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Newport Street Gallery awarded RIBA Stirling Prize for best building one year after it opens

This weekend marks final chance to visit Jeff Koons 'Now' in the award-winning space

Newport Street Gallery, which celebrates its first birthday this weekend, has been awarded the respected RIBA Stirling Prize for the UK's best new building of the year. Designed by Caruso St John, the gallery presents exhibitions of work drawn from Damien Hirst's collection. Now in its 21st year, the RIBA Stirling Prize is the UK's most prestigious architecture prize.

Since opening last October, Newport Street Gallery has welcomed over 120,000 visitors and opened a restaurant in collaboration with Mark Hix, designed entirely by Hirst, Pharmacy 2. The gallery's current show – Jeff Koons: 'Now' – will end on Sunday 16th October after a five month display.

On the awarding of the RIBA Stirling Prize, Damien Hirst said: *"Newport Street Gallery has realised my ambition to create an unobtrusive and beautiful series of buildings that work perfectly as a space to exhibit great art. I wanted to stay true to the history and roots of the building and Caruso understood that from the start. I am immensely proud of what we achieved and the reaction it has received in its first year of opening and hope people will continue to enjoy it."*

RIBA President Jane Duncan commented: *"With Newport Street Gallery, Damien Hirst has made an exceptional contribution to the UK's strong history of private patronage of architecture. Not only has Damien opened up his enviable private art collection to the world, but he has commissioned a real work of art to house it in."*

"Caruso St John have created a stunningly versatile space from a number of linked buildings, with beautifully crafted staircases and superb details including tactile brick facades that blend the street externally and create a succession of wonderful gallery spaces."

The Jeff Koons exhibition, which currently fills Newport Street's expansive five galleries, spans thirty-five years of the artist's extraordinary career. 'Now' features iconic works, dating from 1979 to 2014, from Koons' series *Inflatables*, *The New*, *Equilibrium*, *Luxury and Degradation*, *Made in Heaven*, *Popeye*, and *Hulk Elvis*, amongst others.

The gallery's third exhibition, Gavin Turk: 'Who What When Where How and Why', will open on 23rd November. Featuring over 60 works, the exhibition will be the artist's first major solo show since 2002.

Notes to editors

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 organization 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."*

Newport Street Gallery

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