

Pierre Huyghe Celebration Park

5 JULY – 17 SEPTEMBER

INTRODUCTION

For his first solo exhibition in the UK, Pierre Huyghe has chosen to present an integrated installation of new and recent work rather than a conventional retrospective.

Huyghe's *Celebration Park* creates a landscape of discovery in many forms, including neon signs, films, posters and architecture. The work is united by a series of recurring ideas and themes about collaboration, the nature of time and memory, the status of copyright and intellectual property, and the interrelationship between fiction and reality. Huyghe often begins with a familiar cultural form, such as a puppet show, neon light or a natural history programme, adapting these to create works that investigate how subjectivity and memory are affected by the conventions and myths that we all share. Similarly, he is interested in how ideas and stories originate and how they can be reused and circulated in the public domain.

He often works with other artists and designers, enjoying the dialogue inherent in that process, and many of the works in *Celebration Park* are collaborations.

Celebration Park is designed as a fluid space of celebration and ritual, collective experience and play. As befits a park, it should be approached in a spirit of adventure and exploration.

Pierre Huyghe was born in Paris in 1962

Curated by Emma Dexter, Curator,
Contemporary Art and Vincent Honoré,
Assistant Curator.

Exhibition organised by Tate Modern in association
with Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris/ARC
and Paris Musées.

More information about Pierre Huyghe is available
on www.tate.org.uk/modern

PIERRE HUYGHE TALKS TO CURATOR EMMA DEXTER

Emma Dexter: Your title *Celebration Park* suggests a correlation between a park and an exhibition – can you talk about that?

Pierre Huyghe: I guess I'm looking for a more performative and celebrative mode of exhibition. *Celebration Park* can be seen as a raw idea for a large-scale exhibition, such as a world fair. I'm generally interested in the history of exhibitions and the world fair has always been an interesting collective field of experiences.

ED The first thing we meet in the exhibition is a neon sign that says: 'I do not own Tate Modern or the Death Star', the first in a series of signs that you call 'disclaimers'. Why do you call them disclaimers?

PH A disclaimer allows someone to circulate something he does not own. Several works of mine have extended works by other authors. I refer to these works in these disclaimers at Tate Modern. I both acknowledge that these works are not my property but by doing so I keep extending their narrative.

ED Why do Tate Modern and the Death Star appear together in one disclaimer?

PH The Death Star is an artificial planet in the *Star Wars* saga. So this first disclaimer is about the here and now, of Tate Modern – as well as a fantasy world elsewhere. Putting them together also suggests that they are both 'scripted' places. Even if they are extremely different, there is a script – a narrative or certain way of thinking – attached to a place like a museum as well as a fictional planet.

ED How does this relate to the dancing doors, which might be the second or third thing we encounter in the exhibition?

PH A door usually defines access to a territory. These doors are moving, so the question of inside or outside becomes blurred. The doors, with their constantly shifting threshold, are surrounded by large neon signs, all of them disclaimers.

ED So you really want the two – doors and disclaimers – to work together and off each other. The neon deals with ownership, territory, property and the doors act as a metaphor for fluidity, for shifting ground.

ED For *Isla Ociosidad* Nomination you applied to various governmental agencies to name a new island, which you encountered on the journey.

PH This island did not exist before, it just emerged. To make it appear in the public realm, you have to pass through specific systems of representation, an official map. In the near future, this island and its name should disappear from the map. As in the project *No Ghost Just a Shell*, a sign appears and disappears from the realm of representation. To maintain an elsewhere you have to make believe that what is actually real and present in this elsewhere does not exist.

ED Your work is in fact often political, examining the structures and systems that lie beneath the surface of things.

PH It is more about systems. I am interested in the procedure of production of narratives and images, in re-writing the poetic of these procedures. That's why I choose to collaborate with others as part of a conversational process that allows things to be renegotiated. I guess any works that examine the conditions of representation are political, but being political should not be understood as a critical or moral stance.

ED It seems to me that you specifically avoid the sense of a critical mode in preference for a celebrative mode within your work.

PH The celebrative mode requires participation. *Streamside Day*, for instance, is an invention of a new custom for a new town – a celebration. It's a new day-off inserted into the loop of the year. I was trying to find the element of fiction contained in this given situation and to intensify it, to give rise to a ritual, a 'homeopathic' carnival.

ED Why have you chosen not to make a conventional retrospective exhibition at Tate Modern?

PH I was more interested in a collective monograph based in the present rather than a display of my recent past. *Celebration Park* is a gathering of time-based exhibitions: an opera in Central Park, a puppet show at Harvard, a celebration in a new town.

its sense of the absurd in relation to time and narrative.

ED Your new film, *A Journey that wasn't*, is being exhibited in London for the first time. The setting is Antarctica and it sometimes looks like a nature documentary. Was it tricky to make a film of a journey to a wild place, given the long history of documentary in this field?

PH Documenting reality as a given does not interest me. I was trying to invent the conditions of a fiction and then give myself the real means to verify it. So this collective journey started with the hypothesis that an island should exist somewhere and was also based upon a rumour of a unique creature. We hired a scientific sailing boat and embarked on a month-long expedition towards this hypothesis. This experience in Antarctica was turned into a musical on a Central Park ice rink. The public performance was an equivalent of what we experienced during the journey.

ED The albino penguin was an idea or creature that you set out to find, to test or locate during the journey. A penguin appears on the screen in the film, so you appear to have found it. Yet you won't confirm whether you really found it or not?

PH When things get too extraordinary you have to use the costume of fiction to make them believable. So no, I won't. What is important is the present movement towards something, whether it is a given reality or a constructed one.

ED So why did you make an animatronic penguin?

PH There are two constructions: one is an object, the other an image. Which one came first in the narrative is a question that I like to leave open. Victor Segalen's *Essay on Exoticism: An Aesthetic of Diversity* (1918) was an important book when I started *A Journey that wasn't*. It is about the movement from an external situation or experience to its representation. In order to avoid this representation, you have to find an equivalent, a system that allows you to experience something elsewhere without making its image. Modern explorers used to arrive at a place with a preconceived idea of what things should be or should not be, which meant that they never encountered anything other than what they were – they discovered themselves. Rather than discover something, I am trying to invent zones of ambiguity and holes on the map.

PERFORMANCE

Out of Mind

Wednesday 5 July 2006

20.00

Wednesday 13 September 2006

20.00

A stand-up comedy in conjunction with Pierre Huyghe's *Celebration Park*, starring Robin Ince, Stewart Lee, Josie Long, Simon Munnery and Martin White
Café 2, Tate Modern, Free

TALKS & DISCUSSIONS

Pierre Huyghe: Artist's Talk

Wednesday 5 July

18.30–20.00

Huyghe discusses his work with Mark Godfrey, critic and lecturer at the Slade School of Fine Art. This event will be webcast
Tate Modern, Starr Auditorium
£8 (£6 concessions), booking recommended

Alex Coles on Pierre Huyghe

Friday 8 September

18.30–19.30

Alex Coles, author of *DesignArt* (2005), explores *Celebration Park*.
Tate Modern, Level 4
Free with exhibition ticket, booking recommended

M/M (Paris)

Thursday 14 September

18.30–20.00

M/M (Paris) is a collaboration between Mathias Augustyniak and Michael Amzalag. M/M speak about their practice with Alice Rawsthorn, design critic of the *International Herald Tribune*.
In collaboration with Haunch of Venison
Tate Modern, Starr Auditorium
£8 (£6 concessions), booking required

FILMS

Pierre Huyghe

Sunday 9 July, 15.00

Wednesday 19 July, 18.00

Sunday 30 July, 15.00

This programme surveys some of

Huyghe's work in film, such as *Les Grands Ensembles* (1994–2001), *Blanche Neige Lucie* (1997), *L'Ellipse* (1998) and *The Third Memory* (1999).

No Ghost Just a Shell: Part One

Saturday 22 July, 15.00

Saturday 22 July, 19.00

Programme duration 120 min

This screening presents videos from *No Ghost Just a Shell*. Over the course of the project, Huyghe and Parreno invited artists to use the

No Ghost Just a Shell: Part Two

Sunday 23 July, 10.00

Programme duration 8 hrs

In Rirkrit Tiravanija's contribution to the *No Ghost Just a Shell* project, the protagonist Annlee reads the entire text of Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968), the novel that inspired Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* (1982).

Anna Sanders Films

4 August–13 August

Tate Modern presents films from Anna Sanders Films, founded in 1997 by Huyghe with Charles de Meaux, Dominique Gonzalez-Fonster and Philippe Parreno.

Programme One

Friday 4 August, 19.00

Sunday 6 August, 15.00

Programme Two: Secret Machines

Saturday 5 August, 19.00

Saturday 12 August, 15.00

Programme Three: Shimkent Hotel

Friday 11 August, 19.00

Sunday 13 August, 15.00

Tate Modern, Starr Auditorium
£4, booking recommended

For full details see the Tate guide or visit www.tate.org.uk
For tickets call 020 7887 8888 or visit www.tate.org.uk/tickets or email ticketing@tate.org.uk

ROOM 1

The exhibition opens with the neon sign *I do not own Tate Modern or the Death Star*. Dominating the gallery, it glows like a warning or an advertisement. Huyghe's work is often based on references to other art works, either his own or historical. In 1997 Huyghe made a print called *Death Star Interior*, a plan of the Death Star battle station from the film *Star Wars*, into which he inserted a schematic layout of his childhood bedroom. In this neon work, Huyghe links the Death Star with Tate Modern, comparing his imagined infiltration of a fictional evil empire with his temporary occupation of Tate Modern.

Four other neon signs are dispersed throughout the exhibition. Each one refers to a previous work by Huyghe which, in turn, alludes to an historical film, book or musical score. Huyghe calls these signs 'disclaimers' because they announce that he is not the only source or owner of the ideas that inform the work. Even the signs themselves are collaborations, made with the help of graphic designers. Playing with notions of authorship and copyright is typical of Huyghe's work. He is interested in how an artwork, film, book or piece of music, when released into public circulation, enters the common imagination and is re-interpreted in countless ways.

The neon works also play with the conventions of a museum retrospective. Instead of actually showing his previous works, he inscribes their ghost-like traces in text on the gallery walls.

ROOM 2

The title of *A Smile Without a Cat* derives from the moment in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* when the Cheshire cat disappears, leaving only his smile floating in space. In Huyghe's work, the outline of a girl's face bursts into a firework display and fizzles out. In 1999 Huyghe and artist Philippe Parreno bought the rights to use this face, a manga character they named Annlee, from a Japanese cartoon agency. In 2002, after they had given Annlee to fellow artists to use in other projects, Huyghe and Parreno organised this firework display in Miami to celebrate the disappearance of the character.

ROOM 3

Gates comprises two enormous doors that swirl and revolve like a dancing couple. The doors restructure the sense of space in the gallery, as if the exhibition begins and ends in this, the largest, central space. Huyghe places the viewer

animation, involving the
gateways between worlds.

The three neon signs in this room were created in 2005, but relate to Huyghe's work from the mid 1990s, which in turn borrowed from films and music by Walt Disney, John Cage and Charlie Chaplin. As a group, they reveal Huyghe's key themes: the elasticity of time and the complexity of influence and authorship in the making of an artwork.

The sign *I do not own Snow White* relates to an earlier film by the artist, which is also shown here. The film *Blanche Neige Lucie* (*Snow White Lucie*, 1997) features Lucie Dolène, the French voiceover artist who played Snow White in Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves* (1937), which was released in French in 1962. She describes how Disney reused her performance without her permission, and how this prompted her to successfully sue the company and regain the rights to her voice. Asking her to replay her performance of the character she voiced some 30 years ago, Huyghe creates a strange tension between fiction, memory and identity.

I do not own 4'33" refers to Huyghe's earlier work *Silent Score* (1997), a re-orchestration, for the flute, of John Cage's famous 4'33", a musical piece of uninterrupted silence. In a similar way, Huyghe's signs point to his previous works by highlighting their absence.

I do not own Modern Times is a reference to Charlie Chaplin's film *Modern Times* (1936), which Huyghe has screened as a public event. Chaplin's film examines the organisation of labour under capitalism, a persistent theme in Huyghe's work. The expression 'Modern Times' may also invoke how we use and divide time, or set aside free time, in modern, capitalist culture.

ROOM 4

This is not a time for dreaming tells two parallel stories, one historical and one contemporary, which unfold together as a single puppet show. The first begins in 1959, when Harvard University commissioned the modernist architect Le Corbusier to design a building for their visual arts department. The aim of the project was to create a symbol of the aesthetic and intellectual aspirations of the University, but the project was marred by protracted negotiations between the architect and the University's administration. The Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts was completed in 1963, after the architect's death.

In 2003 Huyghe was invited to create a work that would celebrate the building's 40th anniversary. The architect's misadventures became his starting point: Huyghe found that the difficulties inherent in trying to realise a complex, site-specific project that would satisfy both the artist and the University were similar to Le Corbusier's experience. Le Corbusier and Huyghe appear as characters in the puppet show, alongside the commissioners of both projects and, portrayed as a black, spectral character, Mr Harvard, dean of deans.

ROOM 5

Fictions ne m'appartient pas (*Fictions* does not belong to me) refers to a collection of short stories by the Argentinean writer Jorge Luis Borges. Many of Borges' stories share the same concerns as Huyghe's work: the nature of time, labyrinths, and the translation of language and experience into other forms and representations.

Fictions provided an important stimulus for Huyghe's trip to Antarctica, which forms the core of *A Journey that wasn't*, the film featured in the next room. In the course of this journey, Huyghe came upon a new island that emerged with the reduction of the polar ice shelf, which he named *Isla Ociosidad* (Idleness Island). The work shown here, *Isla Ociosidad Nomination*, is a black plaque based on the official form that Huyghe used to name the island.

ROOM 6

In February 2005 Huyghe, along with fellow artists Francesca Grassi, Aleksandra Mir, Xavier Veilhan, Jay Chung and Q Takeki Maeda, set out on a journey to Antarctica on the aluminium vessel Tara, the ship once used by the polar explorers Jean-Louis Etienne and Peter Drake. Huyghe was on a mission to investigate a rumour about a strange white creature – which proved to be a rare albino penguin – living on an uncharted island.

In October of the same year, Huyghe transformed New York's Central Park ice rink into an Antarctic landscape and restaged the expedition as a musical, complete with an orchestra, an island and an animatronic penguin. The event, titled *Double Negative*, aimed to translate the journey into a new experience, governed by the structure of a musical rather than a journey or nature documentary. The score, by composer Joshua Cody, is based on the island's topography, which was

the musician to create a third, cinematic version of Huyghe's project that comes across as a strange blend of a scientific documentary, Science Fiction movie and opera.

ROOM 8

Huyghe collaborated with architect François Roche to create *Terra Incognita/Isla Ociosidad*. As with the music that accompanies *A Journey that wasn't*, the topography of Idleness Island was translated into data that the architect then used to create the structure. The view is limited to two windows, conveying a mood of isolation, which is heightened by the presence of the single, animatronic penguin. *Terra Incognita/Isla Ociosidad* is yet another translation of Huyghe's Antarctic journey.

ROOM 9

For *One Year Celebration* Huyghe invited several artists, writers and critics to propose ideas for a new celebratory day, an event or occasion for any available, non-holiday day of the calendar. The posters in this room show these various suggestions and give the impression of a collective desire to redeem time for different purposes other than work. They also create a small group show within the context of a solo exhibition.

ROOM 10

Streamside Day was filmed in Streamside Knolls, a new village in New York State that was created by estate agents and a development company. Huyghe invented an occasion to celebrate the birth of the town, and thus create an annual ritual. The celebration begins with the planting of a tree, followed by a costume parade, and the procession of the school bus, a police car, a mail truck and a fire engine. The mayor gives a welcome speech, which is followed by music composed for the occasion and a feast for all the residents.

Streamside Day and *A Journey that wasn't* weave together a range of references, from romantic landscape painting, Disney animations, utopian social projects and nineteenth-century adventure stories, not to mention a number of contemporary films and works of fiction. The films highlight Huyghe's interest in myth, ritual, documentary and fiction, a polyphony of ideas that underpins the fluid, celebratory nature of the exhibition as a whole.

Texts by Vincent Honoré



ROOM 8

Terra Incognita/Isla

Ociosidad, 2006

Terra Incognita/Isla Ociosidad is a project by R&Sie(n) architects, in association with Pierre Huyghe. The R&Sie(n) team consisted of François Roche, Stéphanie Lavaux, Jean Navarro with Camille Lacadée, Clarisse Labro, from a script by Julien Blevarque.

Aluminium and mixed media.

Photo: Florian Kleinfenn

© Terra Incognita/Isla

Ociosidad/R&Sie(n)/Pierre

Huyghe/2006

One, 2005

Photo: Xavier Veilhan

Courtesy the artist and Marian

Goodman Gallery New York/Paris



ROOM 6

A Journey that wasn't, 2005

Film, 22 minutes

Photo: Pierre Huyghe

Courtesy the artist and Marian

Goodman Gallery New York/Paris



ROOM 5

Isla Ociosidad Nomination, 2006

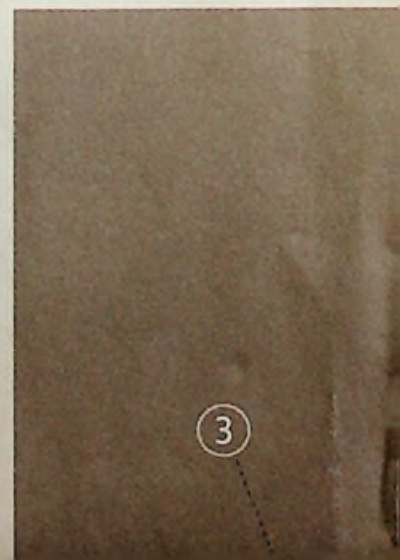
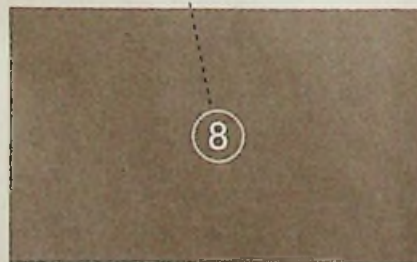
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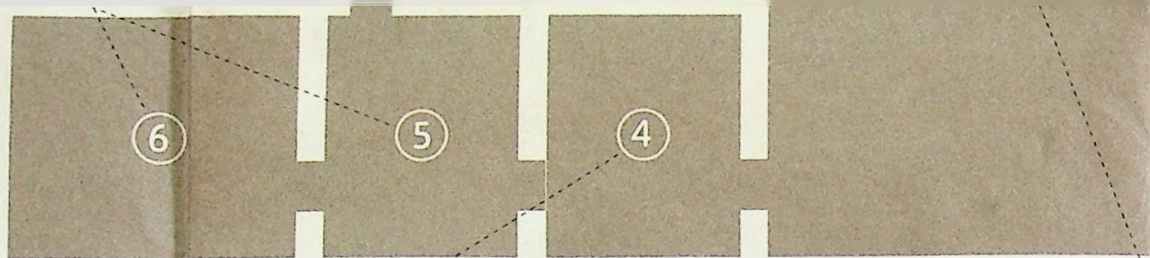
Courtesy the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery New York/Paris

Fictions ne m'appartient pas, 2005

Signage system by M/M (Paris)

White neon lights





ROOM 4

This is not a time for dreaming, 2004

Film, 24 minutes

Photo: Michael Vahrenwald

Courtesy the artist and Marian Goodman

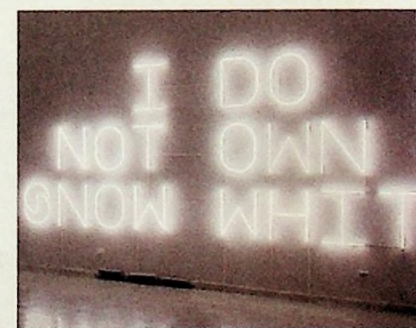
Gallery New York/Paris

This is not a time for dreaming, 2005

Lealet and poster designed by M/M (Paris)

Courtesy the artist and Marian Goodman

Gallery New York/Paris



DRAMATIS PERSONAE



Mr Harvard Dean of deans



Pierre Artist



Linda Co-curator of the Harvard project



Scott Co-curator of the Harvard project



Bird



Le Corbusier Architect



Josep Lluís Serri Dean of Harvard's architecture school, responsible for the commission



Eduard Sekler First director of the Center Center and chronic of the building





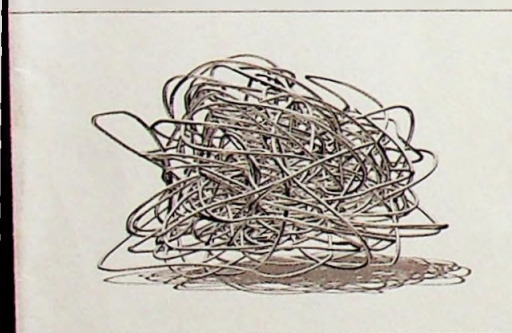
ROOM 9

One Year Celebration, 2006

With various artists

Posters designed by Louise Dossing and Werkplaats, Arnheim, NL

Courtesy the artists



Nœud 01 for Streamside Day, 2004

2004

With François Roche, R&Sie(n) architects

Drawing

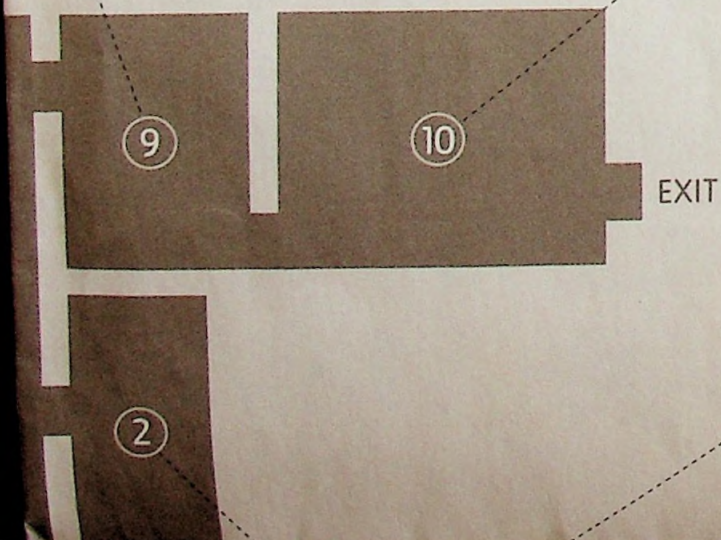


ROOM 10

Streamside Day, 2003

Film, 26 minutes

Courtesy the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery New York/Paris



CONCOURSE

M/M (Paris)

Entrance to Pierre Huyghe's Celebration Park, 2006

Poster and neon works

Courtesy the artists and Haunch of Venison, London. © The artists

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ENTRANCE

ROOM 3

I do not own Snow White, 2005

Signage system by M/M (Paris)

White neon lights

Photo: Florian Kleinfenn

Courtesy the artist and Marian Goodman

Gallery New York/Paris

I do not own Modern Times, 2005

Signage system by M/M (Paris)

White neon lights

I do not own 4'33", 2005

Signage system by M/M (Paris)

White neon lights

Courtesy the artist and Marian Goodman

Gallery New York/Paris

Blanche Neige Lucie, 1997

Film, 4 minutes

Courtesy the artist and Marian Goodman

Gallery New York/Paris

Gates, 2006

Installation: Wood, mixed media

Photo: Florian Kleinfenn

I DO NOT OWN
TATE MODERN
OR
THE DEATH
STAR

ROOM 1

*I do not own Tate Modern
or the Death Star, 2006*

Signage system by M/M (Paris)

White neon lights

All images © the artist unless
otherwise stated

ROOM 2

A Smile Without a Cat, 2002

With Philippe Parreno

Live event in Miami recorded on video

6 minutes

Courtesy and © the artists



YOUNG PEOPLE

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Ages 18-23

17-19 August, 10.30-16.00

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition hours

5 July-17 September

Sunday-Thursday 10.00-18.00

Last admission 17.15

Friday & Saturday 10.00-22.00

Last admission 21.15

Exhibition shop

Catalogues, books, posters, cards and a range of gifts

Café and Espresso Bar

Open daily 10.00-17.30

Tate Modern Café and Restaurant

There is a café on Level 2

The restaurant on Level 7 is open

Sunday-Thursday 10.00-18.00

Friday-Saturday 10.00-23.00

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