



mima press release: 31 January 2011

For immediate release:

## **New artwork commissioned for mima collection funded by the public in new online initiative**

mima is joining forces with an innovative arts website to offer a unique opportunity to play a part in commissioning a new work by artist Richard Forster. The piece will reflect a journey made by the artist across the landscape of the North East and his experience of a specific place or landmark.

This unique new approach to commissioning enables others to actively participate in the work's creation. By funding the project you can join in with the discussion between curator and artist and directly inform and add to the creative process.

If the target of £15,000 is raised, the new work be created and exhibited at mima in late 2011 and will go on to become part of mima's collection. The final work will be a series of drawings informed by a previous work by the artist *Rehearsed Inability to Know This (Un)Place*, made in 2009 which is to be exhibited at The Drawing Center, New York opening on February 18 as part of the artist's debut in a New York gallery. For more information please see

[http://www.drawingcenter.org/exh\\_upcoming.cfm?exh=772](http://www.drawingcenter.org/exh_upcoming.cfm?exh=772).

This project forms part of a new approach to fundraising that mima is taking in 2011 to ensure that it continues to be a valuable and sustainable resource for the region. mima is the first UK art gallery to take advantage of the opportunity through an innovative newly-launched website, [wedidthis.org.uk](http://wedidthis.org.uk). This is the only UK arts-only 'crowdfunding' platform, for arts organisations to bring their audiences and supporters together in order to form a 'critical mass' of funders of the arts.

The initiative is funded and guided by online donations from as little as £20. Funders can join in with a discussion between James Beighton, mima Curator and the artist and directly inform and add to the creative process. Funders over £100 can ask questions about the process and make suggestions. All funders will be able to read regular blogs and gain an insight into the artist's practice. However, these rewards will **only** be delivered if the project reaches its goal within 90 days. If the project does not succeed, then funders contributing funds will be refunded.

All those who make a donation receive rewards, ranging from a signed thank you card, an invitation to the opening exhibition party or an opportunity to meet the artist. Those making a contribution of more than £100 can ask questions about the process and make suggestions about the work.

WeDidThis aims to launch over 50 arts projects into the WeDidThis marketplace in 2011, from grassroots 'crowdsourced' artists and organisations to prestigious productions from large arts and cultural institutions. WeDidThis.org.uk comes at a critical time for the UK arts sector. As central and local Government funding cuts to the arts start to bite. WeDidThis is an opportunity for arts organisations to raise vital funds while building new movements of loyal followers behind their work, a crowd of micro-philanthropists making great art grow and thrive, against the odds.

Richard Forster's first major UK solo show will be presented at mima from July 22 to November 6 November 2012. See [www.visitmima.com](http://www.visitmima.com) for more details.

**To take part and help make this artwork happen, pledge your support online at [Wedidthis.org.uk](http://Wedidthis.org.uk)**

**Ends**

## Notes to Editors

### Richard Forster

Richard Forster's work is strongly informed by social, cultural and art historical concerns and whilst impressively consistent, it adopts such different guises that on first encountering it one could be forgiven for taking the opposite view. Painstakingly detailed, almost photo-real pencil drawings made from snapshots, or pages torn from magazines that have particular resonance for him, co-exist with sculptural objects and installations which have been manufactured in glossy, artificially coloured and functional materials. Rather than seeing these drawings and objects as separate entities from different spheres, Forster uses each to inform the other, developing a new perspective on the challenges of appearance and reality. He enjoys materials and uses them to question our understanding of what we are looking at, so questioning both the thing itself and the image of the thing.

Recent exhibitions have included solo *Working Things Out* at Spike Island Bristol in 2007 and *Seascapes* at Ingleby Gallery in 2008 and *The Northern Art Prize* at Leeds City Art Gallery in 2009. This year, Forster is in an exhibition, *Drawn from Photography*, at The Drawing Center in New York and has a forthcoming solo show at mima Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art opening in July 2011.

The artists' earlier work *Rehearsed Inability to Know This (Un)Place* in 2009 reflected a train journey taken on 12 consecutive days from Saltburn on Sea to Middlesbrough. The Dorman Long Steelworks were drawn and modeled as seen in 12 seconds of a train journey. Richard Forster created 12 drawings, pencil on card, framed in oak for this commission.

Visit the artist's website for more images and information:  
[www.richardforster.net](http://www.richardforster.net)

### WeDidThis.org.uk

Launching in January 2011 with a portfolio of cutting-edge projects drawn from diverse artforms, sizes and types of organisation from across the UK, WeDidThis is an arts-led social enterprise offering high quality, unique rewards to funders of exciting, compelling art.

WeDidThis.org.uk is the only UK arts-only crowdfunding platform, for arts organisations to bring their audiences and supporters together to form a 'critical mass' of funders of the arts. Coming at a critical time for the UK arts sector, as central and local Government funding cuts to the arts start to bite, WeDidThis is an opportunity for arts organisations to raise new funds whilst building new movements of loyal followers behind their work. A 'big society' of micro-philanthropists making great art grow and thrive, against the odds.

WeDidThis projects will be offer each funder a reward in return for their donation. Rewards in the launch portfolio include access to artists, unique and personalised gifts from the artists and company (e.g. a short story written personally for you), experiences (e.g. a picnic with the cast), discounted tickets and merchandise, and public recognition (e.g. display on a 'backers' board' at the host gallery).

WeDidThis is a social enterprise, and is committed to reinvesting its profits into the UK arts. Through 2011 we will be announcing a series of partnerships with organisations who share our aims, starting with Mission Models Money (a peer-led network committed to increasing the resilience of the arts sector) and culturelabel.com (a online shop pooling high-quality cultural goods from arts and cultural organisations). The WeDidThis team is made up of experts from the arts, startups and tech enterprise, and public policy.

WeDidThis will host its formal launch event on 10 March 2011. For press accreditation for this event, and for more information, please contact Ed Whiting at [ed@wedidthis.org.uk](mailto:ed@wedidthis.org.uk), or [07855776130](tel:07855776130).

**mima Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art**

is one of the UK's leading galleries for modern and contemporary art and craft. mima opened to international critical acclaim on 27 January 2007 and hosts 3 exhibitions changes per annum of fine art and craft from 1900 to the present.

The landmark building designed by Erick van Egeraat Architects is situated in the heart of Middlesbrough and brings together the town's art collections for the first time, from the Middlesbrough Art Gallery and Cleveland Craft Centre.

The permanent collection informs and supports the galleries annual programme. Parts of the collection are featured alongside visiting exhibitions, complimenting both new commissions and major international loans. Selected works from the collection are available on loan to corporate partners and patrons.

mima has recently been chosen as a Plus TATE partner making it part of an exciting collaborative network with TATE and 18 other visual arts organizations that share ideas, experiences, practices and programmes and increase public value by broadening and deepening engagement in art.

**For further press information, images or interviews or to be added to our press mailing list contact:**

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<b>Gallery Opening Times</b> Tues 10.00am-4.30 Wed, Fri & Sat 10.00am-5.00pm, Thurs 10.00am-7.00pm Sun 12noon-4.00pm Closed Monday  <b>Admission FREE</b>	<b>mima</b> Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art Centre Square Middlesbrough, TS1 2AZ t: +44 (0) 1642 726 720 f: +44 (0) 1642 726 722 e: <a href="mailto:mima@middlesbrough.gov.uk">mima@middlesbrough.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.visitmima.com">www.visitmima.com</a>
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