

# Victoria Miro

**PRESS RELEASE**

## **Grayson Perry** *The Walthamstow Tapestry*

9 October – 7 November 2009

**This autumn Grayson Perry will exhibit his largest work to date, a monumental tapestry that is three meters high by fifteen metres long.**

Designed specifically for the gallery's architecture it runs the entire length of the top floor exhibition space at Victoria Miro 14. A number of new ceramic works will be exhibited alongside *The Walthamstow Tapestry*, 2009. The exhibition coincides with the launch of a major monograph on the artist, with texts by Jacky Klein and published by Thames & Hudson on 5 October.



*The Walthamstow Tapestry* explores the emotional resonance of brand names in our lives and our quasi-religious relationship to consumerism. Charting man's passage from birth to death, the tapestry is peppered with leading brands encountered along the way. Stripped of their logos and thus much of their identity, the names run alongside - often incongruous - depictions of people going about their everyday lives: walking the dog, nursing children, skateboarding, hoovering, and, of course, shopping. Perry is a great chronicler of contemporary life, in whose work sentiment and nostalgia sit subversively alongside fear and anger. In *The Walthamstow Tapestry* many of the world's leading names, from luxury brands such as Louis Vuitton and Tiffany to high street giants such as Marks and Spencer and IKEA, come under Perry's excoriating gaze in this cautionary and prophetic tale of modern day life. Inspired by antique batik fabrics from Malaysia as well as eastern European folk art this vast work provides a colourful, rich and complex visual journey across our contemporary landscape.

**Grayson Perry by Jacky Klein will be published by Thames & Hudson on 5th October 2009, £35.00. *The Walthamstow Tapestry* is at Victoria Miro Gallery from 9 October - 7 November 2009. Admission is free, Tues – Sat 10am – 6pm. *The Walthamstow Tapestry* is published by The Paragon Press**

### **Background & Biography**

Grayson Perry, winner of the 2003 Turner Prize, uses the seductive qualities of ceramics and other art forms to make stealthy comments about societal injustices and hypocrisies, and to explore a variety of historical and contemporary themes. The beauty of his work is what draws us close. Covered with graffito drawings, handwritten and stencilled texts, photographic transfers and rich glazes, Perry's detailed pots are deeply alluring. Only when we are up close do we start to absorb narratives that might allude to dark subjects such as environmental disaster or child abuse, and even then the narrative flow can be hard to discern. The disparity between form and content and the relationship between the pots and the images that decorate them is perhaps the most challenging incongruity of Perry's work. Yet, beyond the initial shock of an apparently benign or conservative medium carrying challenging ideas, what keeps us drawn to the work is its variety. Autobiographical references - to the artist's childhood, his family and his transvestite alter ego Claire - can be read in tandem with debates about décor and decorum and the status of the artist versus that of the artisan, debates which Perry turns on their head.

Born in Chelmsford, Essex in 1960, Grayson Perry lives and works in London. Grayson Perry won the Turner Prize in 2003 and has had major solo exhibitions at Mudam, Luxembourg (2008), 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan (2007), Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh (2006), Barbican Art Gallery, London (2002) and Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2002). Grayson Perry has also curated two exhibitions - *Unpopular Culture*, de la Warr Pavilion (then touring) (2008) and *The Charms of Lincolnshire*, The Collection, Lincoln (2006).

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**Open Tuesday to Saturday**  
10am to 6pm, admission free  
Tubes, Old Street and Angel