



PRESS RELEASE

**YORKSHIRE SCULPTURE INTERNATIONAL:  
MAJOR NEW SCULPTURE FESTIVAL WITH PUBLIC  
COMMISSIONS AND EXHIBITIONS ACROSS LEEDS AND  
WAKEFIELD**

The inaugural edition of Yorkshire Sculpture International (YSI), the UK's largest dedicated sculpture festival, is now open. YSI features public commissions outdoors across Leeds and Wakefield and major exhibitions at each of the four partner venues that together comprise the 'Yorkshire Sculpture Triangle' – Henry Moore Institute, Leeds Art Gallery, The Hepworth Wakefield and Yorkshire Sculpture Park. YSI has also developed an extensive engagement programme that brings together student and community groups across the region to increase the visibility of sculpture. The festival is on view this summer until 29 September 2019.

Featuring 18 international artists from 13 different countries, the programme brings together artists who share an interest in harnessing the cultural histories and physical properties of the materials they use. New commissions and exhibitions respond to a provocation made by artist Phyllida Barlow in 2018 – that 'sculpture is the most anthropological of the artforms'. Highlights include new commissions by Rashid Johnson at Henry Moore Institute, and rarely-seen sculptures by preeminent Abstract Expressionist sculptor David Smith at Yorkshire Sculpture Park. The Hepworth Wakefield presents a series of large-scale installations including new work by Wolfgang Laib and Tau Lewis' first exhibition in the UK. Leeds Art Gallery presents ambitious new collection displays, a series of solo presentations and new commissions by artists including Nobuko Tsuchiya. Major new works by Huma Bhabha, Ayşe Erkmen and Tarek Atoui liven the public realm in Wakefield and Leeds. Alongside the commissioned YSI programme, sculptures by Damien Hirst are on display in Leeds city centre, Leeds Art Gallery and Yorkshire Sculpture Park.

## YSI COMMISSIONS

**Huma Bhabha** (b. 1962, Pakistan) is presenting a major new sculpture, a large-scale bronze work titled *Receiver*, 2019 installed outside County Hall in the centre of Wakefield. *Receiver* is Bhabha's first public realm commission in the UK and is on display for the duration of the festival. Working almost entirely with figurative sculpture, Bhabha's approach is unconventional and cross-cultural, making connections between histories, languages and civilisations. Carving and moulding materials such as Styrofoam packaging, cork, clay and plaster, Bhabha's work has a timeless quality and her practice is a meditation on new ways of approaching the tactile challenges of sculpture-making. Internationally renowned, Bhabha was honoured with the commission *We Come in Peace* for the Roof Garden at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2018).

**Ayşe Erkmen** (b. 1949, Turkey) has created a site-specific sculpture for Leeds Art Gallery's Central Court that responds to the many architectural changes that have taken place throughout the life of the building. Revealed during the 2016 renovation of the gallery, the original barrel vaulted glass roof has been hidden since the 1960s above a false ceiling created to block out the light. Erkmen has transformed the Central Court by adding a new ceiling that reaches all the way down to this later added floor. The installation creates space at the entrance for visitors to observe the entire room and to walk underneath and inside the roof sculpture. Erkmen's sculptural practice centres on site-specific interventions that draw our attention to locations and things that are often overlooked. Her work is influenced by the historical, cultural, political and geographical significance of a particular place, often incorporating the architectural features of those locations as part of her works. Erkmen has created permanent public realm commissions around the world, most recently in Ghent (2017) and Washington (2015).

**Tarek Atoui** (b. 1980, Lebanon) is working with musicians based in Yorkshire and international instrument makers to create performances that continue his exploration of the material properties of sound, its connection to the body of the performer and the audience, as well as his interest in the invention of new instruments and instrument-making. The opening weekend performance is on Saturday 22 June at The Hepworth Wakefield's converted mill space, The Calder. The second performance on Saturday 20 July will be at Wakefield Cathedral, which will be Atoui's first performance outside of North America with *Organ Within*, an instrument which reimagines the traditional organ.

Atoui's contribution to Yorkshire Sculpture International is part of a project he is developing throughout the two coming years at KMNY, Sharjah Art Foundation and Castello Rivoli. Atoui's work is currently on view as part of *May You Live In Interesting Times*, curated by Ralph Rugoff as part of The 58<sup>th</sup> International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia.

## PARTNER EXHIBITIONS

The Henry Moore Institute is presenting a major exhibition in the main galleries that brings together an assimilation of debates around the use of material culture in understanding human behaviour, history and the responsibility of objects today.

As part of the exhibition, **Rashid Johnson** (b. 1977, USA) is presenting a new installation that features three table sculptures made entirely from shea butter, a material that has come to be traded in North America and Western Europe as a form of exoticism with healing properties. Three phases of sculpture are presented: a series of portrait busts, a reimagining of Western abstract art and, in a reflection upon the fundamental human need to make and leave traces, an invitation to the audience to make their own forms. Johnson's work embraces a broad range of media to examine issues of roots, race and identity, especially in black America. Inspired by anthropology, linguistics and archaeology, **Maria Loboda** (b. 1979, Poland) has created a series of lamps, based on 1920s French design, each encasing insects. Loboda's work unravels the assignation of meaning to symbols and objects throughout history, reimagining them into new combinations. **Tamar Harpaz** (b. 1979, Jerusalem) is known for sculptures that use light, mirrors and lenses to create uncanny optical illusions. Her work unfolds narratives that touch on the cinematic and spectacular, but lay bare the simple mechanisms of their creations. For YSI, she has created a new installation comprised of a collection of found objects surrounded by a perimeter of electric cable that will be activated periodically by a 12-volt electric pulse, sounding out an unexplained code. Harpaz is interested in the memories and meanings that objects potentially retain, originating from the viewer's associations and the artist's concerns with issues such as borders, conflict and the histories of feminism.

**Cauleen Smith** (b. 1967, USA) is also presenting an installation at the Henry Moore Institute. Reactivating archives and harnessing the power of imagination, her work especially addresses issues faced by black women today. Smith is presenting her film *Sojourner*, 2018 in a new installation. The film takes its name from and pays homage to activist Sojourner Truth, and depicts a reimagining of the Noah Purifoy Outdoor Desert Art Museum in Joshua Tree, California as a radical feminist utopia.

**Sean Lynch** (b. 1978, Ireland) has realised a project for the Henry Moore Institute Research Library based on the life and work of 'Flint Jack', a nineteenth-century Yorkshire antiquarian, vagabond and highly skilled artisan, who sold fake megalithic axe heads and ceramic and stone carving forgeries. Despite their lack of historical providence and verification, these objects still populate many UK museums. Lynch represented Ireland at the Venice Biennale in 2015.

At Leeds Art Gallery a series of solo shows and new commissions explore the breadth of contemporary sculpture-making, including the first solo exhibition in the UK by **Nobuko Tsuchiya** (b.1972, Japan). Tsuchiya uses a variety of media to create imaginative and playful sculptures that evoke an arresting narrative quality. She begins her creative process by collecting materials she is intuitively attracted

to and combining them into polymer-like structures which are then cast. Her work often appears post-apocalyptic, utilising objects such as bits of plastic, shredded tissue and digital detritus. Tsuchiya has used the White Gallery as a studio to assemble the final works. **Rachel Harrison** (b. 1966, USA) is exhibiting a group of works in the Small Lyons Gallery that relate to the body. Harrison's work draws from a wide range of influences, combining art historical and pop cultural references through a witty assemblage of materials. Her work plays with dualities; figuration and abstraction, painting and sculpture, the found and the made, the legible and illegible. **Joanna Piotrowska** (b. 1985, Poland) is taking over the Large Lyons Gallery, carpeting the floor and installing a series of composed black and white photographs which explore notions of the human body and social structures. Piotrowska's work examines the complex power dynamics and psychological effects of human relationships.

Leeds Art Gallery is also exhibiting a major re-display of their sculpture collections in the Large Sculpture Gallery to accompany the individual artists' presentations. The exhibition 'Woodwork: A Family Tree of Sculpture' proposes that wood might be the most anthropological of materials, crossing cultures and time through its plasticity, portability and durability. The display considers the correspondence between maker and material and features works from Leeds Art Gallery's collection of British sculpture alongside objects from Africa, India, China and Myanmar, part of the world cultures collection of Leeds Museums and Galleries. Generally more mobile than stone and metal, objects in wood are often more easily transported across national and international borders. The exhibition explores further issues related to the material, including the actions of colonial powers and what they mean for collecting and cultural property. The exhibition also presents eight new acquisitions for the sculpture collections, including *L'Homme* by Ronald Moody (1937), a carved oak mask first exhibited in Paris in 1938. 'Rituals, processes & tools', a collection display in the Lower Sculpture Study Gallery produced by both Leeds Art Gallery and Henry Moore Institute, focuses on enigmatic sculptures and drawings from the Leeds sculpture collections, dating principally from the 1970s and 80s and includes new and recent acquisitions.

The Hepworth Wakefield presents a series of commissions and debut UK presentations by established and emerging artists as well as new collection displays and contemporary interventions across all the David Chipperfield-designed gallery spaces. Centered around the theme of 'truth to materials', the exhibition investigates the idea that a sculptural form should be determined by the characteristics of the chosen materials.

A display of recent works by **Jimmie Durham** (b. 1940, USA) positioned in conversation with early sculptures and carvings by **Barbara Hepworth** and **Henry Moore**, highlights how each artist created their work to emphasise the natural properties of raw materials. A major new installation by **Wolfgang Laib** (b. 1950, Germany), who only uses raw and natural resources in his work, takes over one of The Hepworth Wakefield's largest galleries. Created entirely with rice, stone and ash, Laib explores the organic and life-giving qualities in the materials he uses, reflected in his meditative working practices whilst installing the work. **Nairy**

**Baghramian** (b. 1971, Iran) is displaying works from her *Maintainers* series, recent sculptures that combine aluminum casts, coloured wax and lacquer painted braces with cork. The arrangement of these material components in relation to one another suggests both independence and co-dependence, their precarious balancing hinting at the possibility of continuous rearrangement. Baghramian is also showing a new work – *Coude à Coude* – created for this exhibition.

The exhibition includes the debut presentation outside North America of self-taught, Jamaican-Canadian artist, **Tau Lewis** (b. 1993, Canada). A newly commissioned body of work is on display featuring a large-scale textile hanging and a group of soft textile sculptures collaged together using found objects and materials from different cultures and places that Lewis describes as holding particular energies, histories and memories. The work, inspired by a painting of a coral reef that hung in Lewis' childhood home, reimagines as aquatic creatures the ancestors lost at sea during the transatlantic slave trade and contemplates the erasure of black histories.

Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP) is presenting a major exhibition of over 40 works by pioneering and highly influential American artist **David Smith** (1906–1965, USA). Widely hailed as one of the 20th century's outstanding sculptors, this is the first solo exhibition of his work in the UK since 2006. This landmark exhibition charts the development of Smith's unique visual language over four decades, crucially bringing together a number of his sculptures in the open-air that are rarely seen in this way outside the USA. Within the Underground Gallery over 30 sculptures trace an unfolding narrative of material, technique and form. Beginning with Smith's earliest constructions from the 1930s that combine wood with elements including mussel and clam shells, wire and nails, the exhibition spans work through to the artist's mature, bold, large-scale painted and stainless steel sculptures of the 1960s. The exhibition brings together major loans from museums including Tate, The Whitney Museum of American Art, the Kröller-Müller, and the Lehmbrock and private collections in the US and UK, together with works from the artist's estate, some of which have not previously been exhibited. Important sculptures and works on paper show the development of Smith's sculptural practice and the importance of his life at Bolton Landing in upstate New York. The exhibition illuminates Smith's understanding of the social practice of art and of his prescient belief in an inclusive United States that valued its connectedness to the wider world.

In Yorkshire Sculpture Park's historic chapel, **Kimsooja** (b. 1957, Korea) is presenting a new installation titled *To Breathe*, which uses light and mirrors to blur expected boundaries. The floor, covered with a mirrored surface, provides an entirely new way of seeing, seeming to open up and unfold the space, making solid surfaces and confining structures appear fluid and expansive. By placing diffraction film on all the windows, the light that enters forms a myriad of rainbow spectrums across the space, which are reflected infinitely via the mirrored floor. Kimsooja's practice reflects traditional forms of female labour and craft, such as sewing and weaving, to investigate the role of women. For over 25 years the artist has been inspired by the forms and idea of 'bottari' – the South Korean word for a bundle

wrapped in fabric. Traditionally used for moving possessions from place to place, the bottari references the displacement of people. Kimsooja has extended the idea to incorporate larger spaces and even architecture, meaning that whole buildings could also be wrapped to alter, contain and re-shape what was within. Responsive to the natural environment, the installation changes according to the light quality and intensity, making every experience unique. A soundtrack of the artist breathing accompanies the installation, creating an intimate and shared encounter.

Kimsooja's 14-metre-high sculpture *A Needle Woman: Galaxy was a Memory, Earth is a Souvenir* (2014) is also sited in Lower Park.

Alongside the programme, major sculptures by **Damien Hirst** (b. 1965, UK) are being shown at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Leeds Art Gallery and in Leeds city centre. The Turner Prize-winning artist grew up in Leeds and went on to study at Leeds College of Art in the early 1980s, as Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore had done 60 years earlier. Two of his major sculptures are on display in the public realm in Leeds city centre this summer. The marble *Anatomy of an Angel* (2008) is on display in the Victoria Quarter, and the six-metre-tall bronze sculpture *Hymn* (1999-2005) is on Briggate. *Charity* (2002–2003), *Myth* (2010), *The Hat Makes the Man* (2004–2007), and *The Virgin Mother* (2005–2006) are on show at Yorkshire Sculpture Park. *Black Sheep with Golden Horns* (2009), part of Hirst's formaldehyde series, is on display in Leeds Art Gallery's Ziff Gallery, in dialogue with the historic painting collection which covers the years 1888 to 1900.

YSI has developed an extensive engagement programme that supports artistic talent development in the region and introduces new audiences to sculpture, working with schools, universities, artists and community partners to inspire and connect people with materials and making, exploring what it means to create sculpture today.

YSI has raised more than 1.5 million GBP, including a National Lottery funded Ambition for Excellence grant from Arts Council England and regional investment from Leeds 2023, Wakefield Council, Leeds Beckett University and the University of Leeds.

- ENDS -

## NOTES TO EDITORS

Yorkshire Sculpture International is a free festival of sculpture across Leeds and Wakefield running from Saturday 22 June until Sunday 29 September 2019.

For more information on YSI, please visit [yorkshire-sculpture.org](http://yorkshire-sculpture.org).

Follow the hashtag #YSI2019 on social media to keep up-to-date on YSI news.

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## **About Yorkshire Sculpture International**

Yorkshire Sculpture International – a free, 100-day festival taking place across Yorkshire from 22 June until 29 September 2019 – features major new public commissions in Leeds and Wakefield, a programme of events and exhibitions across the four world-renowned galleries that form Yorkshire Sculpture Triangle – Henry Moore Institute, Leeds Art Gallery, The Hepworth Wakefield and Yorkshire Sculpture Park. The inaugural edition is the UK's largest dedicated sculpture festival and builds upon Yorkshire's rich history as the birthplace of pioneering sculptors, including Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore, and as the home of this unique consortium of galleries and celebrated sculpture collections.

Reflecting the provocation chosen by British artist Phyllida Barlow that '*sculpture is the most anthropological of the artforms*' the festival responds to the idea that there is a basic human impulse to make and connect with objects. The programme explores what it means to create sculpture today, around the globe and in Yorkshire. Showcasing the breadth and diversity of contemporary sculpture practice, the artists participating in YSI challenge what we understand as sculpture, making sense of the world and its political, environmental and social dimensions. The partner programme features 18 artists from 13 different countries.

Yorkshire Sculpture International 2019 is curated by Andrew Bonacina (Chief Curator, The Hepworth Wakefield), Emily Riddle (Assistant Curator, The Hepworth Wakefield), Sarah Brown (Principal Keeper, Leeds Art Gallery), Clare Lilley (Director of Programme, Yorkshire Sculpture Park), Laurence Sillars (Head of Henry Moore Institute), Jane Bhojroo (Producer, Yorkshire Sculpture International) and Meghan Goodeve (Engagement Curator, Yorkshire Sculpture International).

Yorkshire Sculpture International has raised more than £1.5 million, including a National Lottery funded Ambition for Excellence grant from Arts Council England and regional investment from Leeds 2023, Wakefield Council, Leeds Beckett University and the University of Leeds.

[yorkshire-sculpture.org](http://yorkshire-sculpture.org)

## **Henry Moore Institute**

The Henry Moore Institute welcomes everyone to experience, study and enjoy sculpture. Open seven days a week, the Institute is free to all. It is an international research centre located in the vibrant city of Leeds, where Henry Moore began his training as a sculptor. In its iconic building it hosts a year-round changing

programme of historical, modern and contemporary exhibitions presenting sculpture from across the world. Each year it hosts over a hundred powerful discussions, bringing the brightest thinkers together to share ideas. The Institute is a hub for sculpture, connecting a global network of artists and scholars. As a part of the Henry Moore Foundation, an independent arts charity, it is the Institute's mission to bring people together to think about why sculpture matters.

[henry-moore.org/visit/henry-moore-institute](http://henry-moore.org/visit/henry-moore-institute)

### **Leeds Art Gallery**

Leeds Art Gallery offers dynamic temporary exhibitions and a world-class collection of modern British art. Founded in 1888, the gallery has designated collections of 19th and 20th century British art widely considered to be the best outside the national collections. The collection represents the development of English modernism shown through key works by Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth and Jacob Epstein. Leeds Art Gallery through a partnership with the Henry Moore Institute, has built one of the strongest collections of British sculpture in the country and confirmed Leeds's status as an international centre for the study and appreciation of sculpture. The Leeds Sculpture Collection comprises over 1,000 objects, 400 works on paper and the Henry Moore Institute Archive of over 270 collections of papers relating to sculptors.

[leeds.gov.uk/artgallery](http://leeds.gov.uk/artgallery)

### **The Hepworth Wakefield**

Designed by the acclaimed David Chipperfield Architects, The Hepworth Wakefield is set within Wakefield's historic waterfront, overlooking the River Calder. The gallery opened in May 2011 and was awarded Art Fund Museum of the Year 2017. Named after Barbara Hepworth, one of the most important artists of the 20th century who was born and brought up in Wakefield, the gallery presents major exhibitions of the best international modern and contemporary art. It is also home to Wakefield's art collection – an impressive compendium of modern British and contemporary art – and has dedicated galleries exploring Hepworth's art and working process. This summer, The Hepworth Wakefield Garden will open alongside the gallery. Designed by Tom Stuart-Smith, it will feature sculptures and be one of the largest free public gardens in the UK.

[hepworthwakefield.org](http://hepworthwakefield.org)

### **Yorkshire Sculpture Park**

Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP) is the leading international centre for modern and contemporary sculpture which celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2017. It is an independent charitable trust and registered museum (number 1067908) situated in the 500-acre, 18th-century Bretton Hall estate in West Yorkshire. Founded in 1977 by Executive Director Peter Murray CBE, YSP was the first sculpture park in the UK, and is the largest of its kind in Europe, providing the only place in Europe to see Barbara Hepworth's The Family of Man in its entirety alongside a significant collection of sculpture, including bronzes by Henry Moore, and site-specific works by Andy Goldsworthy, David Nash and James Turrell. YSP was named Art Fund Museum of the Year in 2014.

[ysp.org.uk](http://ysp.org.uk)



## Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development body for arts and culture across England, working to enrich people's lives. They support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to visual art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2018 and 2022, they will invest £1.45 billion of public money from government and an estimated £860 million from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country.

[artscouncil.org.uk](https://artscouncil.org.uk)

A festival produced by Yorkshire Sculpture Triangle:



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