBER 1991

## 1992

'Two cheers for the Turner Prize: the wrong artist may have won this year but it's time we stopped knocking Britain's richest art prize.' RICHARD DORMENT, DAILY TELEGRAPH, 26 NOVEMBER 1992

'The annual farce of the Turner Prize is now as inevitable in November as is the pantomime at Christmas.' BRIAN SEWELL, EVENING STANDARD, 19 NOVEMBER 1992

## 1993

'Another spectacular own-goal has been applauded by the judges as a sign of their startling vision and artistic insight. And all those poor fools standing bewildered in the terraces are, once again, being dismissed as yobbos, who don't understand what the game is about.' FRANCES HUBBARD, DAILY EXPRESS, 26 NOVEMBER 1993

## 1994

'This year's crop of artists is the most meagre yet, so feeble with their dismal videos, dull sculpture and useless pretty boxes.' BRIAN SEWELL, EVENING STANDARD, 17 NOVEMBER 1994

## 1995

'It may be accused of being élitist and unrepresentative but the Turner Prize ... makes contemporary art a hot debate once a year.' ADRIAN TURPIN, INDEPENDENT, 26 NOVEMBER 1995

## 1996

'The Booker and Turner Prizes may not always be awarded to the right people – but they do sell books and goad the public into discussing art.' ANDREAS WHITTAM-SMITH, INDEPENDENT, 4 NOVEMBER 1996

## 1997

'Women on top: the all-woman shortlist for the Turner Prize is about talent rather than gender.' WALDEMAR JANUSZCZAK, SUNDAY TIMES, 22 JUNE 1997

## 1998

'What would Turner have had to say about the Turner Prize? ... He would have undoubtedly appreciated the new ways of looking at things that the late 20th century has granted artists.' ANTHONY BAILEY, INDEPENDENT, 25 OCTOBER 1998

'Yet again the Turner shortlist spurns painting in favour of conceptualism.' WILLIAM PACKER, FINANCIAL TIMES, 10 NOVEMBER 1998

## 1999

'Some see it as art. Others as simply a bit of a mess. Yesterday Tracey Emin's unmade bed at the Tate Gallery in London was bounced on, fought over and even tidied up.' LUCIE MORRIS, DAILY MAIL, 25 OCTOBER 1999

'This may no longer be Britain's most valuable prize, but it is a publicity goldmine. This is more precious than any lump sum to an artist; it is the foundation on which future careers are built.' THE TIMES, 20 OCTOBER 1999

## 2000

'Your chance to open up the Turner Prize: The public is being invited to submit nominations for this year's Turner Prize but will the organisers take any notice?' BRIAN SEWELL, EVENING STANDARD, 11 MAY 2001

## 2002

'The people's prize: for once the Turner Prize is more actual art than shock tactics – and who knows, there might even be something in it for everyone.' RACHEL CAMPBELL-JOHNSTON, TIMES, 30 OCTOBER 2002

## 2003

I like this year's Turner Prize shortlist. It isn't glib, it is well-balanced, the artists have all in their ways developed a singular approach, and Ron Mueck isn't on it. Those who complain at how today's art lacks traditional artistic values and enduring subjects shall have to take a deep breath. Model-making, etching, pottery and woodcarving are among this year's skills. ADRIAN SEARLE, THE GUARDIAN, MAY 20 2003

# KEY THEMES IN THE EXHIBITION

## IDENTITY

All the shortlisted artists explore ideas about identity. We are encouraged to consider how personal, historical and cultural identities are constructed in today's global and mass media world. Ataman presents us with real lives where personal identity and narrative interweave, blurring the lines between fact and fiction. Shonibare's work reveals how cultural identity is always a construct. He is interested in clothing, while Langlands & Bell are interested in what buildings say about us. Deller explores the identities of different communities and events.

## REAL OR CONSTRUCTED?

These artists explore the fine line between real life and artifice though both in terms of their subjects and techniques. In our age of digital technology and computer-generated imagery, these artists know that the idea that the camera never lies doesn't hold. Ataman's films are real interviews with real people who tell 'real' stories about multiple realities. Deller explores and reconstructs different cultural products and events in order to re-evaluate and perhaps offer fresh insight. Langlands & Bell make a virtual tour of a place they really visited but have then reconstructed from memory using digital technology. Shonibare's work challenges the notion of 'authenticity' suggesting that there is no such thing.

## FILMS AS ART

It seems significant that all the artists included in the shortlist this year make films. Compare and contrast the different ways each use the medium of film. Why do you think they choose to make films within a gallery context as opposed to showing them at a cinema, for example? Consider how these artists use our familiarity with the medium of film to draw us into their work. Consider also how they experiment and offer alternative ways of presenting and experiencing film.

## THE LIMITS OF LANGUAGE AND TIME

A number of works in the exhibition focus on the limits of language and time. Ataman's films reveal how language breaks down when people try to talk about the subject of reincarnation. Langlands & Bell's house reconstruction pushes the limits of virtual reality and time – what does it really tell us, if anything? Works like Deller's *History of the World* suggest that events and meanings can collide in different and less linear ways than we perhaps want to believe.

## ART IS NOT SEPARATE FROM THE WORLD AT LARGE

These artists embrace the idea that art is not separate from the world we live in. Their work addresses very real political and global concerns and they believe that art has an important role to play. For example, through personal memories or narrative we are encouraged to contemplate the wider political context within which individuals live. You could describe these artists as 'catalysts' who explore a theme but allow their subjects to do the speaking.

## ART AS LIVING HISTORY

What do these artworks tell us about the world today? Why could they be described as 'living history'? It is almost as if the media

have exhausted our capacity to understand or relate to global issues such as war, terrorism, and economic exploitation. Contemporary artists seem to be finding unusual ways to draw our attention to what matters. As Katherine Stout, Tate Britain Assistant Curator, writes in the exhibition broadsheet '*war has become part of our contemporary visual culture, replayed in the minds of people through its pictorial presentation by the media, leaving art to find alternative strategies*'.

## HIDDEN HISTORIES

Artists such as Deller and Ataman are interested in how personal histories can reveal wider and often overlooked concerns within society. Shonibare likewise reconstructs history by revealing how deceptively complex certain symbols are. They are all interested in drawing our attention to activities taking place on the fringes of the mainstream and to how public and private experiences and histories interweave. By examining overlooked or stereotyped events or objects, hidden histories are often revealed.

## CULTURE CLASHES

What happens when you explore and juxtapose contrasting cultures and histories? These artists invite us to question the categories and stereotypes that societies adopt. Nothing, they argue, should be taken at face value. Shonibare questions assumptions about the western world and its relationship to so-called developing countries. Deller reveals extraordinary things when two different cultures are brought together.

## ART AND POLITICS

A striking feature of the shortlist this year is that all the artists engage with politics. What does this exhibition say about current political issues? What does it say about the state of art today? Do you think artists should engage overtly with politics? Look at their work in the context of the history of so-called political art.

## ARTISTS AS RESEARCHERS

These artists undertake meticulous research before they make their work. They all, in their different ways, take on the role of researcher which is not dissimilar to that of a documentary film maker or journalist. For example, they interview (Deller, Ataman), document (Langlands & Bell), travel and photographically record (Deller, Langlands & Bell) or undertake historical research (Shonibare). Consider how these artists use their role and position as an artist to gain access to sources, people and the media.

## CONTROVERSIAL OR NOT?

The Turner Prize draws a lot of public attention and is very well attended for a contemporary art show in Britain. It has always been controversial, attracting a lot of media interest, which is not always favourable. Critics love to judge the new and dismiss it as unworthy of the name art. See some of the critics' comments over the years included in this pack. Do you think this exhibition is controversial? Does it include work that you would not consider art? Why not follow the reviews and press coverage leading up to the award in December.

The Turner Prize 2004 exhibition could be the focus for a range of curriculum work. Any of the art works could be used as a starting point for the discussion of issues in almost any subject. Suggestions are made below for links with a range of different subject areas, but all activities could relate to Art and Design. Suggested activities are included with each key work card. The following are just some additional ideas.

## ART AND DESIGN

The exhibition could be the focus for any of the following topics or themes,

- Identity
- Art about life
- Art about art – why do artists often quote or re-interpret works from the past?
- Using film or digital technology to make art
- The built environment
- Buildings and their history
- Art and politics
- Art as living history
- Symbolic materials and objects
- Community art and collaborative projects

## ENGLISH/MEDIA STUDIES

- **Narrative, storytelling and memory.** Use works such as Ataman's *Twelve* to examine how people develop a narrative and tell personal stories. Students could write or record their own stories based on memories.
- **Documentary and analysis.** Look at how these artists use documentary techniques to make their work. Use the exhibition to discuss the difference between analysis and comment. Students could develop their own documentary films or written work.
- **Media and moving image texts.** How do we 'read' film narrative and story? Why are the films here different to those we see at the cinema? How do these artists use visual and moving images to tell stories and/or analyse events?
- **Understanding texts from different cultures and traditions.** What do these art works tell us about different cultures, histories and traditions? Make comparisons to other visual and literary texts.

## CITIZENSHIP

The exhibition could be the starting point for a range of work and topical discussion such as,

- Attitudes toward war and terrorism today
- Attitudes to life and death in different societies and cultures
- The role of the media in society today
- The world as a global community
- Racial, cultural and religious diversity and identities
- Personal and political identity – pros and cons of identity cards, for example
- Freedom of speech and political views. Why not discuss with students what they think about an artist or musician being overtly political in their work.

## HISTORY

These artists make direct references to recent events in British history (e.g. Deller – miners' strike) and world history (e.g. Langlands & Bell – war in Afghanistan). Shonibare's work explores events from the past such as the assassination of King Gustav III of Sweden in 1792. The exhibition could, therefore, be the focus for work on recent wars, British history, a world study after 1900 or a world study before 1900.

## GEOGRAPHY

A visit to the exhibition could link to various geographical enquiries. These artists make work about different countries and different communities. They also explore the economic activities and resources of different countries and raise questions about global economics. Much of Ataman's work focuses on Turkish communities while Langlands & Bell's recent work is based on a visit they made to Afghanistan. Shonibare explores links between Africa and the West and Deller has travelled and made work all over Britain as well abroad. A major theme in Deller's display is his recent exploration of Texas, USA.

A suggested way to explore the exhibition would be to have a general look and then to focus on a few key works, such as the ones included in this pack. However, to start off and focus discussion, you could ask students the following questions:

## ICE-BREAKER QUESTIONS

- What are your first impressions of the exhibition?
- What do these five artists seem to be interested in? (you could make a list)
- Do they share any common interests and concerns?
- What sorts of materials and processes do they work with?
- Why do you think these artists choose to make some of their work with audio, film and digital media?
- In what ways have these artists transformed or changed the gallery spaces?
- Who would you like to see win the Turner Prize this year?

## QUESTIONS TO ASK OF ANY WORK

- Personal responses – what do you bring to the artwork?
- What are your first reactions to the work?
- What is the first word that came into your head when you saw it?
- What do you notice first?
- Does it remind you of anything?
- What do you think the artist wants to communicate?

## LOOKING AT THE ARTWORK – WHAT CAN YOU SEE?

- What materials and processes has the artist used to make the artwork?
- What is it? (Is it a film, photograph, installation etc.?)
- Where is it? Does it link with other artworks in the exhibition?
- How big is the artwork? What effect does scale have on the artwork and our relationship to it?

## SUBJECT AND MEANING – WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

- Is the artwork about a subject, issue or theme?
- Is it about real life?
- Could the work have a symbolic, moral or political meaning?
- How does the work make you think about time?
- Does it make you consider aspects of life or art in a new way?
- Does the work have a title? Does this affect the way you see it?
- What information is available in the gallery (e.g. wall text or caption)? Does this information affect or change the way you see it?

## ART IN CONTEXT – INFLUENCES WHICH SHAPE THE CREATION AND READING OF A WORK

- Who is the artist? Do you think the background of the artist can inform us about why or how it was created, or what it might be about?
- Was the artwork made for a particular location or event?
- Does the artwork link to other works made by the artist?
- How does the artwork link to work by other contemporary artists?
- Does it connect to any art of the past?
- What does the artwork tell us about the ideas and values of today's world?
- How does it link or comment on contemporary social, cultural, religious and political issues such as the role of the media, attitudes to war and terrorism, consumerism or global economics?
- Does the work make use of 'cutting edge' materials, processes or technology?

# ISSUES RELATING TO CONTEMPORARY ART

A range of issues relating to contemporary art that are raised by the Turner Prize, year after year. Below are just a few of them.

Visit [www.tate.org.uk/britain/turnerprize/history/issues.htm](http://www.tate.org.uk/britain/turnerprize/history/issues.htm) for more information and opinions.

## **THE AWARDS GAME**

What is the aim of the prize? Do we actually remember any of the winners? Is it about winning and losing? Or is it just the opportunity to get the nation talking about art?

## **CONCEPTUAL ART**

For some people, contemporary art is synonymous with conceptual art, and many view conceptual art as questionable art. Conceptual art is also used to label work which makes us think or challenges our assumptions about what art is or should be. Where is its place in the Turner Prize and why do people find it so problematic?

## **CRAFT AND SKILL**

Do artists have to make their work with their own hands, or is it enough that they have the ideas and direct the work? Is it important that a piece of art suggests skill in its process and making? What are the other criteria for looking at and considering art? Is one more important than another?

## **WHERE IS PAINTING?**

For many years there has been a debate about the place of painting in contemporary art. With new media and technologies, collaborative practice, installations and the freedom to make work out of any materials at all, has painting died?

## **SHOCK AND SENSATION**

Do the elements of shock and sensation which fuel the Turner Prize's media coverage help or hinder the aim of bringing contemporary art to a wider public? The 'shock' element seems to take two forms: dislike of the content or subject matter of the art on display (pornography, the inside of the artist's body) and dismay at the materials used (dead animals, elephant dung, unmade bed, rice). But are we shockable any more?

## **REPRESENTATION IN THE TURNER PRIZE**

The prize is now limited to artists under 50 years old. There have traditionally been more male artists than women artists (there are no women in this year's line up). How representative is the prize of artists at work today?



**KUTLUG ATAMAN** STILL FROM *TWELVE* 2003, SIX-SCREEN VIDEO INSTALLATION,  
COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND LEHMANN MAUPIN GALLERY, NEW YORK

# KUTLAG ATAMAN HAS BEEN SHORTLISTED FOR THE TURNER PRIZE FOR HIS VIDEO INSTALLATIONS SHOWN AT THE ISTANBUL BIENNIAL AND OTHER EUROPEAN VENUES.

## BACKGROUND

This image is a still from one of the films that make up *Twelve*, a six-screen video installation which Ataman made in south-east Turkey last year. It features interviews with six people who recount their experience of reincarnation and talk about their past and present lives. Each person is shown life size, in portrait format on a separate projection screen suspended in the gallery. The characters range in age and they were filmed in their own home or place of work sitting around as if they are telling a story.

The man pictured here talks about how he died in an accident, his rebirth and how he went and found his relatives from his previous life and convinced them as to who he was. He talks in a matter of fact way about his life and the acceptance that he feels with his family from his previous life.

*Twelve* was filmed in an Arab community which accepts as fact that everyone is reborn, although only those who have suffered violent or untimely death remember their past lives. The people filmed explain that they remembered what happened because when they were children their parents did not repress their memories. This idea of reincarnation is found in many Arabic communities in the Middle East. It is also a belief that is found in communities that have a history of war and persecution.

Ataman deliberately uses simple techniques, filming his characters close-up with a hand held camera. This gives the immediacy and honesty of a home movie or video diary. We, as viewers, are invited to listen as we might do in a one-to-one conversation. But the straightforward presentation of this man's story seems to emphasise the extraordinariness of what he says. As he talks about his past and present lives and moves between then and now, his story becomes confused. As we listen to the speech of this man we realise that conventional language is not sufficient to communicate the multiple realities experienced by him.

*Twelve*, like much of Ataman's work, explores personal histories and the idea of personal identity. He is quoted in the exhibition broadsheet as saying that 'all narratives, hence all lives, are in the end created as art by their subject'. He shows us how people construct or fabricate identity through storytelling. He shows us the complex texture of memory and imagination, truth and fantasy which people weave together to make sense of everyday life and position themselves in the world. This is reinforced by the way he presents the films in the gallery as a multi-screen installation. We move through the room and from one encounter to the other taking snippets or layers from each story piecing together our own experience.

## FOR DISCUSSION

- Why do you think Ataman called the work *Twelve*?
- How does Ataman create an intimate portrait with each film?
- What broader social concerns do you think Ataman's work addresses? For example, what do his films say about the current political situation in the Middle East?
- Ataman's films explore the subject of reincarnation and its specific interpretation within one community. Consider the variety of

religious and spiritual views of reincarnation. How do Ataman's characters challenge western ideas about life and death?

- How does each character here present us with an identity? What information does Ataman presents us with in his films and how much does he leave to the person speaking? What do you think is meant by personal identity? How do we each fabricate identity in everyday life? Note: Ataman deliberately shows the portraits vertically as if they are identity photographs.
- Would you describe these films as documentaries or fiction? Depending on your answer could you think of other places/ contexts where it might be appropriate to show these films?
- What do these films say about time and reality? What does each character say about his/her 'life time' and how much time do we need to spend watching the films to understand them?

## ACTIVITIES

- Explore the theme of identity. Compare and contrast different contexts for identity such as personal, social and political. Students could collect objects which say something about an identity or they could make a work (such as a painting, installation or video) which they feel encapsulates their own identity.
- Explore the idea of photographic identity. Students could develop photographic portrait work where they contrast known and anonymous portraits.
- Documenting stories. Students could explore the relationship between fact and fiction by developing a series of interviews where people are invited to talk about a subject personal to them. These interviews could be filmed or audio recorded. Alternatively or as an extension, students could be asked to write stories based on memories of a particular subject or event.

## LINKS TO THE TATE COLLECTION

Links can be made to the work of Gillian Wearing whose documentary style videos and photographs explore public and private identities. Wearing's *Confess All On Video. Don't Worry You Will Be in Disguise. Intrigued. Call Gillian* 1994 was based on confessions made by people in disguise who responded to Wearing's advertisement in a magazine. Like Ataman's films, this work reveals how people weave into their identity truth and lies.

Contrast Christian Boltanski's installation of fading photographs *The Reserve of the Dead Swiss* 1994 where the absence of information emphasises the importance of memory. Boltanski present us with the enigma of the unknown – what are the untold stories behind these anonymous portraits?

Consider also Ataman's work in relation to the history of portraiture. See Room 2 (Tudor and Stuart Portraiture) and Room 4 (Portraits & Perspectives) at Tate Britain. Contrast his work with traditional painted portraits such as David Des Granges *The Saltonstall Family* c1636–7 (which is believed to include dead and living relatives) or modern ones such as Lucian Freud's portrait of Francis Bacon 1952. Interesting links could also be made to the photographic portrait work of contemporary artists Rineke Dijkstra. Further information on Tate works can be found at [www.tate.org.uk/collection](http://www.tate.org.uk/collection)



**BEN LANGLANDS AND NIKKI BELL** *THE HOUSE OF OSAMA BIN LADEN* 2003, COURTESY OF THE ARTISTS AND V/SPACE LAB

# LANGLANDS & BELL HAVE BEEN SHORTLISTED FOR THE TURNER PRIZE FOR *THE HOUSE OF OSAMA BIN LADEN*, AN EXHIBITION FIRST SHOWN AT THE IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM, LONDON.

## BACKGROUND

*The House of Osama Bin Laden* 2003 is a collection of works that Ben Langlands and Nikki Bell made as a result of a visit to Afghanistan, commissioned by the Imperial War Museum, London in 2002. The artists, who have worked together since the 1970s, were invited to consider not the war, but the post-war situation in Afghanistan.

The artists created a range of work, including virtual animation, video and digital slides. Their work focuses on issues raised in the immediate aftermath of the war such as the role of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and the trial of people accused of war crimes.

Here you can see an image from an interactive virtual animation Langlands & Bell made in collaboration with V/Space Lab on their return from Afghanistan. It is based on their experience of visiting an isolated house, which had been briefly occupied by Osama Bin Laden in 1996.

We are taken on a virtual tour of this house, which was partially bombed by the Americans when the Taliban refused to surrender Osama Bin Laden. But as we move around we realise there is nothing to see, no personal items, no weapons and no hidden surprises. Osama Bin Laden remains as illusive as ever and our curiosity to know more about this man is foiled. As Langlands & Bell explain,

*'The House of Osama Bin Laden explores ways in which evidence of identity of the presence of a person may be discovered, revealed or projected, in a locality after their departure... Architecture is one of the most tangible records of the way we live. Buildings tend to encapsulate our hopes and fears at many levels while also reflecting the persistent human will to plan events'.*

The decision to make a virtual animation seem crucial to the meaning of this work. The artists play on our curiosity to know how Osama Bin Laden lives in the same way that bombing raids and modern warfare become captivating TV. To all intents and purposes *The House of Osama Bin Laden* could be just another video game where enemies are hunted down. The big difference here is that there is no excitement or action – there are no targets or players.

As with most of their work, Langlands & Bell offer no direct comment or narrative but the effect is to question our understanding of war, terrorism, the role of the media and international organisations. They challenge us to think about how a country comes to terms with the devastation of years of war.

## FOR DISCUSSION

- What does the work of Langlands & Bell tell us in the West about Afghanistan post war? Why do you think they were commissioned to look at what happened after most of the military presence had departed from the country?
- Langlands & Bell's work has been described as 'political art'. What do you think is meant by this? Do you agree?

- Langlands & Bell explore difficult and often emotive subjects. However, they always seem to maintain a level of detachment and distance. How do they achieve this?
- Consider how the built environment can symbolise political and historical situations. Discuss buildings or sites you know and examine how they carry and communicate meaning and how certain people or communities become linked to the site.

## ACTIVITIES

- How would you respond to a particular political situation? What do you feel would be the most effective way to comment on it? Research a subject and then make a presentation of your ideas to the rest of the group.
- Make a video or a series of drawings, paintings, photographs or digital images about a building or site that has particular resonance for you. If you can, explore the building inside and out and also research its history.

## LINKS TO THE TATE COLLECTION

Consider Langlands & Bell's work in relation to the tradition of war commissions. Look at Paul Nash's painting *Totes Meer (Dead Sea)* 1940–1, which is based on a set of photographs taken by Nash of a dump for wrecked German aircraft near Oxford while he was an official war artist.

Contrasts can be made to the work of artists such as Hans Haacke who has produced controversial and overtly political works such as *A Breed Apart* 1978 exposing systems of power and influence.

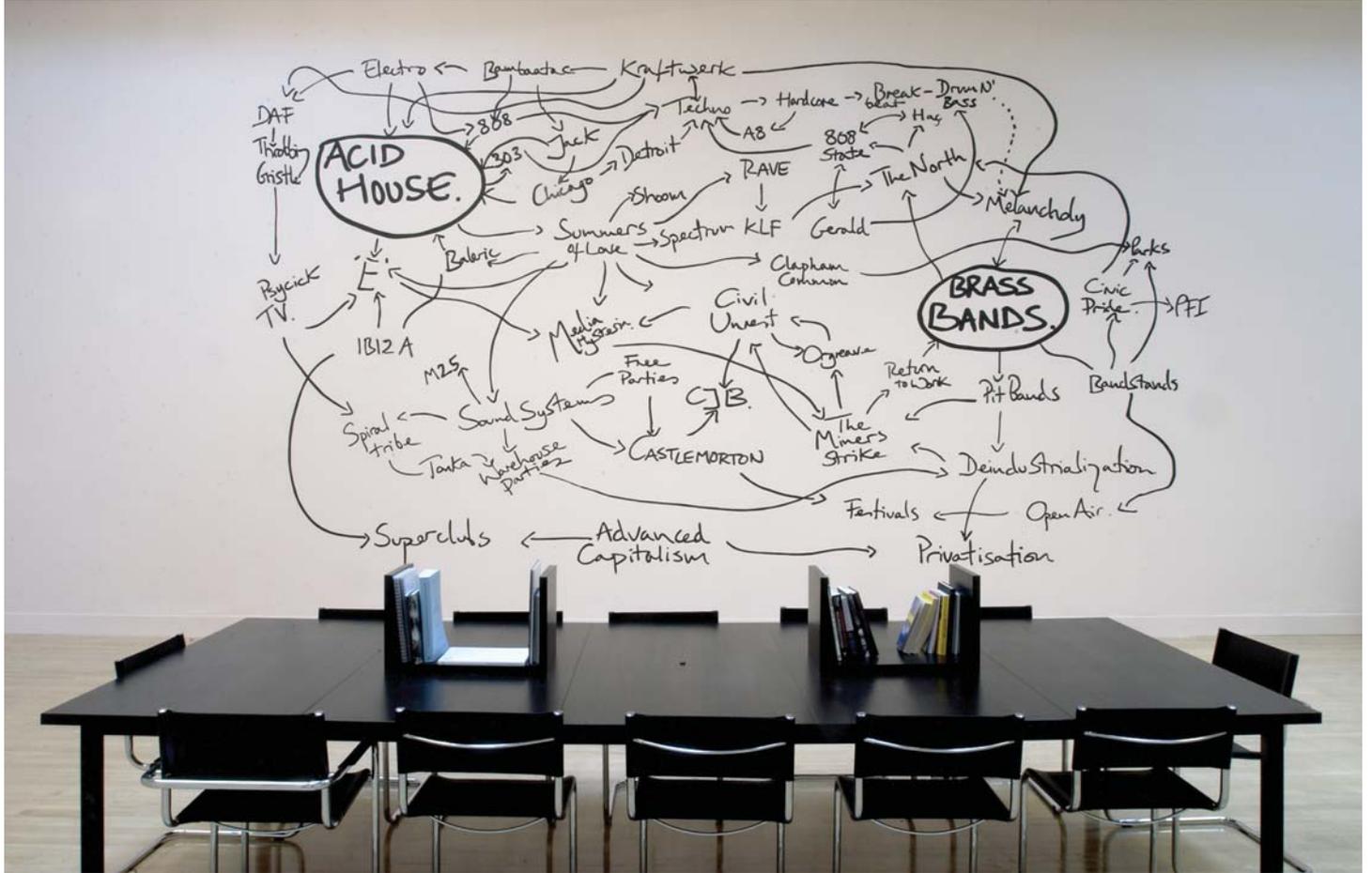
Links can also be made to artists who investigate the built environment, exploring the way spaces, buildings and locations express history and identity. See for example Thomas Struth's photographs such as *Shinju-ku (Skyscrapers)*, Tokyo 1986. Michael Landy's installation *Semi-Detached* is on display until 3 December 2004 in the Duveen Galleries at Tate Britain. This work includes a vast to-scale model of the outside of the house that Landy was brought up in London. An interesting comparison can be made to Langlands & Bell's work and could provide the focus for a wider discussion of issues to do with identity and the built environment.

Also Donald Rodney best known for his photograph *In the House of My Father* has a display in the Goodison Room until the end of December. In the photograph Rodney's hand holds a tiny sculpture of a house made out of his own skin.

Further information on Tate works can be found at [www.tate.org.uk/collection](http://www.tate.org.uk/collection)

## OTHER LINKS

Why not visit a collection such as the Imperial War Museum to make further comparisons. Contrast their work to, for example, the paintings of Peter Howson who was commissioned to record the war in Bosnia. [www.iwm.org.uk](http://www.iwm.org.uk) or [www.iwmcollections.org.uk](http://www.iwmcollections.org.uk).



JEREMY DELLER THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD 1997-2004, COURTESY THE ARTIST AND THE MODERN INSTITUTE, GLASGOW, PHOTO: J. FERNANDES AND M. HEATHCOTE

# JEREMY DELLER HAS BEEN SHORTLISTED FOR THE TURNER PRIZE FOR *MEMORY BUCKET*, A MIXED MEDIA INSTALLATION AT ARTPACE, SAN ANTONIO, DOCUMENTING HIS TRAVELS THROUGH THE STATE OF TEXAS.

## BACKGROUND

*The History of the World* is a large wall drawing Deller has made in the exhibition. The drawing relates to a work called *Acid Brass* 1997 for which Deller invited a brass band to play Acid House music. The diagram explores the links and connections that Deller felt brass bands and Acid House had in common.

Deller says that the drawing shows how he tends to work, trying to connect things up and show how 'everything is connected to everything else'. On the face of it, you might ask what brass bands do have in common with Acid House. However, and as Deller's drawing shows, they are both forms of folk and popular music and they both had a strong following in the North of England. Deller explains that they meet in the middle with the trade unions and with the media interest that surrounded Acid House music and drug culture and also with the miners' strike. The link for Deller is this connection to civil unrest – they represented forms of resistance to the Thatcher government in '80s Britain.

*Acid Brass* was performed first at Liverpool School of Art and later at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, and at the gala opening night ceremony at Tate Modern, London. The strange juxtaposition of these supposedly 'clashing' musical forms resulted in something extraordinary and totally new. The musician Bill Drummond recalls, 'it was just stunning...it's the fantastic chords – when they're playing those sweeping melodies, those huge big chords, which people don't usually think of Acid House'.

Like most of Deller's project, *Acid Brass* involved other people and as an overall project it resulted in a number of different works including live performance, a wall drawing, a CD recording and a series of screenprints. Deller has been described as a 'catalyst' who takes on the role of mediator, curator or director initiating creativity in others. Most of his projects take place outside the gallery context and bring together different social groups and cultural traditions. Within this Turner Prize exhibition he has included a table with books on related subjects as well as a range of speakers with specialist interests who will be there to chat with visitors on certain days.

*The History of the World* is one of a number of works where Deller has explored the cultural and political heritage of Britain. Other work has included a folk archive project and a series of photographs made as memorials to key individuals and events in recent history. He has also explored the cultural history of other specific places such as San Sebastian in Spain (see *A Social Parade* 2004) and Texas (*Memory Bucket* 2003).

## FOR DISCUSSION

- Why do you think Deller calls his wall drawing *History of the World*?
- What questions does Deller's work raise about value in culture? Why do you think he is so interested in exploring what might be described as a culture clash?
- Deller is interested in the idea of 'living history'. What do you think he means by this?

- Deller has made a number of works that explore the history of the 1984 miners' strike. He regards this period as a particularly unsettled piece of history. What other events from recent history do you think would be interesting to explore and re-visit?
- Deller has been described as 'part alchemist and part social-anthropologist'. What do you think is meant by this?
- Much of Deller's work is time-based in the sense that it is focused on specific events. Do you think his work could be described as performance art? Note that there will be live talks during this exhibition.
- What do you think about the idea of an artist taking on a range of roles such as curator, director and writer? Can you think of other people past and present who work in this way?

## ACTIVITIES

- Consider two different but important events within your own lifetime. Make your own diagram exploring the links and connections between these two events.
- Explore ways to re-stage an event that you have lived through and that you feel was perhaps misrepresented by the media.
- Create your own 'memory bucket' based on an event or place. Collect a range of material such as photographs, objects, media clips, interviews etc.
- Develop a collaborative art project. Brainstorm initial ideas as a group and consider a range of media such as music, printmaking, film etc. Explore how the project could be developed for different places and occasions.

## LINKS TO THE TATE COLLECTION

Simon Patterson's work is preoccupied with the presentation of information in its various forms. His work combines text and image, diagrams, maps, wall drawings and installations. In his best known, *The Great Bear* 1992, he reproduced the London Underground map replacing the names of the stations with the names of celebrities past and present.

Experience Bruce Nauman's *Raw Materials* sound installation in the Turbine Hall at Tate Modern (12 October – 28 March 2005). Like Deller, Nauman uses a diverse range of media and the current display explores the effects of layering and fragmentation of sound, image and text.

Consider how other artists past and present work in collaboration with others.

Contemporary artists such as Damien Hirst or Gillian Wearing frequently collaborate with others to produce work in a range of ways. Much of Wearing's work explores the boundaries between public and private.

Look at the tradition of history painting. See works such as John Singleton Copley's *The Death of Major Peirson 6 January 1781* 1783. Could Deller's work be described as a contemporary form of history painting?

Further information on Tate works can be found at [www.tate.org.uk/collection](http://www.tate.org.uk/collection)



**YINKA SHONIBARE** *THE SWING (AFTER FRAGONARD)* 2001, TATE, COURTESY THE ARTIST AND STEPHEN FRIEDMAN GALLERY, LONDON  
PHOTO: J. FERNANDES AND M. HEATHCOTE

# YINKA SHONIBARE HAS BEEN SHORTLISTED FOR THE TURNER PRIZE FOR HIS EXHIBITION *DOUBLE DUTCH* AT THE MUSEUM BOIJMANS VAN BEUNINGEN, ROTTERDAM AND HIS SOLO SHOW AT STEPHEN FRIEDMAN GALLERY, LONDON.

## BACKGROUND

This installation was inspired by an eighteenth-century painting by the French artist Jean-Honoré Fragonard which can be seen in the Wallace Collection in London. Shonibare has re-made the painting in three-dimensions altering various aspects.

Fragonard's painting epitomes a style known as rococo which emphasised extravagance and luxury. This romantic and suggestive painting depicts a young well-dressed woman kicking her shoe off as she swings in a lush garden. Behind her a priest pushes the swing while in front a gentleman lounges, gazing up the woman's billowing skirts.

Shonibare has only selected parts of the painting and, in a witty and playful parody, he transports Fragonard's 'coquette' to a twenty first century context. He leaves out the priest and the gentleman, choosing to display the woman on the swing alone. She is roughly life size, has no head and is dressed in colourful 'African' fabrics. Her petticoats still billow and her slipper flies through the air (suspended on wire) with a sense of abandonment.

The dimensions and scale of the work encourage us as viewers to become part of the scene. It is as if Shonibare wants us to step inside the painting and play at being the 'voyeurs'. At the same time he wants us to explore the contradictions of what he has done. He says *'the piece is both historical and contemporary. And really the idea behind it is to draw a parallel with the relationship between the contemporary first world and third-world countries. I want to show that behind excessive lifestyles there are people who have to provide the labour to make this kind of lifestyle happen.'*

The colourful fabric used for this sculpture was bought in Brixton market in London. Labelled as 'African' the fabric has a fascinating and complex history which Shonibare uses in his work as a metaphor to challenge ideas about authenticity. Originally an Indonesian batik method, Dutch colonisers appropriated and industrialised the technique. English manufacturers then copied what became known as the 'Dutch wax style' in Manchester using traditional African textile designs. The fabrics were then exported to West Africa and the bright colours and geometric patterns became associated with the struggle for African political and cultural independence. They continue to be sold in Africa and the West and their designs are constantly adapted. Here Shonibare has included a fabric with the Chanel logo print on it.

Shonibare has consistently used this fabric to subvert conventional readings of cultural identity. The artist, who, brought up in the UK and Nigeria, describes himself as a 'post-colonial hybrid' is interested in ideas about nationality, identity, history, ethnicity, post-colonialism and today's global economy. He tries to open debate about the social, cultural and political issues that shape our histories and construct identity. *The Swing* is one of a number of works where Shonibare has 're-interpreted' an image or event from history. His most recent work, a film called *Un Ballo in Maschera (a Masked Ball)* 2004, explores the assassination King Gustav III of Sweden in 1792.

## FOR DISCUSSION

- Discuss the way Shonibare offers a 'fresh take' on Fragonard's painting. What issues about both past and present times does he raise by doing this? Consider other ways you might appropriate Fragonard's painting depending on the issues you want to raise.
- What do your clothes (colour, material, style) say about who you are? Consider how the fabric Shonibare uses signifies African identity. How does he draw our attention to the shifting and constructed nature of identity? Can anything be 'authentic' in today's world?
- Fragonard's painting is often described as frivolous. Would you describe Shonibare's installation in the same way? What does his work say about life style, leisure and privileges?

## ACTIVITIES

- Choose a work from the history of art that has always fascinated you. How would you offer a 'fresh take' on it. Consider how you might change the dimensions, scale and media of the work. As an extension, why not explore the ways artists often quote or appropriate art from the past.
- Explore and discuss the 'authenticity' of products, materials and objects that interest you or relate to your family. Try and research their history and origins. Use the results to develop your own 'portable personal history museum'.

## LINKS TO THE TATE COLLECTION

Look at other artists who raise issues of cultural identity in their work. Examples could include Chris Ofili's drawing *afro* 2000, Yukinori Yanagi's installation *Pacific* 1996, Shirin Neshat's film *Soliloquy* 1999 or Mona Hatoum's video *Measure of Distance* 1988.

A display of Donald Rodney's work is on view in the Goodison Room at Tate Britain until end of December. Rodney's work explores the nature of black identity.

Links could also be made to Grayson Perry's ceramic pots and vases. Like Shonibare, Perry (who won the Turner Prize in 2003) is interested in challenging traditional ideas of 'fine art' and he uses a variety of decorative techniques, often appropriating imagery from artists of the past, to address issues of identity, class, sexuality and gender.

Look at the portrayal of wealth, power and leisure in historic painting at Tate Britain. See works such as Peter Angellis's *Conversation Piece* c.1715–20 in Room 3. Explore also *Inventing Britain* (Room 6) and *Art and Victorian Society* (Room 15).

Further information on Tate works can be found at [www.tate.org.uk/collection](http://www.tate.org.uk/collection)

## OTHER LINKS

You might like to look at artists past and present who reference art history. For example, Manet's *Dejeuner sur L'herbe* 1863 (Musée d'Orsay, Paris).

The American video artist Bill Viola had made a series of works such as *Emergence* 2002, which are based on old master paintings. Glenn Brown (who was nominated for the Turner Prize in 2000) makes paintings which frequently reference art history.