

THE HEPWORTH WAKEFIELD

PRESS RELEASE - 1 October 2012

LARGEST EXHIBITION OF BARBARA HEPWORTH'S HOSPITAL DRAWINGS PREMIERES AT THE HEPWORTH WAKEFIELD, ACCOMPANIED BY A MAJOR NEW TATE PUBLICATION

/

- Exhibition reveals new insights into the remarkable series of Hospital Drawings Hepworth made in Post-War Britain during the late 1940s
- Largest and most significant exhibition of this extraordinary series by the artist to date features over 30 works, including some that have never been exhibited previously
- Hepworth's series of drawings and paintings explores what she saw as a close connection between art and the surgeon's expertise, precision and craft
- Major new Tate publication to accompany the exhibition - illustrating for the first time all known works in the series and includes an unpublished lecture by Barbara Hepworth given to surgeons in the early 1950s, following the launch of Britain's pioneering NHS
- Dr Paul Bowness, artist's grandson and Professor of Experimental Rheumatology at the University of Oxford comments on the new exhibition
- Touring exhibition premieres at The Hepworth Wakefield, named after Barbara Hepworth and situated in the city where she was born and grew up

Barbara Hepworth: The Hospital Drawings
27 October 2012 - 3 February 2013

This new exhibition reveals the remarkable series of exquisite drawings and paintings made by the artist during the late 1940s, illustrating surgeons at work in operating theatres within Post-War Britain.

Following the hospitalisation of their daughter Sarah in 1944, Hepworth and her husband, the artist Ben Nicholson, struck up a friendship with Norman Capener, the surgeon who treated Sarah at the Princess Elizabeth Orthopaedic Hospital in Exeter. Through this friendship, Hepworth was invited to witness a variety of surgical procedures at Exeter and the London Clinic. Over a two-year period, 1947-49, Hepworth produced around 80 works within the series. As well as pencil, ink and chalk drawings, many were executed in both pencil and oil paint on board, and as such can be seen as both paintings and drawings.

With over 30 works on display, including Hepworth's sketchbook, this new exhibition is the most significant presentation of this extraordinary series to date. The exhibition comprises key loans from national, public and private collections, some of which have never been exhibited previously.

Audiences will be able to discover the role of this impressive body of works in the artistic development of Yorkshire-born Hepworth. Importantly, this exhibition focuses on a less well-known aspect of Hepworth's artistic practice, her skill as a draughtsperson and how drawing was an important means of exploring forms that influenced the artists' practice as a sculptor.

The Hospital Drawings series should also be viewed in the context of the launch of Britain's pioneering NHS in 1948. A ground-breaking change within Post-War Britain society was embraced by artists like Hepworth, who supported the broad left ideals behind the social reconstruction of Britain, to develop a fairer, more inclusive society,

Impressed by the close connection she felt between her art and the skilled craftsmanship of the surgeon, Hepworth was particularly fascinated by the rhythmic movement of hands during the medical procedures unfolding before her. The artist explains in her unpublished lecture delivered to an audience of surgeons in the early 1950s, shortly after she completed the series: *"There is, it seems to me, a close affinity between the work and approach both of physicians and surgeons, and painters and sculptors."*

A new publication accompanies the exhibition. It will be the first to focus specifically on this area of Hepworth's work, illustrating all known hospital drawings and paintings by the artist. It notably includes a previously unpublished lecture about the works delivered by Hepworth in the early 1950s to an audience of surgeons and a new essay by Nathaniel Hepburn (Curator, Mascalls Gallery) that provides new insights into her practice. Dr Chris Stephens, Head of Displays & Curator (Modern British Art), Tate Britain has provided the foreword, with an introduction by Frances Guy (Head of Collection and Exhibitions, The Hepworth Wakefield).

Frances Guy, Head of Collection and Exhibitions, The Hepworth Wakefield explains: "This exhibition is an exciting opportunity to showcase this wonderful series of drawings and paintings in the context of the sculpture displays here at The Hepworth Wakefield. Executed shortly after the end of the Second World War, the Hospital Drawings series shows Hepworth rediscovering the role of figure drawing as a means of developing sculptural ideas at a time when materials and funds were in short supply. We are hugely proud to be the first venue to present this exhibition and illuminate this different aspect of her art."

Paul Bowness, the artist's grandson and Professor of Experimental Rheumatology at the University of Oxford said: "Barbara's operation drawings and paintings show us the surprising beauty that can be found in an operating theatre. Even for practising doctors like myself, who have assisted at many operations, she strikingly captures the intensity of concentration of hands and eyes, and the harmony of all members of the operating team. "

Nathaniel Heburn, Curator, Mascalls Gallery said: "Hepworth's detailed and heavily worked drawings and paintings, of surgeons seem to be at odds with an artist we know best as a sculptor of pure abstracted forms. By bringing together so many of these works in one exhibition we aim to re-evaluate their importance and to show how Hepworth saw the operating theatre as a ready-made abstract sculpture."

The culmination of several years of research and planning, this touring exhibition by Mascalls Gallery is curated by Nathaniel Hepburn and premieres in Yorkshire at The Hepworth Wakefield, before touring for the remainder of 2013 to Pallant House Gallery, Chichester, 16 February – 2 June and Mascalls Gallery in Paddock Wood, Kent, 14 June – 24 August.

For more information about Barbara Hepworth: The Hospital Drawings, including details of The Hepworth Wakefield's exhibitions, events and family-friendly programmes, visit the gallery online at hepworthwakefield.org or telephone 01924 247360.

ENDS

MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

To request images, unpublished extracts from Hepworth's lecture or to arrange an interview with Paul Bowness, Nathaniel Hepburn, Frances Guy please contact:

Naomi Roberts 01924 247392 / naomiroberts@hepworthwakefield.org

Hollie Latham 01924 247391 / hollielatham@hepworthwakefield.org

PRESS PREVIEW: Barbara Hepworth: The Hospital Drawings

Friday 26 October 2012

11am – 2pm

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 11am | Arrive Wakefield Westgate train station |
| 11.15am | Arrival and light refreshments |
| 11.20am | Welcome from Simon Wallis, Director, The Hepworth Wakefield |
| 11.30am | Introduction to the new exhibitions:
Barbara Hepworth: The Hospital Drawings
To Hope, To Tremble, To Live: Modern and Contemporary Works from the David Roberts Collection |
| 12noon | Interview opportunities |
| 1pm | Light lunch |
| 1.45pm | Transport back to Wakefield Westgate train station |

Limited places are available for complimentary train travel from London to Wakefield, please contact us for more information. The preview takes place 6-8pm on Friday 26 October. Please confirm in advance if you would like to join us for evening.

RSVP by Friday 12 October to Naomi Roberts, Media Officer - naomiroberts@hepworthwakefield.org

EDITOR'S NOTES:

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 with additional funding from a number of charitable trusts and private individuals.

Attracting almost 512,000 visitors through the doors in the first 12 months (since the gallery opened on 21 May 2011), The Hepworth Wakefield is the only nomination from the North of England to reach the shortlist of the RIBA Stirling Prize. The winner will be announced at a ceremony in Manchester on 13 October.

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

Free admission

Open Tuesday – Sunday, 10am – 5pm and 10am – 9pm on the Third Thursday of every month

Closed Mondays (except for Bank Holidays and school holidays)

www.hepworthwakefield.org
01924 247360
Twitter www.twitter.com/HepworthGallery
Facebook www.facebook.com/TheHepworthWakefield

THW EXHIBITIONS PROGRAMME 2012/13

OUTDOOR WORKS

23 June 2012 – July 2013

JAMES PYMAN: Upper Mill

This new site-specific work takes the form of a wrap covering the early 19th century Grade II-listed watermill situated opposite to The Hepworth Wakefield in the gallery garden. Pyman has made a series of meticulously hand-drawn illustrations which capture and record the walls and features of the watermill. These drawings have now been reproduced to life-size scale and printed onto a building wrap which covers the building. This process enlarges the pencil marks, tones, dots and scratches of the original drawings and converts them to the marks, blemishes and textures of the bricks and plaster, creating a three-dimensional drawing set within the riverside landscape.

From 23 June 2012

RICHARD LONG: Grass Line

New site-specific commission for The Hepworth Wakefield

Richard Long has created a temporary sculpture in the gallery gardens. This meandering strip of grass forms a new natural landscape within the urban context of The Hepworth Wakefield's grounds.

Until September 2012:

HEATHER & IVAN MORISON: The Black Cloud

Supported by Art in Yorkshire

Heather and Ivan Morison created a site-specific work titled The Black Cloud in the grounds of the gallery to mark the opening of The Hepworth Wakefield. Taking the form of an outdoor shelter, the work provides a multi-purpose space where visitors are encouraged to gather, relax, entertain and enjoy the waterfront location. To mark the first anniversary of the gallery opening The Black Cloud will be reanimated through natural mosses, plants and grasses which will grow on and around its wooden structure.

COLLECTIONS DISPLAYS

5 May 2012 – November 3 2013

POST-WAR BRITISH SCULPTURE AND PAINTING

Running alongside the permanent displays of work by Barbara Hepworth this new collection exhibition focuses on post-war painting and sculpture. Featuring work by Henry Moore, Francis Bacon, Graham Sutherland, Eduardo Paolozzi and Reg Butler it explores representations of the body.

At the heart of the display is the destabilisation of the body and the depiction of mass and flesh in painting and the stripping down and opening out of the figure in sculpture. Drawing on the Wakefield Permanent Art Collection, the displays are augmented by key loans from the national collections at Tate, the Arts Council and private lenders.

September 2012 – March 2013

LOUISA FENNELLS WAKEFIELD: Works by Wakefield-born, Victorian artist Louisa Fennell (1847-1930) from the Wakefield Permanent Art Collection

From an early age Fennell and her sister Emily made sketches and paintings of life in the city of Wakefield and its surrounding areas. Paintings depicting Wakefield Cathedral and Wakefield Chantry Chapel will be exhibited alongside sketchbook work by a young Louisa Fennell.

TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS

23 June – 14 October 2012

ARTIST ROOMS On Tour with The Art Fund: RICHARD LONG

Includes two new site-specific works for The Hepworth Wakefield

An exhibition by one of Britain's most significant artists, extending the gallery's continuing interest in debating the relationship between art and the rural and industrial landscape. ARTIST ROOMS On Tour with the Art Fund is an inspired partnership that enables Tate and the National Galleries of Scotland to display this new national collection throughout the UK. Established by Anthony d'Offay, the guiding principle for the creation of ARTIST ROOMS was the concept of individual rooms devoted to particular artists. This programme of touring exhibitions fulfils d'Offay's vision for this extraordinary collection: that it should be shared nationwide with a particular emphasis on inspiring young people. The exhibition consists of works from the collection of Anthony d'Offay and loans from Tate and the National Museum of Wales as well as two new commissions inspired by Wakefield's locality on the banks of the River Calder.

23 June – 14 October 2012

LUKE FOWLER: *The Poor Stockinger, the Luddite Cropper and the Deluded Followers of Joanna Southcott* Supported by the Contemporary Art Society through 'commission to collect', the Annual Award for Museums – a partnership project with Wolverhampton Art Gallery and Film and Video Umbrella.

Luke Fowler's major new commission will be a film based on research and material from archives based in the North of England, focusing on the work of the radical socialists Edward Palmer-Thompson, Raymond Williams and Richard Hoggart whose influential writing were honed in northern working class communities.

27 October 2012 – 3 February 2013

TO HOPE, TO TREMBLE, TO LIVE: Modern and Contemporary Works from the David Roberts Collection

The Hepworth Wakefield presents its first exhibition in collaboration with a private art collection with a selection of outstanding works from the David Roberts Collection. Sculpture, paintings and photographs by artists that include: Huma Bhabha; Louise Bourgeois, Lucian Freud, Thomas Houseago, Eduardo Paolozzi and Rebecca Warren, reveal how representations of the physical body can convey the inner psychology of the subject. Highlights from the almost 2000-strong DRAF collection, will be on display, presenting this private art collection for the first time within a public art gallery.

16 February – 2 June 2013

ALICE CHANNER, JESSICA JACKSON-HUTCHINS AND LINDER

Three dynamic exhibitions featuring all new works produced for The Hepworth Wakefield by Alice Channer, Jessica Jackson-Hutchins and Linder.