

# CUBITTS



PRESS RELEASE, 31 October 2016

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## Cubitts Launches Artist-in-Residence Programme

### Hayden Kays sets the balls rolling...

Since it first launched in 2013, London's hand-crafted spectacle-maker, **Cubitts**, has been a champion of creativity, both in the artistry of the brand's glasses and sunglasses and through its collaborations with creatives such as Radiohead album-cover artist Stanley Donwood.

This year, **Cubitts** introduces its **artist-in-residence** series, whereby a roster of different artists are invited to create exclusive artworks to be sold alongside **Cubitts'** products, with the lens cloth as their canvas.

First up is the wryly provocative London artist **Hayden Kays** – a painter, sculptor and printmaker whose curious, often-sardonic works melds street art, socio-cultural commentary and offbeat whimsy.

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Cubitts x Hayden Kays cleaning cloths

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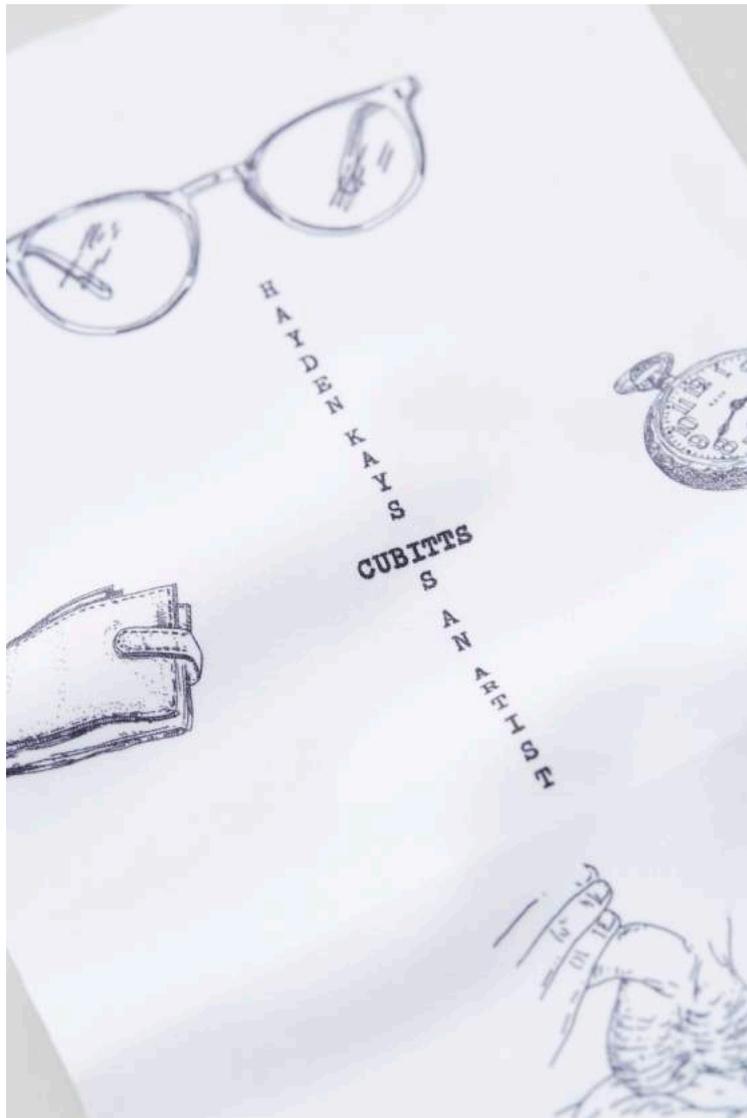
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For **Cubitts**, Kays has created two cloth designs: **Dead Colourful** – a cheery collection of skulls and a beautifully, hand-illustrated, somewhat NSFW riff on the **Spectacles, Testicles, Wallet and Watch** sign-of-the-cross mnemonic.



Spectacles, Testicles, Wallet and Watch cleaning cloth by Hayden Kays for Cubitts

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Why these particular designs? Kays says: 'Colour can attract you to subject matter that is inherently morbid. Death is something we avoid. Make death colourful and it becomes something we want in our pockets. The 'Spectacles, Testicles, Wallet and Watch' design is a visual representation of a saying I remember hearing as a kid and thinking it was hilarious and so rude. I've always liked off-colour humour.'

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**Dead Colourful** is available free to all existing **Cubitts** customers or available for £5 from **Cubitts'** workshops in Spitalfields, Borough and Soho, as well as online at [cubitts.co.uk](http://cubitts.co.uk). All proceeds will be donated to Kay's chosen charity, **Cure Blindness: The Himalayan Cataract Project**, which campaigns to eliminate curable blindness in individuals with no access to healthcare. Spectacles, Testicles, Wallet and Watch – from a limited edition of 100 pieces – costs £10, which will be donated to **Macmillan Cancer Support**. Kays' tenure will be followed by another (possibly less rude) artist in due course – watch this space.

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Dead Colourful cleaning cloth by Hayden Kays for Cubitts

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*I'm really keen to see my work applied to wide-ranging materials and objects. We live in a world of things and stuff, I just want to make my things interesting and my stuff memorable.*

**Hayden Kays**, artist

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For more information about **Cubitts** and the **artists-in-residence programme**, please contact Jodi Moss at [jodi@zetteler.co.uk](mailto:jodi@zetteler.co.uk) or on +44(0)7910 705147.

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## Interview with Hayden Kays



Artist, Hayden Kays

**How does it feel to be the very first artist in residence for Cubitts?**

I never come first, so it feels new.

**How did you get involved with Cubitts and what made you want to take part in this campaign?**

Cubitts asked me to design a couple of cleaning cloths with the proceeds going to charities of my choice. I imagine I was asked because I'm a wearer of spectacles. I like to imagine I'm on some sort of list somewhere, 'The Four Eyes Only Club'.

**We live in an age of multi-disciplinary creative collaboration – as an artist is this something that you have been quick to embrace?**

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I'm really keen to see my work applied to wide-ranging materials and objects. We live in a world of things and stuff, I just want to make my things interesting and my stuff memorable.

Do you feel that collaborative projects expand the potential for creativity or do they impose limitations? That depends entirely on whom you're collaborating with. Cubitts was a dream collaborator. I believe the best collaborations come when each party implicitly trusts the other to do its job.

## **What does Cubitts represent to you?**

Clarity.

## **What inspired these two very different designs?**

I've been working with the colourful skulls design for some time now. I've always been drawn to colour. Colour can attract you to subject matter that is inherently morbid. Death is something we avoid. Make death colourful and it becomes something we want in our pockets. The 'Spectacles, Testicles, Wallet and Watch' design is a visual representation of a saying I remember hearing as a kid and thinking it was hilarious and so rude. I've always liked off-colour humour.

## **Glasses and cloths are everyday objects, viewed as part of a routine or lifestyle, whereas art is often found in contextually neutral spaces (such as galleries) and visually isolated. How does this difference in background setting affect your creative process?**

I tend not to think about where the work might end up. I've heard stories of my work living in some extraordinary places I could never have imagined. It's best to avoid that avenue of thought altogether, otherwise you could end up making work loaded with hope about its potential destination.

## **Why did you choose Cure Blindness as your charity?**

Just £20 can provide life-changing surgery. I've spent £20 on far more frivolous a thing than 'life-changing surgery'.

## **What are you working on at the moment?**

I try not to talk about things I'm working on too much. I find the more you discuss them, the less they seem to happen.

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Notes for Editors

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## About Cubitts

Since 2013, Cubitts has combined traditional craft with contemporary style, creating bespoke, hand-made spectacles and sunglasses in its workshops, first in King's Cross, then in Soho, Borough and Spitalfields. Using artisan techniques that have been around for centuries, their team pin-drills hinges, mitres joints, and polishes each acetate frame four times, and they even glaze their own prescription and polarised lenses. A champion of artisanal techniques rarely found on the high street, Cubitts offers hand-made prescription spectacles online and in-store from as little as £125, as well as a bespoke individual design service that sees its technicians work through more than 50 stages to make a single set of frames.

[cubitts.co.uk](http://cubitts.co.uk)

Twitter: @CubittsKX

Instagram: @cubitts

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Cubitts Borough workshop

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## Cubitts Workshop Locations

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### **BOROUGH**

9 Park Street  
London SE1 9AB  
+44 (0) 20 7407 6514  
borough@cubitts.co.uk

### **SOHO**

37 Marshall Street  
London W1F 7EZ  
+44 (0) 20 7129 8128  
soho@cubitts.co.uk

### **SPITALFIELDS**

86 Commercial Street  
London E1 6LY  
+44 (0) 20 7375 2439  
spitalfields@cubitts.co.uk

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### **About Hayden Kays**

Born in London in 1985 and based there ever since, Hayden Kays is an artist whose works tread the line between comical and hard-hitting. He has exhibited at galleries across London, including the Saatchi Gallery as part of Frieze London, and is contributing editor of the Arts & Culture pages of Hunger magazine. Harry Styles is a fan.

haydenkays.co.uk  
Twitter: @HaydenKays

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