

Colin Self: *Unseen*

18 September–7 November 2026 | Golden Square

Press Release

Frith Street Gallery is delighted to announce a major exhibition of works by Colin Self. Presented across two floors, this is the artist's first London retrospective since *Colin Self's Colin Self's* at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in 1986. The show includes rarely seen pieces from public and private collections, as well as the first showing of *365: A Journey in that Direction* –an endlessly fascinating and eclectic multi-media installation of 365 wall-based works ongoing since the year 2000.

In the 1960s Self was the only Pop Artist on either side of the Atlantic to address the nuclear menace. Working across a wide range of media, his seven-decade artistic career has been a peaceful and even paradisaical response to threats of annihilation. This has renewed resonance amid current global tensions.

Turning 85 this year, the artist was born between Luftwaffe bombing raids on his native city of Norwich and just before the fields beyond his family house were claimed for Rackheath Airfield, a huge American military base. Self has always had a sense of living on the edge – between city and country, land and sea, nature reserves and rubbish dumps, peace and war, past and present.

For all his creative connections; a friend of David Hockney since his days at the Slade and the man Richard Hamilton called 'Britain's best draughtsman since William Blake' Self has mostly operated under the art-world radar. He made prolonged trips to North America and Europe but after retreating to rural Scotland, he returned to his roots in England - a constantly questing modernist honouring the great East Anglian painters such as John Constable and John Sell Cotman.

Colin Self's profoundly playful work encompasses painting, drawing, printmaking, collage, ceramic and sculpture. His art stands for boundless invention, gentle subversion and humane optimism in the face of oblivion.

Colin Self: *Unseen* is curated by writer and curator Ian Collins.

Colin Self (b.1941 Rackheath, Norfolk, UK) studied at Norwich School of Art and Slade School of Fine Art, London. Exhibitions include *One Self: The Creative Life of Colin Self*, Norwich Castle 2025. *The World Goes Pop, Tate Modern and International Pop*; a touring exhibition at the Walker Art Centre, Dallas Museum of Art and Philadelphia Museum of Art, both 2015-2016. *Colin Self: Art in the Nuclear Age*, Pallant House Gallery, Chichester, 2008. His work is in many national collections including Tate, V&A, The Arts Council Collection, The Imperial War Museums, and The Museum of Modern Art, New York.