

Yale Center for British Art announces 2026 exhibitions

NEW HAVEN, CT (November 6, 2025) — This spring, the Yale Center for British Art (YCBA) invites visitors to explore the complex and evolving narratives of British art across centuries, with three compelling special exhibitions. Drawing from the museum’s renowned holdings, these exhibitions illuminate creative collaborations, global exchanges, and the emergence of distinctive forms of modernism across continents from the eighteenth century to the present.

“Our spring exhibitions demonstrate the museum’s commitment to presenting a dynamic story of British art,” said Martina Droth, Paul Mellon Director. “They illuminate the complex interplay of culture and power, while inviting audiences to explore cross-cultural connections and artistic innovation across the centuries.”



Lucknow from the Gomti, detail,
ca. 1826, watercolor and gouache,
with gold. Yale Center for British
Art, Paul Mellon Collection

PAINTERS, PORTS, AND PROFITS: ARTISTS AND THE EAST INDIA COMPANY, 1750–1850

January 8 – June 21, 2026

This exhibition examines the extraordinary artistic exchanges between Indian, British, and Chinese artists whose work and lives were shaped by the growing power of the British East India Company. Between 1750 and 1850, the Company transformed itself from an expansive international business into a major military and political power that sought to control and profit from territories across Asia. Art was central to the Company’s world: it was traded for profit, offered as

diplomatic gifts, and collected by its agents and officers. As the Company's wealth increased, so did the networks of artists trained in academies, princely courts, schools, studios, and workshops. These artists experimented with styles, materials, and techniques from their diverse traditions to create a singular visual language that connected art to the expanding global economy. The exhibition features architectural drawings, watercolors, hand-colored aquatints, small- and large-scale portraits, and a spectacular thirty-seven-foot-long scroll depicting the city of Lucknow, India. Most works are drawn from the YCBA's extensive collection, and many will be displayed for the first time. A comprehensive publication accompanies the exhibition and provides insights from an international array of scholars, curators, and conservators.



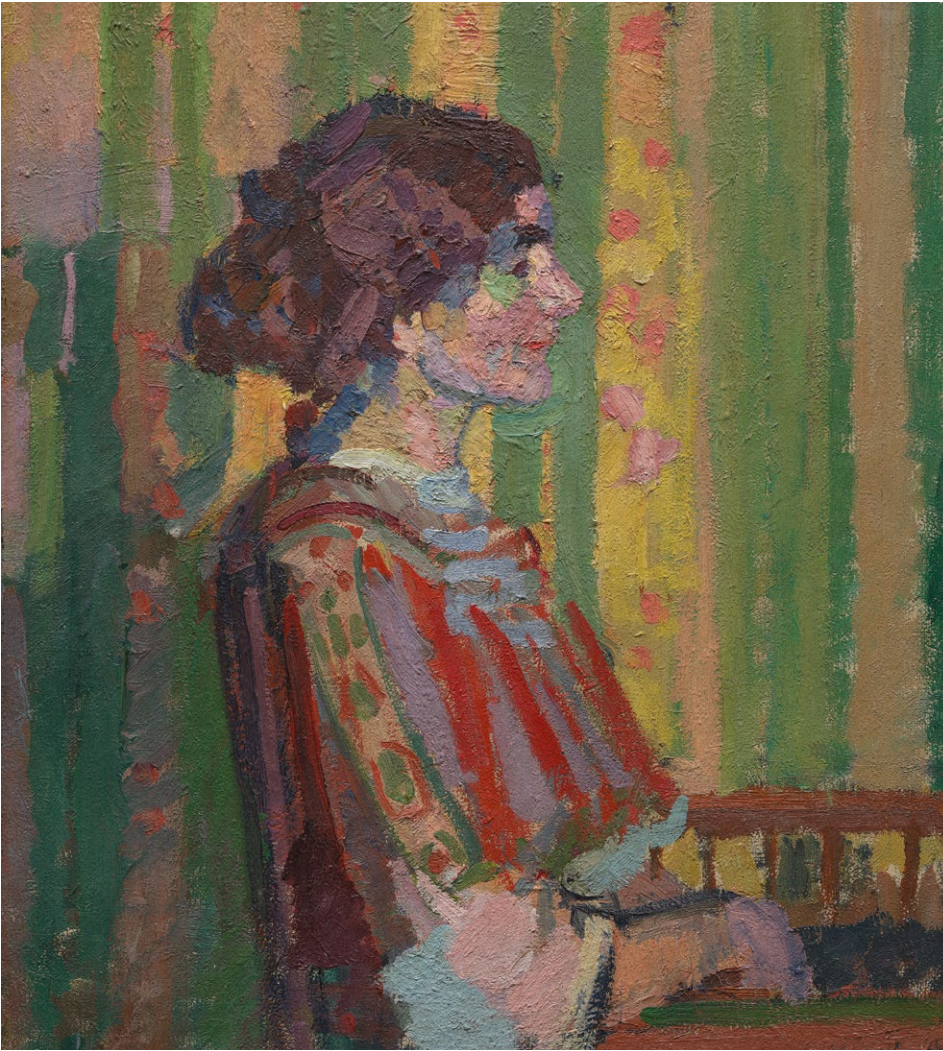
Rina Banerjee, *Take me, take me, take me . . . to the Palace of love*, 2003, plastic, antique Anglo-Indian Bombay dark wood chair, steel and copper framework, floral picks, foam balls, cowrie shells, quilting pins, red colored moss, antique stone globe, glass, synthetic fabric, shells, and fake birds. Yale Center for British Art, purchased through the generosity of Allison K. and Larry Berg; Laura and James Duncan, Yale BA 1975; Adam R. Rose, Yale BA 1982, and Peter R. McQuillan; and Yale University Art Gallery, Heinz Family Endowed Fund. © The Artist. Image Credit: Rina Banerjee: *Make Me a Summary of the World* at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, October 27, 2018 – March 31, 2019. Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia.

RINA BANERJEE:
TAKE ME, TAKE ME, TAKE ME . . . TO THE PALACE OF LOVE

February 7 – July 26, 2026

On display for the first time at the YCBA since it was acquired in 2023, *Take me, take me, take me . . . to the Palace of love* by Rina Banerjee (b. 1963, Yale MFA 1995) references the iconic form of the Taj Mahal in India, both a grand funeral monument and a symbol of enduring love. Banerjee's translucent sculpture (2003) inverts the monument's most cherished features: its costly materials and elegant marble façades, its sense of history and permanence, and its fixed location. In contrast, Banerjee's palace consists of a light frame of steel and copper wrapped in a skin of pink cellophane – a mass-produced material designed for the disposable consumer culture of the twenty-first century. Suspended from the ceiling, the tentlike structure will float in the museum's Entrance Court, visible from the street and welcoming visitors upon arrival. In the center of the work are relics of colonialism, including an antique Anglo-Indian Bombay chair, together with a chandelier assembled from a variety of expendable goods – pink foam balls, plastic beads, synthetic materials, and fake birds. Modeled on a toy souvenir of the Taj Mahal, the sculpture invites visitors to reflect on histories of global movements of goods, people, and culture, and how connections can be forged through art.

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Harold Gilman, *Stanislawa de Karłowska*, detail, ca. 1913, oil on canvas. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Fund

GOING MODERN: BRITISH ART, 1900–1960

February 12 – August 9, 2026

Twentieth-century Britain saw the emergence of some of the most innovative and influential artists of modern times, including Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, Frank Auerbach, Lucian Freud, and Francis Bacon. Their work continues to resonate and inspire today, yet “going modern and being British,” as artist Paul Nash observed, was never straightforward. This exhibition focuses on the six decades from 1900 to 1960, a time of astonishing change in politics, culture, and daily life. Comprising more than seventy paintings and sculptures from the museum’s collection, it shows artists in Britain responding to the question of what it meant to be modern. The exhibition ranges across the urban impressionism of Walter Sickert and the Camden Town Group; the paintings of Roger Fry and the Bloomsbury Group, as experimental in art as in life; the abstraction of Ben Nicholson; the groundbreaking sculpture of Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth; and the School of London’s bleak yet humane vision. By bringing a strongly contemporary ethos to enduring concerns with natural forms and the human figure, these artists created compelling and highly distinctive modernisms of their own.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Yale Center for British Art is located at 1080 Chapel Street, New Haven, Connecticut. The museum is open Tuesday–Saturday, 10 am – 5 pm, and Sunday, 11 am – 5 pm. Between September and June, the museum offers late hours on Thursdays and is open 10 am – 7 pm. The YCBA is closed Mondays and major holidays. For more information, visit britishart.yale.edu.

PRESS RELEASE

p. 4

ABOUT THE YALE CENTER FOR BRITISH ART

Opened in 1977 through the generosity of Yale graduate and philanthropist Paul Mellon, the Yale Center for British Art holds the largest and most significant collection of British art outside the United Kingdom. The collection spans more than five centuries and is the foundation for a museum uniquely focused on the histories, legacies, and shifting contexts of British art. Housed in a celebrated modernist building designed by Louis I. Kahn, the museum is situated on the Yale University campus in the city of New Haven. It is free and open to all.

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