

# Introduction

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## Trustees' Foreword

- Following the opening of Tate Modern and Tate Britain in 2000, Tate has consolidated and built on this unique achievement, presenting the Collection and exhibitions to large and new audiences. As well as adjusting to unprecedented change, we continue to develop and innovate, as a group of four galleries linked together within a single organisation.
- One exciting area of growth has been Tate Online – [tate.org.uk](http://tate.org.uk). Now the UK's most popular art website, it has won two BAFTAs for online content and for innovation over the last two years. In a move that reflects this development, the full Tate Biennial Report is this year published online at [tate.org.uk/tatereport](http://tate.org.uk/tatereport). This printed publication presents a summary of a remarkable two years.
- A highlight of the last biennium was the launch of the new Tate Boat in May 2003. Shuttling visitors along the Thames between Tate Britain and Tate Modern, it is a reminder of how important connections have been in defining Tate's success.
- Tate is a British institution with an international outlook, and two appointments from Europe – of Vicente Todolí as Director of Tate Modern in April 2003 and of Jan Debbaut as Director of Collection in September 2003 – are enabling us to develop our links abroad, bringing fresh perspectives to our programme. With the appointments of Alex Beard as Deputy Director and a new Director of Communications, Will Gompertz, we have a restructured and reinvigorated senior management team, ensuring that we can confidently face the future.
- Tate receives £28 million a year in Grant-in-Aid. This is less than similar institutions, despite the scope and breadth of our work across the UK and internationally. We have worked very hard to supplement this funding with self-generated income, and a National Audit Report of national museums showed that Tate earned twice as much as any other institution in 2002–03. We are enormously grateful to our many individual and corporate supporters. However, Tate remains vulnerable to small shifts in the economic climate and in visitor numbers.
- Over the past two decades, government has effectively abandoned financial support for new acquisitions for public collections in the UK. It is therefore imperative that the Trustees should secure support from other sources, so that we may plan for the long term. Our priorities for the next biennium are to achieve a more stable financial position and to find ways to enhance our Collection, the root from which all our programmes grow.
- The Trustees are grateful to everyone, throughout Tate and our partner organisations, whose imagination and perseverance

have generated so much for our audiences. First, it should be acknowledged that without the extraordinary leadership and energy of Tate's Director, Nicholas Serota, the changes that so many have worked to bring about could not have been achieved. We must also thank David Verey, Trustee since 1992 and Chairman from July 1998 to March 2004. His outstanding contribution during an exceptional period for Tate was duly recognised by the award of a CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours 2004. We would also like to pay tribute to the contributions of several senior staff who left Tate during the biennium. We were sorry to lose Sandy Nairne, Director of National Programmes 1995–2002, whom we congratulate on his appointment as Director of the National Portrait Gallery; Jeremy Lewison, Director of Collections and a curator at Tate since 1983, who left in 2002 to pursue independent research; and Jim France, Director of Collection and Research Services 1995–2003, who has also moved on to freelance activity in his retirement. Finally, it is with great regret that we report the death of John Anderson, Head of Frame Conservation, who died unexpectedly at the end of 2003. He joined Tate in 1973 and single-handedly established Frame Conservation as a centre of excellence. The loss of his expertise and knowledge is inestimable, but he leaves a tangible legacy.

- It is thanks to the hard work and commitment of staff throughout Tate that our opportunities are still growing, and we look forward with optimism. That is why this year's report sets our achievements in the context of our hopes for the future.

Paul Myners  
CHAIRMAN

Professor Dawn Ades  
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## Director's Introduction

- In the decade to 2002 our overriding aim was to develop our galleries in London and the regions. This priority enabled us to display more of the national collection to ever broader audiences, and to facilitate a wider range of exhibitions and activities. Over the last biennium, the number of visitors to all our galleries has remained at the very high levels experienced following the opening of Tate Modern, and to this we should add visits to our website and to Tate exhibitions travelling to other venues in Britain and overseas. In 2003, for example, our exhibition of twentieth-century British art, *A Bigger Splash*, was seen by over 250,000 visitors in Brazil. Appreciation of the Tate Collection and of our programmes has grown significantly, as has our standing both in Europe and around the world.
- However, access is about more than numbers, and over the last two years we have made a concerted effort to innovate and share, so that we can enrich the experience we offer, serve our visitors better and enable more people to enjoy art and benefit from our programmes. To achieve this we have been developing our relationships with universities, museums and other institutions at home and abroad; with schools, social services, local organisations and charities; with our technology and media associates, our corporate sponsors and many others, including our individual supporters. Numerous research projects, partnerships and collaborations have helped us to build knowledge, improve audience experience and extend our reach to a wider public.
- Our exhibition programme has again produced major popular and critical successes. *Matisse Picasso* at Tate Modern combined scholarly research with sensitive presentation and was the most visited exhibition in Tate's history. At Tate Britain, *Turner and Venice* drew on our special knowledge of Turner, as well as the rich holdings of the Turner Bequest, while at the same time we celebrated the twentieth year of the Turner Prize. *Shopping*, the most ambitious exhibition ever mounted at Tate Liverpool, was a major public success and affirmed Tate Liverpool's status as an international gallery. Tate St Ives celebrated its tenth birthday with steadily increasing visitor numbers and its most popular exhibition to date, a centenary display of the work of Barbara Hepworth.
- Over the past two years we have sought to add variety to our programmes and to explore fusions between different art forms. *Tate & Egg Live* was an innovative series of live performances which invited artists from different disciplines to work together. The results were remarkable, and it has given us the knowledge and confidence to continue to explore

new areas of artistic practice. At Tate St Ives we are running a flourishing artist residency scheme, and Tate Liverpool plays a major role in the Liverpool Biennial.

- The Collection is the centre of Tate and belongs to everyone – a universal asset that has unique meaning to each person who discovers it. A first encounter with a work of art can be a revelation, but being able to return to it can lead to a profound relationship over a lifetime. When visitors describe what favourite works mean to them, it is a reminder of the true value of a living, growing museum collection. Developing the Tate Collection is one of our most important responsibilities and over the last two years we have, thanks to our supporters, made some outstanding acquisitions.
- However, we need to do much more if we are to ensure that the Tate Collection continues to develop for future generations. Recently we have been focusing on new geographical areas, beginning to acquire contemporary and modern art from Latin America. We have also been adapting to developments in art and a new commitment to collecting photography, as well as video and film, has been underpinned with major exhibitions and displays. As artists continue to work on a large scale, we are responding to the challenges of buying, showing, transporting and storing such pieces.
- Tate is thriving, but of course success creates its own challenges. Tate St Ives was designed to accommodate 70,000 visitors. Last year the figure was 268,000. Similarly, Tate Modern's visitor figures continue to be double the anticipated number, which inevitably causes congestion in certain areas, as well as wear and tear on the building. So now we do need to look again at how to develop and improve our galleries.
- We have enjoyed two years of progress that have been rich in ideas and detail. The next two promise further developments and exciting new departures.

Nicholas Serota  
DIRECTOR, TATE

