

Willoughby Gerrish
Thirsk Hall Sculpture Garden

Press Release

Highlights:

- New sculptures unveiled this season at Thirsk Hall Sculpture Garden include works by Laura Ford, Kenneth Armitage, William Tucker, Jeff Lowe & Tim Pomeroy
- The next exhibition in Gallery One: *Ghosts in Sunlight* will open in July and will bring together pieces from a host of Modern & Contemporary artists such as Edward Burra, Mary Ramsden, Frank Walter & Alvaro Barrington
- Also opening in July is *Glimpse of Light in Darkness* an exhibition of sculpture by Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva. Hadzi-Vasileva is an internationally recognised artist who has participated in the Venice Biennale twice, first representing her country Macedonia, following this she was commissioned by the Vatican for the Pavilion of the Holy See



Laura Ford, *Twiglet* 1991, Bronze, 51 1/8 x 23 5/8 x 22 1/2 in, 130 x 60 x 57 cm, Edition 1 of 5 plus 2 APs

Thirsk Hall Sculpture Garden

Open: Wednesday - Saturday, 11am - 5pm

Thirsk Hall Sculpture Garden is a commercial enterprise offering monumental sculpture for sale in a stunning heritage setting within 20 acres of gardens and parkland in Thirsk, North Yorkshire. In addition to the outdoor sculptures there are also two indoor gallery spaces within the garden, The Orangery and Gallery One. Previous exhibitions have included Mona Hatoum, David Hockney, Howard Hodgkin, Jeff Lowe, Zak Ove, Bill Tucker, and Emily Young.

Upcoming Exhibitions

Ghosts in Sunlight, Organised by Rory Mitchell
Gallery One, Thirsk Hall Sculpture Garden
Opening 5 July 2024

This exhibition, set in the heart of North Yorkshire, will bring together major contemporary artists, allowing visitors to appreciate the artworks within this unique rural setting and explore how the pieces interact with one another. This is an exciting opportunity as it will enable audiences in the North of England to engage with these important contemporary artists within their own community,

Edward Burra
Frank Walter
Andrew Cranston
Alastair Mackinven
Kaye Donachie
Mary Ramsden
Alvaro Barrington
Oliver Bak
Anton Munar
Libasse Ka
Anderson Borba
Mark Barker
Andrew Miller
Robbie Fife
Raphael Egil
Behrang Karimi



Alastair Mackinven, *Untitled*, 2022, Oil and iron powder on canvas, 120 x 140 cm, 47 1/4 x 55 1/8 in
(Copyright the artist. Courtesy Maureen Paley, London)

“For his commencement speech to students at Columbia University School of the Arts, which was published in The New York Review on the 10th July 2014, the great American writer, Hilton Als eloquently described artists as ‘builders and destroyers of truth and memory, makers who take from the past—their memories—to create a present that shimmers with veracity and poetry.’

Als borrowed his title, Ghosts in Sunlight from Truman Capote’s 1967 essay written on the set of the film adaptation of his 1966 novel, In Cold Blood.

I have stolen it again for this exhibition, which takes place at the height of summer in the gallery at Thirsk Hall, a house steeped in history, standing on the flat land between the dales and moors of North Yorkshire.

There are ghosts here, so it seemed fitting. But it was also Als’s ode to artists that spurred me into thinking about why these paintings and sculptures are being brought together.

This approach is at the heart of all of the works exhibited and conveniently connects the two historic painters, Edward Burra and Frank Walter with this group of contemporary artists; allowing us to see how artworks from different periods can sing together in harmony whilst also triggering new unexpected readings.

Mid-20th Century English painter Edward Burra’s watercolour and gouache, Composition (1933–34) is heavily influenced by Surrealism with multiple perspectives and symbols and yet the image exudes a vibrancy and expressiveness that still resonates today. Burra’s work floats in its own space in time; clearly not the present, but certainly not rooted in the 1930s. It’s a world he has envisioned but one that touches our senses.

Artist and writer Frank Walter was born in Antigua in 1926, returning to live and work there in the early 1970s after spells in Europe and Dominica, and remaining on the island until his death in 2009. His dreamlike landscapes were born from continuous observations of nature although the resulting images are so magical in form and palette, they enter another realm beyond his era and place of birth.

Andrew Cranston, Alastair Mackinven, Kaye Donachie, Behrang Karimi, Oliver Bak, Anton Munar, Mark Barker and Robbie Fife all make figurative works that transport us into their own orbit albeit one imbued with the richness of historical figures as much as their daily lives.

Alvaro Barrington, Mary Ramsden, Libasse Ka, Anderson Borba, Raphael Egil and Andrew Miller are more closely engaged with abstraction but the figure is never far away. Subtle references act like traces to something familiar but out of reach. Something that only colour, surface and texture might convey more successfully.”

- Rory Mitchell

Upcoming Exhibitions

Glimpse of Light in Darkness

Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva

The Orangery, Thirsk Hall Sculpture Garden

Opening 5 July 2024

Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva is an internationally recognised, contemporary visual artist working across sculpture, installation, print and architectural interventions. Hadzi-Vasileva was commissioned by the Vatican for the Pavilion of the Holy See, at the 56th International Art Exhibition with her work *Haruspex* (2015) and represented the country of her birth, Macedonia, at the 55th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia, with *Silentio Pathologia* (2013).

Hadzi-Vasileva's artworks are in public collections including Luxelakes a4 Museums, Chengdu, China; The Vatican; Soho House; Pooseum, Australia; Office of Public Works, Dublin, Ireland; Križanke, Ljubljana, Slovenia; Casoria Contemporary Art Museum, Napoli, Italy; Osten, Skopje, Macedonia; MIMA, Middlesbrough and New Hall Art Collection, Cambridge and private collections around the world.

Her materials range from the extraordinary to the ordinary, and the ephemeral or discarded to the highly precious; they have included fallen trees, foodstuffs and precious metals. One of her signature pieces *Fragility* (2015) made with hanging layers of caul fat.

Central to her practice is a response to the particularities of place, its history, locale, environment and communities. Her work reflects a continuing interest in how humanity behaves in our exploitation and destruction of nature and how urbanisation and consumerism impacts our environment. It also reflects on the experience of fleeing war and hunger; the transmission of disease from untouched parts of our world leading to pandemics, and global warming. Unusual natural materials are used to critically consider the fragility of nature and make the viewer think, respond and react. Hadzi-Vasileva is interested in how the exchange of knowledge might develop through collaborative working and in the contexts of landscape, heritage, science and community as offered by each location.



Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva *Segment XIII*, 2024 English elm, 23.5ct gold leaf

Notes to Editor

Willoughby Gerrish:

Willoughby Gerrish is an independent art dealer and consultant, specialising in artworks from the Impressionist, Modern and Post-War periods, with a specific focus on sculpture. He is the director and owner of Thirsk Hall Sculpture Garden.

Rory Mitchell:

Rory Mitchell is a Director of Art Advisory at Ocula, based in London. He specialises in Modern and Contemporary Art and advises collectors throughout Europe, Asia and the US. Earlier on in his career he worked at Pilar Corrias, Maureen Paley, Haunch of Venison and Christie's.

Thirsk Hall:

Thirsk Hall is a grade II* listed three-storey town house built in 1723 and extended in 1770 by York architect John Carr. It has been in the Bell family for 300 years and is the location of Thirsk Hall Sculpture Garden. In 2021 the picturesque 20-acre garden and parkland at Thirsk Hall opened to the public for the first time with the launch of Thirsk Hall Sculpture Garden, curated by Willoughby Gerrish. The sculpture garden showcases modern and contemporary art in a stunning heritage setting, consisting of an outdoor sculpture trail as well as two indoor gallery spaces, The Orangery and Gallery One where exhibitions and events are held throughout the year.

Thirsk Hall Sculpture Garden:

Opening Hours:

Wednesday - Saturday

11am - 5pm

Day Tickets:

Adult £6.50

Concession £5.50

Under 16 FREE

Annual Membership:

Adult Membership: £40 no

Concession Membership: £30

Joint Adult Membership: £60

Joint Concession Membership: £50

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