

Press Release – 15 May 2012

DOUBLE CELEBRATIONS FOR THE HEPWORTH WAKEFIELD AHEAD OF ITS FIRST BIRTHDAY  
AS THE GALLERY WELCOMES ITS 500,000th VISITOR AND IS SHORTLISTED IN UK'S  
TOP FOUR MUSEUMS TO WIN THE £100,000 ART FUND PRIZE

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- Over 500,000 visitors within first 12 months of opening
- Far exceeded initial first year nationally benchmarked target of 150,000 visitors, with 100,000 visitors in first five weeks of opening
- In the UK's Top 50 most visited attractions (Association of Leading Visitor Attractions, 2011)
- One of the UK's Top 10 most visited art galleries (ALVA, 2011)
- First birthday celebrations this weekend (19-20 May)

The Hepworth Wakefield has become one of Britain's most successful art galleries since it opened on 21 May 2011 and is preparing for a bumper birthday celebration this weekend, 19-20 May.

The gallery has recently welcomed its 500,000<sup>th</sup> visitor (on 12 May, more than a week away from its first birthday) and been announced as one of only four finalists shortlisted to win the coveted £100,000 Art Fund Prize and become 'museum of the year'.

The Chair of Judges of the Art Fund Prize, Lord Smith of Finsbury, said: "This wonderful new gallery has completely transformed the physical and cultural landscape of Wakefield and the wider region. So much more than just a stunning architectural achievement, the displays of the museum's permanent collections and the quality of its contemporary art programme are equally commendable. It's clearly one of the success stories of the museum world in the past twelve months, but whether it can beat off stiff competition from the other three outstanding contenders remains to be seen."

Simon Wallis, Director of The Hepworth Wakefield said: "We are so delighted to have made it to the shortlist of this prestigious award and we would like to thank our wonderful audience who have supported the gallery and helped us to reach this exciting stage. It's deeply gratifying to be recognised as one of the UK's top galleries and museums, and for this to come just as we've achieved 500,000 visitors before our first birthday on 21 May. If you've not yet visited The Hepworth Wakefield, now's the time to come and see this inspiring, free, world-class gallery."

Cllr Peter Box, Leader of Wakefield Council said: "The Hepworth Wakefield has been a huge hit since it opened. It's great to see visitors coming for a day out or cultural weekend in Wakefield. We've had visitors from as far away as Canada, Japan and Australia. It's great to see the gallery

become such a success and along with Yorkshire Sculpture Park and Henry Moore Institute put Yorkshire on the map as a new world centre for sculpture.”

Far exceeding initial expectations, the gallery has outstripped the first year nationally benchmarked target of 150,000 visitors, welcoming 100,000 within the first five weeks of opening. The Hepworth Wakefield is in the top 3 most visited art galleries outside of London and is the UK’s most successful purpose-built gallery.

The visitors who tipped the museum over the 500,000 mark were Andrew and Nicola Laverick, who visited the gallery on 12 May with their daughter Alice. The family, from Selby in North Yorkshire, received a special goody bag, plus a £50 gift voucher to spend in the gallery’s shop and café bar, and a complimentary family workshop.

Nicola Laverick said: “We’ve had a fantastic day. The Hepworth has been on our to-list for a while, and we’re so glad we made the trip. It’s really family friendly and becoming the 500,000<sup>th</sup> visitors was such a surprise. We’ll definitely be coming back soon and bringing our friends and family – it’s brilliant!”

The gallery has already provided a huge boost for the local economy. The 500,000 visitors to the gallery so far will have generated an estimated £10m of income for the local economy, with money being spent in local shops, restaurants, cafes, pubs, other attractions and hotels.

Visitors to The Hepworth Wakefield can enjoy a range of attractions, including 10 light-filled galleries, learning studios, displays of modern and contemporary art, an auditorium; a shop; café bar with an outdoor terrace; gardens and a riverside children’s play area. Admission to the gallery is free.

Complementing the collection displays, which include works by Barbara Hepworth, Henry Moore, Lucian Freud, Francis Bacon, Eduardo Paolozzi and Frank Auerbach, The Hepworth Wakefield presents a programme of contemporary exhibitions. The gallery is currently presenting the work of four British artists – Ben Rivers, David Thorpe & Heather and Ivan Morison. Visitors can also enjoy sculpture in the gallery gardens and the outdoor commission *The Black Cloud* by Heather and Ivan Morison.

The gallery’s next exhibition will feature Turner Prize 2012 nominee Luke Fowler and seminal British artist Richard Long.

For further details of the gallery, forthcoming exhibitions and events please visit [www.hepworthwakefield.org](http://www.hepworthwakefield.org) or call 01924 247360.

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## THW FIRST BIRTHDAY – PHOTOCALL & PRESS CONFERENCE

Wednesday 16 May, 10.15-11.15am

The Hepworth Wakefield

### Attendees:

Cllr Peter Box, Leader of Wakefield Council

Simon Wallis, Director of The Hepworth Wakefield

Schoolchildren from Wycliffe Primary School, Shipley

10.15am	Arrival
10.30am	Photo opportunity with giant number 1
10.45am	Interviews
11.15am	Close

## MEDIA ENQUIRIES

To request images or further information on The Hepworth Wakefield please contact:

Naomi Roberts 01924 247392 / [naomiroberts@hepworthwakefield.org](mailto:naomiroberts@hepworthwakefield.org)

Hollie Latham 01924 247391 / [hollielatham@hepworthwakefield.org](mailto:hollielatham@hepworthwakefield.org)

PRESS PREVIEW: Friday 22 June 2012

Luke Fowler and ARTIST ROOMS: Richard Long

11am – 2pm

The Hepworth Wakefield

## NOTES TO EDITORS:

### 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.

More than 500,000 visitors have come through the doors since the gallery opened on 21 May 2011, which is shortlisted for the Art Fund Prize 2012.

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

Free admission

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

Closed Mondays (except for Bank Holidays and school holidays)

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

01924 247360

Twitter [www.twitter.com/HepworthGallery](http://www.twitter.com/HepworthGallery)

Facebook [www.facebook.com/TheHepworthWakefield](http://www.facebook.com/TheHepworthWakefield)

## THE ART FUND PRIZE 2012

The Hepworth Wakefield is the only nomination from the North of England to reach the finals of the tenth Art Fund Prize. The winner will be announced at a ceremony at the British Museum on 19 June.

The four finalists for the Art Fund Prize are:

- The Hepworth Wakefield, West Yorkshire
- Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery, Exeter, Devon
- Watts Gallery, near Guildford, Surrey
- Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh

The shortlist was chosen by an independent panel of judges chaired by Lord Smith of Finsbury, former Labour MP and Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. The judging panel includes Professor Jim Al-Khalili OBE, theoretical physicist, author and broadcaster; Charlotte Higgins, Guardian journalist and author; Lucy Worsley, Chief Curator at Historic Royal Palaces, author and broadcaster; Sir Mark Jones, Master at St Cross College, Oxford and former V&A director; Rick Mather, architect; and Lisa Milroy, artist and Head of Graduate Painting at the Slade School of Fine Art, UCL.

## THW CONTEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS PROGRAMME 2012

11 February 2012 – 10 June 2012

HEATHER & IVAN MORISON, BEN RIVERS AND DAVID THORPE

Four leading contemporary British artists examine the extraordinary beauty and detail of the natural world and also highlight the aberrant disorientation that occurs when the man-made and natural worlds collide. Together these artists take their cue from nature, replicating, recording the natural world and man's place within it.

23 June 2012 – 14 October 2012

ARTIST ROOMS: RICHARD LONG

Includes 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 new work inspired by the new architecture of the gallery, with the historic River Calder flowing past outside.

23 June 2012 – 14 October 2012

LUKE FOWLER: a new film commission

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 2012 Turner Prize nominee, Luke Fowler won the 2010 Contemporary Art Society Annual Award and has made a new film using both original footage shot on location in Yorkshire and material from archives

based in the North of England. It focuses on the work of the radical socialist Edward Palmer Thompson and his teaching and writing developed in northern working-class communities.

27 October – February 2013

#### BARBARA HEPWORTH: THE HOSPITAL DRAWINGS

Between 1947 and 1949 Barbara Hepworth created a discrete body of works from her experience of witnessing orthopaedic and ear operations. For the first time, many of these works will be brought together to illustrate this fascinating aspect of Hepworth's work and to highlight her skill as an accomplished draughtsperson. This three venue touring exhibition by Mascalls Gallery in Kent will premiere at The Hepworth Wakefield.

#### COLLECTIONS DISPLAYS

5 May – 3 November 2013:

#### POST WAR BRITISH SCULPTURE AND PAINTING

Major new collection display

Running alongside the permanent displays of work by Barbara Hepworth the new collection exhibitions will focus on post-war painting and sculpture. Featuring work by Henry Moore, Francis Bacon, Graham Sutherland, Eduardo Paolozzi and Reg Butler it will explore representations of the body. At the heart of the display is the destabilisation of the body and the contrast between mass and flesh in painting and the stripping down and opening out of the figure in sculpture. Drawing on the Wakefield Art Collection the displays will be augmented by key loans from the national collections at Tate, the Arts Council and private lenders.

#### OUTDOOR COMMISSIONS

From 23 June 2012:

#### RICHARD LONG

New site-specific work for The Hepworth Wakefield

Richard Long has made a temporary sculpture in the gallery gardens. A meandering line of grass will form 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.

From 30 May 2012:

#### JAMES PYMAN: *The Upper Mill*

James Pyman made a series of small pencil drawings meticulously detailing the existing walls and features of the Upper Mill, the early 19th century Grade-II listed watermill situated opposite the gallery at the heart of the waterfront conservation area. These seven drawings have now been scaled up to life-size to wrap the watermill and create the sense of a drawn survey placed back within the landscape. The wrap will help secure and preserve this aspect of Wakefield's industrial heritage for the future.

#### CULTURAL OLYMPIAD AND LONDON 2012 FESTIVAL

The London 2012 Cultural Olympiad is the largest cultural celebration in the history of the modern Olympic and Paralympic Movements. Spread over four years, it is designed to give everyone in the UK a chance to be part of London 2012 and inspire creativity across all forms of culture, especially among young people.

The culmination of the Cultural Olympiad will be the London 2012 Festival, bringing leading artists from all over the world together from 21 June 2012 in this UK-wide festival – a chance for everyone to celebrate London 2012 through dance, music, theatre, the visual arts, film and digital innovation.

Principal funders of the Cultural Olympiad and London 2012 Festival are Arts Council England, Legacy Trust UK and the Olympic Lottery Distributor. The British Council will support the international development of London 2012 Cultural Olympiad projects.