

THOMAS DANE GALLERY

Pickford, James. 'First TenTen artist selected to produce new works for UK embassies'. *The Financial Times* Online. 24 September 2018

## FINANCIAL TIMES

**First TenTen artist selected to produce new works for UK embassies**  
Hurvin Anderson to kick off decade-long scheme that will showcase British art globally



Turner-shortlisted Hurvin Adnerson will benefit from a scheme backed by a \$0.5m philanthropic donation © Vanley Bourke

Hurvin Anderson, a British artist shortlisted for the Turner Prize, has been selected for the first of ten government commissions over ten years aimed at producing new work to fill Britain's network of embassies and diplomatic residences.

Intended to depict British contemporary culture and promote UK art overseas, the TenTen Commission, organised by the Government Art Collection, is backed by a £500,000 donation from philanthropists Sybil Robson Orr, a film producer and niece of Walmart founder Sam Walton, and her husband Matthew Orr, a City financier.

Each year until 2028, an emerging British artist will produce a limited edition print to be offered to the FCO's foreign network. With "Still Life with Artificial Flowers", Mr Anderson, 53, has made a 30-edition print of a flower-laden vase inspired by memories of the front room of his mother's house in Birmingham.

The TenTen scheme is the brainchild of the GAC, which holds 14,000 works for display in government buildings, and Outset Contemporary Art Fund, which pools philanthropic donations to support art projects in nine countries.

Fifteen of Mr Anderson's prints will be offered to embassies; eleven will go to Outset Contemporary Art Fund; as it sells them in future, the proceeds will go towards further commissions for the GAC.

Penny Johnson, GAC director, said the donation was the biggest the organisation had received from individuals in its 120-year history. "It is an enormous amount of money for us," she said.

11 DUKE STREET, ST JAMES'S, LONDON SW1Y 6BN

TEL: +44 (0)20 7925 2505 FAX: +44 (0)20 7925 2506 [info@thomasdanegallery.com](mailto:info@thomasdanegallery.com)

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Hurvin Anderson has made a 30-edition print of a flower-laden vase inspired by memories of the front room of his mother's house in Birmingham © Government Art Collection, UK

Artists will be selected by a committee of art experts independent of government. But those contemporary artists who are used to provoking audiences with taboo-busting works may find they are left off the invitation list, for fear of causing offence in diplomatic buildings.

Ms Johnson said the “context” of the display in government and diplomatic buildings meant nudity and bodily fluids were not welcome, nor political banners. Artists will not be told what to do, but those known for more controversial themes are unlikely to be sought out. “In selecting the long list we’re not going to choose an artist who is heavily political because we know we’re can’t show their work,” she said.

Speaking at an event to launch the TenTen Commission, Michael Ellis, minister for arts, heritage and tourism, said the GAC already contained plenty of politicised imagery. Pointing to a picture inspired by the Greenham Common protests of the 1980s and 1990s, Mr Ellis said “most people would say that’s political ... But any collection has its views about what is going to be most useful.”

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