Sir Peter Blake-Solo exhibition
31st March - 14th April 2012
Sir Peter Blake is often referred to as the Godfather of British Pop Art. His work crosses all generational divides, and inspires great respect from younger artists such as Damien Hirst, Gavin Turk, Pure Evil and Tracey Emin. Knighted in 2002, an honorary doctor of the Royal College of Art, and with his work represented in major collections throughout the world, Sir Peter Blake truly is a grandee of British Art.

Sir Peter Blake’s work reflects his fascination with all streams of popular culture, and the beauty to be found in everyday objects and surroundings. Many of his works feature found printed materials such as photographs, comic strips or advertising texts, combined with bold geometric patterns and the use of primary colours. The works perfectly capture the effervescent and optimistic ethos of the sixties, but are also strikingly fresh and contemporary. Blake is renowned for his connection with the music industry, having produced iconic album covers for the Beatles, ‘Sgt Peppers’ Lonely Hearts Club Band’, Paul Weller, The Who, and Oasis, as well as designing this years Brit Award.

Blake remains as busy as ever in his 80th year; currently working on a new painting of St Martin for St Paul’s Cathedral (the first new artwork to be commissioned for the Cathedral since William Holman-Hunt’s ‘The Light of the World’), a series of book covers for penguin, amongst many other projects.

*Please note that a * by any print in this catalogue means that this is the only copy available*
Found Art

‘Found Art—England Forever’ £3,000.00

Image & Paper Size: 101.6cm x 122cm digital print with silkscreen glazes.

‘Found Art—Buttons’ £3,000.00
'Found Art-5d per lb' Image & Paper Size: 101.6cm x 122cm digital print with silkscreen glazes  £3000.00

The ‘Found Art’ series is based upon one of the earliest tenets of pop art; that everyday objects can become the subject matter for fine art. However, Blake does not choose dominant commercial brands to focus upon; his interest is ‘found art’ meaning found objects that most people would consider to be valueless like old cigarette packets, the packaging of old children’s games, match boxes etc. This fascination with arcane and unusual objects is of course at the centre of his collecting instinct; his studio is famed for being closer to a museum of popular culture objects and printed ephemera than a typical artist’s studio.
Homage to Rauschenberg

Image size 50cm x 65cm  Paper size: 70cm x 81.7cm  Edition size: 125
“Homage to Rauschenberg” is a series of five stunning limited edition collaged silkscreen prints with gold leaf, diamond dust, embossing & glaze, created as a tribute to Robert Rauschenberg, whose work has inspired Peter Blake throughout his career.

“Robert Rauschenberg was an enormous influence on me in the mid 1950s. My ‘Rauschenbergs’ are a very formalised version of his work. I made no attempt to assimilate his beautiful, almost ‘Abstract...
Homage to Damien Hirst

'The Butterfly Man Tunis'  £2,000.00
'The Butterfly Man Hollywood'  £3,000.00
'The Butterfly Man in Eastbourne'  £2,500.00
'The Butterfly man in Tokyo'  £2,000.00

Image size: 58cm x 68cm  paper size: 75cm x 83cm  Silkscreen  ed.size: 100
Homage to Damien Hirst Series

*The Butterfly Man in Eastbourne, Hollywood, Tokyo and Tunis are* signed limited edition silkscreen prints by Sir Peter Blake, from his *Homage to Damien Hirst* series. Produced as a set of five, including *The Butterfly Man Venice*, which has sold out, these five silkscreen prints are a continuation of Blake’s Butterfly Man motif: a character who recurs in several of his collage series (*Venice Suite, World Tour, Paris Quartet*) as well as a tribute to his friend and inspiration Damien Hirst.

‘Damien Hirst has used butterflies a lot in his work, and it was pointed out that ‘the butterfly man’ owes more than a little to his work, so I was happy to dedicate him in homage to Damien. I am an enormous admirer of Damien’s work.’

In the series Blake once again makes use of retro postcard images as backdrops to his collage of the butterfly man, dozens of butterflies and an assortment of eclectic characters from the miscellaneous print paraphernalia that he has hoarded over the years. The butterfly man’s travels continue on the North Africa, where he releases his multitude of larger than life butterflies in the souk at Tunis.
Hope- signed limited edition silkscreen print with 14 colours, gold leaf, silver leaf, embossing and glazes.

Blake uses collaged letters taken from different sources to spell out one of the most important words in the English language: HOPE. These works reflect a sentiment and warmth that is inherent throughout the artist’s work. His use of mismatching letters from different sources is a classic motif in his oeuvre, reflecting his love of collage and collecting, as well as the influence of artists such as Jack Pierson. The use of 'found letters' or commercial lettering in his work is something that Blake adopted in the 1950s; allying himself with decorators, sign painters and commercial artists rather than the fine art establishment: deducing himself a ‘pop’ artist.

Whilst studying Art at Gravesend Technical College (1949-51) Blake was given a thorough grounding in a wide range of crafts including Roman lettering, hand lettering, typography and typesetting. This training has seeped into his work throughout his career with text often being an integral- or the only- element of a piece.

Blake uses collaged letters taken from different sources to spell out the immortal words I Love You. These works reflect a sentiment and warmth that is inherent throughout the artist’s work. His use of mismatching letters from different sources is a classic motif in his oeuvre, reflecting his love of collage and collecting.
10 Man Up: This tower of humans is one of the circus feats that often recurs in Blake’s work. Blake’s takes childlike joy in all things ‘circus’ and here we see this precariously balanced group performing in front of Les Invalides (the military hospital and museum where Napoleon is buried). Blake acknowledges this Parisian landmark by compiling his human tower from military personnel, but cannot resist the joke of putting a little girl at the bottom! The spire of Les Invalides is made to seem considerably shorter than the pile of figures, of whom we can only see four and a half of the advertised ten, as the tower reaches dizzying heights beyond the image edge.

Butterflies II: Blake’s butterflies are pressed right up against the picture plane, creating a colourful screen through which we can view a collection of diverse and random characters. Butterflies have an increasing presence in Blake’s current work inspired equally by his admiration for the work of Damien Hirst (as seen in his solo show ‘Homage 10 x 5’ at Waddington Galleries 2010) and the beauty of the antique butterfly illustrations he finds in his huge collection of printed material.
‘Paris-Chicken Act’ : The Garnier Opera House seems to inspire avian thoughts in Blake, for his *Birds* (Paris Quartet) was set in the same location. Peter returns to his circus theme by having chickens and splendid cockerels re-enact the human tower of *10 Man Upright* and *Four Man Up*. The cockerel is of course a symbol of France; perhaps Blake could be making a little tongue in cheek reference to the Gallic love of display. Again Blake plays with scale—the size of the horse revealing the chickens to be giants. Gathered around this unusual sight is a classic Blake ‘magic crowd’ made up of diverse engraved heads selected from his huge collection of printed material.

‘Paris-Lowering the Elephants’ : The languid expression on the elephants’ faces contrasts humorously with the drama of their arrival via winch. The sight of elephants flying through the air in this manner is utterly surreal and very funny, perhaps referring to the Disney song ‘When I See an Elephant Fly’. Blake’s humanisation of elephants in the series is continued, with one of the pachyderms cradling a human infant.
Blake at his humorous and nostalgic best, combining intricate collage with some of the best-loved comic book characters in the world, including: Dennis the Menace, Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Pluto, Donald Duck, Charlie Brown, Linus, Desperate Dan, Lord Snooty, Snow White and the Seven Dwarves, Superman, Wonder Woman, The Invisible Man (see if you can spot him), Green Goblin and many more.
Sir Peter Blake’s Pentangle is based on the album cover he created for the folk group’s Sweet Child Album in 1968. This glitzy composition is created using Glitter inks. In the centre is a large five-pointed star. Completed in September 2002 this print is a celebration of the exquisite talent of Peter Blake and the famous folk group. Formed in 1967, ‘The Pentangle’ was inspired by ‘Bert and John’, a collaborative album by folk musicians Bert Jansch and John Renbourn.
These very rare, stunning silkscreen prints, with 14 colours and silver leaf are two of Sir Peter Blake’s found art cigarette packets or fag packets as they have come to be affectionately known. This series demonstrates Blake’s belief that beauty can be found anywhere, even in objects that most would believe to be rubbish. The fag packets highlight iconic 20th century design and branding, a key component in the pop art movement. The simplicity of these pieces adds to their wall power.
Top: 'Circus’ Bottom: ‘on the Beach - Classroom suite Bottom: ‘On the Beach’
Image Size: 78cm x 52cm Paper size: 95.8cm x 71.2cm Ed. size: 100 £1,500.00
Top: ‘Another Parade’ - Classroom  Bottom: ‘Aquarium’ - Classroom suite

Image Size: 75 cm X 52 cm  Paper Size: 95.8 cm X 71.2 cm  Ed.Size: 100  £1,500 each
The Classroom Suite

'Circus' and 'On the Beach' are both part of the Classroom suite. Blake uses one of his favourite techniques to create the composition. He gathers visual material from varying sources such as Victorian postcards, old photographs, zoological illustrations, images from artworks or magazines, and arranges these over a simple background. This collage technique is one he also used to great effect in his Venice Suite; it gives the works a surreal twist and provides the viewer with a feast of detail for the eye. The use of these collaged elements also lends the work a witty and humorous twist.

The Circus has been a major subject for Blake's art; he made a circus poster as early as 1949 and some of his earliest collages of the 1950s were based on the theme. Here Blake revisits those early works (such as Jockey Act and Bird Act from 1957), we can see the same use of a double-coloured line to represent the wall between crowd and performance arena, and the same use of collaged illustrated-figures to make up the crowd. This pattern of subject matter recurring allows us to track the impact Blake's changing perspective as he ages, his investigation of new techniques and stylistic solutions.

On The Beach: seeks to capture all the activities that we associate with a visit to the seaside: swimming, messing around in boats, fishing, paddling, sunbathing, donkey rides and so on. However, Blake contrasts these familiar ideas with unexpected images of African and Australian tribal life, or an erotic glimpse of the naked female form. The combination of retro imagery and a radical surrealist composition makes On The Beach a truly modern piece.

Another Parade: The density of figures that populate 'Another Parade' provides almost endless interest for the eyes, and also shows Blake's skill at marshalling his huge cast of characters. Finding a compositional balance in a picture space that contains figures and animals but absolutely nothing else; no reference points like buildings or trees, no sense of perspective, is extremely difficult. Blake differentiates between the participants of the parade and the watching crowd by suggesting a road/street surface with his use of a grey background. He also creates points of interest through his placing of coloured figures across the composition. This draws the eye to particular spots in the picture and stops the monochrome figures from merging into each other.

Aquarium: Every single little fish (of which there must be hundreds in this piece) were cut out from old reference and fishing books by hand. Sir Peter describes these "cutting" sessions as his relaxation time; he doesn't consider it work. This attention to minute detail leads one to imagine that Sir Peter has a touch of OCD, SO stringent is his perfectionism. The result was a visually arresting collage from which this silkscreen has been created. (Peter tells me that he still has plenty of fish left for cutting-out). Aquarium is so densely packed with fish it appears almost pattern-like, it could be an incredibly intricate wallpaper design.
Homage to Schwitters


Image size: 40cm x 48cm  Paper Size: 60cm X 70cm  Edition Size: 125  £1,800.00 each
A walk in the Tuileries Gardens: Sir Peter made a number of collage works on ‘memories of place’. Here we see his memories of a stroll in Paris distilled through the objects that he found along the way. These collage-based works vary from the bright simplistic pop art works, for which the artist is most famous. Blake commented, ‘For me, pop art is often rooted in nostalgia. To the artist, nostalgia represents a celebration of the past rather than a lament of times gone by; memories of places, people and an era.

Homage to Schwitters (opposite): from a series of six limited edition silkscreens, this series is inspired by the collage work of Kurt Schwitters in the first half of the 20th century. Blake showcases his fascination with popular retro-ephemera, from advertisements and postcards, to luggage labels and envelopes. The 6 pieces feature the use of gold and silver leaf as well as various glazes, giving the surface great texture.
Legend Series

Top row: Elvis Presley, James Dean
Bottom row: Marilyn Monroe, Montogomery Cliff

Image size: 20.2cm x 26.5cm Paper size: 30.7cm x 38.2cm Edition size: 50
Above are 3 pieces from Sir Peter Blake's rare 1991 series of alphabet letters. Image size: 51cm x 72.2cm  Paper size: 78cm x 102cm ed. Size: 95

I is for Idol: Here we see a collage of figures from popular culture, from screen legends and artists to musicians. The idols featured include Francis Bacon, Shirley Temple, Laurel & Hardy, the Beatles, Marilyn Monroe, the Everly Brothers, Bette Midler and Tony Curtis.

K is for King: 'The King' is of course Elvis Presley. Blake creates a collage of different images of Elvis spanning his career.

M is for Marilyn: As well as a large image of the young Marilyn Monroe in the lower section in the competition, there is a collage of images in the top half that spans her life from babyhood to her final years.
"Girlie Door" * £3000.00

"Marilyn's door" * £3,000.00

"American Trilogy" £3,000.00

**Girlie Door & Marilyn's Door:** Image Size: 45.5cm x 66cm  Paper Size: 59.5cm x 82cm Edition Size: 175 - From the Replay suite This is a re-visititation of Blake's pop art work of the 1960’s, and features motifs and famous faces that dominated his work in that period. The bright colours, bold patterns and simplistic compositions of pop art are heavily present in Replay, as are 60s pop culture icons like Marilyn Monroe, Kim Novak, Lavern Baker and Billy Rainbow. Pop Art print based on Sir Peter Blake’s work from the 50’s- early 60’s. A red painted door with pictures of popular culture icons such as Marilyn Monroe and Sophia Loren.

**American Trilogy:** Digital Screen Print, Edition Size: 25, Image/Paper Size – 936mm x 1872mm, Published in 2007
This work has been published in a very small edition of 100. The title 'Got a Girl' is taken from the song of the same title by the Four Preps which tells the story of a young man's girlfriend's obsession with Fabian, Avalon, Ricky Nelson, Bobby Rydell and Elvis Presley: The images of the men on the print from left to right. The record at the top left of the print has collaged elements.
Souvenirs Series

Homage to Joseph Cornell Image & Paper size: 51cm x 64cm Ed.size: 250 £500.00

‘Homage to David Hockney’ Image & Paper size: 37cm x 34cm £750.00 Ed.size: 50
Top Row: Homage to John, Homage to Gilbert & George, Bottom Row: Homage to Judith

Image & Paper size: 31.2cm x 37.9cm £75.00 each Ed. Size: 50
Madonna on Venice Beach Series

Top Row: Venice Beach II Image & Paper Size: 39.3cm x 35.5cm, Venice Beach III Image and Paper size: 40cm x 36.8cm
Bottom Row: Venice Beach I Image and Paper size: 38.1cm x 44.5cm, Venice Beach IV Image & Paper size: 30.5cm x 31.7cm
Edition size 100, £500.00 each