

LYNDA BENGLIS



THE HEPWORTH WAKEFIELD PRESENTS
THE UK'S FIRST MAJOR EXHIBITION OF WORK BY LYNDA BENGLIS,
ONE OF AMERICA'S MOST INFLUENTIAL ARTISTS



LYNDA BENGLIS

6 FEBRUARY – 1 JULY 2015

*"I just wanted to go beyond and create something that was visually more.
I was interested in excess, buoyancy, weight, gesture of material.
It was very different from abstract expressionism."
Lynda Benglis*

THE
HEPWORTH
WAKEFIELD

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LYNDA BENGLIS

From 6 February until 1 July 2015 The Hepworth Wakefield will present the UK's first museum survey of work by Greek-American artist and feminist icon Lynda Benglis. This highly anticipated exhibition will be the largest presentation of Benglis' work in the UK, featuring approximately 50 works that will span the entirety of her prolific career to date.

Aged 73, Benglis is one of America's most significant living artists. Born in 1941 in Louisiana, USA, she was heralded as the '*heir to Pollock*' by Life magazine in 1970, and emerged as part of a generation of artists forging new approaches to sculpture and painting in the wake of Abstract Expressionism, Minimalism and Pop Art.

Counting Andy Warhol, Sol LeWitt and Barnett Newman among her friends and peers, Benglis established her career within a male-dominated art world and became famous not only for her radical re-envisioning of sculpture and painting through her early works using wax and poured latex, but also for her works dealing with feminist politics and self-image.

The most infamous of these works is *Centrefold*, which appeared in the pages of Artforum in 1974. An explicit parody of both the male ethos of the time and the tradition of the 'pin-up girl', it showed a naked, confrontational Benglis posing with a giant dildo and sunglasses. Its inclusion in the magazine resulted in a handful of editors quitting the journal in protest. Cindy Sherman, a former student of Benglis, saw the Artforum ad and cited it as a pivotal moment in the development of her own work, exclaiming: "She [Benglis] kicked ass!"

The incredible breadth of Benglis' work will be explored in this expansive exhibition, which highlights her enduring desire to challenge the traditions of sculpture and painting, and explore the physical dialogue between work and viewer. Key early works on display will include latex 'fallen paintings' such as *Baby Contraband* (1969), the polyurethane pour *Night Sherbet A* (1968), the cast metal cantilever *Wing* (1970) and glitter-encrusted 'knots' such as *Sparkle Knot IV* (1970). Several of her videos and photographic works will also be presented, including the sensual video *Female Sensibility* (1973), featuring the artist kissing and licking the face of fellow artist Marilyn Lenkowsky.

Benglis remains prolific and continues to develop the unique approach to form and unconventional materials which has defined her practice since late 1960s. Her recent ceramic and polyurethane works will also be on display along with several moulded paper works, to be exhibited publicly for the first time.

Over the past 50 years, Benglis has divided her time between studios in New York, Santa Fe, Ahmedabad in India and Kastelorizo in Greece, with each diverse location having subtle, yet discernible, influences on her practice.

Drawing on the significance of place and landscape to Benglis' work, the exhibition layout will be geographically-defined, to echo the influence of these studio localities on her art: each providing a rich resource of forms, iconographies, motifs, materials and methods of fabrication.

John Baldessari, with whom Benglis taught in Los Angeles, has credited her as being "*one of the most innovative living sculptors in the United States*". Her curiosity for materials and irreverence can be felt in the work of artists such as Franz West and Paul McCarthy and she continues to inspire younger generations of artists who have adopted a materials-led approach to making.

Simon Wallis, Director of The Hepworth Wakefield said: "*Being the first UK public institution to explore the work of this remarkable and influential artist in-depth is testament to the ongoing ambition of our programme.*" He added: "*While Benglis may not yet have achieved the widespread attention of her male counterparts, this exhibition, the most extensive presentation of her work to date in the UK, will address this imbalance allowing our audience to discover the work of this significant and inspirational artist for themselves. Benglis' work will create an unforgettable experience in our beautifully designed gallery spaces.*"

ENDS

EXHIBITION FACTS

Title: Lynda Benglis

Dates: 6 February – 1 July 2015

Address: The Hepworth Wakefield
Gallery Walk, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF1 5AW

Telephone: +44 (0)1924 247360

Admission: Free

Website: www.hepworthwakefield.org

Email: hello@hepworthwakefield.org

Opening Hours: 10am - 5pm Tuesday – Sunday
10am - 9pm Third Thursday of the month
Closed Mondays (except local school holidays and bank holidays)

Travel: By Train: the nearest stations are Wakefield Westgate and Kirkgate
By Car: the gallery is situated off the A61, with nearby links to the M1 motorway. A pay & display visitor car park is located on Thornes Lane, WF1 5QJ, with free blue badge car parking on site
By Bus: the gallery is situated on main bus routes and the FreeCityBus route (Mon-Sat, 9.30am-3pm)
By Bicycle: bicycle racks are located by our main entrance
By Air: the nearest airport is LeedsBradford

Polite Request: The gallery should be cited in full, as The Hepworth Wakefield

Twitter: @HepworthGallery

Facebook: TheHepworthWakefield

Instagram: HepworthWakefield

MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

For further details, interview requests and photo opportunities please contact:

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IMAGE REQUESTS:

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EDITOR'S NOTES:

LYNDA BENGLIS

Born in Lake Charles, Louisiana in 1941, Lynda Benglis moved to New York City in the late 1960s. She now resides in New York and Santa Fe, Mexico and is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and two National Endowment for the Arts grants, among other commendations. Her work is held in important public collections and has been exhibited at Tate Modern, The Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum. Benglis was the subject of a 2010-11 international retrospective that travelled to The Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; The Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven; Le Consortium, Dijon; New Museum, New York; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Most recently, in early 2014, Benglis showcased a series of new ceramic works in a solo exhibition at Cheim & Read, New York and Thomas Dane Gallery, London.

THE HEPWORTH WAKEFIELD

The gallery is at the heart of Wakefield's regeneration. Designed by the internationally acclaimed practice, David Chipperfield Architects, it is funded by Wakefield Council and Arts Council England and an increasing number of charitable trusts, private individuals, Patrons and Members. The gallery opened on 21 May 2011 and welcomed its millionth visitor on 5 December 2013.

THE CALDER

The Calder is The Hepworth Wakefield's new contemporary art space which opened to the public on 30 August 2013. Located on the ground floor of a 19th century former textiles mill, the new contemporary art space is situated adjacent to the main gallery site, on the banks of the River Calder. The Calder adds 600 square metres of exhibition and event space to the existing 10 gallery spaces within The Hepworth Wakefield and presents a mixed programme of art, music and events that runs in parallel to the visitor offer at the main gallery.

The Calder, Gallery Walk, West Yorkshire, WF1 5AW

Free admission (except for ticketed events)

Open Tuesday – Sunday, 12 – 4.30pm

Open Third Thursday of every month, 12 – 8.30pm, as part of After Hours late nights

Open for the Wakefield Art on Wednesdays every other month, 12 - 8.30pm

Closed Mondays (except for Bank Holidays and school holidays)

www.hepworthwakefield.org

01924 247360

Twitter: @HepworthGallery #TheCalder

Instagram: [instagram.com/thecalder](https://www.instagram.com/thecalder)

YORKSHIRE SCULPTURE TRIANGLE

The Hepworth Wakefield, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Henry Moore Institute and Leeds Art Gallery are four of the UK's leading visual art organisations, situated within 30 minutes' drive or train ride from one another. They build on West Yorkshire's unique artistic legacy as the birthplace of two of the most important 20th Century artists, Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore.

This long-term partnership works to promote contemporary art and sculpture in inspirational settings to grow visitor numbers for all four institutions and to raise the profile of West Yorkshire as a major centre for the appreciation and study of sculpture.

For details on Yorkshire Sculpture Triangle:

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