



Press Release

David Nash: Full Circle

19 February – 5 June 2022

The Weston Gallery, Bothy Gallery and YSP Centre

“Trees show their time-story through their form. At all stages trees and wood reveal their place and progress in this great cycle of coming and going, soaked in weather and time.” David Nash

David Nash has dedicated his artistic life to an evolving study of trees and wood, absorbing knowledge through haptic experience and close observation over decades. This new exhibition in The Weston Gallery is dedicated to the artist’s drawings inspired by trees, from the observational and documentary, through to intensely coloured, abstract works that capture the essence of their life force.

Nash’s long association with Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP) began over forty years ago and *Full Circle* marks an affinity between artist and organisation. In the early 1980s, he wrote in a letter regarding his forthcoming YSP residency: “environment and ecology are a first consideration for me as an artist”. This prescient and enduring occupation not only with the intersection of nature and art, but our direct human relationship with the natural environment, makes Nash’s body of work ever more pertinent as we address the climate crisis. A critical aspect of his admiration for trees, and one we might learn much from, is that “trees take just enough and give back more”.



David Nash, *Red Tree*, 2021. Photo © Jonty Wilde

Drawing is as central and constant in Nash’s practice as the trees it grows from. It is a way of learning about and understanding his subject, of finding form for ideas, recording and responding to forms from life. Works in The Weston Gallery, a significant number of which have never been exhibited before, will be enlivened by the natural light that floods the space and will resonate with the far-reaching landscape views.

Spanning four decades, a broad range of drawings reflects different processes and types of mark making, from fine graphite to thick, smoky charcoal, and bold swathes of colour achieved by applying pure pigment with cloth. The dynamic *Big Beech Going at Space* (1978) conveys the pure energy of growth through minimal yet highly expressive lines. This directness, seen across the exhibition, is a result of the fact that the artist draws immediately and rapidly from life in the landscape, driven by the particular qualities of trees and their environments. Other works reflect at greater distance, made in the studio and concentrating on embodying the sensation of a principal characteristic such as colour, as so vibrantly demonstrated in *Red Tree* (2021).

Place is also reflected directly in the process of drawing: *Ash Dome* (2007) was created using earth taken from the surrounding ground, and *Autumn Leaves in a River, November, Llan Ffestiniog* (1983), made by drawing single leaves with ink and then repeatedly dipping the paper in river water to build up layers of different densities and reflect the durational nature of making.

In the Bothy Gallery a complementary display of films, archival photographs and works on paper will chart Nash's remarkable relationship with YSP through his residencies and evolving works made for the landscape. In customary style, the artist will use diagrammatic drawing to demonstrate visually the aesthetic associations and familial links between pieces as well as the wider context of how his time at YSP fed into his wider career.

Full Circle also offers an opportunity to reconsider Nash's site-specific works at YSP through a circular walk that links The Weston Gallery and Bothy Gallery, taking in sweeping views across the Park and lakes. *Barnsley Lump* and *Three Stones for Three Trees* were made during the artist's first residency in 1981-82 and reflect the passing of four decades in their respective erosion and growth. *Seventy-One Steps* (2010), created for his major retrospective, has also been newly restored, re-charred and oiled to reanimate the black surface of the oak sleepers that snake up the valley side. Rarely have institution and artist held a creative partnership over such an extended period of time.

A publication will feature a conversation between the artist and YSP's Founding Director, Peter Murray, who retires in 2022 – a perfect opportunity to reflect on a personal and professional relationship that has developed over 40 years, taking in numerous projects and exhibitions, and centred on the powerful connections between art and environment.

In YSP Centre, stencil prints by the artist will be available for sale, a number of which relate directly to his site-specific works at YSP. A range of bespoke merchandise, including a silk scarf, will be available to buy.

-ENDS-



David Nash, *Big Beech Going at Space*, 1978.
Photo © Jonty Wilde



David Nash, *Seeing an Oak*, 1993. Photo © Jonty Wilde



David Nash, *Ash Dome*, 2007. Photo © Jonty Wilde

Notes for Editors

Press enquiries

Abigail Varian, Sutton: +44 (0)20 7183 3577 / abigail@suttoncomms.com

Gemma Donovan, Communications Officer, YSP / +44 (0)1924 832 515 / gemma.donovan@ysp.org.uk

Download images at ysp.org.uk/media

Listings information

David Nash: Full Circle

19 February to 5 June 2022

The Weston and Bothy Galleries, and YSP Centre

Yorkshire Sculpture Park, West Bretton, Wakefield WF4 4LG

Near Wakefield and Barnsley – M1 Junction 38

+44 (0)1924 832631 | ysp.org.uk | [@YSPsculpture](https://www.instagram.com/YSPsculpture)

Open seven days a week, except Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

Booking essential, via ysp.org.uk

Social media

Instagram and Twitter: [@YSPsculpture](https://www.instagram.com/YSPsculpture)

Facebook: [@YorkshireSculpturePark](https://www.facebook.com/YorkshireSculpturePark)

[#ArtWithoutWalls](https://twitter.com/ArtWithoutWalls)

About David Nash

David Nash RA (b. 1945, Esher, Surrey) has built up an international reputation as a sculptor in a career now spanning fifty years. After studying at Kingston College of Art (1963-67) he moved to Blaenau Ffestiniog, north Wales in 1967 – a place where he had spent many childhood family holidays – before returning briefly to London for postgraduate study at Chelsea College of Art (1969-70). His first solo exhibition was held in York in 1973, since when he has had numerous large-scale solo exhibitions all over the world, many with site-specific projects.

Nash's work is held in public art galleries and private collections worldwide. Although known primarily for his sculptures in wood, some of which are planted works, drawing has remained a cornerstone of his practice. Throughout his career he has maintained a studio in Blaenau Ffestiniog, working with the seasons and elements. His work was celebrated in a major retrospective exhibition at National Museum Wales, Cardiff in 2019 and Towner Gallery Eastbourne 2019- 20, with an accompanying publication; *David Nash, 200 Seasons at Capel Rhiw*.

In 1979 Nash took part in the group exhibition *Wood* at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, followed by a year-long residency in 1981-82, during which he made works including a wood quarry and the site-specific pieces *Barnsley Lump* and *Three Stones for Three Trees*, which are both still on display. He was then part of the important International Sculpture Symposium held at YSP in 1983. In 2010 Nash returned to make a significant exhibition across the Underground, Longside, Bothy and Garden Galleries and the open air which was an expansive statement on his life's work to date. As part of that exhibition, he made *Seventy-One Steps*, a commission comprising charred oak steps and providing a walking route to Oxley Bank. In 2013 this work was joined by two further projects made in response to the YSP landscape, *49 Square*, 49 Himalayan birch trees planted in 7 rows of 7, and *Black Mound*, a circle of charred oak forms.

About Yorkshire Sculpture Park

Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP) is the leading international centre for modern and contemporary sculpture. Welcoming around 500,000 visitors each year, pre-pandemic YSP is an independent charitable trust and registered museum situated in the 500-acre, 18th-century Bretton Hall estate in West Yorkshire.

Founded in 1977 by Executive Director Peter Murray, YSP was the first sculpture park in the UK, and is the largest of its kind in Europe. It is the only place in Europe to see Barbara Hepworth's recently restored *The Family of Man* in its entirety alongside a significant collection of sculpture, including bronzes by Henry Moore and Joan Miró, important pieces by Phyllida Barlow, Roger Hiorns and Ai Weiwei, and site-related works by Katrina Palmer, Andy Goldsworthy, David Nash, Sean Scully and James Turrell.

YSP mounts a year-round temporary exhibitions programme including some of the world's leading artists across six indoor galleries and the open air. Recent highlights include exhibitions by Fiona Banner, Anthony Caro, Tony Cragg, Amar Kanwar, KAWS, Joan Miró, Henry Moore, Annie Morris, Giuseppe Penone, Jaume Plensa, Ursula von Rydingsvard, Sean Scully, Yinka Shonibare CBE, Chiharu Shiota, David Smith and Bill Viola.

Across its 45-year history, YSP has worked with over 1,000 artists from more than 40 countries, on varied projects from short-term residencies to major surveys. YSP supports artists at vital stages in their careers and is rare in having the accommodation, workshops and expertise to enable open-ended and risk-taking practice, giving artists space, time and support to think and to develop new ideas.

Over this time, YSP has sought to ignite, nurture and sustain interest in and debate around contemporary art and sculpture, especially with those for whom art participation is not habitual or familiar. It enables open access to art, situations and ideas, and continues to re-evaluate and expand the approach to considering art's role and relevance in society. Supporting 40,000 people each year pre-pandemic through YSP's learning programme, this innovative work develops ability, confidence and life aspiration in participants.

YSP's core work is made possible by investment from Arts Council England, Wakefield Council, the Liz and Terry Bramall Foundation and Sakurako and William Fisher through the Sakana Foundation. YSP was named Art Fund Museum of the Year in 2014.

Creative Case for Diversity

Yorkshire Sculpture Park was founded in 1977 to enable fairer cultural access and opportunity and we are committed to being part of change towards a fairer world. We do not tolerate discrimination in any form and are proactive in our programme, policies and behaviours to address inequalities locally, nationally and internationally. We recognise that economic, social and cultural disadvantage is complex and intersectional and shape our activity accordingly. Diversity and equality are crucial to the arts because they release the true potential of our nation's artistic talent – from every background. At YSP, we support Arts Council England's mission – great art and culture for everyone. We share ACE's commitment to promote and embed diversity in our workforce and cultural programme. This is called the 'Creative Case for Diversity'.



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



**LIZ AND TERRY
BRAMALL FOUNDATION**

**SAKANA
FOUNDATION**

**ROGER
EVANS**