

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Londonist
18 exhibitions to see this summer in London and beyond
Tabish Khan
3 August 2021



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The screenshot shows the LONDONIST website interface. At the top is a blue navigation bar with the LONDONIST logo and menu items: HOME, FOOD & DRINK, THINGS TO DO, VIDEOS, PUBS, WEEKEND, SHOP, and A. Below the navigation bar is a large purple banner with the text "Mini br" in white. Underneath the banner is a white section containing the article title "18 Exhibitions To See This Summer In London And Beyond" in blue, followed by the author's name "BY TABISH KHAN" and a small profile picture. A paragraph of text follows: "Our pick of the best exhibitions to see right now in London's galleries. We've split the list into areas to make it easier to navigate, with a few exhibitions outside of London. Check ahead before visiting, as many venues still require advance booking." Below this is a section titled "Exhibitions in Central London" in blue, followed by a photograph of an art gallery interior with several framed artworks on the wall.

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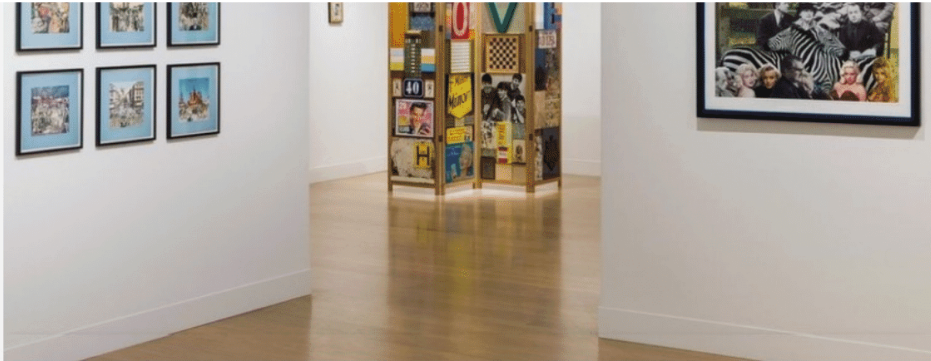


Image courtesy of Waddington Custot.

CREATIVE COLLAGES: Peter Blake is best known for the Beatles' Sgt. Pepper's album cover art but this collection of collages flaunts a decades-long career, from early works to one recently completed. Wrestling action figures, exotic birds, famous landmarks — Blake draws inspiration from seemingly anything. A highlight is his tribute to artist Joseph Cornell — Blake creates a collage tour of Europe for Cornell so he can be viewed travelling across the continent he was in love with but never managed to visit. A lovely tribute.

Peter Blake: Time Traveller at Waddington Custot. Until 13 August, free. ★★★★★
(Monday-Saturday)



Image © Melissa McGill.

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RED SAILS: Mixing paintings with photography, a vibrant red regatta sails across the Venice lagoon. Artist Melissa McGill uses it to draw attention to the global issue of rising sea levels, as well as Venetian issues such as over-tourism and its effect on local sailing communities. Elsewhere, sounds of Venice's squares emanate from small box sculptures shaped like said squares. This is art that reflects the lives of Venetians, rather than the touristy city we normally see.

[Melissa McGill: In Venice at Mazzoleni.](#) Until 18 September, free. ★★★★★ (Monday-Saturday, closed 2-21 August)



Image courtesy Simon Lee Gallery.

GHOSTS OF BOOKS: Ethereal shelves of books are made from soot; a simple swipe of the hand could destroy them — it's like we're looking at the ghost of a library. Nearby a gigantic bell is suspended from the ceiling but it's been silenced and will never ring. It's this absence of sound and knowledge within a silent gallery that makes us wonder what a world without either would be like. A thoughtful, haunting exhibition.

[Claudio Parmiggiani at Simon Lee.](#) Until 25 September, free. ★★★★★ (Monday-Saturday)

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This Cold War Steve image shows Boris Johnson depriving orphans of food.

WHAT THE DICKENS: An Oliver Twist themed version of giant snakes and ladders features at this exhibition focussing on one of Charles Dickens' most endearing characters. The Dickens Museum also looks at problematic depictions of Fagin, and throws in plenty of Twist memorabilia including a guinea pig version of Oliver (yes it exists). This may be a small show, but it's got a few real gems and is packed with fun.

More! Oliver Twist, Dickens and Stories of the City at Charles Dickens Museum. Until 17 October, £9.50 for adults and includes entry to the museum. ★★☆☆☆ (Wednesday-Sunday)



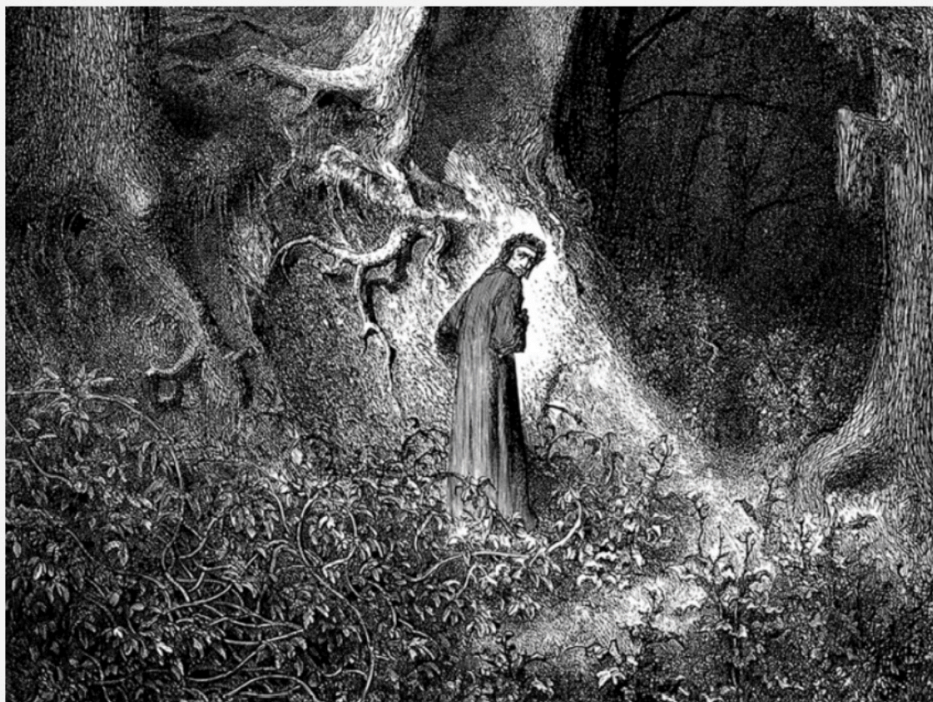
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IT FIGURES: The 16 international artists in this show all paint figures, but what also unites them is the fact they're black female artists (who could always do with more representation). *Mother of Mankind* is an extremely varied show, with highlights including a vibrant portrait by Marcellina Akpojotor that's made from fragments of fabric; and beautifully painted figures by Bria Fernandez, where the work is made to appear unfinished, giving her subjects a sense of impermanence.

Mother of Mankind at House of Fine Art. Until 31 August, free. ★★★★★ (Open daily)



A Gustave Dore illustration from the *The Forest at Parafin*

STARS & UNICORNS: A stunning assemblage by Cathy de Monchaux shows us a forest full of unicorns — that a large part of it is made from copper wire only adds to the magic of this large scale artwork. It's one of several pieces in this forest-themed show, which includes paintings of green vegetation and of staring up at

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the stars through a canopy of trees. We watch the poet Dante proceed into the darkness in an unsettling illustration by Gustave Dore, and we experience both the beauty, and the darker sides of forests.

The Forest at Parafin. Until 4 September, free. ★★★★★☆ (Tuesday-Saturday)

Exhibitions in North London



The stunning forest installation featuring the photography by Chrystel Lebas. Photo by Steven Pocock.

FOREST BATHING: Sit inside a room filled with large scale photographs of a rainforest, listen to the birdsong and rainfall while breathing in the aromas. This meditative installation is at the heart of an exhibition about tranquillity at Wellcome Collection, which also covers the spiritual side to relaxation and meditation. Upstairs, companion exhibition 'Joy' features ecstatic dancing, a periodic table of happiness and fun drawings (thumbs ups, laughing faces) by David Shrigley. It's an uplifting double header — we could have spent an hour in that forest.

Tranquillity at Wellcome Collection. Until 9 January, free. ★★★★★★ (Tuesday-Saturday)

Joy at Wellcome Collection. Until 27 February, free. ★★★★★☆ (Tuesday-Saturday)