



Saturday  
Lates



Every Saturday  
until 10pm

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6<sup>th</sup> June 2017

#### PRESS RELEASE:

### Dan Colen solo exhibition to be presented at Newport Street Gallery in October 2017

Newport Street Gallery will present an exhibition of work by American artist Dan Colen (b.1979), opening in October 2017. Colen's first major London solo show spans over fifteen years and features new works, including large-scale installations.

Colen emerged onto the New York art scene in the early 2000s alongside artists such as Dash Snow and Ryan McGinley. Brilliantly witty, shocking, poignant and nihilistic, his art presents a portrait of contemporary America and is, in part, an investigation into the act of producing and looking at art.

Alongside significant early works such as *Me, Jesus and the Children* (2001–2003) – a photorealist painting of the artist's chest, overlaid with cartoon cherubs and floating speech bubbles – the exhibition features paintings from Colen's long-running 'Gum' and 'Trash' series. In the 'Gum' paintings, spots of brightly coloured chewing gum – usually only seen in the mouths of others or stuck to the soles of shoes – are layered onto the canvas as paint. The 'Trash' works incorporate rubbish and discarded ephemera, the kind you would often encounter piled up in the street. Referencing Arte Povera, Abstract Expressionism and action painting, the trash is mixed with paint and used as an unwieldy brush to form shapes based on Raphael's exalted *Madonna and Child* paintings. With their irreverent borrowing from art history and disruptive combination of abstraction and figuration, they are paintings about painting, paintings about belief.

The exhibition features four installations, in which Colen continues to appropriate and subvert imagery from the globalised mass media and American subcultures. In these installations, Colen's examinations of masculinity and individuality are brought to the fore. The bloated, spent machismo of the American Dream is laid bare to reveal a deep-seated existential unease.

On the occasion of the exhibition, Colen states: *"This show is the first time I've been able to present the full range of my work and the wide-ranging ideas, crafts, materials, technologies and processes that I engage with. The earliest piece in the exhibition was begun eleven days before 9/11 and the exhibition follows my intuitive trajectory over the last fifteen years, which has allowed me to consider the transforming power of art when it's experienced in different moments and contexts. It also creates a perfect space for the viewer to settle in on my interests, which are sure but can be meaningless, often formless, striving for the inexplicable; which can be most felt in the negative spaces, the cracks, the holes and barely perceptible lines that are always there connecting all seemingly disparate things."*

## Notes to editors

### About Dan Colen

Dan Colen was born in 1979 in Leonia, New Jersey. He received his B.F.A. in 2001 from the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence. His work is held in various public collections including the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; and the de la Cruz Collection Contemporary Art Space, Miami. Recent solo exhibitions include 'Help!' at the Brant Foundation Art Study Center, Connecticut (2014); 'The L...o...n...g Count' at the Walter De Maria Building, New York (2014); 'Psychic Slayer' at the Herning Museum of Contemporary Art, Denmark (2015); 'Shake the Elbow' at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo (2015); and 'Oil Painting' at the Dallas Contemporary (2016).

Colen currently lives and works in New York.

### 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.

The 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.

Entry to all exhibitions is free.

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

+44(0)20 3141 9320 or email [press@newportstreetgallery.com](mailto:press@newportstreetgallery.com)

### Newport Street Gallery

Newport Street

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[www.newportstreetgallery.com](http://www.newportstreetgallery.com)

### Opening times:

Tuesday – Friday & Sunday 10am – 6pm

Saturday 10am – 10pm

Closed Mondays

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

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