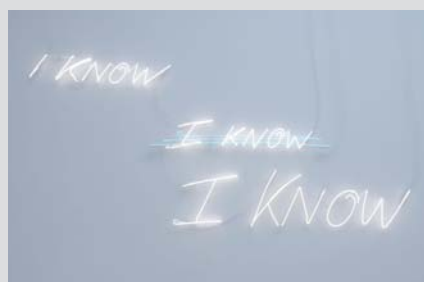


**LIGHTNESS OF BEING at INITIAL ACCESS**  
**New Art from the Frank Cohen Collection**  
**6 September–19 December 2008**



*Lightness of Being* is the fifth exhibition at Initial Access of new art from the Frank Cohen Collection, and will present a selection of recent works in neon and fluorescent light. The artists in *Lightness of Being* work across media. In this exhibition one aspect of their practice has been highlighted to demonstrate the unique potential that the medium of charged particles in light has when manipulated by the creative mind.



The play of light has been a mainstay of painting for hundreds of years. Modernist painters strove to record and visually interpret the effects of light in the world around them. They were superseded by other concerns in art that moved away from the representation of nature into abstraction and, subsequently, a response to popular culture exemplified by Pop Art. Neon sculptures employ a technology that was originally developed for commercial signage. Sophisticated techniques such as sculpted neon strips, light boxes and plasma screens have extended possibilities for artists, and changed their relationship with light from one of interpreting natural effects to employing artificial light as an essential expressive element in their work.

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Because neon and fluorescent light can only be seen encapsulated within glass tubes it exists in a physical yet fragile no-mans land that operates between two and three dimensions. The malleability of the medium allows it to express poetic slogans in 'flat' forms mounted on the gallery wall or to be free-standing as a sculpture or installation. The intensity of its visual presence elicits a powerful aesthetic response to the glow of colour while, at the same time, never losing the immediacy that is rooted in its popular origins. The artists in this exhibition have used neon to express their subjective responses to the world. In Tracey Emin's work, *I Know I Know I Know* (illustrated), she expresses her typical candour, made all the more poignant through its manifestation in light. Dan Attoe's *I'm Gonna Blow Your Ass Sky High* (illustrated), uses the playful, commercial aspect of the medium to portray pop culture laced with sardonic humour, while Jason Rhoades' colourful installations touch on ideas of thought itself, using the banal vocabulary of consumer culture.

Initial Access opened on 19 January 2007, as a space to present exhibitions from Frank Cohen's internationally important collection of contemporary art. It is sited on the outskirts of the millennium city of Wolverhampton, in two refurbished warehouses that provide 10,000 sq feet of exhibition space. Initial Access presents different aspects of the Collection in a series of exhibitions curated by David Thorp. The programme is designed to mount shows of new acquisitions to the collection, explore themes among works that may not have been seen before and give the public an opportunity to see more of the collection currently in store.

### For further press information and images please contact:

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### Visitor Information:

Initial Access Units 19 & 20,  
Calibre Industrial Park, Laches Close,  
Off Enterprise Drive, Four Ashes,  
Wolverhampton, WV10 7DZ  
Website [www.initialaccess.co.uk](http://www.initialaccess.co.uk)

Hours Monday-Thursday 11am-4pm,  
Sat. 10am-4pm Admission Free  
Visitor info: +44 (0) 1902 798999,  
[info@initialaccess.co.uk](mailto:info@initialaccess.co.uk)

**Train/Taxi** Wolverhampton Station is on a direct route from Birmingham and London Euston. Initial Access in Four Ashes is a ten minute drive from the station

### Car

At the M6 J12:  
from the North take the first exit OR  
from the South, take the third exit,  
on to the A5 heading east towards  
Brownhills & Cannock.

After approx 200 meters sign-posted "Four Ashes Industrial Estate", turn first right into Vicarage Road, which incidentally is not signposted!

Continue straight for approx 1.5 miles, taking the third left into Enterprise Drive and right into Laches Close, continue round and turn right at the multi-coloured sculpture, where you will find us on the left.  
On-site parking is free.