

# CANDIDA STEVENS GALLERY

## Stephen Farthing's Museums of the World

Manor Place Museum & Candida Stevens Gallery

3 March – 14 April 2018



*Museums of the World* is a collection of 18 paintings produced between 2015-2017, by Royal Academy Exhibitions Committee Chairman Stephen Farthing, of the interiors of public and private museums around the world. They were inspired by his work as an artist and as the husband of an American diplomat.

The exhibition will be split across two venues – the Candida Stevens Gallery in Chichester and the rarely accessed private museum of art collector, Simon Draper. The former Chairman of the Virgin Music group built Manor Place Museum close by his West Sussex country home, Monkton House, to display his collection of works by artists such as Howard Hodgkin, Richard Hamilton, Gerhard Richter and Anselm Kiefer.



Throughout his peripatetic life, Stephen Farthing has felt compelled to visit the collections of the museums and galleries wherever he has lived. He observes and reconfigures both the space and the works of art within, through his own eyes. His paintings record and respond to the function of being a collector and the purpose of having a collection. They look closely at the process of accumulation and pose questions about perceived value, the behaviour behind collecting and the legacy of a collection.



Stephen says: *"You arrive as a stranger in a foreign city and you are looking at a way to relate to it. The museums and galleries are the places that I naturally gravitate towards, feel comfortable in, and want to spend time in. You can just sit there and look at the people and the art and try and work out how you're going to fit in. In very practical terms, it's a way of me trying to integrate myself into a new environment."*

Farthing's work has often focused on interiors and this new series puts the viewer right into the setting of gallery spaces. Stephen is the guide by which we enter these institutions, we see their collections and exhibitions through his eyes – *"You're not just looking at a painting, but at a painting in a situation"* he says. *"Nothing in these pictures comes from my fantasy. Everything in them can be traced back to historically real sources, though I've taken great delight in juxtaposing vastly different periods."*



The works on display at Manor Place Museum, will be playfully curated to show paintings of museums, in a museum, as part of a museum, alongside pieces of Simon Draper's personal collection, which includes works by Patrick Caulfield and Bridget Riley. Simon Draper says: *"I have long been addicted to collecting, so the*

chance to open up my museum and host a body of work, by an important British artist, that uniquely reflects back on that activity, and the environments that collectors create, was something I have a real curiosity and interest to see and share.”

*Museums of the World* features interiors of illustrious institutions that will be immediately recognisable to art lovers, including The Royal Academy (*The Museum of Vernal Entertainment: London*), The National Gallery (*The Museum of Good Painting: Trafalgar Square*), The Metropolitan Museum, New York (*The Museum of the American World View of Global Visual Culture, Manhattan*), Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (*The Museum of the Slice of America, Madison Avenue*), Yale Center for British Art (*The Museum of Art from a Small Island, New Haven*) and The Wallace Collection (*The Museum of the Boudoir, Manchester Square*).

Charles Saumarez Smith, Secretary and Chief Executive of the Royal Academy of Arts, introduces the catalogue for the exhibition, writing: “*The works demonstrate Stephen’s worldliness, his ability to travel in the imagination, his knowledge of the conditions of art display, and the contrasts between the ways that art is displayed on different continents, in different milieu, in private and in public. Intelligent and knowing wit is not something which we normally look for in contemporary art, but it is evident in the work of Stephen Farthing.*”

Stephen Farthing has also made a painting, based on the interior of Manor Place Museum, as part of *Museums of the World* series - *The Museum of Post Cubist Painting: near Chichester*.

More information at [www.candidastevens.com](http://www.candidastevens.com) – follow us on Twitter @Candida\_Stevens, Facebook @CandidaStevensGallery and Instagram @candida\_stevens

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

**Stephen Farthing** (b. 1950) has exhibited extensively since he held his first solo exhibition at the Royal College of Art Gallery in 1977. He represented Britain at the Sao Paulo Biennale in 1989, leading to many further solo shows around the world. He has also participated in numerous group exhibitions, including the *John Moores Liverpool Exhibition* at the Walker Art Gallery in which he was a Prize Winner on eight occasions.

His teaching career began as a Lecturer in Painting at Canterbury College of Art, after which he was a Tutor in Painting at the Royal College of Art. From 1990-2000 he was the Ruskin Master of Drawing at the University of Oxford and a Professorial Fellow of St Edmund Hall. He was the Executive Director of the New York Academy of Art (2000-4) and the Rootstein Hopkins Research Professor of Drawing at the University of the Arts, London (2004-17).

Stephen was appointed Artist in Residence at the Hayward Gallery in London in 1989. He was elected a Royal Academician in 1998 and has been Chairman of the Royal Academy Exhibitions Committee since 2013. He lives and works in Amman and London. His works can be found in numerous public collections including Ashmolean Museum, British Museum, National Portrait Gallery, Royal Academy of Arts, V&A Museum, Walker Art Gallery. More at [www.stephenfarthing.co.uk](http://www.stephenfarthing.co.uk)

**Candida Stevens Gallery** is a curation led gallery established in 2014. The gallery produces exhibitions that explore important themes through the responses of new or relevant work by some of the finest emerging and established figurative and abstract artists working in Britain today. With an energetic, curatorial curiosity the gallery seeks to work with artists who are influential in their field and we have the privilege to represent the work of some of Britain’s genuine artistic pioneers, including textile artist Alice Kettle, painter Stephen Farthing RA and technically ground-breaking politically engaged artist Nicola Green. Candida Stevens Gallery is at 12 Northgate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1BA. Tel – 01243 528401. Email – [info@candidastevens.com](mailto:info@candidastevens.com)

#### **IMAGES**

*The Museum of Vernal Entertainment: London*, 2017 © Stephen Farthing (Royal Academy of Arts)

*The Museum of the American World View of Global Visual Culture Manhattan* © Stephen Farthing. (The Metropolitan Museum, Manhattan)

*The Museum of the Boudoir, Manchester Square* © Stephen Farthing (The Wallace Collection, London)

*The Museum of the Slice of America, Madison Avenue* © Stephen Farthing (Whitney Museum, Manhattan)

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Brera PR & Marketing – 01702 216658 / [tracy@brera-london.com](mailto:tracy@brera-london.com) & 07887 514984 / [adam@brera-london.com](mailto:adam@brera-london.com) & 0781 806 1503