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## **PRESS RELEASE:**

### **Newport Street Gallery to exhibit Ashley Bickerton solo show in April 2017**

Newport Street Gallery is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of work by American artist Ashley Bickerton (b.1959), which opens to the public on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April and will run until 20<sup>th</sup> August 2017.

The exhibition spans more than three decades of Bickerton's career and features almost 50 works, including both new and previously unexhibited pieces. The show will present examples of Bickerton's earlier consumerist work as well as his tropically-coloured mixed-media paintings, which explore themes varying from fantastic eroticism and nightmares, to 'the end of the world'.

Ashley Bickerton rose to prominence in the early 1980s as part of New York's East Village art scene with his vibrant abstract works that offered a sardonic critique of contemporary consumer culture. Alongside Jeff Koons, Meyer Vaisman and Peter Halley, the artist pioneered the 'Neo-Geo' movement. His practice – which involves a hybrid of photography, painting and sculpture – constantly investigates issues relating to the commodification of the 'art object' itself.

Bickerton's oeuvre can broadly be demarcated according to the date of his move from New York to Bali in the mid 90s, at which point he began his vibrant 'Blue Man' series. Incorporating elements of photography and sculpture, he describes these largely figurative works as 'parodies of what a painting is supposed to be'. Increasingly interested in the differences between representation in western and non-western cultures, Bickerton's later work strives to reinterpret art historical genres and the painterly tradition, drawing inspiration from artists as diverse as Willem de Kooning, Andy Warhol, Breugel and Gauguin.

This survey – the first of the artist's work in the UK since 2009 – includes works from his 'Non-Word Word' and 'Wall-Wall' series, as well as his 'Travelogues'. The exhibition will be displayed throughout Newport Street Gallery's six gallery spaces.

Hirst met Bickerton in New York in the late 1980s and has been collecting his work for over a decade.

Newport Street Gallery is the realisation of Hirst's long-term ambition to share his extensive

collection of art – which includes over 3,000 works – with the public. In October 2016, the gallery was awarded the respected RIBA Stirling Prize for the UK's best new building of the year. The gallery's current show, 'Who What When Where How & Why', an exhibition of work by British artist Gavin Turk, has been extended by one week until 26<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

Entry to all exhibitions is free.

## Notes to editors

### About Ashley Bickerton

Bickerton's work has featured in exhibitions in museums around the world, including the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2012); Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2012); Victoria & Albert Museum, London (2011); New Museum, New York (2010); Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2010); The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2006), among others. He has also been included in prominent international biennales, among them the 9<sup>th</sup> Biennale of Sydney, Australia (1992); the 44<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale (1990); and the 1989 Whitney Biennial. His work is included in the collections of The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo; and the Tate, London among others.

The artist lives and works in Bali, Indonesia.

### About Newport Street Gallery

Newport Street Gallery opened in Vauxhall, south London, in October 2015. Spanning five buildings, the gallery presents solo or group exhibitions of work drawn from Damien Hirst's extensive art collection, which he has been building since the late 1980s. Hirst's interest in curating dates back to the beginning of his artistic career and his organisation of the groundbreaking 'Freeze' exhibition in south London in 1988.

On the opening of the gallery, Hirst said: *"I've always loved art and art deserves to be shown in great spaces, so I've always dreamed of having my own gallery where I can exhibit work by the artists I love. I believe art should be experienced by as many people as possible and I've felt guilty owning work that is stored away in boxes where no one can see it, so having a space where I can put on shows from the collection is a dream come true."*

#### For media enquiries about Newport Street Gallery please contact:

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### Newport Street Gallery

Newport Street, London, SE11 6AJ  
[www.newportstreetgallery.com](http://www.newportstreetgallery.com)

#### Opening times:

Tuesday – Sunday 10am – 6pm

#### Free entry

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Newport Street Gallery is open on bank holidays. Please see website for details.