

## Press Release

### The University of Manchester's Whitworth to unveil new commission by Anya Gallaccio

- Anya Gallaccio permanent public sculpture commissioned exclusively for the Whitworth Park
- Only tree taken down during the Whitworth's redevelopment to be reimaged in steel from an architectural scan

From 24 June 2016 the Whitworth will unveil a new public sculpture by internationally acclaimed British artist Anya Gallaccio in Whitworth Park. In only the second permanent public sculpture of her career the artist will reimagine in steel a tree removed from the park during the Whitworth's £15 million redevelopment by architects MUMA (McInnes Usher McKnight Architects).

During the redevelopment of the Whitworth it was discovered that one of the London Plane trees on the south side of the building had died of natural causes and would need to be removed. Noticing the tree's absence on a visit to the site Gallaccio chose to give an artistic response to the park's loss through a permanent and ghostly sculptural commission.

Director of the Whitworth, Dr. Maria Balshaw commented: *'The redevelopment of the Whitworth was designed to open up the gallery to the surrounding park and community, so I was delighted when Anya suggested creating a piece that reflected both. It's so exciting to see the commission come together and know that this timeless artwork will be enjoyed by visitors all year round.'*

Gallaccio's work engages with the dualities of nature and transience versus the fixed, traditionally making use of materials such as flowers, chocolate, fruit and sugar that degrade and change over time. In a departure from her usual practice Gallaccio reimagine the missing tree out of stainless steel using the architect's 3D digital architectural scan of the area. Through her use of this material she will reference the heritage of the Whitworth, which was founded by Victorian engineer and inventor Joseph Whitworth, alongside the buildings redevelopment now with its stainless steel and glass brick extension.

Anya Gallaccio says: *'Usually I would take an existing object and transform it; not making a copy but a new unique object determined by the form and material properties of the original. I am interested here in using the data to produce a sculpture that is a ghost of the real tree, without being a replica.'*

Anya Gallaccio's work is found in the collections of Tate; the Victoria and Albert Museum; Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; Towner, Eastbourne; the Whitworth, Manchester; British Council Collection; Arts Council Collection; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Seattle Art Museum and in several private collections notably that of Jupiter Artland near Edinburgh.



She was nominated for the Turner Prize in 2003 and is a Professor of Fine Art at the University of California, San Diego. Her permanent public work in the Whitworth Park is supported by the Karpidas Foundation, The Oglesby Charitable Trust, The Art Fund and through a major Exceptional Arts Awards from Arts Council England.

In celebration of the new sculpture the galleries Whitworth Young Contemporaries, young people aged 15 -25, will programme **Circuit:** WARP arts festival taking place from 23 – 26 June 2016. Throughout the weekend festival visitors will experience a range of events for all the family that warp art, music, performance together beneath the trees of the park.

For further details on the Whitworth visit [www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth)  
#galleryinthepark

**ENDS**

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**NOTES TO EDITOR**

About Anya Gallaccio

Anya Gallaccio (b. 1963, Scotland) attended Kingston Polytechnic and Goldsmiths' College at the University of London. Gallaccio creates site-specific installations, often using organic materials as her medium. Past projects have included arranging a ton of oranges on a floor, placing a thirty-two ton block of ice in a boiler room, and painting a wall with chocolate. The nature of these materials results in natural processes of transformation and decay, often with unpredictable results. Gallaccio has stated, "I see my works as being a performance and collaboration . . . There is unpredictability in the materials and collaborations I get involved in. Making a piece of work becomes about chance - not just imposing will on something, but acknowledging its inherent qualities."

Anya Gallaccio's work is remarkable for its conflation of inclusiveness and rigour, for engaging light touch which belies its profundity. Through the use of a wide range of materials, often in large quantities, such as chocolate, whistling kettles, ice, sugar, candles, salt, Polaroid photographs and lead, she conveys her preoccupation with the nature of change through the passage of time, the balance in life struck between growth and decay. Gallaccio has exhibited extensively, including solo exhibitions at the Tate Britain, London (2003) and at the Ikon Gallery in Birmingham, England (2003). Recent exhibitions include solo shows at Camden Art Centre, London (2008); The Eastshire Museum, Scotland (2010); Annet Gelink Gallery in Amsterdam, The Netherlands (2011). Gallaccio's work is featured in numerous public and private collections such as the Tate Gallery, London; the Victoria & Albert Museum, London; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; and South Gallery, London. Anya Gallaccio lives and works in San Diego.

About the Whitworth

The Whitworth is part of The University of Manchester. It is home to internationally renowned collections of modern art, textiles, watercolours, prints, drawings and sculpture. Created in 1889 as the first English gallery in a park, the Whitworth has developed a new vision for the role of a university gallery. A creative laboratory within an ambitious university, the Whitworth is a place where good, unusual things happen.



The Whitworth re-opened to the public on 14 February 2015 after a major £15 million redevelopment by architects MUMA. The Whitworth has welcomed over 465,000 since re-opening, and more than doubled its previous annual records. The redevelopment has doubled public space and created state-of-the-art new facilities including expanded gallery spaces, a study centre, learning studio, and a collections centre.

The Whitworth redevelopment is just one part of an ambitious Campus Masterplan that will see The University of Manchester invest £1 billion over the next ten years to create a world class campus for staff, students and visitors. The gallery was crowned Art Fund Museum of Year 2015, nominated for the prestigious Stirling Prize, named Best Emerging Cultural Destination in Europe, and Large Visitor Attraction of the Year, continuing to establish itself as a leading cultural destination and housing an internationally significant collection of art. [www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth)

#### About Circuit WARP

**Circuit:** WARP will form part of Circuit, a four-year national programme connecting 15--25 year olds to the arts in galleries and museums working in partnership with the youth and cultural sector. The initiative is funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and led by Tate.

<http://www.tate.org.uk/about/projects/circuit>