



## **Teacher Resource Notes**

### **Barbara Hepworth Museum & Sculpture Garden**



These notes are designed to support teachers and students as they explore and engage with the art work and experience the unique setting of the Barbara Hepworth Museum & Sculpture Garden.

Enquiries & Bookings: 01736 796226 [stivesticketing@tate.org.uk](mailto:stivesticketing@tate.org.uk).

## Introduction

The Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden at Trewyn Studio in St Ives presents the artist's sculpture in the place where she lived and worked for many years. As a 'studio museum' it is unique in this country and it has changed very little since Hepworth lived there. She placed many of the sculptures in the garden exactly where they are today.

Hepworth lived at Trewyn from 1949 until her death in 1975. In her will she asked her executors to consider 'the practicality of establishing a permanent exhibition of some of my works in Trewyn studio and its garden'. She envisaged her working studio being shown, as in her lifetime, with small works in the house and a few large works in the garden.

A year after Hepworth's death, the Museum and Sculpture Garden were opened to the public. In 1980 the Barbara Hepworth Museum was presented to the nation by her family and executors and today it is maintained and managed by the Trustees of Tate.

*'Finding Trewyn studio was a sort of magic. For ten years I had passed by with my shopping bags, not knowing what lay behind the twenty-foot wall...Here was a studio, a yard and a garden, where I could work in open air and space.'* Barbara Hepworth: A Pictorial Autobiography, London, 1970, p52



## A Walk Around ...

### Ground floor

This room, which was originally the kitchen, dining-room and bathroom, introduces you to Barbara Hepworth as a person not just a sculptor. Today there is an archive display of photographs, documents and other memorabilia which tell the story of her life. There is also an alcove where some unfinished woodcarvings and the artist's tools can be seen.

### First floor

Upstairs you will find the studio. This room was at first a workroom but it soon became a bedroom and eventually a sitting room as well. It still contains some of the original furniture and the rugs and curtains that the artist always preferred. The works on display include wood and stone carvings, paintings and drawings. There is also a bronze cast of her left hand.

### The garden

Hepworth said it was important to have trees and plants around her sculptures. She said 'with space and the sky above, sculpture can expand and breathe'. She created the garden, with help from her friend the composer Priaulx Rainier, especially for her sculptures. When she began to work in bronze in the 1950s she often kept back an artist's cast of each sculpture for the garden. Today it contains three large stone carvings and eighteen bronzes, including *Four Square (Walk Through)*, 1966, the artist's largest work. The greenhouse contains the artist's collection of cacti and some original plasters for bronze sculptures. At the bottom of the garden you will find the summerhouse where Hepworth used to have an afternoon rest.

### The workshops

Outside the workshops you can see the yard where Hepworth did most of her stone carving. Underneath the magnolia tree you can see blocks of uncut marble. She called them her 'flock of sheep'. The turntable is as it was when she died, with the stone blocks of a new multipart marble carving in place. From here you can look into the plaster and stone-carving workshops which have also been left more or less untouched since the artist's death. The top workshop was where the plasters for bronze were made, and you can see some of the original plasters among the tools and materials. In the stone-carving workshop you can see more unfinished works and a wide range of tools and equipment.



## The Artist

Barbara Hepworth (1903-75) was one of Britain's most important twentieth century artists and probably the most famous female sculptor. She achieved worldwide success at a time when it was very unusual for a woman to be a sculptor. She is perhaps most famous for her abstract sculptures of pierced forms. Her work can be found all over the world for example, *The Family of Man (Nine Figures on a Hill)*, 1970, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, *Winged Figure*, 1963, John Lewis' Oxford Street, London and *Single Form*, 1962-3, United Nations Plaza, New York.

Born and brought up in Yorkshire, Barbara attended Leeds School of Art at the age of 17 and went on to study sculpture at the Royal College of Art in London. She first learnt to carve in stone during a visit to Italy in 1924. Her early works were based on the figure, animals and birds. While in Italy she married the sculptor John Skeaping. They returned to London in 1926 where they set up a studio. Her first son, Paul Skeaping was born in 1929.

From 1930 Barbara's work became more abstract as she explored space and shape often piercing right through the form. In 1931 she met the painter Ben Nicholson who became her second husband. Nicholson and Hepworth were involved in developing an abstract art based on pure simplified forms and during the 1930s they were associated with many of the leading European avant-garde artists of the day. In 1934 Hepworth gave birth to triplets, Simon, Rachel and Sarah Hepworth Nicholson.

Just before the outbreak of World War II, Barbara and her family moved to Cornwall. In 1949 Barbara bought Trewyn Studio in St Ives where she lived and worked for the rest of her life. In the 1950s Barbara began working in bronze - often on a larger scale. She received a number of important public commissions and her work was exhibited worldwide. She was awarded many honours including a DBE from the Queen. Barbara died in a fire at her studio in 1975. She was 72 years old. The following year the Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden was opened at Trewyn.



# Ways of Looking

## **Listening to others/responding personally/sensory experiences**

A huge amount of information can be revealed just by asking the question 'what do you see?'. Once a few ideas are circulating this often cascades into very imaginative and perceptive ways of viewing the work. Asking 'why do you say that?' invites further consideration and sharing of ideas from students.

- What word(s) does the work make you think about?
- Have you seen anything like this before?
- What do the titles tell you?
- What does the colour make you think about?

## **Visual experience -what can you see?**

What materials and processes has the artist used to make the work? Have you seen this material in art before?

- Is the work made in traditional or new materials?
- What is it? (carving, construction, model, cast, maquette)
- How is it displayed? What space does it occupy and how does it relate to the space around it?
- What is the scale of the artwork and how does this affect our relationship to it?
- Is the work made to be permanent?

## **Communicating ideas and meaning**

- Is it about real life?
- Is there a story or narrative in the work?
- Does it relate to contemporary life?
- Does the title affect the meaning of the work?

## **Art in context/cultures/times. Local/national/global**

- Is the work about a particular place?
- Does information about the artist's background inform the work?
- Does the work connect to art from other times and cultures?
- Has the artist reinvented art from other times and cultures?

# Key themes

## **The human figure**

Hepworth's early work is dominated by sculptures of the human figure, seated or standing. She drew and painted the life model throughout her life and transformed/abstracted/simplified the figure into vertical shapes that were more about mass, surface, line and balance.

## **The landscape**

Many of Hepworth's sculptures explore the forms and shapes of the landscape. She was inspired by the landscape of her childhood, West Yorkshire and West Penwith in Cornwall and was interested in the history of the landscape. Some of her works relate to ancient stones and shapes within the landscape. Hepworth was interested in expressing the physical experience of being in the landscape – for example, the push and pull of the wind, the changing shapes and contours as you walk or the varieties of textures and patterning on rocks and vegetation. She preferred her work to be shown outdoors and said that sculptures need natural light and air 'to breathe and grow'.

## **Maternal forms**

Many of her early works are based on the theme of mother and child and clearly relate to her own experience of motherhood. She explores the tender relationship between one living thing beside another. Her later carvings explore a more generalised view of maternity. They contain ideas of nurture, enclosure and suggest shapes such as a womb or seed pod as symbols of renewal and protection.

## **Inside and outside**

Hepworth said there is an inside and an outside to every form. Many of her sculpture explore both solid shape and open space. She carved into and through her sculptures to explore both the inside and the outside. She liked to pierce, tunnel and hollow out her forms.

## **Space and abstraction**

Hepworth explored abstract ideas about colour, line, shape, form, balance and depth in both her paintings and sculptures. She liked to combine geometric shape with more organic forms and explored different materials and textures to draw attention to relationships between forms, surfaces and subject.

## **Sculpture about materials**

Hepworth seems to revel in the qualities (colour, texture, softness and hardness) of the different stones and woods she used. She said the job of the sculptor was to release the 'life' of the material and a show its 'essential' qualities of shape, colour, surface and grain. In some works she used contrasting materials to highlight their different qualities. She also enjoyed chance elements such as mineral inconsistencies or fossils while for some works she applied paint.

## **Groups in space**

Hepworth made a number of multi-part and group sculptures. She explored the harmony and tension between separate but inter-related forms. This related to her fascination with human relationships and harmonious human interaction. She was interested in how people move in different spaces and in relation to each other.

## Drawing activities

These suggestions are for quick and easy activities to do during a visit. You are welcome to bring your own drawing books and pencils (please refer to the **Use of Art Materials** p.8 for further information).

### Quick sketching and memory drawings

Encourage your students to make quick drawings. You could set them a time limit or tell them that the Gallery is about to close and they need to record as much information in as short a time as possible. Look at one work closely then ask your students to turn away from it and draw it from memory. You could follow this with close observational drawing and consider the difference between the two drawings.

### Outline/on top drawings

Ask students to choose a sculpture and draw the outline. Then get them to choose another two sculptures and do the same but this time ON TOP of the drawing they've just done. With their pencil trace a heavy line around the outside of their three shapes to create a new one. Get them to give their new shape a name.

### Negative Shapes

Look at some of the sculptures that have holes or spaces through them. Talk to your students about negative spaces and observe the shadows and reflections that are created. Find some negative shapes that they like and draw them either separately or together, side by side or one on top of the other as one big shape.

### Drawing through holes

Ask students to look at some of the larger sculptures such as *Four Square (Walk Through)*, 1966 in the garden at the Barbara Hepworth Museum. Draw what they can see through one of the holes. They might see another sculpture or other visitors as well as parts of the garden/gallery.

### Textures and rubbings

This activity can only be done in the garden. Ask students to choose a sculpture, close their eyes and run their hands across the surface. If there are lots of different sides or surfaces, get them to run their hands inside and out. How does it feel? Then ask them to make a selection of rubbings from the different surfaces in the garden – **but not the sculptures themselves**. Compare them with the surfaces of some of the sculptures in the garden.

### Group drawing by rotation

Ask each student to find a space from which to draw the work. After two minutes stop, leave their book in place and move onto the next person's drawing and continue working on their drawing. After four moves round stop and compare drawings done from various viewpoints. Encourage students to discuss how they feel about making group drawings.

### Inside/outside

Hepworth liked to explore the inside and outside of shapes and materials. Get students to look at one sculpture and make two separate drawings – one of the outside and one of the inside. An extension of this activity would be to think about the actual space they are in.

## Safety of Works of Art

To make your visit more enjoyable please be aware of these guidelines.

Please do not:

- Touch artworks
- Run in gallery spaces or the garden at the Hepworth Museum
- Take photographs in exhibition spaces at Tate St Ives
- Take photographs inside at the Hepworth Museum
- Use wet or messy art materials
- Eat or drink in the exhibition spaces and Hepworth Garden
- Smoke

*The changing exhibitions at Tate St Ives may be subject to additional rules and restrictions. Please contact the gallery for further details. Enquiries & Bookings: 01736 796226 [stivesticketing@tate.org.uk](mailto:stivesticketing@tate.org.uk).*

## Use of Art Materials

*These rules apply in the garden and greenhouse at the Hepworth Museum as well as inside the galleries and studio spaces.*

If you are engaging with a learning activity the creative practitioner will provide materials for your session. If you are visiting independently you are welcome to use your own materials with appropriate supervision levels for young people.

### **Materials that CAN be used with care at both sites**

- Graphite pencils
- Coloured pencils
- Ballpoint pens
- Enclosed/barrelled pencil sharpeners
- Erasers are not permitted at either site

**Please respect all visitors to Tate St Ives and the Hepworth Museum & Sculpture Garden by ensuring that you leave walk-ways and lines-of-sight to artworks clear.**

## Further Reading and Information

*Barbara Hepworth: Centenary*, Exhibition catalogue, Tate St Ives, 2003  
Curtis, P, *Barbara Hepworth*, Tate St Ives Series, Tate Gallery, 1998  
Curtis, P & Wilkinson, A, *Barbara Hepworth: a retrospective*, Liverpool University Press & Tate Gallery, 1994  
*Barbara Hepworth, A Pictorial Biography*, Tate Publishing 1970. Reissued 1985  
Phillips M & Stephens C, *Barbara Hepworth Sculpture Garden*, Tate Publishing 2002  
Gale, M & Stephens C, *Barbara Hepworth: Works in the Tate Collection*, Tate Publishing 1999  
Hammacher, A. H, *Barbara Hepworth*, Thames and Hudson, 1968 Revised Edition, 1987  
Thislewood, D (Ed), *Barbara Hepworth Re-considered*, Liverpool University Press & Tate Liverpool, 1996  
*Barbara Hepworth Sculptures from the Estate*, Wildenstein, 1996  
*Barbara Hepworth Stone Sculpture*, Pace Wildenstein, 2001

### General sculpture and techniques

Birks, T, *The Alchemy of Sculpture*, Pangolin Editions, Chalford, 1998  
Causey, A, *Sculpture Since 1945*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1998  
Clough, P, *Sculptural Materials in the Classroom*, A & C Black, London, 1998  
Collins, J, *Tate Sculpture*, Tate Gallery, 2003  
Finn, D, *How to Look at Sculpture*, Harry N. Abrams. Inc., Publishers, New York, 1989  
Hall, J, *The World of Sculpture*, Chatto & Windus, London, 1999  
Mills, J. W, *The Technique of Sculpture*, BT Batsford, London, 1976  
Opie, M, *Sculpture*, Dorling Kindersley Eyewitness Art Series, London, 1994  
Penny, N, *The Materials of Sculpture*, Yale University Press, New Haven & London, 1996 (includes useful glossary)  
*The History of Western Sculpture, A Young Person's Guide*, Belitha Press, Ltd, London, 1993  
*The Unpainted Landscape*, Coracle Press, London, 1987

The **St Ives Archive Study Centre** holds a range of material about Barbara Hepworth and other artists associated with St Ives. They can accept limited numbers of children in group visits. [www.stivestrust.co.uk](http://www.stivestrust.co.uk)

### **Useful Websites**

[www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk) Tate online

[www.bronzeage.co.uk](http://www.bronzeage.co.uk) Bronze Age Foundry with useful information on bronze casting techniques

[www.learningstone.com](http://www.learningstone.com) Learning Stone

[www.grizedale.org](http://www.grizedale.org) Grizedale Forest Sculpture

[www.sculptor.org/Outdoor.htm](http://www.sculptor.org/Outdoor.htm) Outdoor Sculpture parks and gardens

[www.yssp.co.uk](http://www.yssp.co.uk) Yorkshire Sculpture Park

[www.sculpture.org.uk](http://www.sculpture.org.uk) Sculpture at Goodwood (British contemporary sculpture)

[www.henry-moore-fdn.co.uk](http://www.henry-moore-fdn.co.uk) Henry Moore Foundation

[www.sculpture.uk.com](http://www.sculpture.uk.com) New Art Centre Sculpture Park and Gallery, Wiltshire

[www.forestofdean-sculpture.org.uk](http://www.forestofdean-sculpture.org.uk) Forest of Dean Sculpture Trail

[www.scottishsculpturetrust.org](http://www.scottishsculpturetrust.org) Scottish Sculpture Trust - promotes public education in contemporary sculpture

[www.landartnet.org](http://www.landartnet.org) Landscape & Arts Network (LAN) – international network of artists interested in the environment

*Sculpture resources for teachers*

[www.accessart.org.uk](http://www.accessart.org.uk) On line visual arts workshops including 'What is Sculpture' and 'Casting and Constructing'. Also has good links to other websites.

[www.cambridge-sculpture-workshops.co.uk](http://www.cambridge-sculpture-workshops.co.uk) Offers workshops to schools, colleges and adults throughout the region. Information on projects and workshops.

[www.yssp.co.uk](http://www.yssp.co.uk) Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Teachers Resources, Curriculum 2002

*Films and music*

*Leach and Hepworth, The Stories of Two Great South West Artists*, TSW Films and Television Archive, DVD £16.99 available from Tate St Ives email: [shopstives@tate.org.uk](mailto:shopstives@tate.org.uk) 01736 791110

*Midsummer Marriage*, Michael Tippett, Naxos [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

*No Title Required* (a selection of Rainier's music) Prialux Rainier and Sadie Harrison, Metie

*Other places to see Barbara Hepworth's work*

St Ives Town (See *Map Guide* to Barbara Hepworth's public sculptures in St Ives).

Visit *Hepworth Wakefield*, West Yorkshire [www.hepworthwakefield.org](http://www.hepworthwakefield.org)

Further public collections and sites in the UK, including Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, Norwich and Stromness.