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Barbara Hepworth: Art & Life



Barbara Hepworth, *Oval Sculpture (No.2)* 1943 (Cast 1958). Tate

26 November 2022 - 1 May 2023

Tate St Ives

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This autumn, Tate St Ives will present a landmark retrospective on the iconic British artist Barbara Hepworth (1903–1975). Encompassing almost 50 sculptures, as well as rarely seen drawings, paintings and archival materials, *Barbara Hepworth: Art & Life* will celebrate one of the most influential sculptors of the twentieth century and the special significance of St Ives on her work.

Originally staged at The Hepworth Wakefield near the artist's birthplace, Tate St Ives has collaborated with the gallery to reimagine the exhibition for the Cornish context in which Hepworth lived and worked. It will emphasise how the area's rugged landscape and close-knit artistic community became important sources of inspiration. These local connections are evident in the titles of many key works, such as *Curved Form (Trevalgan)* 1956 and *Sea*

Form (Porthmeor) 1958, while her engagement with the wider world of international events will also be explored through works such as *Disc with Strings (Moon)* 1969, perhaps inspired by advances in space exploration, and *Single Form*, unveiled at the United Nations in 1964.

Visitors to the exhibition will follow Hepworth's early artistic journey from her initial studies at Leeds School of Art in 1920–1 to her travels across Europe, and her subsequent life in London in the 1930s, where she started a family and created works such as *Mother and Child* 1933. The show will explore how, during this time, she moved away from overtly figurative work towards abstraction, though her fascination with the human body would remain evident through much of her later practice.

The exhibition will then trace the development of Hepworth's work during her early years in St Ives – an artistic community she quickly embraced after permanently relocating to the Cornish seaside town at the outbreak of the Second World War. *Barbara Hepworth: Art & Life* will uncover how the landscapes of West Cornwall captivated her and generated a period of extraordinary creativity, shown through works such as *Oval Sculpture (No. 2)* 1943 (cast 1958) and *Tides II* 1946.

The show will explore the artist's forays into stage design and her interest in the movement of the body, as well as her adoption of bronze to make work in response to the landscape. There will be a particular focus on the creation of Hepworth's monumental *Single Form* for the United Nations headquarters in New York, the armature for which was made at her second studio at the Palais de Danse in St Ives.

Barbara Hepworth: Art & Life will culminate with a section on the artist's interest in space and spirituality, with particular reference to the inspiration she took from her visit to Goonhilly Earth Station on the Lizard, Cornwall. In these works, and many others throughout her career, Hepworth connected the local with the universal, and challenged the boundaries of modern sculpture in ways that continue to reverberate today.

Barbara Hepworth: Art & Life is organised by The Hepworth Wakefield in collaboration with the National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh, and Tate St Ives. The exhibition planned for Tate St Ives is curated by Eleanor Clayton, Senior Curator, The Hepworth Wakefield, Anne Barlow, Director of Tate St Ives and Giles Jackson, Assistant Curator.

For press information

contact rachael.young@tate.org.uk / hele.rhys@tate.org.uk or call +44 (0)20 7887 8730. High resolution press images can be downloaded [here](#).

- Biographical information about Barbara Hepworth can be found on Tate's website [here](#).

- First staged at The Hepworth Wakefield and curated by Eleanor Clayton, Senior Curator, the original exhibition is accompanied by a publication, available from The Hepworth's shop [here](#).