FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

***A Brush with Evil*: Peter Howson’s *Holocaust Crowd Scene II***

**Ben Uri Gallery (14 June – 14 July)**

Ben Uri Gallery presents a new exhibition, *A Brush with Evil*, showcasing contemporary Scottish artist Peter Howson's devastating painting, *Holocaust Crowd Scene II* (2011).

This monumental canvas, a visceral and haunting representation of the horror and brutality of the Nazi concentration camps, depicts a crowd of Jewish prisoners in various attitudes of grief, suffering and lamentation. Both the structure and composition of the painting reference classical and Christian imagery, such as Rubens’ *Massacre of the Innocents* and representations of the dead Christ (or *pietà*), powerfully underlining the prisoners’ martyrdom.

Painter, printmaker and muralist Peter Howson was born in London in 1958 to Scottish parents and moved with his family to Prestwick, near Glasgow, at the age of four. He studied at Glasgow School of Art and is a former Artist-in-Residence at the University of St Andrews, and part-time tutor at Glasgow School of Art. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Henry Moore Foundation award, and has established a significant reputation as a central figure in the school of Scottish figurative painting.

In 1992 Howson was commissioned by the Imperial War Museum to record the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. He was appointed official British war artist for Bosnia in 1993 and produced a number of highly emotive, sometimes controversial paintings, which surely inform his later work. In *Holocaust Crowd Scene II*, he creates a work that is both deeply personal and universal in its message.

The painting serves as a powerful reminder of the atrocities committed during the Holocaust and the need for continued awareness and education about the dangers of hatred and prejudice. It also highlights the important role that art plays in bearing witness to history and engaging with the human experience.

Works by artists including George Grosz, Josef Herman, Dora Holzhandler and Leon Kossoff will also be on display.

**Ben Uri Gallery 108A Boundary Road, St John’s Wood, London NW8 ORH**

**For opening times see** [**www.benuri.org**](http://www.benuri.org)

This is the first of two short, focused exhibitions exploring the trauma of war and its consequences. The second, showcasing two of Laura Knight’s major studies for *The Nuremberg Trial* (1946), opens on 26 July.

For more information and images, please contact sarahm@benuri.org

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