



Press Release

Yukihiro Akama: Basho no Kankaku – A Sense of Place

YSP Centre

9 March – 30 June 2024

Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP) presents a new collection by Japanese woodcarver Yukihiro Akama



Yukihiro Akama. Photo © Red Photography, courtesy Yorkshire Sculpture Park.

A display of 55 works, *Basho no Kankaku – A Sense of Place* will be Akama's largest exhibition to date.

It will showcase a new collection of beautiful, intricately carved wooden houses of various sizes – from just 4cm (slightly bigger than a 50p piece) up to 106cm – alongside a series of architectural technical drawings and mini prints.

All works will be for sale, with prices ranging from £135 to £9,500.

Working from a furniture maker's workshop in Huddersfield, Akama is surrounded by the natural world. There, he creates these singular houses, carving each one from a single piece of wood. He draws on his experience as a joiner, through which he has refined his skills and techniques in woodworking. Each piece is given a unique appearance and takes between 3 hours and 3 days to complete. For this latest collection, commissioned by

YSP, Akama has developed a method of colouring the wood using iron acetate solution. The solution is painted onto the wood which reacts with the tannins to create a beautiful ebonised finish.

The wood often dictates the starting point for the designs, with the knots or grain guiding where Akama cuts and carves. Gradually they take on the appearance of a house – often low and long, or tall with stilt-like legs and large roofs, sometimes cantilevered out. Delicate and intricate detailing of clay render and pebbles minimally decorate and enhance the surfaces, adding to the overall effect of how precarious man-made structures can be and the now transient and perilous nature of so many people's lives. Inspiration comes from many sources for these fantastic creations, but much comes from Japanese temples and shrines and particularly from Jomon-era ruins; the shapes, textures and surfaces used in this period of 4,000 years ago.

Akama is an architectural technician by training, having studied architecture at Tohoku University of Art and Design, in Yamagata, Japan. When living in Japan, Akama designed a house for a plot of land he owned, rich in native Japanese trees with wild fruits and mushrooms. He aims to capture a sense of place in his work, creating houses that belong in woodland forest settings – quiet and rural. In 2011, he and his family moved to the UK, drawn to Yorkshire due to its landscape and natural surroundings. Here he has pursued an alternative lifestyle and career, responding to an overwhelming need to work with his hands as a maker. His first solo UK exhibition took place in 2013, and this is his second solo exhibition at YSP.

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Yukihiro Akama in his workshop. Photo © Yorkshire Sculpture Park



Yukihiro Akama. Photo © Red Photography, courtesy Yorkshire Sculpture Park.



Above and below: Yukihiro Akama. Photo © Red Photography, courtesy Yorkshire Sculpture Park.



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Notes for editors

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Listings information

Yorkshire Sculpture Park, West Bretton, Wakefield WF4 4LG

Near Wakefield and Barnsley – M1 Junction 38

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

Open Tuesday - Sunday. Closed on Mondays (excluding school and Bank Holidays) and 24–25 December.

Book tickets at ysp.org.uk

Social media

Instagram and Twitter: @YSPsculpture

Facebook: @YorkshireSculpturePark

LinkedIn: Yorkshire Sculpture Park

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About Yorkshire Sculpture Park

Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP) is the leading international centre for modern and contemporary sculpture. Welcoming around 380,000 visitors each year, 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 Sir Peter Murray CBE and since 2022 led by Clare Lilley, YSP is the largest sculpture park of its kind in Europe. It is the only place in Europe to see Barbara Hepworth's *The Family of Man* in its entirety, alongside a significant collection of sculpture, including bronzes by Henry Moore, important pieces by Phyllida Barlow, Roger Hiorns, Damien Hirst, Hemali Bhuta and Ai Weiwei, and site-specific works by Katrina Palmer, Andy Goldsworthy, Alfredo Jaar, 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 outdoors. Highlights include exhibitions by Fiona Banner, Anthony Caro, Tony Cragg, Leonardo Drew, Robert Indiana, Amar Kanwar, KAWS, Joan Miró, Henry Moore, Lindsey Mendick, Annie Morris, Giuseppe Penone, Jaume Plensa, Ursula von Rydingsvard, Sean Scully, Yinka Shonibare CBE, Chiharu Shiota, David Smith, Joana Vasconcelos, Bill Viola and Erwin Wurm.

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 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 and awarded VisitEngland's gold accolade in 2021-22 for an outstanding visitor attraction.

YSP was also awarded the 2023 Visitor Attraction of the Year and Cultural Attraction of the Year in the Yorkshire Post Tourism Awards.



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