

Press Release

3 December 2003

Lunette

Tate Britain Christmas Tree 2004 by Richard Wentworth

4 December 2004 – 6 January 2005

Tate Britain, Rotunda, Level 2

Open 10.00-17.50 every day except 24, 25 and 26 December

Admission free

Each year Tate Britain invites an artist to create a Christmas Tree. This year sculptor Richard Wentworth has dressed a traditional Norwegian Spruce tree with broken halves of plates and strings of dimmed domestic light bulbs. Text panels on the base describe the histories of the tree's four elements: the light bulb, the plate, the Christmas tree and the plinth.

Visitors are invited to interact with the tree by leaving digital presents (photos, movies, texts etc) via the Christmas tree's bluetooth antenna. If your phone has bluetooth you may be able to send a file to it, choose the *send via bluetooth* option on your phone and choose *Christmas tree* from the available devices. If you can not connect to the tree you can send your file via email to christmastree@untitledfolder.org. The digital presents will be unwrapped at www.untitledfolder.org/christmastree on Christmas day.

Wentworth will be auctioning the plates that decorate the tree in aid of the children's charity Artworks (www.art-works.org.uk). Visitors can post their bids at the information desk beside the tree. The decorations will be given to the highest bidder, which will be announced on 7 January 2005. Wentworth has also designed a Christmas card *DARKTIME (Arresting the solstice) 2004/05* which is available as a free e-card at Tate Online, sponsored by BT, at www.tate.org.uk/ecards.

Richard Wentworth was born in Samoa in 1947. Since the late 1970s, Wentworth has emerged as one of the key figures in radically transforming the way we think about sculpture. Shunning the monumental gesture, Wentworth finds his materials in the everyday world. Often working with found, mass produced objects - such as light bulbs, plates, buckets and ladders - Wentworth subverts their functions to play with conventional systems of classification and notions of so-called high and low art, providing us with original and fresh perspectives on the things that constitute the world around us.

Wentworth has an upcoming solo exhibition at Tate Liverpool, 21 January – 24 April 2005. His work has been shown in numerous institutions in the UK and internationally, such as the Serpentine Gallery; the Whitechapel Art Gallery; the Hayward Gallery, London; the Israel Museum, Jerusalem; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia; the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; the Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Vienna; and the Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris. He lives and works in London.

This is the seventeenth year that Tate has marked Christmas in this way. Previously commissioned artists are: Mark Wallinger (2003), Tracey Emin (2002), Yinka Shonibare (2001), Catherine Yass (2000), Mat Collishaw (1999), Richard Wilson (1998), Michael Landy (1997), Julian Opie (1996), Cornelia Parker (1995), Cathy de Monchaux (1994), Shirazeh Houshiary (1993), Craigie Aitchison (1992), Boyd Webb (1991), Lisa Milroy (1990), Tim Head (1989) and Bill Woodrow (1988).

For further information, please contact Ben Luke

Tate Press Office, Millbank, London SW1P 4RG

Call 020 7887 8731/2 Fax 020 7887 8729 Visit www.tate.org.uk