



Press Release

Andrian Melka: A Way Forward

On view until 9 January 2022

Open Air and Formal Garden

"Yorkshire Sculpture Park is delighted to show this bronze sculpture of Captain Sir Tom Moore before it is permanently placed at Chapel Allerton Hospital in Leeds. During the dark days of the pandemic, we all became aware of Captain Tom's extraordinary fortitude when – aged 99 – he set out to walk 100 lengths of his garden. He captured the nation's heart and gave hope and inspiration to all. It is fitting that this Keighley-born man, who was put to rest in his hometown, should be celebrated in Britain's best-loved sculpture institution where many thousands will be able to see Andrian Melka's sculpture and to pay tribute to 'Captain Tom'."

Clare Lilley, Director of Programme, Yorkshire Sculpture Park



Andrian Melka, *A Way Forward*, 2021. Installed at Yorkshire Sculpture Park. Photo © the artist

A Way Forward, by sculptor Andrian Melka, pays tribute to Captain Sir Tom Moore's NHS fundraising achievements and his endeavour to inspire others to find a way forward during the Covid-19 pandemic. The bronze figure is temporarily presented at Yorkshire Sculpture Park before relocation to its longer-term home at Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust. There it may offer motivation to those attending the Chapel Allerton Hospital, as patients or visitors, through its embodiment of determination and self-belief.

Melka is a Yorkshire-based sculptor, born in Albania. He left his country of birth as an adult in 1997 during a period of civil war with a graduate degree in monumental sculpture from the Academy of Fine Arts in Tirana. He arrived in London on a Getty Foundation-funded scholarship, studying at the Building Crafts College to develop his masonry skills. Founded by the Worshipful Company of Carpenters in 1893 to train young people in a range of construction crafts in central London, the College relocated in 2001 to Stratford near to the Olympic Park. Until recently Melka has worked primarily in marble and stone, which he directly carves. Past commissions include the Golden Jubilee Fountain at the Royal Family's Sandringham Estate; the Figure of Christ on the Cross for Bamburgh Castle War Memorial, and a replacement of the Medici Venus at Chiswick House in London. More recently Melka has expanded his range of sculptural media to include bronze.

"Captain Tom represented hope and determination during the early days of the pandemic when many felt their world being turned upside down. This two-metre high statue pays tribute not only to his incredible fundraising achievements, but to his ability to inspire others to put one foot in front of the other and find a way forward during the most challenging of times." - Andrian Melka.



This figurative sculpture, shaped in clay before casting, captures a distinct likeness of his internationally renowned face concentrating on each step. His stance here, giving a thumbs-up, became an iconic pose. It can be seen to represent a patriotic and nostalgic inclination towards UK identity and the traits we value at times of national crisis, adversity and struggle. For some it may recall the experience of the nation coming together during war.

Captain Sir Tom Moore, fondly known as Captain Tom, was born in Keighley, West Yorkshire in 1920. He was educated at the local grammar school before starting an apprenticeship in civil engineering. In May 1940, eight months after the start of WWII, Moore was conscripted in the 8th Battalion, Duke of Wellington's Regiment, stationed at Weston Park in Otley. Though Moore was a war-time veteran who served in India and Burma between 1941-45 before returning to become an instructor at the Armoured Vehicle Fighting School in Dorset, he became a public figure at the age of 99 fundraising in aid of NHS Charities Together. Capturing media attention and consequently the hearts of the nation, Moore set out on 6 April 2020 with a goal of raising £1,000 by walking one hundred lengths of his garden in the days leading to his 100th birthday on 30 April that year. In less than one month, Captain Tom raised almost £33 million.

The figure of Captain Tom is Melka's first bronze work made at this scale (larger-than-life), cast at a foundry in London with the support of donations from hundreds of individuals. The names of donors or their loved ones lost during the pandemic appear on the sculpture's base and on the frame that Captain Tom pushes.

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Notes for Editors

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Download images at ysp.org.uk/media

Listings information

Andrian Melka: A Way Forward

On view until 9 January 2022

Open Air and Formal Garden

Yorkshire Sculpture Park, West Bretton, Wakefield WF4 4LG

Near Wakefield and Barnsley – M1 Junction 38

+44 (0)1924 832631 | ysp.org.uk | @YSPsculpture

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

Booking essential, via ysp.org.uk

Social media

Instagram and Twitter: @YSPsculpture

Facebook: @YorkshireSculpturePark

#ArtWithoutWalls

About Andrian Melka

Andrian Melka began studying Art and Sculpture at the age of ten, graduating from the Academy of Fine Arts in Tirana in 1994. After graduation, he spent two years copying antique heads and reliefs in a marble workshop in Albania. He moved to England in 1997 with a Getty scholarship and spent a year at the Building Crafts College in London where he was awarded the City & Guilds Silver Medal for Excellence and granted the Freedom of Carpenters' Company and the Freedom of the City of London.

Melka then moved to York to work as Head Sculptor with the renowned carver Dick Reid, alongside several great designers and architects on many high profile commissions including the Jubilee Fountain on Sandringham Estate erected to commemorate The Queens Golden Jubilee and figures of Christ and Madonna for St Mungos Church in Glasgow.

He opened his studio near York in 2003 taking on a wide range of commissions in the UK and America. His clients have included: Lord Rothschild, HRH The Prince of Wales, Lord Conrad Black, Lord Halifax and Fred Landman.

Since his early days studying figurative sculpture at high school, Melka has continually strived to explore the timeless fascination which the human form holds. Over the years he has utilised many different mediums and styles but since moving to the UK his work has focused on marble, stone and bronze. He relishes the distinct challenges of both making realistic figures, as well as abstractions based on the human form.

Attention to detail and the right finish are also very important, and something in which he takes great pride in. However, he approaches his work very differently from most other studios, working directly in stone in the same way Michelangelo would have done, without the need for full-size models.

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'.



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