



## **Three Lions' diversity on display at Guildhall Art Gallery in *This Is England***

**Guildhall Art Gallery, Guildhall Yard, London, EC2V 5AE  
Until Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

Following the 2022 World Cup, Black British artist Matt Small's *This Is England* is on display at Guildhall Art Gallery, showcasing the diversity of the England football squad – the most successful England men's team since the 1966 World Cup winners. Commissioned by the FA at the start of the Euros 2020 (held in 2021), 27 portraits by Small present the football players and manager that represented England at the Euros, highlighting and celebrating the multi-racial team, many of whom recently played at the World Cup.

Players featured in *This Is England* include captain Harry Kane, rising talents Bukayo Saka and Jude Bellingham, star players Marcus Rashford MBE, Raheem Sterling MBE and Jack Grealish, and stalwart defenders Kyle Walker and Reece James, all alongside their manager Gareth Southgate OBE. The exhibition captures the proud, celebratory and hopeful spirit of the players, and English football more generally.

Small is a passionate believer in social inclusion, and his energetic and dynamic portraits often depict the young, homeless and socially marginalized to encourage viewers to consider those who are often overlooked and face prejudice. His portraits of the England players show a group of men, many of whom have faced racial prejudice and abuse in their journey to the top of the game and are using their platform to stand up against it, who are role models and inspiration for millions across the country.

The racial diversity of the Three Lions at the Euros in 2021, and subsequently the World Cup, was widely lauded, especially following football's response to Black Lives Matter, with players across the Premier League and international football showing their support by taking the knee at kick off. While the exhibition celebrates the diversity of the team, it also highlights how important it is to keep striving for racial justice and equality, as was seen after England's

loss in the Euros where Black players were unjustly abused online due to the colour of their skin. *This Is England* aims to celebrate the players, their inspiring stories, and how they represent and inspire a diverse and modern England.

Half of the 26-man Euros squad could have chosen to represent another nation, with a multitude of different cultures and heritages represented in the squad, including Jamaica, Ireland, New Zealand, Barbados and more. The other players presented in *This Is England* are Phil Foden, Jadon Sancho, Mason Mount, Dominic Calvert-Lewin, Calvin Phillips, Declan Rice, John Stones, Conor Coady, Tyrone Mings, Luke Shaw, Ben Chilwell, Kieran Trippier, Harry Maguire, Ben White, Jordan Pickford, Sam Johnstone and Dean Henderson.

Artist Matt Small says, *This is England is more than a show about a group of footballers that represent the country on the field of play. The most important perspective from which to see the team depicted here is as one that is representative of a contemporary England. In this country, people from all over the world have come to live and contribute, and now call this nation their home. This is the England that we are all part of: a diverse, multi-cultural, multi-faceted nation, respectful of its past but not bound by it either.*

Gareth Southgate, England manager, comments, *We are a team whose diversity and youth represents a modern country. Our players are role models. It's their duty to continue to interact with the public on matters such as equality, inclusivity and racial injustice, while using the power of their voices to help put debates on the table, raise awareness and educate.*

*Look what we can do when we come together,* comments Marcus Rashford, one of England's most famous and celebrated Black players. Rashford and his England teammates Raheem Sterling and Jordan Henderson received MBEs for services to vulnerable children, racial equality in sport, and charity respectively.

The exhibition was first seen at the St George training ground, then Pitzhanger Manor & Gallery, and is now at Guildhall Art Gallery in central London until 19<sup>th</sup> February 2023, having opened in October just before the World Cup commenced. *This Is England* was purchased by Moniker Foundation, May 2022 and is managed for them by JG Contemporary.

## Notes to Editors

Title	<i>This Is England</i>
Dates	Until Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> February 2023
Location	Guildhall Art Gallery, Guildhall Yard, London, EC2V 5AE
Getting There	Guildhall Art Gallery is a short walk from Bank (on the Northern, Central and Waterloo & City lines) and Moorgate (on the Circle, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan lines) stations. The nearest rail station is Moorgate.
Website	<a href="https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/events/this-is-england">https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/events/this-is-england</a>
Instagram	@jgcontemporary @guildhallartlondon

## Matt Small

London-based artist Matt Small (1975, UK), studied at the University of Westminster and the Royal College of Art, graduating in 2000. A passionate believer in social inclusion, his portraits of the young, homeless and socially marginalized encourage the viewer to consider those who are often overlooked, challenging prejudices and acknowledging our shared humanity. Bursting with pride and compassion, Small creates energetic and dynamic paintings, injected with colour, power and the spirit of the city.

Small is deeply involved in social schemes intended to support and develop ostracised youth and previous projects include 'Hope in Life'; a series of weekly workshops where the socially excluded could express themselves through painting and music. His works have been exhibited worldwide including Lefevre Fine Art, Mayfair, Vroom & Varossieau, Amsterdam, DIE Galerie, Seoul and Marry Karnowsky, Los Angeles. Small has also won and been nominated for numerous art prizes, including the Viliers David Art Prize and the BP Portrait Award.

For all enquiries, images and further information:  
Isobel Jaffray, Chloé Nelkin Consulting  
E: [isobel@chloenelkinconsulting.com](mailto:isobel@chloenelkinconsulting.com), T: 020 3627 2960  
W: [www.chloenelkinconsulting.com](http://www.chloenelkinconsulting.com)