

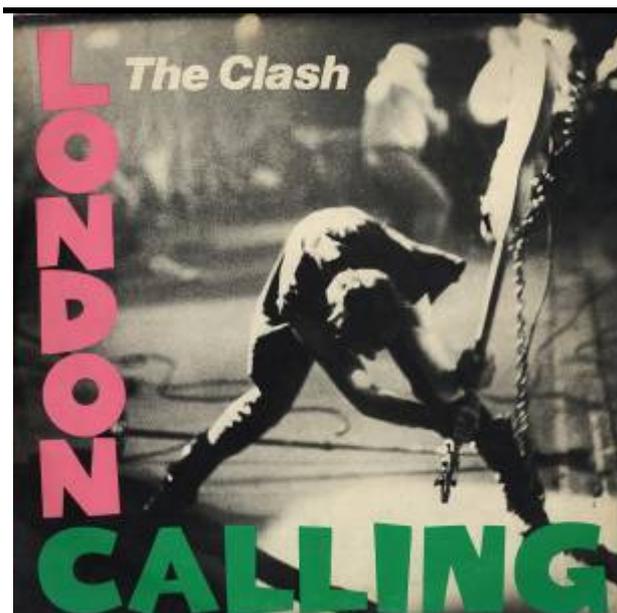
# Ray Lowry

## London Calling

Top UK artists create new works to honour Rock n' Roll cartoonist

18<sup>th</sup> June – 4<sup>th</sup> July 2010

Private View 17<sup>th</sup> June



London Calling Cover, created by Ray Lowry

© Pennie Smith

Paying tribute to Ray Lowry, 30 artists, including Tracey Emin, Nick Hornby, Billy Childish, Harry Hill, Paul Simonon and Humphrey Ocean, create reinterpretations of The Clash's iconic 'London Calling' album cover.

*"Ray Lowry is, of course, both mad and obsessive. Both qualities have made him rock'n'roll's greatest pictorial artist"*

John Collis, Manchester Reporter

The Idea Generation Gallery in support of the Ray Lowry Foundation, presents a unique exhibition paying tribute to the life and works of iconic illustrator, Ray Lowry. Manchester—born, Lowry began his career drawing for *Punch Magazine*, *International Times*, *OZ*, *NME* and *Private Eye* creating a cult following for his celebrated illustrations and cartoons. Most famously, Lowry created the unforgettable art work for The Clash's seminal 1979 album, *London Calling*. Followed by many devoted fans Lowry and his work has been cited as an influence by a broad spectrum of artists from John Squire to Arthur Smith, Keith Allen to Paul Simonon (of The Clash) and Tracey Emin to Humphrey Ocean.

Underlying Ray Lowry's cult status and influences, 30 prominent artists have produced new art works interpreting his famous 1979 album cover for The Clash. Celebrating Ray's work and career the artists have looked at how Ray influenced their art as well as the personal influence he had on their artistic output. All the new works will be exhibited, for the first time, alongside a retrospective of Ray's work. The original sketches, designs and ideas for the album cover, private sketchbooks, personal letters and previously unseen photographs, paintings and more will be on show. This showcase gives a personal insight into the mind and work of Ray Lowry and reveals the motivations behind one of the greatest illustrators of the past four decades.

*"Ray Lowry's cartoons, Pennie Smith's photos and Nick Kent's rambling prose were the three things in the NME that had me standing in the rain waiting for the newsagents to open every Wednesday at 7am. I couldn't wait to devour it all so I could be as cool as they obviously were."* Kevin Cummins



Elvie Horatio  
© Ray Lowry



The Clash on Stage  
© Ray Lowry



Picadilly  
© Ray Lowry

Lowry's association with the music press began in the 1970's, most notably with the NME for which he produced pocket cartoons, strips and a wide variety of illustrations. As a true rock n' roll fan, he met The Clash at a concert at the Electric Circus whilst they were supporting the Sex Pistols on their infamous *Anarchy in the UK* tour. A friendship began and he was invited to accompany the Clash on their 1979 US tour during which Joe Strummer dubbed him as the band's "official war artist".

*"Within three weeks I had gone from a fan to one of the band's intimate entourage. The first time I got behind the wheel of the minibus, with The Clash in the back, I felt a bit awestruck."* Ray Lowry



Rock Star dies in crash  
© Ray Lowry



Ray Lowry Portrait  
© Andrew Farrington



Madonna  
© Ray Lowry

Lowry was invited to design the sleeve for the band's third album, *London Calling*. Lowry's concept involved using one of Pennie Smith's rejected, out-of-focus shots and borrowing the pink and green lettering from Elvis Presley's debut album. He superimposed the album title on a photograph of Paul Simonon smashing his base guitar on stage, during a concert at the Palladium in New York. In 2002, Q magazine voted Pennie Smith's image as "the best rock 'n' roll photograph of all time" with Lowry's sleeve coming ninth in a poll by the same magazine of the greatest album covers of all time.

*"The London Calling album cover had to feature the infamous pink and green rock 'n' roll lettering. God made me do that ....Actually I had no idea that it was out of focus. Half blind at the best of times and probably half pissed at the time, that simply had to be the one."* Ray Lowry

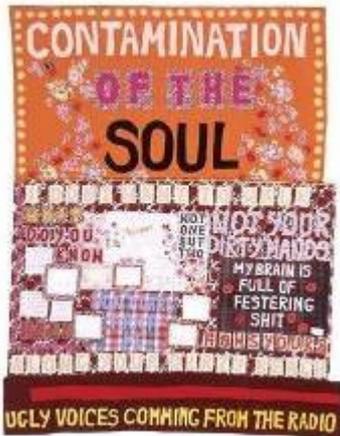
The Ray Lowry Foundation has been set up to help fulfil dreams for others that Ray was not able to, the aim to give a gifted person the financial support to develop their skills and study to a higher level. Ray was a self-taught artist and had no formal training in the field. He valued further education but due to his circumstances he was unable to take his studies to a higher level. In memory of Ray Lowry, the Foundation has been set up to help those in similar circumstances. Launching on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2010, to coincide with the exhibition, the foundation will work closely with Manchester Metropolitan University to help provide financial support to those who share Ray's passion for art. All works exhibited and donated will tour the world before being auctioned in aid of the Foundation.

In his life Ray published three collections of his drawings – *Only Rock and Roll* (1980), *This Space to Let* (1986) and *Ray Lowry – Ink* (1998). He also illustrated several books including *A Riot of Our Own*, an account of The Clash's career. The Idea Generation Gallery stages a retrospective of Ray's extraordinary career and celebrates the life of this unique artist.

*"Lowry always had it right, rock'n'roll is both bollox and brilliant but always, always cool. Cigarettes(roll ups), biker jackets, Ray-Bans, pointed crepes, Joe Strummer and shared NME's on the way to school – Lowry days."*

Bruno Waterfield, The Telegraph

## Artists include:



© Tracey Emin

### Tracey Emin

One of Britain's most acclaimed and successful contemporary artists. Tracey Emin's works include the installation pieces *My Bed* and *Everyone I Have Ever Slept With 1963-1995*. Emin's further artistic achievements include being nominated for the Turner Prize in 1999, representing Britain at the Venice Biennale in 2007 and being a member of the Young British Artists.

Emin studied at Medway College of Design, Maidstone Art College and later the Royal College of Art. She is most commonly known for her stitch-work installations, sculpture and use of neon lighting. From the start of her career she acknowledged her influence of Billy Childish but her works is often self – autobiographical.



© Billy Childish

### Billy Childish

Childish (Far left) is the cult British artist well known for his painting, poetry and song writing. His prolific body of work includes some 40 published collections of poetry, four novels and around 2,500 paintings. In addition, he has been a member of numerous bands including The Pop Rivets, The Milkshakes and The Headcoats. He has released a staggering 100 full – length albums.

After being expelled from Central Saint Martins, Childish spent years developing a style both in painting and writing with which he has come to be associated with. The content of his work is highly personal, with his early poetry and artworks exploring the abuse suffered as a child.

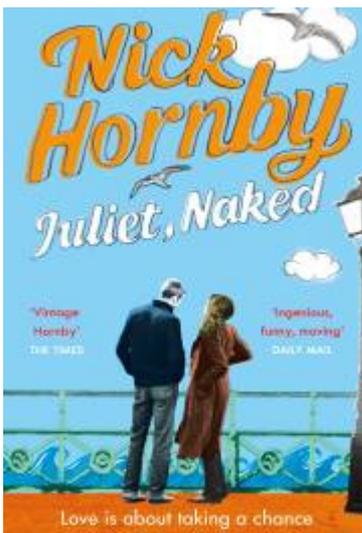


©Kevin Cummins

### Kevin Cummins

Renowned for documenting three decades of photography on the Manchester Music Scene. Taking countless portraits of Ray Lowry allowed them to develop a strong friendship.

He began his career photographing rock bands in the mid 1970's in Manchester. Cummins had a 25-year association with the *NME* including 10 years as their chief photographer. He has photographed major musicians including the. The Clash, Sex Pistols, U2 and David Bowie,



### Nick Hornby

Nick Hornby was born in 1957. He is the author of six novels, *High Fidelity*, *About a Boy*, *How To Be Good*, *A Long Way Down* (short-listed for the Whitbread Award) *Slam* and *Juliet, Naked*. He has also written three works of non-fiction, *Fever Pitch* (winner of the William Hill Sports Book of the Year Award), *31 Songs* (short listed for the National Books Critics Circle Award) and *The Complete Polysyllabic Spree* as well as a Pocket Penguin book of short stories, *Otherwise Pandemonium*.

He wrote the screenplay for the film *An Education*, for which he was recently nominated for an Oscar and a BAFTA for Best Adapted Screenplay. London Calling is his Desert Island Double Album.

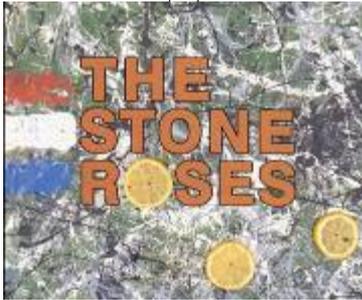


© Humphrey Ocean

### Humphrey Ocean

Widely recognised for his portraiture, Ocean has a number of works exhibited at the National Portrait Gallery, including paintings of Sir Paul McCartney and Philip Larkin. Another of Ocean's well known works is the iconic *Black Love Chair*; the etching used on the cover of McCartney's recent album *Memory Almost Full*.

Ocean studied at Tunbridge Wells, Brighton and The University of Canterbury. He became a member of the Royal Academy in 2004 and is a visiting lecturer at Camberwell College of Art, London. He had his first solo exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery in 1984, and has since exhibited widely with works at the Tate Liverpool and The Whitechapel Gallery.



© John Squire

### John Squire

John Squire, lead guitarist of *The Stone Roses*, co-founded the rock group with Ian Brown in 1984, and later went on to form band *The Seahorses*. Squire also created artwork for the cover of award-winning album *The Stone Roses (left)* in 1989.

In 2007 Squire announced he was to give up his music career in order to commit fully to his art, and has since had solo exhibitions at The Smithfield Gallery and The Dazed Gallery.



### Keith Allen

As Damien Hirst's best friend and chum to the Blur boys, Keith Allen has contributed to many aspects of the British art scene. Allen's has played parts in *Shallow Grave* (1994), *Trainspotting* (1996) and in FilmFour's *Blue Juice* (1995). Most recently he has become well known for his role in the BBC drama of Robin Hood.



### Arthur Smith

Arthur Smith began his career as a stand-up comedian on the Edinburgh Fringe circuit. He is a regular compere at the long-running Hackney Empire New Act of the Year competition final.

In addition to stand-up comedy he also presents various shows on BBC Radio 4 such as *Excess Baggage* and *Loose Ends*. He took over as narrator of the TV series, *A Life of Grime*, after the death of John Peel and, more recently, was one of the *Grumpy Old Men* in the television series of that name.



### Ed Vaizey

Ed Vaizey MP was elected as the Member of Parliament for Wantage and Didcot in May 2005. Since November 2006, he has been the Conservatives' Shadow Minister for Culture, looking after arts and broadcasting policy.

When he left university, he spent two years working for the Conservative Party's Research. Ed has built up a career as a freelance political commentator, writing regularly for *The Guardian*, and appearing on programmes such as *Despatch Box* and *The Wright Stuff*, as well as broadcasting frequently on Five Live.



© Harry Hill

### Harry Hill

The triple Bafta award winning comedian, author and television presenter began his career on the popular radio show *Harry Hill's Fruit Corner*. In recent years he has become a household television name presenting *Harry Hill's TV Burp*. Hill has won two British Comedy Awards as well as being listed as one of the 50 funniest acts in British Comedy.

He wrote his first novel in 2002, *Flight from Deathrow* following *Tim the Tiny Horse* in 2007 and *The Further Adventures of the Queen Mum*.



© John Butterworth

### John Butterworth

Butterworth has produced varied types of art throughout his career. His work covers a broad spectrum of art that include wildlife, portraits and landscape paintings. As an abstract painter, John developed his talent and went on to study at Winchester and Chelsea Schools of Art.



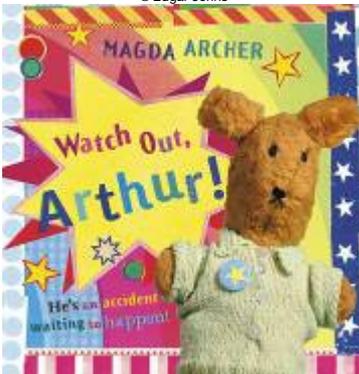
© Edgar Jerins

### Kosmo Vinyl

Kosmo Vinyl is best known for his time working with The Clash, during which he acted as Press Agent, Manager and Spokesperson.

As an original members of Stiff Records he worked closely with Ian Dury from the release of "Sex & Drugs & Rock'n'Roll" to "Reasons To Be Cheerful".

A native of East London, Vinyl has lived in New York City for over twenty years and has been producing art privately since 1997. This is the first time his work will be shown in a gallery.



© Magda Archer

### Magda Archer

A London based artist, and wife of comedian Harry Hill, Magda studied at the Chelsea School of Art and The Royal College of Art before embarking on a series of solo art exhibitions. In 1996 she produced artwork for The Beatles Anthology in partnership with Peter Quinnell. Since then she was the co-writer and illustrator of the Harry Hill Fun Book. Some of the artwork produced for the funbook appeared in 'Peter Blake; About Collage' at the Liverpool Tate in 2000.



© Johnny Green

### Johnny Green

As a road manager of The Clash, Green formed a strong relationship with Ray Lowry. After his time with The Clash he went on to work with the honky-tonks in West Texas.

Johnny Green wrote his first book, "A Riot of our Own", which Lowry Illustrated, documenting their time on the road with The Clash. His second was "Push Yourself Just a Little Bit More: Backstage at the Tour de France" which continues to be a strong passion

(left – Johnny, Ray and friends with first print edition of *Riot of Our Own*)

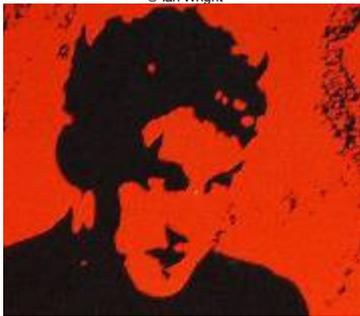


© Ian Wright

**Ian Wright**

As an established artist, Wright has made installations for clients that include Issey Miyake, the British Museum, Vitra and The Design Council.

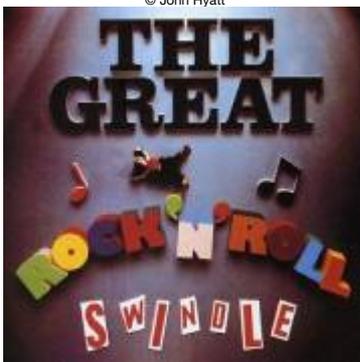
Wright uses over 2800 one inch buttons as pixels to construct each image. In an age of immediate digital media, Wright has intentionally created a time-consuming, alternative form of pixilation assembled entirely by hand. In this reinterpretation of the portrait the merging of old and new technologies with sensory responses presents the material and the subjects in a totally new context.



© John Hyatt

**John Hyatt**

Artist and musician, John Hyatt, the singer with the legendary band, The Three Johns which supported by The Clash. John was a contemporary cartoonist with Ray Lowry, drawing for 'Underground' music magazine. John was the cover artist for the Arts Council's British Art Show of 1985, representing the best of British Art, whilst the Three Johns played five nights a week supporting the families of miners during the great Miner's Strike of 84 - 85.



**Julian Temple**

An English film, documentary and music video director. With an interest in the early punk scene in London in 1976 it led to his friendship with The Sex Pistols, leading him to document many of their early gigs. During their time together he became virtually their cinematic amanuensis, a process which culminated in his first feature *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* (1979).



**Don Letts**

Letts is a renowned London—born British film and music director. Heavily influenced by his family's Jamaican origins and by the music of Bob Marley, Letts became familiar with musicians such as Marley and The Clash in the 70s, during his time working in clothing store Acme Attractions. Letts is accredited with bringing together reggae, dub and punk during this period.

In 1978 he produced his first movie *The Punk Rock Movie*, which documented the movement in the UK. His 2003 film *Westway to the World* was awarded a Grammy.



© Malcom Garrett

**Malcom Garrett**

Garrett is a British graphic designer, who has worked for music artists such as Simple Minds, Magazine, Duran Duran and Peter Gabriel.

Garrett's first important professional work was a designer for The Buzzcocks. The sleeves that Garrett designed for Duran Duran included their first four albums Duran Duran, Rio, Seven and Ragged Tiger and Arena.



© Pennie Smith

### **Paul Simonon**

Simonon was the bass guitarist for the Clash. Asked to join the Clash in 1976 by lead guitarist Mick Jones, he was immortalised on the front cover of the London Calling album cover in Pennie Smith's image.

Evidently, Simonon formed a strong relationship with Ray Lowry during their time spent together.

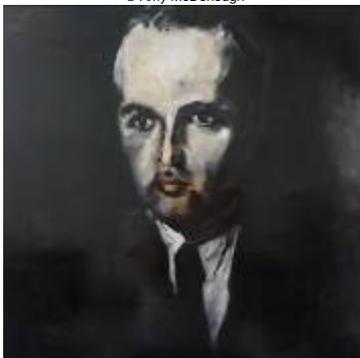


© Amy McDonough

### **Amy McDonough**

Amy McDonough works using video and performance.

McDonough is interested in urban mythology and lo-fi means of production that is seen in her work. Often inspired by peculiar locations, she interweaves references from the conventions of theatre, television and cinema to create her own hybrid video narratives.



© Sam Jackson

### **Sam Jackson**

After studying at the Royal Academy Schools, Sam has exhibited around the world.

His works have been displayed in the Edward Lucie-Smith exhibition, British Art Now, Berlin (2009) and Kay Saatchi's Anticipation, London (2008) and the Future Can Wait (2007,08,09). Future shows include Amsterdam and New British Painting in Helsinki.

Sam's work draws on themes of violence and sexuality within a contemporary arena and our understanding of subversion and transgression.



© Luke Jackson

### **Luke Jackson**

Since graduating from the Royal Academy Schools in 2007 Luke exhibited his work in Bloomberg 'New Contemporaries'(2007), 'Anticipation'(2008, curated by Kay Saatchi & Catriona Warren), 'New London School'(2009), 'The Future Can Wait'(2008/09) and 'British Art Now' (Curated by Edward Lucie Smith). Luke has also exhibited internationally in New York, Krakow, London, Berlin and Frankfurt.

Luke's practice is concerned with the paradoxical nature of social, political, cultural and ideological function. The work is positioned to examine a power struggle that exists between varying symbolic relations.

**Julian Williams, Curator of The Ray Lowry Foundation** *This exhibition demonstrates how much influence Ray had on so many people for so many reasons. London Calling is a tribute to the outstanding contributions that Ray made to the Industry and the effect that he had on so many.*

**Eloise Rowley, Idea Generation Gallery Manager** *commented The Idea Generation gallery feels honoured to have such a varied selection of Ray's work. Not only is Ray remembered for his links with punk movement band The Clash and The London Calling sleeve but his cartoon imagery maintains some of the greatest ever seen. He has played part in so many people's lives and this exhibition demonstrates how talented Ray was and how far his influenced reached.*

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## Editor's Notes

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### Idea Generation Gallery

Idea Generation was founded in 2001 around a simple proposition: find something you enjoy doing – and then try to do it better than anyone else.

Eight years on, Idea Generation now stands as one of the UK's leading arts, entertainment and cultural PR agencies - having worked with, for, and in support of some of the most exciting projects, people, institutions, fairs, festivals, tours, exhibitions, books, magazines, films, gigs, auctions, launches, parties and premieres across the UK and the world.

In 2008, Idea Generation embarked on its biggest and most ambitious project to date: by opening its own gallery space in the heart of Shoreditch. With a soaring 50 foot wall and over 200 square feet of gallery space, the Idea Generation Gallery is one of Shoreditch's biggest exhibition spaces.

### The Ray Lowry Foundation

Ray was an accomplished artist and recognised for his penmanship, his work within the cartoon industry transcended into the art world, one in which he would like to have had a greater influence and presence.

An eccentric figure deeply in love with rock'n'roll, Lowry was born in Urmston, Greater Manchester, and discovered music while at grammar school. Initially moving into the world of advertising, he relocated to London where he began to draw cartoons and paint. His work first appeared in International Times and Oz, before he found himself in the employ of more mainstream publications including Punch, Private Eye and Mayfair.

Ray valued further education and would have liked to have supported his interest with more formalised training but due to family circumstances this was not an option. Ray wanted to study, he wanted to improve his skills and develop new styles, Ray would probably have been a challenging student bringing a edgy controversial twist to the art world.

The foundation has been set up to help fulfil dreams for others that Ray was not able to, the aim is to give a gifted person the financial support to develop their skills and study to a higher level ( degree level). Any additional support will be given to art projects.

The Foundation has been set up and will work in partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University to provide financial support through scholarships and individual awards based on a demonstrated financial need.

The launch of the foundation is on 17th June 2010 to coincide with the London Calling Exhibition, all works will tour the world before being auctioned in aid of the Ray Lowry Foundation.

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Exhibition sponsored by leading PR agency, Brands2Life ([www.brands2life.com](http://www.brands2life.com)).

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# Ends

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- More Information on the Ray Lowry Foundation