

GALLERY PANGOLIN

BACK TO THE CAVE

Sculpture goes Underground

21st May - 17th July 2022

First of its kind, subterranean exhibition of contemporary sculpture in the extraordinary environment of Clearwell Caves in the Forest of Dean.

Clearwell Caves are part of a network of more than 600 acres of iron-rich caves that have been mined for ochre pigments and iron ore for over 4,500 years. The subterranean caverns were known to miners as 'galleries', ten of these have been opened to the public and will now play host to this landmark exhibition, taking sculpture 'Back to the Cave'.



'Burning Spear' Tavares Strachan

Although Art as we know it started deep underground, caves have not, until now, been used as a venue for contemporary sculpture.

International in scope and with subjects and materials chosen to complement this unique environment, 'Back to the Cave' references the history of cave art, prehistoric cave dwellers and the more recent uses of caves.

We envisage this exhibition as a new way of experiencing contemporary sculpture outside the confines of the white-walled gallery and we hope to evoke an atmosphere akin to that of the prehistoric era with atmospheric lighting providing a fresh and exciting way to see sculpture.

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'Back to the Cave' includes 60 pieces of sculpture by 47 international artists:

Anthony Abrahams, Kenneth Armitage, Bruce Beasley, Nick Bibby, Hamish Black, Ralph Brown, Jon Buck, Halima Cassell, Daniel Chadwick, Lynn Chadwick, Ann Christopher, Geoffrey Clarke, Mat Collishaw, Michael Cooper, Terence Coventry, Geoffrey Dashwood, Abigail Fallis, Sue Freeborough, George Fullard, Maggi Hambling, Damien Hirst, John Hoskin, Steve Hurst, Michael Joo, Jonathan Kenworthy, Jonathan Kingdon, Anders Krisár, Sarah Lucas, David Mach, Susie MacMurray, Anita Mandl, Charlotte Mayer, Polly Morgan, Eilis O'Connell, Isaac Okwir, Peter Oloya, Eduardo Paolozzi, Pangolin Designs, Hans-Ulrich Pauly, Tom Price, Peter Randall-Page, STIK, Tavares Strachan, Almuth Tebbenhoff, William Tucker, Deborah van der Beek, Jason Wason.



'Half Torso 3'
Anders Krisar



'Consider the Risk'
Polly Morgan

"No one who has visited the Palaeolithic painted caves can fail to be moved not only by the beauty of the paintings and engravings but by the special and unique environment. With 'Back to the Cave' we aim to create a different but equally enthralling feeling, in a novel way to experience contemporary and Modern sculpture." Rungwe Kingdon



'Horse'
John Hoskin



'Longdog'
Jon Buck

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There are two site-specific pieces in the exhibition. Street artist STIK has painted directly onto the wall of the cave, using ochre mined from the Caves at Clearwell:

'The Ochre Man represents the first art emerging from the cave. The figure is painted in raw, red ochre from deep within the cave, mixed only with water and applied by hand as humans have done since the beginning of time. The body is formed of the natural cracks and contours

of the rugged limestone bringing the cave itself to life. The ceiling of the cave is illuminated to show the warm red glow of the natural ochre deposits formed there when the earth was still young.

The artwork was made with the blessing of the family who own the cave and carry the ancient tradition of 'free mining' to produce small batches of red, orange, yellow and purple ochre for artists. No artificial binders or colourants were used, great care was taken to avoid historical markings and no natural habitats were disturbed in the production of this piece.'

STIK

Susie MacMurray, known for her architectural installations was inspired by a trip to the caves.

'When I visited Clearwell Caves I was particularly struck by the spot where people have thrown coins into a pool of water. Instead of remaining pristine and glittering they quickly become ossified by the minerals present, and are gradually absorbed back into the rock. This made me think about the ritual practices stretching back across many cultures of tossing



coins, and making offerings for good luck, wealth and health.

There is a poetic irony in toiled for wealth extracted from the earth being ultimately reclaimed, fossilised and absorbed back into the rock. Before long it is as if it never existed. It made me think about the length of a human life in relation to geological time. On that scale the glittering mirage of the pursuit of wealth, power over others and permanence could seem a fool's errand.'

Susie MacMurray

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One of the few galleries to specialise in sculpture and related drawings, **Gallery Pangolin** has an established reputation for works of quality and excellence by both Modern and contemporary artists.

Gallery Pangolin curates 'in house' exhibitions as well as exhibitions in other environments, responsible for the hugely successful Crucible exhibitions in Gloucester Cathedral as well as numerous other venues.

An illustrated catalogue accompanies the exhibition with an introduction by Rungwe Kingdon and photography by Steve Russell Studios.



'Lion' and 'Beast IX'
Lynn Chadwick



'Boar'
Terence Coventry



'Turning'
Charlotte Mayer

Venue address:

Clearwell Caves, The Rocks, Clearwell, Coleford GL16 8JR
Book now : www.clearwellcaves.com

Further information can be found on the gallery website:
www.gallery-pangolin.com or please contact Sally James or Cath Ingram on **01453 889765**

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