

Press Release

8 December 2006

Tate Britain Christmas Tree by Sarah Lucas

Cherubim/Allegory of Love 2006

Tate Britain, Octagon, Level 2

8 December 2006 - 2 January 2007

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

Admission free

Tate Britain has commissioned Sarah Lucas to create its Christmas tree for 2006, which is on display from 8 December 2006. Lucas has decorated a 20ft Nordman fir tree with sculptures that take the form of baby angels and fairies made from wire and stretched tights.

This chorus of winged infants including fairies, putti and cherubs have been positioned on the tree as if they have descended from above. They refer to numerous classical figures that have appeared throughout art history such as Cupid, Eros, and Venus. Lucas' decorations are a playful comment on the erotic depictions of these mythical figures over the centuries.

Sarah Lucas was born in London, England in 1962. She studied at Goldsmiths' College, London and emerged as a major artist in the 1990s. She is best known for her provocative sculptures and self-portraits and the way she incorporates everyday objects – cigarettes, food, furniture, tights and tabloid newspapers – into her art. Her work often challenges stereotypical representations of sexuality through visual and verbal puns.

This is the nineteenth year that Tate has marked Christmas in this way. Previously commissioned artists are: Gary Hume (2005), Richard Wentworth (2004), 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).

Images and information about all Tate's artist Christmas trees since 1988 and the artist-designed Tate Director's Christmas cards can be viewed on Tate's website at www.tate.org.uk/britain/exhibitions/christmastree. In addition, Tate Online and BT have created a unique e-advent calendar, available from 1 December via Tate Online, www.tate.org.uk/adventcalendar. In the countdown to Christmas you can open a new online window everyday to discover a work of art in Tate's Collection which has inspired a leading international artist. 24 artists including Howard Hodgkin, Antony Gormley, Grayson Perry, Anish Kapoor, Tomma Abts have participated.

For further information, please contact Helen Beeckmans/Rachel Phillips

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