

ART REVOLUTIONARIES

SIX YEARS AGO, TWO FORMIDABLE, FASHIONABLE WOMEN LAUNCHED A NEW ENTERPRISE. THEIR MISSION WAS TO TRANSFORM THE WAY WE SUPPORT THE ARTS. THEIR OUTSET/ FRIEZE ART FAIR FUND BROUGHT TOGETHER PATRONS, GALLERISTS, CURATORS, THE WORLD'S GREATEST CONTEMPORARY ART FAIR AND THE TATE IN A WHIRLWIND OF FUNDRAISING, TOURS AND PARTIES, THE LIKES OF WHICH HAD NEVER BEEN SEEN BEFORE. HERE, FOR THE FIRST TIME, IS THEIR INSIDE STORY.

JUST A DECADE AGO, the support mechanism for young artists in Britain was almost non-existent. Government funding for purchases of contemporary art had all but dried up. There was a handful of collectors but a paucity of patronage. Moreover, patronage was often an unrewarding experience, both for the donor and for the recipient institution. Mechanisms were brittle and old-fashioned. Artists were caught in the middle.

Then two bright, brisk women – Candida Gertler and Yana Peel – marched into the picture. They knew about art; they had broad social contacts across a new generation of young wealthy; and they had a plan. They teamed up with Sir Nicholas Serota, Director of Tate, Britain's foremost art institution, and the founders of the then-nascent Frieze Art Fair to form the Outset/Frieze Art Fair Fund to benefit the Tate Collection.

Their idea was daring, original – but, ultimately, very simple. Patrons would donate an amount of money, varying from hundreds to a few thousand pounds, into Outset, a registered charity. Armed with the money, each year at the Frieze Art Fair, curators from the Tate would be joined by guest curators from galleries around the world to choose the best contemporary art, from

across the globe, and purchase it for the Tate collection, with the Outset funds.

It was a winner all round. Artists who might never have been recognised by the Tate were suddenly propelled into recognition; the national collection acquired work it would never otherwise have afforded.

But the masterstroke of founders Gertler and Peel was that they made it all fun. Patrons were whisked on tours of galleries around the world or to drink champagne with artists; galleries were persuaded to hold parties featuring collections of work including those by (gasp) artists tied to other galleries. Patrons started to see supporting contemporary art not only as worthy, but as enjoyable – and an excuse to party.

Frieze and Tate have stayed on board and grown closer to Outset in the past six years, in a multidirectional relationship that benefits galleries, artists, the Tate, patrons, and the art fair. Outset itself has plenty of activities that are separate from Frieze, but together they make a great team. The Outset/Frieze Art Fair Fund to benefit the Tate Collection has raised nearly £1m and purchased 72 works, including pieces from three artists – Jeremy Deller, Mark Leckey and Simon Starling – who went on to win the Turner Prize.

ARTWORKS PICTURED ON THESE PAGES HAVE BEEN PURCHASED USING FUNDS PROVIDED BY THE OUTSET/FRIEZE ART FAIR FUND TO BENEFIT THE TATE COLLECTION UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED.



Jersey by Hurvin Anderson, 2008

1 THE FRIEZE MAN MATTHEW SLOTOVER

Co-founder and co-owner of Frieze magazine and the Frieze Art Fair

‘UNTIL OUTSET, the whole patronage and fundraising world in London was a bit fusty and boring. In London in the Nineties museums were not receiving much money from patrons for their acquisitions and what patrons there were felt entitled to sit down and have lunch with Nicholas Serota (Director of the Tate galleries) whenever they wanted, just because they were giving £500 a year.

‘What’s more, the museums had not been very sophisticated in working out what people wanted. If someone gave £50,000 [the museums] wouldn’t treat them any differently to someone who gave £5,000, and so people’s noses got put out of joint. Then [the museums] would do an event and the food would be bad, because they’d use in-house caterers, and the whole event would just be not very satisfactory.

‘What Candida Gertler and Yana Peel thought was, well we are patrons or potential patrons and we know lots of people like us. We’d be prepared to give a lot more than £500 if what we got back was really great. So, from the start, the events at Outset were fun: there was champagne and really good food, and exclusive experiences such as meeting the artist – which is very important – going to the artist’s studio, getting to see a work before anyone else has seen it.

‘Their other good idea was that the world’s a big place, and it’s difficult for the Tate curators to be in touch all over the world. Having outside curators involved was part of the deal and, for the Tate, it was possibly a sensitive thing to start with, but actually now they really like it and are confident enough to use these people again. Recently there was a Brazilian curator [Lisette Lagnado] – who, of course, is going to know a bit more about Brazilian art than them – and she bought some great Brazilian works, and [Tate] could feel confident, having taken very good advice on that.

‘I think the Tate collections team really do see [the fund] as one of the major avenues for contemporary art now and it’s very important to them. It’s one of the things I’m most proud about from the fair; I feel we’ve made a real contribution to the national collection. The acquisitions play a significant part in the UK’s cultural heritage.

‘If you ask artists, [being displayed in] museums is their top priority; they like having their work on show to a lot of people, it also puts them in the history books. In career terms, the artists chosen by the fund are in the national collection, the Tate will not sell those works, they’ll be there forever, and that’s pretty amazing for artists who all want to be immortal through their work.’

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FGF, Warsaw by Pawel Althamer, 2007



Morceau Accrochant by Pae White, 2004

The Chittendens: The Resuscitation of Uplifting by Catherine Sullivan, 2005



2 THE TATE DIRECTOR **SIR NICHOLAS SEROTA**

Director of the Tate galleries since 1988; oversaw the opening of Tate Modern in 2000

[THE FUND] is an unprecedented cooperation between a museum, a group of collectors and a fair. It is an independent group that has formed an association with the Tate for a particular purpose. That purpose is to buy works from younger artists.

'The relationship with Outset and Frieze began when two things came together: the first was a feeling that the Tate hadn't been quite as active as it might be in acquiring work by young, emerging artists; and secondly, it coincided with the creation of the Frieze Art Fair, in 2003. We knew Candida Gertler, and also Yana Peel a little, and the idea emerged that one of their first projects might be to help Tate but also help Frieze.

'One of the things that Candida and Yana felt was that there was a younger group of people who were just beginning to collect, who might well be almost frightened by the majesty of the Tate, if you can put it in those terms. These people might have been wondering if they would really be noticed. The great thing about Outset was that it provided

a place for younger collectors to congregate.

'Using external curators emerged very early in the discussion; the feeling was that it would be helpful to have some curators from elsewhere who had experience of building collections. It has worked very well and I think it has been very interesting for the Tate curators to be working with very distinguished curators from elsewhere.

'The great thing about having an outside curator is that they will have their enthusiasms, and they will encourage us to look more widely than we might otherwise have looked. It is about broadening the collection as well as expanding it. Quite a number of the artists that have been acquired through the fund are artists who were not previously represented in the collection. That is something we are definitely proud of.

'Outset represents a significant sum of money spent on emerging art, and it's very helpful. I haven't heard of any other museums replicating the model yet, but I am sure there will be.'

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Moulin Rouge
by Andreas Slominski
1998/2002



Untitled by Matthew Monahan, 2005

©MATTHEW MONAHAN, COURTESY ANTON KERN GALLERY NEW YORK AND THE TATE; ©STEVE MCGUINN, COURTESY WARREN GOODMAN GALLERY NEW YORK/PARIS, THOMAS DANIE GALLERY LONDON AND THE BRITISH COUNCIL, NOT ACQUIRED BY OUTSET/FRIEZE



Still from Giardini by Steve McQueen, 2009, whose exhibition at the 2009 Venice Biennale was co-funded by Outset

3 THE OUTSET CO-FOUNDER **CANDIDA GERTLER**

Trained in Germany as a lawyer and journalist before setting up Outset with Yana Peel in 2003

'I HAD A VERY SHORT CAREER before Outset. I started working for *Der Spiegel* in Hamburg and then decided a couple of years later, when I met my husband, to move to London and start a family. While I was with my small children at home, I did courses in modern and contemporary art at Christie's and Sotheby's. It was a great opportunity to pursue interests beyond journalism. I then got involved with an organisation supporting museums and started doing ad hoc art events.

'All of that turned into Outset when I met Yana and she came to a few events I had organised. Joining forces, we moved quickly, registering as a charitable organisation and establishing a very professional set-up. With the first Frieze Art Fair launching [in 2003], it became a natural partner.

'We met just at the inception of the Frieze Art Fair, and the directors of Frieze [Matthew Slotover and Amanda Sharp] asked us to think about a project that could enhance the fair. Our aim was to support public galleries – institutions, museums – not commercial galleries. We linked with the Tate by acquiring works of art – with money given by our patrons – at Frieze to benefit the Tate collection, which at that time needed a boost towards the very contemporary and cutting edge.

'Our aim was to bring artists to the fore. It was about making the best use of what existed in the art world in London and then, subsequently, abroad, where we felt there were many professionals doing amazing things, who wanted to help but maybe didn't know exactly how to do it. We had real enthusiasm that we felt was infectious.

'Take Frieze, for example. This was a fair that

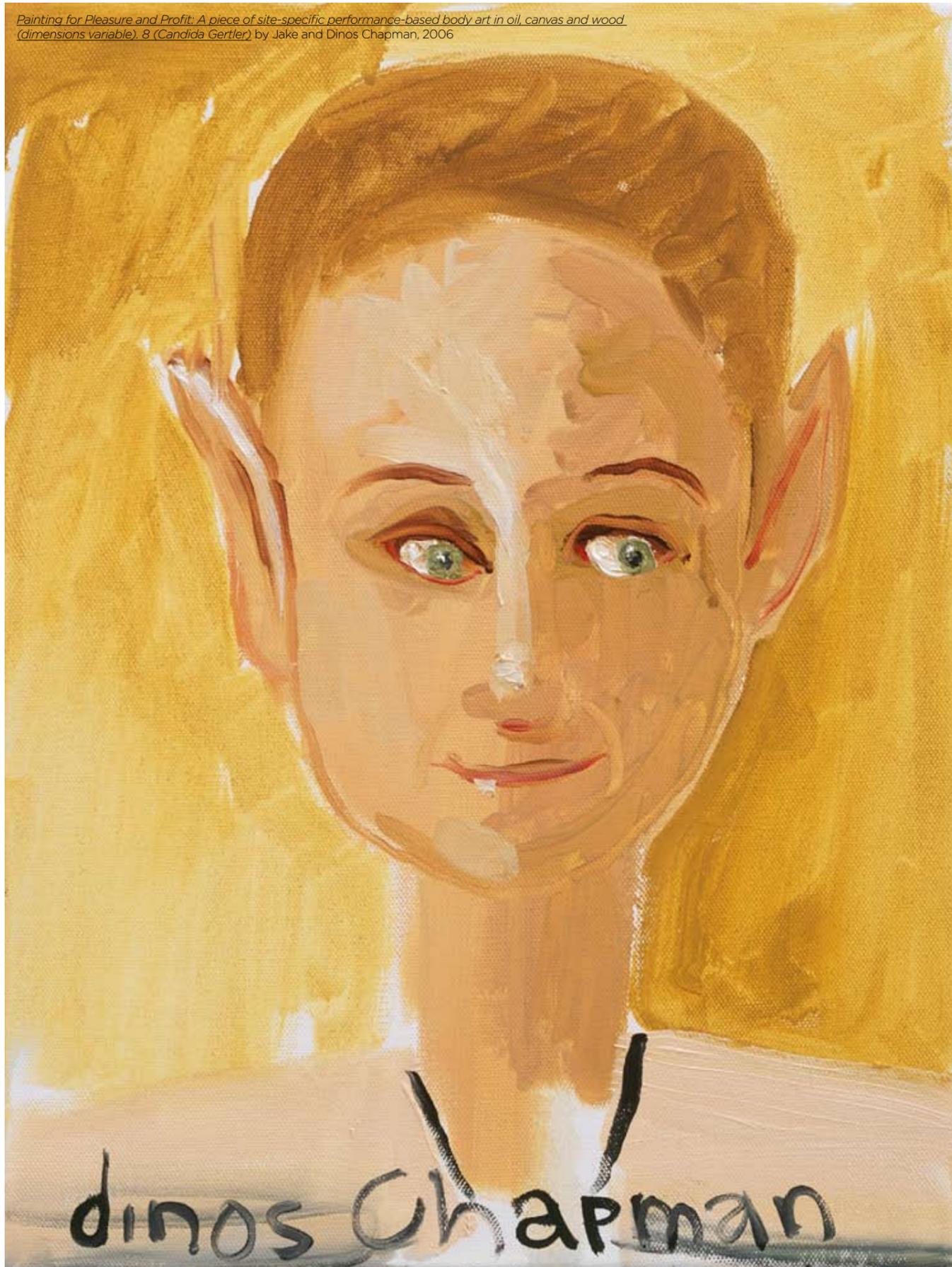
maybe many people wouldn't have visited in the first year; it didn't have a profile, it didn't have big headlines. A lot of people said, "we don't really need another fair". I think through launching our fund and publicity at the home of Lord and Lady Foster, we enthused maybe 50 key people who perhaps otherwise wouldn't have attended the fair.

'Over the years we have managed to create a wonderful group of unofficial advisors we trust and work with who are the best around the world. Through the work we have done internationally, we really can call upon most curators who have done something interesting to ask them about their next project. To introduce our patrons to what is happening at the cutting edge has kept us fresh and interesting. In the beginning it was word of mouth that drew people to us, but over the past few years we have been approached by curators, artists and galleries who want to realise projects that are maybe out of the commercial realm.

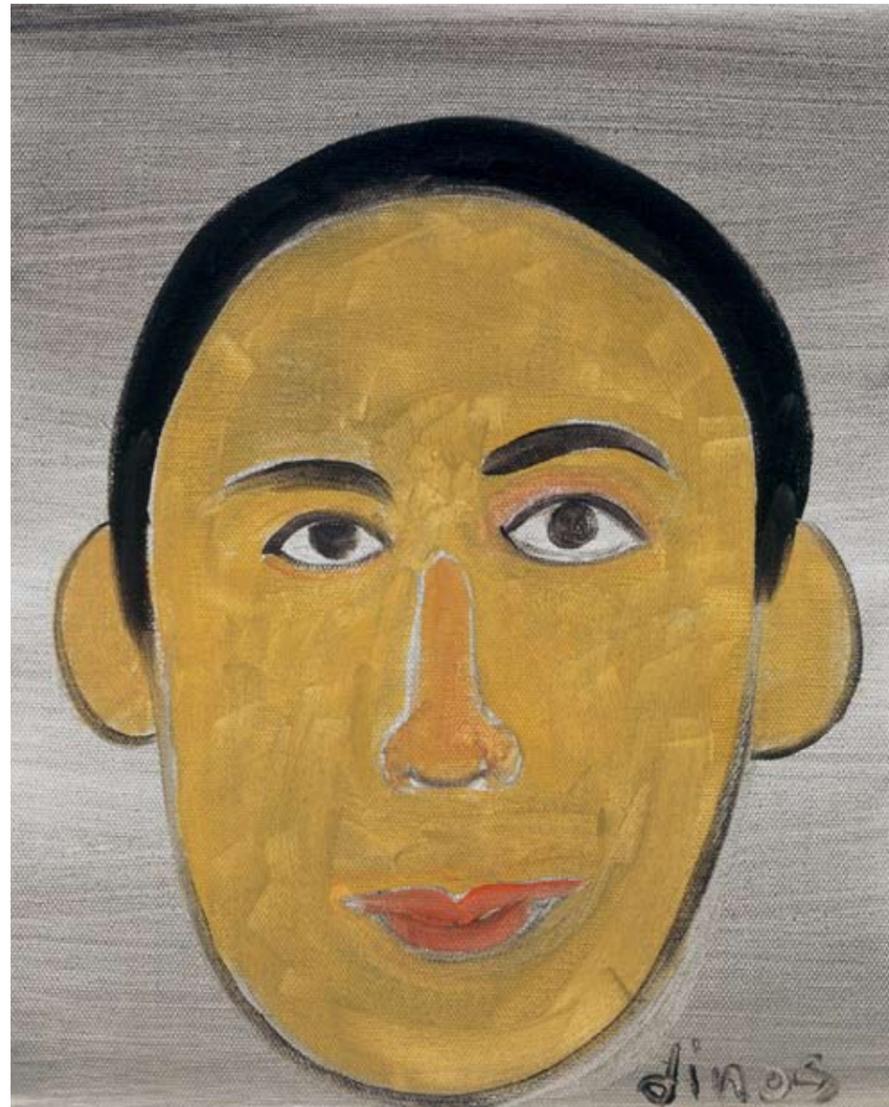
'When I walk into a museum and I see works that we bought five years ago, that perhaps the museum couldn't nowadays afford, I feel happy. We have to be very responsible with the money that has been given to us and make sure we are advised by the right people and see things the way they are. The other very exciting thing to me is always when we reach out to new audiences.

'Our biggest achievement is to have loosened up the boundaries between the patrons groups, the museum and Frieze. People are now much happier to work together to support the arts, and have realised that if we do it together we can create more than if we all pull in our own direction.'

Painting for Pleasure and Profit: A piece of site-specific performance-based body art in oil, canvas and wood (dimensions variable). 8 (Candida Gertler), by Jake and Dinos Chapman, 2006



©JAKE AND DINOS CHAPMAN. PHOTO: STEPHEN WHITE. COURTESY: JAY JOPLING/WHITE CUBE (LONDON) AND CANDIDA GERTLER. NOT ACQUIRED BY OUTSET/FRIEZE



Painting for Pleasure and Profit: A piece of site-specific performance-based body art in oil, canvas and wood (dimensions variable). 50 (Yana Peel), by Jake and Dinos Chapman, 2006

'I FIRST MET CANDIDA at the home of Charles Saatchi when I was working at Goldman Sachs. That day, probably for the first time, I saw the works of artists like Jake and Dinos Chapman, Tracey Emin and Ron Mueck. When I saw them I knew that there were lots of people around me – business and social contacts – who would find the same kind of enthusiasm of being taken outside of their comfort zone, who maybe were time strapped but had resources available in other ways to give to the art world.

'We registered Outset as a charity, launched the first fund, spent £100,000 at the Frieze Art Fair very effectively and saw the impact that that had, both on the people who we brought into the initiative, and the artists whose work we bought. For me, as well as watching what's happened with Outset in the past few years – the money, the parties, the people – I look at how many Turner

©JAKE AND DINOS CHAPMAN. PHOTO: STEPHEN WHITE. COURTESY: JAY JOPLING/WHITE CUBE (LONDON) AND YANA PEEL. NOT ACQUIRED BY OUTSET/FRIEZE

4 THE OUTSET CO-FOUNDER YANA PEEL

Former Goldman Sachs executive co-founded Outset with Candida Gertler in 2003

Prize winners we bought (three), with relatively modest funds, and that's tremendously rewarding.

'Now our patron base is remarkably solid; they have become even more financially engaged because they understand the message and because we've used the success rate, and analysis of how much we've invested, to show how rewarding it's been for the public in terms of what they get to see. From our non-artistic backgrounds, I think [Candida and I] are very accustomed to getting the most bang for our buck.

'Candida has an amazing sensitivity to the artistic community, she has built amazing relationships with museums; she is absolutely unwavering in her lack of tolerance for bullshit. We are both very honest in terms of how we allocate our resources and how we manage our team and supporters.

'Matthew and Amanda at Frieze are really a model for the way art fairs should be run and I think they've added so much to London, and to the art community and the international art map. We'd also be very encouraged if people picked up the model in other parts of the world, in terms of supporting new art and building patrons groups around the acquisition of art for public spaces. In a difficult economy coming together is one route. What we've been hearing from patrons is maybe that they're buying more or less, but they are giving more, and hopefully that will translate into a broader benefit that we can harness.'

5 THE PATRON
ERIN MORRIS

Patron of Outset since 2008

'WHAT I LIKED ABOUT OUTSET was that it was giving patronage directly to young, upcoming artists, which I thought was really important. Rather than just being a member of an art group and going around and looking, you were being a part of something that was helping to fortify these young artists.'

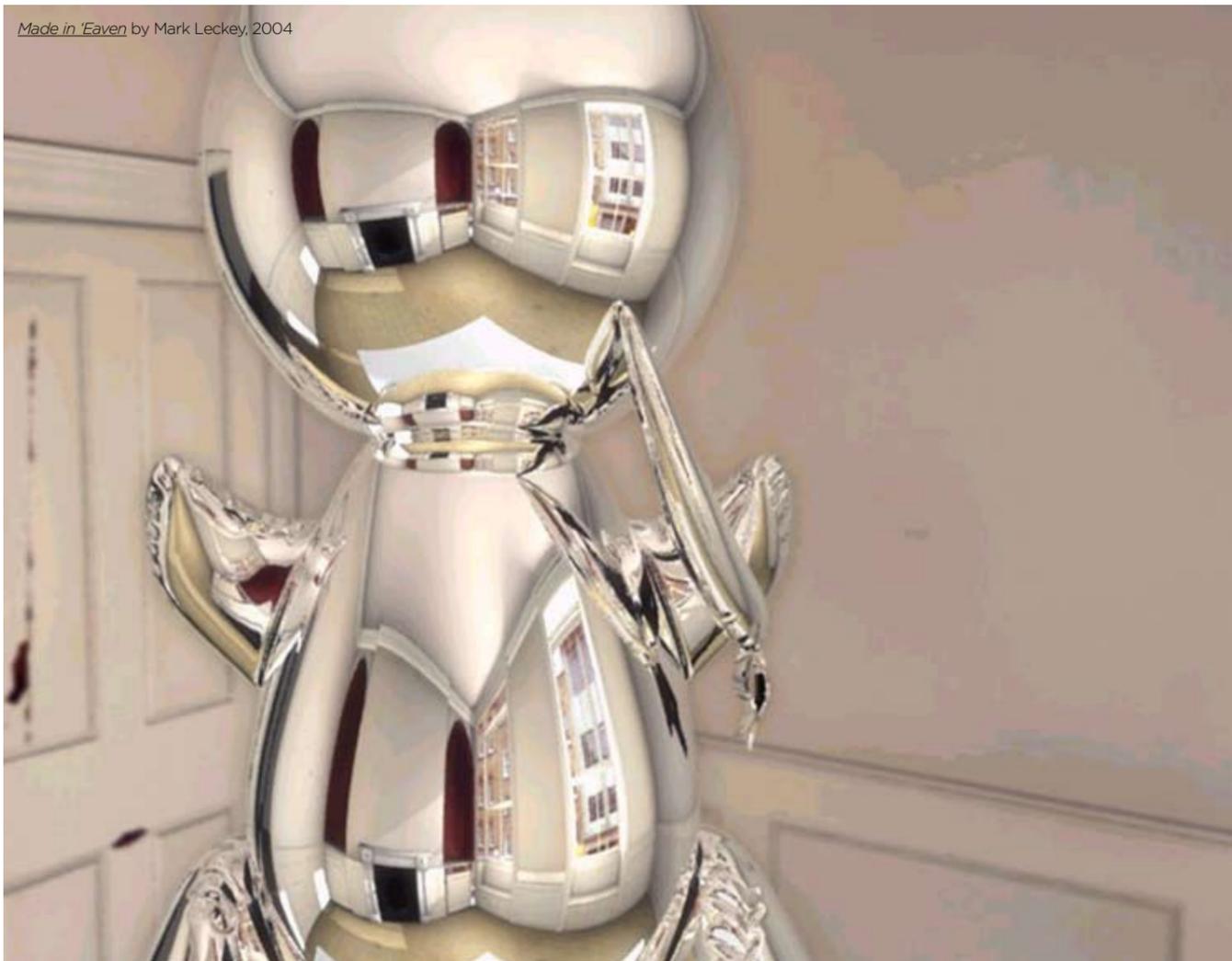
'Outset runs a lot of foreign trips for patrons [to visit contemporary artists] which I haven't yet done. I don't know of any other arts patronage scheme that does quite as interesting a programme. As a patron, not only are you giving to the Tate, to Frieze and to young artists, but you can also go on trips, do viewings of galleries, visit artists' studios: that makes patronage more intellectually interesting and fun. They've lived up [the patronage scene]. It's more, "OK maybe we'll pop in and have a glass of champagne here and meet

an artist". If you're passionate about art, Outset is so exciting.

'Patronage of the arts is very important. I read a quote, from a hip-hop artist, I think, who said, "without art and music, what does society have left, what hope does society have?". And I believe that, in a way. I didn't really make the link until we went to Camden in North London once and we saw this young Irish artist we had helped; she was about 32 years old and she'd been studying and really scraping by, and this funding let her really delve into her oeuvre and hold a show. I thought, isn't that a great feeling to give this woman who's really talented, and has got this passion, and who'd been waitressing to earn money, the chance to do all this? I love the Tate and I feel that with Outset membership you can really feel where your money and patronage is going.'



After the Mountains, More Mountains
by Scott Myles, 2004



Made in Heaven by Mark Leckey, 2004

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BOT-18-2004 by Frank Nitsche, 2004

6 THE CURATOR
JESSICA MORGAN

Tate curator of contemporary art; works closely with Outset and Frieze to acquire new works from the Fair

'ONE OF THE WONDERFUL things about Candida Gertler and Yana Peel is that they've completely understood from the beginning that any decision on what enters the collection has to be made by the museum, because we're the ones who know what we have and how we can best add to it. Their fund didn't come with strings attached.'

'The presence of external curators was one element that we had some trepidation about, because we weren't sure about how it would work out, but every year it has helped to orient the discussions. If you've got outside curators with a particular interest there are things that they may bring into us in terms of an expertise that we don't have in house; so it can offer a completely different perspective on, say, an artist

from California, or a group of young Polish artists.'

'Perhaps my favourite piece acquired through the fund would have to be the work by Roman Ondák, which is a piece called *Good Feelings in Good Times*. It's a performance work that consists of a queue of people. A group of actors are hired to form a queue in a particular location and then disband it and form it again. He did it at Frieze, and the queue would form, for instance, outside of one of the booths. Of course, there's a great deal of expectation; people are thinking, "why are people queuing there, it must be something really great". They join the queue, so the queue gets even longer; then the actors in the queue disband and perhaps rejoin and form a queue maybe outside the VIP room or something, and the same thing happens.'



Brick Wall by Anna Barriball, 2005

7 THE ARTIST
ANNA
BARRIBALL

*London-based artist; exhibited
 in Tate Britain after being
 'spotted' by the Outset/
 Frieze Art Fund*



Untitled III by Anna Barriball, 2006

'IN 2006 THREE OF MY PIECES WERE acquired by the Tate through the Outset/Frieze fund. *Brick Wall* is a dense pencil rubbing: I placed a sheet of paper up against the wall in my studio and worked over it. The paper takes on the form of the wall and has a strangely physical presence. *Untitled III* and *Untitled V* are single-projected slide images. I found the slides in a state of decomposition in a flea market. The images are familiar family snapshots almost eaten away by time. I re-photographed them and so fixed them again. I like the slippage held within the image.

'I didn't have any work in the Tate previous to

these and I was, and still am, really thrilled about it. It is the collection you aspire to be in – the national collection. You know that your work will be kept and looked after very well, and displayed sympathetically. It will have a very wide audience and you can't ask for more than that.

'I think it's important for people who visit the Tate to be able to see work that is made by emerging artists as well as established artists – it adds another kind of energy. The curators at the Tate are very informed and in touch; I think the Outset fund probably does help them acquire works from artists earlier in their careers than they otherwise might be able to.

'Arts patronage like Outset enables artists to realize ambitious and perhaps non-commercial work that would be impossible otherwise. Outset also allows patrons to visit artists' studios. That kind of contact is very valuable as you can talk about the work and provide insights that help understanding between patrons and artists.'

Acquisitions from the Outset/Frieze Art Fair Fund to benefit the Tate Collection are on display on rotation in the Tate galleries; www.outset.org.uk

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