

## Untitled

Tracey Emin is made Royal Academician  
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Tracey Emin has become one of only 19 artists to become a member of the Royal Academy of Arts. Emin was elected Royal Academician (RA) in the category of painting this week, joining an elite group of luminaries including David Hockney, Peter Blake and Anthony Caro.

All RAs are entitled to exhibit up to six works in the annual summer exhibition.

Emin, who was shortlisted for the Turner Prize in 1999, said yesterday that she learnt of the news while taking her pet cat to the vet. "I couldn't talk because I was driving, but the phone call was from Gary Hume RA asking me, if I were given the honour of being a Royal Academician, would I accept it? As I drove down the Mile End Road I shouted across the car: 'Of course I will! Of course I will!'"

"Today I am very happy to know that the vote went in my favour," she added. "I'm sure it will be interesting and a lot of fun - I've heard wild stories about that place."

Six years ago, Emin was invited by the pop artist Peter Blake to exhibit at the Royal Academy, Britain's oldest art institution, along with Bridget Riley and Sir Paul McCartney. Blake considered resigning from the academy when he felt opposition to the choice from some Academicians.

A year ago Emin made a film about institutional sexism in art. She visited Norman Rosenthal, the RA's exhibitions secretary, to ask if she was likely to become an Academician. "I haven't got a member, Norman," she said. He replied that they have "plenty of members without members" and suggested that Emin let it be known "in some mysterious way" that she'd consider becoming a member of the Royal Academy. She replied, "What, like making a TV programme and talking about it quite openly?"

It seems that her approach worked, as the members, who govern the Academy, feel she has proved she has the "depth" to join their ranks. Tom Phillips RA, chairman of the exhibitions committee, said: "A lot of people thought that Tracey was a flash in the pan in the Sensation exhibition, but she's proved she's got staying power and depth. And that's the moment when the Royal Academy likes to invite people to join. It's wonderful to have a new, youngish, bright, funny woman artist to join us. She might enjoy it more than she thinks".