

Dr Sonia Solicari

Money, Power, Politics: Curating London's Square Mile

Part of the Making Space for Art series, organised by the Centre for Visual Cultures and Royal Holloway Picture Gallery.

Dr Laura MacCulloch: I will introduce our speaker for today. This is the first in our second series of Making Space for Art lectures sponsored by HARI. Last year, we had the first series and it was really successful, and so they've actually sponsored us for a second series. Sonia is our first speaker. I actually found out just a few days ago that Sonia is actually an alumnus of the English department here at Royal Holloway. She did her undergraduate here. She knows this space very well.

She's a Curator and Cultural Strategist with over 15 years of experience in project management, arts, and cultural programming, and organizational development. She is currently Head of the Guildhall Art Gallery and London's Roman Amphitheatre. Having joined the City of London as Principal Curator in 2010, she's previously held post of Curator of Ceramics and Assistant Curator of Paintings at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

She's published and lectured widely on the 19th century art and culture as well aspects of curating and contemporary collecting. The perfect person to talk to us about curating and making space for art. She is going to talk about curating specifically within the City of London and all the cultural and financial issues that brings with it, both in terms of what the City of London stands for at the moment in the press, but also in terms of its collection and curating the Roman Amphitheatre, and also an art gallery. I'll hand over to her. Thank you.

Dr Sonia Solicari: Thank you very much, Laura. Yes, I sat many an exam in this room, so there's always a frisson of fear when I return to this space. I wanted to begin my talk today with a quote by Sue Clifford, who's founder of the arts organization, Common Ground. This is the kind of statement which I think we now take for granted following decades of thought into the cultural impact of cities. Sue Clifford says, "Cities are not simply bundles of architecture, feats of history, sociological salads, economic engines, tourist destinations, or development opportunities." I think it's a given that we now think about the metropolis in terms of rich tapestry of people and places, which is what Sue Clifford goes on to argue.

Within London this is also true of most areas and quarters, many of which have their own distinct history and identity. Given the geographical space in which I currently work, this statement got me thinking, what about the City of London? Where does the Square Mile sit between public perception and reality? What is the role of art and culture in negotiating this identity?

Surely, the City of London is very much seen as a bundle of architecture, home to buildings so iconic that the city skyline is now dominated by epithet skyscrapers, the Gherkin, the Walkie Talkie, the Cheese Grater. Its history, unique in the UK if not in the world, means it retains rights and privileges going back to the medieval period. These privileges including keeping its own police force distinct from the Met, having its own Lord Mayor distinct from the Mayor of London, and offering the vote to local elections to businesses as well as residents define it as undeniably an economic engine. The city is a metonym, it stands in for the UK economy, as does its synonym, the Square Mile.

In fact, I think the city is so embroiled in the world of finance that it is actually in danger of losing its sense of place in the public eye. For instance, I noticed that when the city is mentioned on the news or in journalism, they often flash up a photograph of Canary Wharf. The idea of the city goes wherever the money is. Where does that leave the actual physical, living, breathing City of London?

Today, I want to explore these meanings of place and look at how the City of London is at once a cluster of dynamic business enterprise, keeping the economy afloat, and the focal point of blame for the economic crisis. Alongside the controversy, the city is also one of the most historic and cultural areas of London with exposed Roman ruins, libraries and museums sharing space with new high rise office blocks, and increasingly luxury penthouse apartments.

This paper examines the role of the City of London Corporation and the Guildhall Art Gallery in particular, in shaping the cultural landscape of this historic and energetic space, beginning to focus new collecting strategies and initiatives of public sculpture that reposition the city as a space where art and commerce collide. To set the scene, I just wanted to give a potted history and profile of the City of London before moving on to the art collection display, because it's often a place where the history and the way it functions is somewhat shrouded in mystery.

Geographically, the City is small. There it is in the middle in blue in between Westminster, Kensington, Tower Hamlets. It occupies an area of 1.12 square miles, which is why it's also often known as the Square Mile. It is one of the oldest parts of the capital, from its time as a Roman settlement, and some of the defensive Roman wall still exists today, to the Middle Ages. This was London. The Metropolis gradually expanded from this nucleus. William the Conqueror recognized the liberties of the citizens of the City. He pledged to defend their freedoms and protect the city from external interference, and these privileges have been preserved by subsequent charters and laws.

In the 17th century the City resisted attempts to encourage it to extend its rights to the growing London of Westminster, Southwark, Clerkenwell, and Whitechapel, and somewhat controversially it has also survived largely intact from subsequent municipal reforms of the 19th and 20th centuries. Consequently, the City of London is credited with being the oldest continuous democratic commune in the world, with 2,000 years of self-government, distinct from the main government of the UK.

The City of London Corporation is effectively the local authority that runs the Square Mile under the auspices of the Lord Mayor of London. Here he is, this is the current Lord Mayor who has just come into office. This is Jeffrey Evans, and not to be confused with the Mayor of London, currently, Boris Johnson who I think wears fewer robes actually, whether that's probably not through choice. The Lord Mayor presides over its governing bodies which is the Court of Aldermen and the Court of Common Council. Within the city, only the sovereign takes precedence. The Lord Mayor also takes precedence over the Prime Minister.

The City is home to 7,400 residents which is absolutely tiny in comparison to other London boroughs. In contrast 392.5 thousand people are employed there, mostly using public transport to commute to work across London and the surrounding regions. This slide shows early morning workers pouring out of London bridge, across the bridge and into the city for work. It's a scene that we've been familiar with for decades, if not centuries, when all of these people would have been wearing bowler hats and carrying umbrellas.

The majority of workers commuting to the city are employed in the financial services. The legal profession also forms a major component of the northern and western sites of the city, especially in the Temple and Chancery Lane areas. These are the notorious cash-rich, time-poor professions. Their task of attracting workers in their lunchtime to take part in cultural activities is perhaps harder to achieve here than anywhere else. Although I don't think it's actually an easy market to achieve anywhere.

Workers are always rushing to have their sandwich in their lunch hour rather than embracing cultural activities. This largely solvent proportion of the working population is also not usually a priority target audience for most cultural and heritage organizations.

The City runs several high-profile cultural services. In addition to its five libraries, it either fully or part funds the Museum of London, the Barbican Centre, Tower Bridge, Keats House, London Metropolitan archives and of course Guildhall Art Gallery in London's Roman Amphitheatre. Of these only the Barbican Centre, the Museum of London and Guildhall Art Gallery are located squarely within the footprint of the City of London, all the others are beyond the Square Mile. I want to focus on the latter, Guildhall Art Gallery, not least because of its somewhat unique remit.

There it is, if anyone hasn't been there before. The Guildhall Art Gallery is located in the part of the City that's in between Bank, Moorgate and St Paul's. It houses the City of London's art collection, which is approximately 6,000 works of paintings, drawings and sculpture. These range from scenes of London life from the 17th century to the present day, to masterpieces of the Victorian period. The gallery's collections are mainly displayed at the main site in Guildhall but are also spread across the city at other sites, including Mansion House, which is the Lord Mayor's residence, and the Old Bailey.

An art gallery has existed on the site since 1886. The original gallery was badly damaged in an air raid during the Second World War and the building that exists today was designed by the architect Richard Gilbert Scott and opened in 1999. During building works of the new gallery, archaeologists discovered the remains of London's Roman Amphitheatre, which in its functioning prime would have hosted over 7,000 spectators with gladiatorial combat, circus and theatre performances. Parts of the remains are preserved beneath the gallery and open to the public. The rest of the amphitheatre still lies beneath Guildhall yard, which is the administrative centre of the City of London.

In addition, the gallery also houses a heritage space, which showcases a rolling programme of treasures from the London Metropolitan Archives, such as the City's 1297 copy of Magna Carta, and the Shakespeare deed which will shortly be going on display, which is one of only six authenticated examples in the world of the bard's signature. In terms of a space for art, it can be a complicated sell. At once a City-specific collection and nationally if not internationally important collection of Victorian paintings and an archaeological site.

Added to this, is the fact that the gallery was also rebuilt in the '90s primarily as a function space for the many state banquets and corporate functions hosted in the adjoining Guildhall every year. As such, it is a physically uncompromising space designed to hold a static permanent collection and posing a continuous challenge to the curator intent on flexibility and change. Over the last 16 years, however, it has very much evolved into a public-facing gallery. The space was rehung last year with temporary walls built over uncompromising columns and new lighting and wall colours.

Visit figures are up from 33,000 in 2010 to 100,000 per annum, which is what we're on course to achieve this year. This success has been mainly through a full exhibitions programme, which combines blockbusters on Victorian artists and locally relevant projects, and a dynamic events program.

However, it's the collecting policy that I want to talk about today, as this I feel demonstrates most markedly the ways in which curators at the gallery have actively interrogated what it means to be curating a collection within such a unique space, but potentially also a

controversial space given that it sits slam back in the middle of the financial sector. The new policy for collecting and display has been given the title Money, Power, Politics, and focuses on art that addresses some of the more contentious issues associated with the Square Mile, such as trade and commerce, plenty and progress, boom, and bust.

Indeed, aside from the Lord Mayor and the Roman history, the thing which many people associate with the City of London is the financial crisis. This is mainly due to the fact that as I've mentioned, the City is a metonym for the financial services and because it does indeed house the highest concentration of financial service businesses in the UK. This slide shows headlines from 2008 to 2013, but there's no shortage of examples that I could show. Going back to the idea of how people use the term the City, HSBC actually has its head office in Canary Wharf, which is perhaps a moot point when people are thinking about the crisis.

One of the biggest challenges when beginning to address the issue of art and the economy is the art is usually – not always, but usually – very visible, visceral even. The economy, by contrast, is perceived to be invisible. In an article for *The Financial Times* on the 29th of September, 2014, the Labour peer and academic, Maurice Glasman, made the statement of the City of London Corporation, “invisible earnings, invisible power”.

This is a comment echoed in the introduction to *Show Me the Money* by Paul Crosthwaite, Peter Knight, and Nicky Marsh, an AHRC-funded research project and exhibition into the culture of the market network based at Manchester University. They said, “The failures in the global financial system that occurred in 2008 were experienced as a crisis because they were confusing and chaotic. Financial processes are often difficult to see, not in spite of, but because of their vast size.”

Some of the questions, therefore, that form the nucleus of our thinking around the new collecting policy at Guildhall was how to make the invisible visible. How could art be used to negotiate the sense of chaos and confusion experienced by the public in relation to the economy? What does it mean to curate a collection in this locality? Is the art gallery the appropriate forum in which the City of London Corporation, notoriously defensive of its position as the authority of the Square Mile, could open up about the negative connotations of the area?

Also, crucially, was it appropriate for curators of the gallery to begin to explore subject matter that was uncomfortable for its paymasters and large sections of the local audience? I'm not saying that we have all the answers yet or that having the answers is even possible or desirable, but we do have a plan. First, curators looked at the historic collection and thought about how re-examining these pre-crash paintings post-crash could shed new light on the works and open up debate about the contemporary climate. We have selected and

displayed works within the gallery that mix style and period in the hang that takes Money, Power, Politics as its theme.

In order to keep our focus tight, we wanted to explore works that suggested Money, Power, Politics, and we're keen to avoid attempting to tell the history of the UK economy through images. Therefore, illustrative works are interspersed with more suggestive works, and for the time being we've avoided peppering the walls with Hogarthian prints of the South Sea Bubble and works that are more journalistic.

Secondly, we wanted to avoid altogether Baudrillardian discussions about the relationship of the art market to the economy, such as through patronage, auction house results, linked to the stock market, et cetera, et cetera, as this would complicate the dynamic. We haven't ventured to address this in the way in which the art is presented. To pick out a few examples of what we have selected, first up is Niels Moeller Lund's *The Heart of Empire* from 1904. It's a dreamy view of London and I think it's when you know the title that it gives it a different spin.

As art historian, Ian Black has pointed out in his article, *Rebuilding the Heart of Empire: Bank Headquarters in the City of London, 1919 to 1913*, this painting is a landscape of power. It was commissioned by a member of the City of London, which again, the commissioning process perhaps gives us another way of looking at it. *The Heart of Empire* embodies all the optimism and pride of the young 20th century and refers to the City of London as the centre of the world economy. This view looks west across the thriving City, from the roof of the Royal Exchange with Mansion House on the left-hand side and the Bank of England visible in the bottom right-hand corner.

The golden glow, which the artist has given this work suggests the romanticism around both the idea of art, empire and particularly the economy that was arguably left behind in the 19th century. Interestingly, also, in terms of the contemporary spin, the very idea of empire has been redefined in recent years, not least by Hardt and Negri in their controversial book *Empire* published in 2000, which repositions globalism as the new postmodern empire in a move away from the historic model of nation and states.

Secondly, there's Brendan Neiland's *Broadgate Reflections* from 1989. Broadgate is a 32-acre office and retail estate in the City of London and the largest office development in the capital until the arrival of Canary Wharf in the early '90s. The Broadgate complex is seen by many as embodying the 'loads of money' culture of the Thatcher era. The building featured in this painting is composed mainly of glass and steel. Materials used across the rest of the complex include high-grade Portland stone and polished pinkish granite, which recalls the architecture of earlier financial buildings, such as the Bank of England and the Royal Exchange.

This painting derives its object imagery from reflections and shadows cast by the steel and glass of the new buildings. We included it in the new hang because we felt that it addresses the structures of money and power as close as we can actually get to that idea of structure. Square Mile architecture is, in many ways, the casing around the invisible economy. Possibly one example of the intangible made tangible, the very title of this work, *Reflections*, encourages thought.

Next up is Roderick Jordan's *The Stock Exchange, London* about 1966, and this was very much a forgotten painting down in the stores. Very rarely displayed until we started to think about the idea of Money, Power, Politics. It is one of the most illustrative works in the selection. The London Stock Exchange is a center of financial trading. It's located in the City of London and Jordan depicts the iconic hustle and bustle of the trading floor as it appeared in the mid-1960s, when business was booming.

The Stock Exchange, of course, had its origins in London's 18th-century coffee houses. In particular, traders and stock jobbers would gather in coffee houses around the Royal Exchange to find out international trade news brought there from the docks and merchants. This eventually consolidated into a building known as the actual Stock Exchange in 1773. This, and bear with me with this history, relocated in 1801 to the building depicted in this painting in Capel Court, which has now been demolished.

In 1967, so just after this painting was painted as a commemoration, work began on new accommodation and in 1972, the Stock Exchange moved to larger premises in 125 Broad Street. In 2004, the Stock Exchange relocated again to its current premises in Paternoster Square, reflecting the ever-changing demands of financial trading.

For me, this painting explores the significance of the historically male-dominated trading floor. The style of the painting I think is very old-fashioned for 1967, but probably accurately represents a style of trading that had remained unchanged for decades, if not centuries, until the advent of computerized systems and the speeding up of the change. The ant-like stockbrokers scurrying about their work, I think raises the power of the individual versus the mass when it comes to financial trading.

Subsequently, post this painting, I think it brings to mind the role of rogue traders like Nick Leeson, who was involved in the downfall of Barings Bank back in 1995 and which really highlighted how the rise and the fall of the economy, invisible and vast as it is, can rest on the conduct of one person.

Finally, from the historic collection, I wanted to point out this painting by William Logsdail, *The Ninth of November, 1888*. Going back to what I was saying about the Lord Mayor of London, he comes into office in November every year, on the ninth of November

traditionally, and there's usually a Lord Mayor's Show. We've just had the Lord Mayor's Show this year. This painting portrays the Lord Mayor's Show from 1888. What's interesting about it is I think this is where the power and the politics comes into the theme. Because we're looking here at how the centre of governance actually operates within the City of London and the role of pomp and ceremony in reinforcing that power.

James Whitehead who was the Lord Mayor, who is actually in the coach here, wanted a low-key affair that year because he wanted to donate the money that he had saved for meals in the workhouses, but I don't think you'd necessarily know it from the opulence of this parade. There he is in the gold carriage with gold livery leading the way. The people that Logsdail has depicted in this are incredibly accurate, I think, in detailed portrayals of all the different types of characters one gets in London at the time.

You see a young boy stealing oranges from a lady's basket and a very upright figure in military uniform at the back there. What's particularly interesting in terms of how the public perceive money, power, politics is that whenever I'm talking about this particular picture, I've had several members of the public point out that on the morning of the ninth of November, where Logsdail set up his crow's nest in order to paint this painting. Just down the road, 10 minutes' walk, police were discovering the final victim of Jack the Ripper, Mary Kelly.

I think for the public, that fact which I was unaware of and obviously sensationalism around that Jack the Ripper has become particularly controversial at the moment with the new Jack the Ripper Museum. That fact about the rich and the poor in the City and its juxtaposition, perhaps to Tower Hamlets, is particularly important and relevant.

Our thinking about the historic collection, of course, kick-started our contemporary acquisition activity. We wanted to focus on these same themes of Money, Power, Politics in order to add to the collection. The first acquisition made through this policy was Mark Titchner's *Plenty and Progress*, which dates from 2012 and was made possible through the Art Fund and the Friends of Guildhall Art Gallery. Titchner's work presents the use of text and design, concepts and ideologies which encouraged the viewer to form their own conclusions. *Plenty and Progress* is a thought-provoking statement but I think noncommittal, neither obviously for nor against. As such, it sets the tone for open discussion.

Titchner's texts are taken from sources as diverse as Victorian socialist writings such as that of William Morris, to contemporary self-help mantras. He never particularly identifies which slogan is from which text because that almost doesn't matter to him in the public's interpretation of his work. Presented as slogans, though, they are immediate and attention

grabbing and set against this ornamental backdrop, they also appear timeless, in the case of *Plenty and Progress*, almost heraldic.

As the first contemporary acquisition for us, I think that this was key that it fit in with the aesthetic of the City of London. Especially with that red, you can't see it so well in this image, but it's red lacquered on the back of the stainless steel. The polished stainless steel, I think, also recalls Nieland's *Broadgate Reflections*, the painting which we saw earlier. I think that in many ways, although this wasn't how I sold it to the City, this for me, epitomizes the City of London Corporation, which in some ways is thrusting and forward looking, and in other ways staid and traditional.

Another acquisition, in early 2015, we acquired four works by Polly Braden from her *London's Square Mile* series. The selection that we chose represents both the hustle and bustle and the quiet moments of London's financial district. Just looking through that there's Paternoster Square with a single figure walking against very stark architecture.

The G20 riots which were located predominantly in the City in 2009, and notoriously set up camp around St. Paul's Cathedral, and the London Metal Exchange of 2012. So this selection juxtaposes the world of work with the world of public political protests, so we felt that it did show two sides of the coin.

In the artist's own words, Polly Braden says, "Stumbling into London's Square Mile, the heart of the powerful financial district, you could lose your way within minutes. Public streets flow into private forecourts, seductive passages become corporate cul-de-sacs of soaring glass, steel and stone. Much of the new City architecture has a preening bravado. These are offices built to look great in photographs. To a newcomer, the City looks impenetrable, like an oiled machine with a hidden logic. City folk might seem coolly efficient, but it's an illusion. Look again, and many of them seem out of their element as if caught between one air-conditioned sanctuary and the next. These are not employees 'on message'. There is doubt and indecision in their gestures."

Braden does define herself as a metropolitan voyeur. Her work is very much about the anonymity of crowds versus the intimacy of the photo that hones in on one person. This guided us in our selection of the images, plus our desire to represent different sides of the City. As part of our new way of thinking about the collection, it was, like I said, absolutely essential that we include the G20 protests and we were pleasantly surprised that this passed through the City of London's board, I think, demonstrating that there was a new willingness for openness amongst the City of London's Corporation.

I think it's also interesting to compare the unshakable confidence of Lund's *Heart of Empire*, which we saw earlier, with Braden's study in vulnerability. Also, what about global

capitalism and the global economy? Is the idea of the financial services as a physical space irrelevant now? Is even Polly Braden's world that of the bygone? When I speak about this photograph, in particular, people are most interested in it being a depiction of the last physical trading floor in the City.

There's that idea of history, what this represents, in historical terms, kind of overwhelming other nuanced meanings that we perhaps intended for the public, but it's how works of art change in the public perception all the time. I think there's this gentle probing as well that informs us going forward.

Our forthcoming project is an exhibition which focuses more specifically on the City of London Corporation and it opens on the 4th of March 2016.

We were very fortunate to work with the acclaimed British photographer, Martin Parr, on a series of images which really show the City through its ceremonial functions and events. During this time, Parr has visited the City's livery companies and been granted unprecedented access to high-profile occasions. On the top left-hand side here, we can see two men that their actually an annual pancake race which takes place within the City of London and people dress up for that.

On the top right, these are the watermen from the Company of the Waterman and Lighterman. They still enact some of those traditional and historic journeys along the Thames. On the bottom left, we have Fiona Wolf, who was Lord Mayor two years ago and was only the second female Lord Mayor in the whole history of the City. The bottom right we have two men from the Drapers Company, which is one of the livery companies within the City of London.

I don't know how many of you are familiar with Parr's work, but he is known for capturing archetypal Britishness in an affectionate and teasing way. The resulting images from this project, I hope, offer a new perspective on the City of London and create a unique documentary record of its colour and character. Through Parr's playful eye for detail and visual dynamism, visitors will gain access to a world of unseen private ceremonies, ancient to modern traditions, robes and chains and processions, banquets, public occasions and informal behind-the-scenes shots.

Again, it goes back to the William Logsdail painting about the processes as power and the function of power in somewhere that is as traditional as the City of London. Parr's work seeks to offer a more human perspective on ceremony, capturing unguarded moments and dishing up, I hope, some surprising insights. Again, Parr's project I think, is indicative of a more open approach by the City of London Corporation, guided by the possibilities of the nuances of art. Going forward in terms of our programming, we've set a challenge to the

Gay Photographers Network to respond to the theme of money and power. The results of this will be displayed in the autumn.

In 2016 and '17, we also hope to establish a program of talks and events that take some of these ideas on to the podium. We're particularly interested in looking at notions of both masculinity and femininity within the City.

All this very much takes place within the walls of Guildhall Art Gallery. What about outside on the very streets? Well, in 2011, the City of London Corporation launched Sculpture in the City, an initiative to curate a rolling programme of public art within the Square Mile. Now, in its fifth year, Sculpture in the City aims to enhance the urban environment with cutting-edge contemporary works from leading artists, sited in both busy therapy affairs and quieter green spaces.

Crucially, Sculpture in the City is a unique collaboration between the City of London Corporation, local businesses, and the art world, delivered through a partnership between 22 Bishopsgate, 30 St. Mary Axe (which is The Gherkin), AON, Aviva, British Land, Brookfield, Hiscox, Tower 42, Willis and WRBC Development UK Limited. It's truly a marriage of art and commerce. It was very important to the businesses who got involved in this process that they weren't just sponsors of the project, that they were actually actively involved in dictating curation of art within the Square Mile, so all of these businesses have representation on the curatorial panel that decides the works that go on display.

Sculpture in the City is located in the EC3 part of the City, which is traditionally the insurance district around The Gherkin. The Guildhall Art Gallery operates as the City of London's art adviser on the selection location of the works. I just wanted to point out a handful of works from recent years. This is a back catalogue that I feel particularly speak to the location in which they are situated and which have gained new meaning through their display in the Square Mile, so I think have made people look at them differently by being displayed here, rather than anywhere else. First up is Robert Indiana's *ONE Through ZERO*. Indiana first conceived the number set sculptures in 1980 for a special commission for a developer in Indianapolis.

He then created several series of the numbers, including this six-foot series which came on loan to the City. Indiana's artistic motivation lies in extrusion, the printed form into space. I think we're more used to seeing numbers as 2D entities, and his interest is actually in the symbolic, allegorical, and formal aspects of number. The palette of Indiana's work is also loaded with symbolism, so he explains the choice of palette as follows in a sort of progress through life. Number one, the red and blue, are associated with birth. Two, green and blue, signify infancy. Three, orange and blue represent youth and so on until you get to zero, which is in shades of grey and signal the end of the life cycle.

The question of location, which is here at the base of the Lloyds Insurance Building, I feel brings about a shift in this meaning. The association of numbers with finance and accounting perhaps suggests itself more strongly than a holistic approach to the symbolism of numbers. However, this tension between what the artist intended and the location is what makes this piece particularly interesting.

Secondly, I wanted to point out work by the artist Ben Long, which is a scaffolding sculpture. It's inspired by Robert Indiana, and I think when you look back at the numbers, you can see that 3D boldness that he's trying to recreate, and Ben Long's artwork is made specifically for the public realm. It's about challenging perceptions of how and where art can be appreciated, and it's inspired by actually his own experience of working on a building site as a teenager. The sculptures are designed to be dismantled and the pieces reused in other sculptures that he makes in the future, so there is an ephemeral quality to them, which is deliberate. He says, "I suppose I'm offering an alternative – monuments that reflect the change and evolution that the urban environment is constantly subjected to."

Again, the location of this piece beneath The Gherkin places the focus on office work rather than manual work. Interestingly, the volatile financial environment in which the piece is placed contributed to its regrettably brief airing. It was intended to be on loan until summer 2015. In August 2014, IVG, one of the two owners of 30 St. Mary Axe filed for insolvency, and the building went into receivership.

The *Work Scaffolding Sculpture* was subsequently removed at the request of the receivers. It only actually stood there for nine weeks. I think this really speaks about the changing and unpredictable nature of the City, and positioning artworks within the Square Mile. There is this radical turnover of ownership, and desire as to what the space should mean.

The final work that I wanted to talk about today is called *Rays (London)* by Xavier Vielhan and it's actually on display at the moment in the St. Mary Axe area. It's a 12-metre-tall site-specific piece framing the views between the Willis buildings. Vielhan's vision is to capture views recently opened up by construction work. This piece is also ephemeral, in that the view will shortly close again when building progresses and another skyscraper is built in the middle there. So the experience of this work in this particular location will be lost. It's a one-off chance to see it here and now and then it will move on somewhere else. For me then, this work epitomizes the idea of making space for art within the Square Mile.

That space is changing at an accelerated pace, driven by plenty and progress, if we turn to the title of Mark Titchner's work. I hope that all the examples today shown across both the historic and contemporary collections of the Guildhall Art Gallery, and the temporary installations as part of the Sculpture in the City project might form the launchpad for wider

debate about the City of London, both as a metonym, and a geographic location. Art has a particular role to play, I feel, in creating another dimension to London Square Mile. That's it.
[applause]