The ICA is delighted to present original art works by the Independent Group to coincide with the 60th anniversary of the ground-breaking exhibition *Parallel of Life & Art*.

The Independent Group met at the original ICA in Dover Street from 1952-5 and comprised architects Alison and Peter Smithson, James Stirling and Colin St John Wilson; artists Magda Cordell, Richard Hamilton, Nigel Henderson, John McHale, Eduardo Paolozzi and William Turnbull; music producer Frank Cordell and writers Lawrence Alloway, Reyner Banham and Toni del Renzio. Celebrated today as the so-called Fathers of Pop, the Group worked with art, science, technology and popular culture. From horror films to theories of evolution, modern architecture to Marilyn Monroe, this group project worked beyond traditional boundaries and conventional disciplinary areas.

The exhibitions organised by the group – *Growth & Form; Tomorrow’s Furniture; Parallel of Life & Art; Man, Machine & Motion* and sections of *This is Tomorrow* – were highly innovative, both in terms of layout and the range of objects displayed. Building on the ICA’s Surrealist legacy, the Independent Group shows introduced the new age of modernity and mass culture to the gallery space. Reflecting the Group’s collage mentality, new technology and high end design were juxtaposed with avant-garde art.

Unlike other London venues, ‘none provided a foyer, a hearth which the artists and his audience can gather in unanimity, in fellowship, in mutual understanding and inspiration’ stated Herbert Read in the exhibition catalogue *40 Years of Modern Art*. Even before the Group was assembled by Assistant Director Dorothy Morland, members gravitated to the ICA as the only place to see and discuss modern art and modern culture. Hamilton, Paolozzi and Turnbull exhibited at the Dover Street
inaugural exhibition, *1950: Aspects of British Art* and continued their involvement throughout the 1950s and 1960s, curating a wide range of public exhibitions and events, underpinned by clandestine discussions and gatherings.

The ICA exhibition will include paintings, drawings and photographs by John McHale, Magda Cordell, Nigel Henderson, Eduardo Paolozzi and Richard Hamilton, alongside related designed objects and ephemera from the Independent Group. Evoking the ICA's original home in Dover Street in the 1950s, the exhibition will be designed to give viewers a sense of 'The Home of the Avant Garde' which first attracted this collection of creative practitioners.

In addition the exhibition will be accompanied by a two day conference which will bring together leading researchers, practitioners and curators who are working on aspects of the Independent Group. The aim will be to consider ways in which the Independent Group have been, and continue to be, exhibited. Participants will share their knowledge and approaches to this seminal moment in the history of British art and architecture at a very timely moment when the history of the Independent Group has come under increased scrutiny internationally.

Anne Massey is Co-Curator and organiser of the conference along with Matt Williams, Curator ICA.

**Press information:**

*Naomi Crowther | Press Officer ICA*

`naomi.crowther@ica.org.uk | +44 (0)20 7766 1407`

**Listings information:**

*The Independent Group: Parallel of Art & Life, free exhibition: 26 March – 9 June 2013*

Gallery opening hours: Tues - Sun 11am – 6pm, except Thurs, 11am – 9pm. Closed Mon.

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Book online `www.ica.org.uk` Call Box Office +44 (0)20 7930 3647

Textphone +44 (0)20 7839 0737

Institute of Contemporary Arts, The Mall, London, SW1Y 5AH

**Image credit:**

John McHale, *Telemath*, 1958, Collage and paint on board, 91 x 121 cm