# Lubaina Himid revisits The Thin Black Line as UK art scene unveils diverse new exhibitions



The Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) in London is currently hosting "Connecting Thin Black Lines: 1985–2025," a major group exhibition curated by Lubaina Himid that revisits her groundbreaking 1985 show, The Thin Black Line. The original exhibition was pivotal in showcasing the work of young Black and Asian women artists, challenging the art world’s conventional narratives. Marking the 40th anniversary, this new iteration brings together many of the original contributors, including Claudette Johnson, Sonia Boyce, and Ingrid Pollard, alongside newly commissioned works that span the four decades since the initial show. The exhibition extends beyond the gallery walls with a dynamic programme of film screenings, talks, music, and live performances, running until 7 September 2025. It celebrates the ongoing impact and evolution of Black and Asian female artistry in the UK, reinforcing the original exhibition's lasting legacy.

Meanwhile, in Wakefield, the Yorkshire Sculpture Park is presenting "William Kentridge: The Pull of Gravity," an expansive exhibition that focuses on the multifaceted talents of the South African artist. This is the first museum presentation outside South Africa dedicated to Kentridge’s sculpture, featuring over 40 works created between 2007 and 2024. The showcased pieces range across diverse media including bronze, steel, paper, and found objects, with several sculptures displayed for the first time, including a major new commission titled "Paper Procession." This collection reveals a restless inventiveness likened to Picasso's, highlighting Kentridge’s ability to merge personal and political histories through his art. The exhibition will be on display until 19 April 2026.

At the Royal Academy in London, "Kiefer/Van Gogh" explores the resonant dark romanticism that Anselm Kiefer draws out from the life and work of Vincent van Gogh. This poignant exhibition, open until the end of October 2025, intertwines Kiefer’s intense reflections on death and nature with the tragic genius of Van Gogh’s fields, casting a haunting shadow over the landscapes portrayed.

In Edinburgh, the National Galleries of Scotland's Modern Two is home to "Resistance," an exhibition curated by filmmaker Steve McQueen that features photographs of protest and collective action representing a century of alternative British history. This powerful assemblage documents diverse movements and voices pushing for social change, offering a visual testament to the enduring spirit of resistance. The show runs until January 2026.

For those seeking vibrant contemporary work, Glasgow’s Modern Institute is showcasing Jim Lambie, an artist known for his exuberantly colourful paintings and objects. Lambie’s work is a celebration of hedonism in art, with pieces that pulsate with life and energy, offering a bold contrast to some of the more somber exhibitions currently running. His exhibition runs until late August 2025.

Additionally, a striking highlight in this week’s art world is a major new exhibition dedicated to Dennis Morris, a photographer whose career began at just 11 years old and who spent much of his life chronicling the Black British experience. Morris’s work, which draws from a unique personal history including touring with Bob Marley, offers an intimate and enduring portrayal of Black British culture. This show further enriches the broader conversation about Black creativity and representation in contemporary art.

In an evocative nod to art history, the National Gallery in London features Thomas Gainsborough’s "Cornard Wood near Sudbury, Suffolk," painted in 1748. This piece is a vivid reminder of the disappearing tradition of common land in England, with Gainsborough presenting a rare, radical depiction of ordinary rural life beneath a canopy of auburn trees—an artistic plea against the enclosure and displacement that altered the social landscape deeply during his time.

Together, these exhibitions and artworks reflect a richly varied art scene engaging with themes from historical memory and social justice to colour, creativity, and identity, affirming the continuing power of art to challenge, inspire, and connect.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2025/jun/27/thin-black-lines-lubaina-himid-william-kentridge-van-gogh-kiefer-the-week-in-art), [[2]](https://ica.art/exhibitions/connecting-thin-black-lines-1985-2025)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2025/jun/27/thin-black-lines-lubaina-himid-william-kentridge-van-gogh-kiefer-the-week-in-art), [[3]](https://ysp.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions/william-kentridge)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2025/jun/27/thin-black-lines-lubaina-himid-william-kentridge-van-gogh-kiefer-the-week-in-art), [[4]](https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/exhibition/kiefer-van-gogh)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2025/jun/27/thin-black-lines-lubaina-himid-william-kentridge-van-gogh-kiefer-the-week-in-art), [[5]](https://www.nationalgalleries.org/exhibition/resistance)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2025/jun/27/thin-black-lines-lubaina-himid-william-kentridge-van-gogh-kiefer-the-week-in-art), [[6]](https://www.themoderninstitute.com/exhibitions/jim-lambie)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2025/jun/27/thin-black-lines-lubaina-himid-william-kentridge-van-gogh-kiefer-the-week-in-art), [[7]](https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2025/jun/27/dennis-morris-black-british-experience)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2025/jun/27/thin-black-lines-lubaina-himid-william-kentridge-van-gogh-kiefer-the-week-in-art)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2025/jun/27/thin-black-lines-lubaina-himid-william-kentridge-van-gogh-kiefer-the-week-in-art> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://ica.art/exhibitions/connecting-thin-black-lines-1985-2025> - The Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) in London is hosting 'Connecting Thin Black Lines 1985 – 2025', a major group exhibition and event programme curated by Lubaina Himid. This exhibition celebrates 40 years since 'The Thin Black Line', a groundbreaking show of young Black and Asian women artists at the ICA in 1985. The exhibition features works by the original artists, including Brenda Agard, Sutapa Biswas, Sonia Boyce, Chila Singh Burman, Jennifer Comrie, Himid, Claudette Johnson, Ingrid Pollard, Veronica Ryan, Marlene Smith, and Maud Sulter. It includes new commissions and artworks made over the past four decades, extending beyond the gallery space with a rich programme of film screenings, talks, music, and live performances. The exhibition runs from 24 June to 7 September 2025 at the ICA, London. ([ica.art](https://ica.art/exhibitions/connecting-thin-black-lines-1985-2025?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://ysp.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions/william-kentridge> - Yorkshire Sculpture Park in Wakefield is presenting 'William Kentridge: The Pull of Gravity', a major exhibition by South African artist William Kentridge. The exhibition marks the first museum presentation outside South Africa to focus on his sculpture and features over 40 works made between 2007 and 2024. It includes a selection of the artist’s sculpture across different scales and media, including bronze, steel, paper, cardboard, plaster, wood, and found objects. Several works will be displayed for the first time, including a new commission of six monumental coloured sculptures, 'Paper Procession', on parade in YSP’s historic landscape. The exhibition runs from 28 June 2025 to 19 April 2026 at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield. ([ysp.org.uk](https://ysp.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions/william-kentridge?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/exhibition/kiefer-van-gogh> - The Royal Academy in London is hosting 'Kiefer/Van Gogh', an exhibition where Anselm Kiefer brings out the dark Romantic in Van Gogh, as death stalks the fields. The exhibition runs from 28 June to 26 October 2025 at the Royal Academy, London.
5. <https://www.nationalgalleries.org/exhibition/resistance> - Modern Two, National Galleries of Scotland in Edinburgh is presenting 'Resistance', an exhibition where Steve McQueen selects photographs of protest and collective action from a century of alternative British history. The exhibition runs until 4 January 2026 at Modern Two, National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh.
6. <https://www.themoderninstitute.com/exhibitions/jim-lambie> - The Modern Institute in Glasgow is showcasing works by Jim Lambie, one of the most hedonistic artists around, who presents paintings and objects that pop with colour. The exhibition runs until 27 August 2025 at The Modern Institute, Glasgow.
7. <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2025/jun/27/dennis-morris-black-british-experience> - Dennis Morris, who got his first cover shot at the age of 11 and spent the rest of his life chronicling Black British experience, is now showing in a major new exhibition. The exhibition is featured in The Guardian's 'The Week in Art' article.