

CORPORATE CULTURE
A History of Corporate Art Collecting

21st June - 3rd September 2005

The purpose of this exhibition is not to present a comprehensive history of corporate collecting in this country but to celebrate collections where the art has become part of the company culture. The Fleming Collection is uniquely placed to conduct this survey of corporate collecting, having begun life in 1968 as a handful of paintings bought to decorate the empty office walls of the London merchant bank, Robert Fleming & Co. Ltd., it has since become one of the finest private collections of Scottish art in the world.

Corporate collections have not always received favourable press and there are many misconceptions about how and why companies buy art that have circulated over the years. Often press coverage, mostly negative, is only generated when companies are forced to sell their collections due to take-overs or financial difficulties. This often raises panic amongst dealers and artists who find their work dumped at auction. Another problem has been that to date, the spokes people for corporate collections have little or no understanding of the industry. Also the fact that the art world is largely unregulated means that anyone can set themselves up as a consultant or open a gallery selling bad art to companies or individuals who don't know any better. There is still a popular misconception that companies have huge art budgets and purchase indiscriminately and in volume. All this paints a very negative picture of the corporate art world but is not representative of the industry as a whole. The collections that are showcased in this exhibition demonstrate what can be achieved with a little creative thinking.

The exhibition includes loans from some of the top corporate collections in this country including Deutsche Bank, Clifford Chance, ING, JP Morgan Chase, Drambuie, Monsoon, Unilever, Hiscox and The Fleming Collection. Featured artists include Gilbert & George, Kitaj, Jorg Immendorff, Susan Derges, Ian Davenport and David Mach.

There are a number of lunchtime talks and evening events organised to coincide with this exhibition, for details please go to our events or telephone +44 (0) 20 7409 5733.

Images from top: Barry Morgan Dutch Tussle 1999 © artist and reproduced courtesy of Clifford Chance. Gilbert & George London 1980 © artists and reproduced courtesy of JP Morgan Chase. John Nash Dismantled Wood © artist's estate and reproduced courtesy of ING. Moyna Flannigan Once Upon Our Time No. 38 © artist and reproduced courtesy of The Fleming-Wyfold Art Foundation. Jorg Immendorff Lonely + Dumb the Unbeatable Jorg, your Treble Clef 1995 © artist and reproduced courtesy of Deutsche Bank.

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