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barbican

Barbican announces the first international retrospective of Noah Davis and a new Curve commission from Citra Sasmita for early 2025

Noah Davis

Barbican Art Gallery

6 February – 11 May 2025

Citra Sasmita: Into Eternal Land

The Curve

30 January – 20 April 2025

Please see full details below.

Noah Davis

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L: Noah Davis, *Single Mother with Father Out of the Picture*, 2007-2008 © The Estate of Noah Davis. Courtesy The Estate of Noah Davis and David Zwirner.

R: Noah Davis, *Pueblo del Rio: Arabesque*, 2014 © The Estate of Noah Davis. Courtesy The Estate of Noah Davis and David Zwirner.

“Painting does something to your soul that nothing else can. It’s visceral and immediate”

Noah Davis, [Dazed](#), Feb 2010

In February 2025, Barbican Art Gallery will host the largest institutional survey to date of the work of late American artist **Noah Davis** (1983 – 2015). Bringing together over 50 works spanning the artist’s career, this major touring exhibition offers a comprehensive overview of Davis’ extraordinary practice in painting as well as his work in curating and community-building as co-founder of The Underground Museum.

Based primarily in Los Angeles, Davis created a body of figurative paintings that explore a range of Black life. Believing he had a “*responsibility to represent the people around me,*” Davis drew on anonymous photography found in flea markets, personal archives, film and television, music, literature, art history and his imagination to create a ravishing body of work. Figures dive into swimming pools, sleep, dance, and look at public art in settings that can be both realistic and dreamlike, joyful, and melancholic. Often enigmatic and uncanny, Davis’ paintings reveal a deep feeling for people, humanity, and the emotional textures of everyday life.

Motivated by the desire to “*change the way people view art, the way they buy art, the way they make art,*” Davis and his wife Karon co-founded The Underground Museum in 2012, a revered and loved institution in the historically Black and Latinx neighborhood of Arlington Heights, Los Angeles.

Organised chronologically, this retrospective presents Davis’ relentless curiosity beginning with his first exhibition in 2007, spanning 8 years until his untimely death in 2015. Featuring previously unseen paintings, works on paper, sculpture and his work at The Underground Museum, the exhibition pays special attention to the art historical, philosophical and conceptual approaches to his practice, revealing that collected images, humour, and above all, people were the core of his work.

Noah Davis is initiated by Barbican, London and DAS MINSK, Potsdam where it will be on display 7 September 2024 – 5 January 2025. The exhibition will tour to the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles 8 June – 31 August 2025.

Citra Sasmita: Into Eternal Land

The Curve

30 January – 20 April 2025



L: Citra Sasmita © Yeo Workshop

R: Installation view of Citra Sasmita, *Timur Merah Project IX: Beyond the Realm of Senses (Allegory of the Archipelago)*, as part of *Choreographies of the Impossible*, 35th São Paulo Biennale, Brazil, 2023 © Levi Fanan / Fundação Bienal de São Paulo.

In January 2025, Indonesian artist **Citra Sasmita** will transform The Curve for her first solo exhibition in the UK. Working fluidly across the mediums of painting, sculptural installation,

embroidery and scent, Sasmita will invite visitors on a symbolic, multi-sensory journey through the 90-metre-long gallery, exploring ideas of ancestral memory, ritual and migration.

Sasmita's practice often engages with the Indonesian Kamasan painting technique. Dating from the fifteenth century, and traditionally practiced exclusively by men, Kamasan was used to narrate Hindu epics. Reclaiming this masculine practice, Sasmita is interested in dismantling misconceptions of Balinese culture and confronting its violent colonial past. Challenging gender hierarchies and reinventing mythologies, her protagonists are powerful women who populate a post-patriarchal world.

Citra Sasmita (b. 1990, Bali, Indonesia) is a self-taught artist; she studied literature and physics, then worked as a short story illustrator for the Bali Post before she began developing her expanded artistic practice. Major group exhibitions include the forthcoming Toronto Biennial of Art (Canada, 2024); *After Rain*, Diriyah Contemporary Art Biennale (Saudi Arabia, 2024); *Ten Thousand Suns*, 24th Biennale of Sydney (Australia, 2024); *Choreographies of the Impossible*, 35th São Paulo Biennale (Brazil, 2023); *The Open World*, 3rd Thailand Biennale, Mae Fah Luang Art and Cultural Park, Chiang Rai (Thailand, 2023); *Garden of Ten Seasons*, Savvy Contemporary, Berlin (Germany, 2022); Kathmandu Triennale (Nepal, 2021-2022); *ARTJOG MMXXII, Time To Wonder*, Jogja National Museum, Yogyakarta (Indonesia, 2021); and the Biennale Yogyakarta (Indonesia, 2019). Solo shows include *Atlas of Curiosity*, Yeo Workshop (Singapore, 2023); *Ode To The Sun*, Yeo Workshop (Singapore, 2020); *Tales of Nowhere*, Museum MACAN, Jakarta (Indonesia, 2020); and *Under The Skin*, Redbase Foundation, Yogyakarta (Indonesia, 2018).

Shanay Jhaveri, Head of Visual Arts at the Barbican, said: *"We are delighted to share the first of our Visual Arts programme for 2025. From Noah Davis's original and uncanny paintings in the Art Gallery to Citra Sasmita's vibrant, multi-sensory installations in The Curve, these two exhibitions shine a light on artists who invoke the magical and the mythological to challenge hierarchies and reimagine the world around them."*

Visual Arts programme across the Barbican in 2024:

Unravel: The Power and Politics of Textiles in Art

Barbican Art Gallery

Until 26 May 2024

Soufiane Ababri: Their mouths were full of bumblebees but it was me who was pollinated

The Curve

Until 30 June 2024

Ibrahim Mahama: Purple Hibiscus

Barbican Lakeside

Until 18 August 2024

Francis Alÿs: Ricochets

Barbican Art Gallery

27 June – 1 September 2024

Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum

The Curve

18 September 2024 – 5 January 2025

The Imaginary Institution of India: Art 1975-1998

Barbican Art Gallery

5 October 2024 – 5 January 2025

Further programme highlights taking place across the Barbican in 2024 include:

Running throughout the summer, producers behind smash-hits *Anything Goes* and *A Strange Loop* present a majestic new production of Cole Porter's masterpiece *Kiss Me, Kate*, (4 Jun—14 Sep), one of the all-time classic musical comedy farces. Directed by **Bartlett Sher** (*The King and I*), this new production features a full-scale orchestra and a tour de force of talent led by **Adrian Dunbar** (*Line of Duty*) and Broadway royalty **Stephanie J Block** (*The Cher Show*).

Also in June, the Barbican will host a number of events during [SAFAR Film Festival](#) (21–30 June), the UK's largest Arab film festival, including a ScreenTalk preview of *Bye Bye Tiberias*, attended by award-winning filmmaker **Lina Soualem**, who celebrates her Palestinian family history. The festival closes at the Barbican with **Amr Gamal's** *The Burdened*, which offers a rare glimpse into the everyday realities of Yemeni families, dealing with the fallout of economic collapse and war.

This Autumn, Barbican will present a trio of new music theatre pieces variously combining Sufi, Ghanaian, Chinese, Indian and Western classical traditions while challenging hierarchical structures and examining where power imbalances can affect change.

Presented by UK company Mahogany Opera, [Sky in a Small Cage](#) (8 Sep), explores the extraordinary life of the Sufi poet Rumi through music by Rolf Hind, words by Dante Micheaux, and translations of Rumi's own poetry.

Composer Gorges Ocloo's acclaimed 'Afropera' project, [The Golden Stool, or the story of Nana Yaa Asantewaa](#) (14 Oct), pays homage to the heroic woman who confronted colonial injustice in 1900 Ghana, reimagining western classical works through a Ghanaian lens.

Presented alongside the BBC Symphony Orchestra, [M. Butterfly](#) (25 Oct), is a semi-staged version of Huang Ruo's opera of David Henry Hwang's smash-hit play. This gripping production reveals the blurred lines between fantasy and reality at the heart of this true story of ambiguity, illusion, fluidity and metaphor.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

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Press images available online

Further information and images can be found [here](#). Please [contact the press team](#) for any requests.

Barbican press room

All Barbican Centre press releases, news announcements and the Communications team's contact details are listed on our [website](#).

Public Information

Barbican Art Gallery, Barbican Centre

Silk Street, London, EC2Y 8DS

www.barbican.org.uk

Opening Hours

Saturday - Wednesday 10am - 6pm (last entry 5pm)

Thursday - Friday 10am - 8pm (last entry 7pm)

The Curve is open daily 11am - 7pm

Refer to the website for Bank Holiday hours.

Please look out for latest information on tickets via our website.

Entry to The Curve is free.

About the Barbican

The Barbican is a catalyst for creativity, sparking possibilities for artists, audiences, and communities. We showcase the most exciting art from around the world, pushing traditional artistic boundaries to entertain and inspire millions of people, create connections, provoke debate, and reflect the world we live in.

We are an international arts and events centre rooted firmly in our own neighbourhood, collaborating with local communities and putting the City of London on the map as a destination

for everybody. Central to our purpose is supporting emerging talent and shaping opportunities that will accelerate the next generation of creatives.

As a not-for-profit, we rely on the generosity of individuals and organisations, including our principal funder the City of London Corporation. Every ticket purchased, donation made, and pound earned supports our arts and learning programme and enables the widest possible range of people to experience the joy of the arts.

Opened in 1982, the Barbican is a unique and audacious building, recognised globally as an architectural icon. As well as our theatres, galleries, concert halls and cinemas, we have a large conservatory with over 1,500 species of plants and trees, a library, conference facilities, public and community spaces, restaurants, bars, and a picturesque lakeside oasis.

We are the home of the London Symphony Orchestra, and a London base of the Royal Shakespeare Company. We regularly co-commission, produce and showcase the work of our other partners and associates: the Academy of Ancient Music, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Boy Blue, Britten Sinfonia, Cheek by Jowl, Drum Works, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Serious, and We Are Parable.

For more information, visit our [website](#) or connect with us on [Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [YouTube](#) | [Spotify](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

Barbican Art Gallery and The Curve

Our visual arts programme embraces art, architecture, design, fashion and film. Many of our exhibitions explore the interconnections between disciplines, periods and cultures, and aim to imagine the world in new ways. Designers, artists and architects are our collaborators in this process.

We invest in the artists of today and tomorrow; The Curve is one of the few galleries in London devoted to the commissioning of new work. Through our activities we aim to inspire more people to discover and love the arts. Entrance to The Curve is free. Through Young Barbican we offer £5 tickets to 14 – 25 year olds for our paid exhibitions, children under 14 attend for free.

Our exhibitions are complemented by comprehensively researched catalogues and a full range of public events. In partnership with renowned museums and art galleries, many of our exhibitions travel to reach both national and international audiences.

The Barbican believes in creating space for people and ideas to connect through its international arts programme, community events and learning activity. To keep its programme accessible to everyone, and to keep investing in the artists it works with, the Barbican needs to raise more than 60% of its income through ticket sales, commercial activities and fundraising every year. Donations can be made here: www.barbican.org.uk/join-support/support-us/for-individuals/make-a-donation