

WORLD ART COLLECTIONS EXHIBITIONS

SAINSBURY CENTRE
for Visual Arts



John Hedgecoe
Francis Bacon, painter, 1969

Press Release

The Face of the Artist exhibition – 21 June to 4 December

Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts acquires and exhibits a major collection of portraits by the photographer John Hedgecoe

The Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, has acquired a major collection of portraits by John Hedgecoe, one of the most significant photographers in the history of British photography. An exhibition of works from this collection, *The Face of the Artist: Photographs by John Hedgecoe*, will open on Tuesday 21 June and will run until Sunday 4 December. The exhibition will include portraits of artists and writers, together with figures from fashion and the stage. A central focus of the show will be photographs of artists such as Francis Bacon and Henry Moore, who feature in the Centre's collections, alongside their works. During the summer (21 June – 28 August), the exhibition will coincide with a Manchester Art Gallery touring exhibition, *A World Observed 1940 – 2010: Photographs by Dorothy Bohm*.

"My father photographed thousands of people from all walks of life. He travelled around the world visiting countless extraordinary places. I know he would be very pleased to know his photographs will live on and be seen by other generations of people. I'm sure they will inspire future photographers" – Sebastian Hedgecoe (son).

John Hedgecoe (1932 – 2010) was at the forefront of portrait photography for over 50 years. Perhaps best known for his portraits of artists, he also took pictures of the leading figures in the worlds of literature, science and politics from Agatha Christie to Winston Churchill, while his portrait of the Queen taken in 1966 still graces British postage stamps.

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The new exhibition at the Sainsbury Centre will feature John Hedgecoe's photographs together with works from the Centre's permanent collections. They include Henry Moore with his *Mother and Child*, Anthony Green with his painting *My Mother Alone in her Dining Room*, Lucie Rie with a selection of her ceramics, and Lynn Chadwick and Elisabeth Frink alongside their sculptures. A portrait of Francis Bacon by Hedgecoe will sit alongside Bacon's *Sketch for a Portrait of Lisa*, 1955, from the *Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection*. The Centre has an outstanding collection of early Francis Bacon paintings and Sir Robert Sainsbury considered *Sketch for a Portrait of Lisa* to be "one of the most beautiful pictures Francis has ever painted", stating that he would have bought it even if he wasn't related to Lisa.

Also on display this summer at the Centre will be portraits by John Hedgecoe of other well-known artists and writers, as well as images of famous names from fashion and the stage. These will include Sir Cecil Beaton, Sir Peter Blake, Malcom Bradbury, Sir Noël Coward, Dame Barbara Hepworth, David Hockney, Laurie Lee, John Mortimer, Sir Andrew Motion and Mary Quant.

"The physical appearance of the artist, his or her features, mannerisms, eccentricities, and posture has long fascinated us. John Hedgecoe, one of the great society photographers and educators of the last half century, brilliantly photographed many of the greatest painters, sculptors, poets, and cultural thinkers of his age. This exhibition presents these artistic faces, in celebration of a great photographer, and a great artistic age" – Dr Paul Greenhalgh, Director, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts.

John Hedgecoe's unconventional and elegant style ranged from the formal, such as posed shots of artists with their work in the studio, to close-ups revealing their various reactions to being photographed. In 1969 he photographed Francis Bacon. The posed shots were taken at the RCA as Bacon had just accidentally burnt down his studio. More informal photographs of Lucie Rie were taken in her home in 1980. Hedgecoe recalled, *"She invited me to stay for tea, which she'd set out like a Mondrian painting: all the sandwiches were cut into neat squares and triangles, with the plates arranged with precision, while a single tulip stood in one of her pots. It all looked fantastic and I could hardly bring myself to eat it and spoil the effect"*.

John Hedgecoe was friends with many of his subjects. He knew Henry Moore for over 40 years and photographed him extensively in many settings and produced 4 books. Richard Calvocoressi has described the books as *"an exceptional range of incisive and insightful photographs. These are among the most important visual records we have of Moore's life and work"*.

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An internationally acclaimed photographer, educator and writer, John Hedgecoe studied photography at Guildford School of Art. Following a period as an aerial photographer in the RAF, he joined *Queen* magazine as staff photographer. In the mid-1960s he persuaded the Royal College of Art (RCA) to allow him to create a department of photography and in 1975 he became the first Professor of Photography. He was powerful creative force at the RCA, a dynamic personality, determined to place the study of photography on an equal footing with other arts and to make the institution one of the most significant artistic institutions internationally. His photographs have appeared in leading newspapers and magazine titles and can be found in major collections around the world. Hedgecoe was also best-selling author of over 30 books on photography, selling millions of copies world-wide during his lifetime. His 'how to' books provided the first educational building blocks for amateurs and professionals alike.

"We are very pleased to give the Sainsbury Centre of Visual Art our father's photographs as we know they will be very well looked after and will be seen by a wide audience. Our father would have been very happy for them to be in Norfolk as he lived there for over 20 years" - Dolly Carter (daughter).

The John Hedgecoe exhibition will coincide with *A World Observed 1940 – 2010* (21 June – 28 August), the first comprehensive retrospective of the work of London-based photographer Dorothy Bohm. The exhibition will bring together over 150 images, tracing an exceptional career which spans 7 decades. Bohm's visually striking photographs focus on the human figure in its natural setting and document the rapidly changing world of the last 70 years.

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For further information or images please contact

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Notes to Editors

Dates, Times and Information

The Face of the Artist runs from Tuesday 21 June to Sunday 4 December 2011. The exhibition will be open Tuesday to Sunday, 10am to 5pm, closed Mondays including Bank Holiday Mondays T 01603 593199 www.scva.ac.uk

Admission (includes entry to the coinciding special exhibition) £4, concessions £2
Family admission (up to 2 adults and 3 children) £8, concessions £6

The Sainsbury Centre's John Hedgecoe collection

The Sainsbury Centre gratefully acknowledges the generous gift of works by John Hedgecoe from his family

Sainsbury Centre Exhibition Marketing Sponsors

National Express

Other Information

George Sexton Associates have provided the lighting and design for *The Face of the Artist* the Sainsbury Centre

The Centre is supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and The Gatsby Charitable Foundation