



**Press Release**

27 March 2015

## **Barbara Hepworth: Sculpture for a Modern World**

24 June – 25 October 2015

Tate Britain, Linbury Galleries

Admission £16.30 (£14.50 concessions) or £18.00 (£16.00 concessions) with Gift Aid donation

Open daily 10.00 – 18.00

For public information call +44 (0)20 7887 8888, visit [tate.org.uk](http://tate.org.uk), follow @tate #Hepworth

Tate Britain will open the first London museum retrospective for five decades of the work of Barbara Hepworth, one of Britain's greatest artists. Barbara Hepworth (1903-75) was a leading figure of the international modern art movement in the 1930s, and one of the most successful sculptors in the world during the 1950s and 1960s. This major retrospective opens on 24 June 2015 and will emphasise Hepworth's often overlooked prominence in the international art world. It will highlight the different contexts and spaces in which Hepworth presented her work, from the studio to the landscape.

The exhibition will feature over 70 works by Hepworth from major carvings and bronzes to less-familiar works and those by other artists. It opens with Hepworth's earliest surviving carvings from the 1920s alongside works by predecessors and peers artists from Jacob Epstein to Henry Moore. The selection reveals how her work related to a wider culture of wood and stone carving between the wars when Hepworth studied at Leeds Art School and at the Royal College of Art.

Hepworth and her second husband Ben Nicholson made works in dialogue and photographed their studio in Hampstead, London in order to reinforce the idea of a common practice integrated into a way of life. Major carvings like *Kneeling Figure*, 1932 (rosewood) and *Large and Small Form*, 1934 (alabaster) will be shown with paintings, prints and drawings by Nicholson, and rarely seen works by Hepworth including textiles, drawings, collages and photograms. Archival photographs will show the two artists and their works in the studio demonstrating their integrated life of art and craft.

In the later 1930s, Hepworth made more purely abstract work as part of an international movement disseminated through magazines and exhibitions. A display of the majority of Hepworth's surviving carvings of this period will include *Discs in Echelon* 1935 (padouk wood) and *Single Form* 1937 (lignum vitae) which will be seen in conjunction with the journals in which they featured alongside the work of artists such as Alberto Giacometti and Piet Mondrian.

In the mid-1940s, Hepworth, in St Ives, Cornwall, began making sculptures in wood that expressed her response to her new surroundings. These will be set alongside her two-dimensional work: the abstract works on paper of the early 1940s and her figurative 'hospital drawings' of 1947-8, both expressing utopian ideals. A selection of photographs and film will consider the different ways in which Hepworth's sculpture was presented or imagined – in landscape, in a gallery, in the garden and on stage - and the impact such variant stagings have on the work's interpretation.

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One room will reunite four large carvings in the sumptuous African hardwood guarea, made in 1954-5, which are probably the highpoint of Hepworth's carving career. In the post-war period, Hepworth's sculpture became a prominent part of the international art scene. This will be evoked through a focus on her retrospective at the Kröller-Müller Museum in 1965 and the display of bronzes that inaugurated the Museum's reconstructed Rietveld Pavilion.

***Barbara Hepworth: Sculpture for a Modern World*** is curated by Penelope Curtis, Director, Tate Britain and Chris Stephens, Lead Curator, Modern British Art and Head of Displays with Assistant Curator Inga Fraser and Sophie Bowness, the artist's granddaughter. The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue. It will tour to the Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo in the Netherlands from November 2015 to April 2016 and to the Arp Museum, Rolandseck in Germany from May to August 2016.

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