

Stephen Friedman Gallery

The Guardian
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Mark Brown
20 May 2020

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Artist is one of four designing limited edition masks to raise money for lockdown fund.



Image: The face mask by David Shrigley, which features the word 'emotions' among waves of black lines.

David Shrigley, one of the UK's most consistently funny and perceptive visual artists, is one of four who have produced limited edition masks to help raise money for a rapid response fund created because of the lockdown by the Contemporary Art Society and Frieze London.

The fund is for museums and galleries to purchase art and craft works for their collections by artists based in the UK. A total of £100,000 has already been raised and the sale of the four art masks aims to raise a further £20,000.

Shrigley has produced a mask that seems to be a blur of black lines, but look carefully and there is the word "emotions" hiding among them. He said it was a nod to how difficult it is to see human emotions when people wear a mask.

The artist is best known for his mordant, often deceptively simple cartoons that are providing much-needed cheer via his Twitter account. Bigger works include the gigantic bronze thumb's-up installed on the fourth plinth in Trafalgar Square in 2016.

Shrigley said: "The fund will provide incredible support to emerging artists at a time when the art world entirely ground to a halt, but also the technicians, the assistants, the small galleries that do so much to support younger artists in turn."

The other masks are by Yinka Shonibare, Eddie Peake and Linder Sterling, who has revisited the album cover she co-created for the Buzzcocks' *Orgasm Addict* in 1977.

Image: The face mask designed by Linder Sterling.



The masks are available through a three-week crowdfunding campaign and are priced at £35 each, or £120 for all four. They can be worn or collected for posterity.

The Contemporary Art Society has been championing the collection of contemporary art and craft in the UK since 1910. Its director, Caroline Douglas, said the charity was one of the most important grassroots-level investors in the arts ecosystem.

"That support is of critical importance right now, injecting investment directly where it is needed whilst helping museums become more active centres of our communities as we slowly recover from this period of lockdown."

Alistair Hudson, the director of the Whitworth and Manchester art galleries, said the rapid response fund was a wonderful thing.

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“Throughout this time of isolation and uncertainty, one thing that has been starkly revealed is the vital role that art plays in our lives, providing a creative stimulus and a way to assert our humanity when we need it most. In this light, museums and galleries will be needed even more than they were before when we re-enter the world to rebuild a way of life.

“The CAS are a lifeline in the best of times, and now also in a moment of crisis.”