



World famous artist swaps New York for Wakefield

By Andrew Hutchi Nson
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Huma Bhabha visits Wakefield.

A world-famous artist will be swapping New York for Wakefield city centre as part of a major sculpture festival this summer. Huma Bhabha is creating a new sculpture which will be installed outside Wakefield Council's County near Wakefield College for three months.

It's all part of the free-to-enjoy Yorkshire Sculpture International – the UK's biggest sculpture festival of the year – and backed by Wakefield Council, Wakefield College, Arts Council England and Leeds 2023.

Last year the artist installed 'We Come in Peace' on the roof of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art overlooking the famous Manhattan skyline and her new sculpture for Wakefield will go on display from 22 to late September this year. **READ MORE:** This is why there could be a giant human anatomy sculpture on Briggate in Leeds this summer. This summer's event is being presented by four world-class art galleries which make up the Yorkshire Sculpture Triangle – The Hepworth Wakefield, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, The Henry Moore Institute and Leeds Art Gallery – who are collaborating to present a sculpture festival featuring major new commissions and exhibitions at each of the four partner venues and sculpture outdoors in Leeds and Wakefield.

Huma Bhabha's figurative sculptures have a timeless quality and appear to make connections between histories, languages and civilisations.

She added: "I don't find my figures unsettling – quite the opposite as I feel they are comforting and for sculpture should challenge, and also be available to all with art outdoors in the public realm making an important contribution to this debate. I hope people in Wake and beyond enjoy my new work positioned in Wakefield's civic quarter."

Coun Jacquie Speight, cabinet member for culture, leisure and sport at Wakefield Council, said:

“Wakefield is internationally-known for its contribution to sculpture and the festival is a great opportunity for residents and visitors to come to our city and experience this fascinating form of art.

“The outdoor Huma Bhabha sculpture coming to Wakefield has been described as challenging and thought-provoking, and is likely to get people talking and thinking about art and what it means to them. I’d encourage everyone to head in to Wakefield city centre and see it first hand before exploring the rest of the festival across the galleries.”

Lisa Macdonald, executive director for curriculum of Wakefield College, said: “Part of our passion is giving our students opportunities that they could not get elsewhere in order to educate and inspire them, which is why we are backing Yorkshire Sculpture International. Sculpture is part of the fabric of this city and provides the building blocks for education and inspiration for our ambitious students. The stories of the sculptors themselves often show how anyone with a passion for art can follow their dreams. Who knows, this may be the catalyst for the next Hepworth or Moore from right here in Wakefield.”

Jane Bhoyroo, Producer of Yorkshire Sculpture International, said: “We are delighted to have the backing of Wakefield Council, Wakefield College, Leeds 2023 and Arts Council England who are playing a part in making Yorkshire Sculpture International a reality, enabling us to commission internationally renowned artists to make new work in Yorkshire as well as supporting activity working with local communities and artists across the region to create sculpture. We look forward to celebrating the festival through the exhibitions and public programme and hope to encourage curiosity, debate and discussion about sculpture.”

To find out more about the festival visit: www.yorkshire-sculpture.org