

PRESS RELEASE

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Ana Maria Pacheco Sculpture: Norwich 2015

From Tuesday 17 March 2015

Four separate but simultaneous exhibitions, in four different Norwich locations, bring major sculptural work from Brazilian-born artist, Ana Maria Pacheco, to Norwich for the first time.

Curated for Norfolk Contemporary Art Society, in association with Pratt Contemporary and in partnership with Norwich University of the Arts, Norwich Cathedral, Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery and The Cathedral of St John the Baptist, Norwich, these four major exhibitions will explore the sculpture of Ana Maria Pacheco produced over the last four decades. Supported by Arts Council England.



Ana Maria Pacheco *The Banquet*, 1985 Sculpture, polychromed wood 183 x 400 x 250 cm

Although she has strong local connections to Norwich, the sculptor, Ana Maria Pacheco, was born in Brazil. Following degrees in both Art and Music, she taught and lectured for several years at Universities in Goiás before coming to London in 1973 on a British Council Scholarship to the Slade School of Fine Art. Since 1973 she has lived and worked in England. From 1985-9 she was Head of Fine Art at Norwich School of Art (now NUA), the first woman to hold such a post in the UK. In 1999 she received the prestigious Ordem do Rio Branco from the Brazilian Government. She received an Honorary Degree from the University of East Anglia and in 2003 was made a Fellow of University College London. From 1997 to 2000 she was Associate Artist at the National Gallery, London (the first sculptor to hold the post), a residency that culminated in a major exhibition of her work that toured on to further venues in the UK. She currently lives and works in London and Kent.

The variety of Pacheco's sculptural work is remarkable and with its tough humanist core, her project constantly provokes us to seriously question the true extent of our own humanity, and of our uses and abuses of power. Her work shows us how vulnerable we are. Large and enduring themes; violence, journeys, death, love, transformation and metamorphosis reflect her high seriousness, but at the same time her work is neither pompous nor devoid of humour. With a cast of characters that are betrayed, tortured, ecstatic, seductive, grotesque, bestial or divine, her work can arouse extreme emotions, a process that some concluded art no longer has the power to elicit.

The four venues showing her work have all got important associations for the artist. The two Norwich cathedrals reflect her upbringing in a Brazilian household with a catholic father and a protestant mother. The old Norwich School of Art, now NUA, was where she arrived to become Head of Fine Art, and the Castle was where she had a major exhibition that included *Man and His Sheep* and where she encountered Francis Cheetham and his alabaster reliefs. What follows are some notes on the work that can be seen in each of the four exhibition venues, highlighting the Norwich connections and the complex inter-relationships between the works.

At The Gallery, at Norwich University of the Arts



The Banquet (1985) is a large polychromed wood sculpture, completed the same year the artist moved to Norwich, when she was appointed by Bill English to succeed Ed Middleditch as Head of Fine Art at what was Norwich School of Art, now NUA. Pacheco was also awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the University in 2002 for her services to Fine Art and the University is very pleased to welcome her back to Norwich, especially as they celebrate their 170th anniversary this year. *The Banquet* has not previously been exhibited here in the City and it will be shown in The Gallery at NUA together with a related contextual work: *Box of Heads* (1983) – a loan from Towner, Eastbourne. The other half of the gallery will be dedicated to more recent large-scale graphic works including *Dark Event I-VII* (2007)—making a connection to the sculpture in the Cathedral— *An Ancient Dark Night Descended Upon My Soul I & II* Drypoint, 2010-12 and *Burial*, 2014. Smaller works will include a new portfolio of ten drypoints, *The Miraculous Journey of a Little Vixen* (2014), with an accompanying text by Marius Kociejowski.

The enormous seated black figures in *The Banquet*, taller than the standing viewers, compel them to join in, complicitly completing the circle around the defenceless offering lying on the table. With their sharp teeth and without necks, these are dark, formidable and threatening figures. And yet there is still a playfulness, a dry sense of humour about the work that reflects on the contradictions the artist feels about her migration, and her complex cultural inheritance.

Pacheco left Brazil in 1973, some time after the military regime had taken power in 1964, and many years before democracy was restored in the late 80s. The totalitarian repression affected artists, journalists and other civilian occupations. Vivian Schelling has written about the background to *The Banquet*:

“In *The Banquet* the figures have been equipped with a set of real teeth which are sharp and jut out from under the lips in a bestial manner. This virtual coming to life of the figure blurs the boundary between art and life and renders the vision of human relationships as a mutual devouring particularly



Ana Maria Pacheco *Box of Heads (Studies for The Banquet Sculpture)*, 1983
 Polychromed Wood, 92 x 71 x 18 cm.
 On loan from Towner, Eastbourne

disturbing. Cannibalism as a metaphor for human relationships is a central theme in Brazilian cultural history. It was originally developed in the ‘Cannibalist Manifesto’ in the 1920s by the Modernist poet Oswald de Andrade. Using the image of the ‘cannibalist’ Indian as a metaphor for the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised, it proposed that Brazil overcame its perennial cultural dependence on Europe by ‘devouring’ what Europe had to offer but in the process adapting to its local conditions.”

At Norwich Cathedral



Ana Maria Pacheco *Shadows of the Wanderer*, 2008 Sculpture, polychromed wood 260 x 390 x 605 cm

Shadows of the Wanderer is a large polychromed wood sculpture on a raised wooden base and it will be installed in the Cathedral's North Transept. It comprises ten over life-size figures, each carved from a single lime tree, that crowd close together and stand as looming shadows behind a young man carrying an older man on his back. The group recalls the tale of Aeneas, who carries his father Anchises from the ruins of burning Troy, but it also powerfully resonates with contemporary issues, particularly those of exile, asylum, migration and the displacement of people. First shown at the Aldeburgh Festival, it was later shown at St John's Church, Waterloo as part of their *Faith, Justice, City* project in 2010, and Neil McGregor, Director of the British Museum, had this to say about the work in a sermon at the church,

"The young man at the front of the sculpture group, fleeing from something we cannot see, carries nothing but his father - his past, his identity - and it was I think a stroke of genius that Ana Maria has carved both father and son out of the same piece of wood. This man literally cannot leave his past behind, but must take it with him. And that young man is about to step off the plinth and be among us. How are we going to react? Now, today, as this displaced man and his family arrive in our church? What will we do? Will we behave with justice and with love?" The work will remain in the Cathedral for six months.

In Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery



Ana Maria Pacheco *Enchanted Garden* 2014 Relief, Alabaster, tempera and gold leaf, 30 x 25 x 6 cm

Enchanted Garden, a new series of eight polychromed and gilded alabaster reliefs, reflects the artist's long interest in the famous medieval alabasters in the V&A and in the Castle's collection and her friendship with the late Francis Cheetham, Head of the Museum, who wrote the definitive book, *English Medieval Alabasters*. This will be the first public showing of these recently completed works and they can be seen on the balcony of the Norman Keep alongside some of the Castle's own alabasters.

As the artist has remarked, reliefs are peculiar objects,. Unlike in a conventional sculpture she had to worry about a background and deal with an implicit frame. She is using very traditional techniques;

gilding and gypsum based tempera paints, applied as thin glazes, decorate the surface of the alabaster, a soft, delicate and amorphous material. The subject for the whole *Enchanted Garden* series is the artist's homage to the power of the human imagination. The unicorn figure recalls Rilke's famous idea in *Sonnets to Orpheus*, that it was the vivid imagining alone of the unicorn that finally made it appear; it is not real but it exists! Pacheco grew up in a landscape in Goiás that was wild and magical too, and this rich landscape of mythical creatures appears in other works such as her *Sheba and Solomon* series of prints and paintings.

In the Cathedral of St John the Baptist



A large head in Portland stone, *Study for Requiem (John the Baptist I)*, 1989, will be exhibited in the North Aisle of the Nave. John the Baptist is one of the most popular subjects for paintings over hundreds of years and is also the subject of numerous baroque sculptures, often stripping the subject down to his head alone. In a Cathedral whose patron is such a familiar figure in Christian iconography, it is often easy to forget that the abuse of power wielded by Herod that led to the beheading of John the Baptist is not just a familiar biblical story that prefigured Christ's death but has contemporary relevance. The recent appalling use of ritual beheadings by Islamic State reminds us that death squads, regicide and French revolutionaries are nothing new and that abuses of power are a constant presence in our dangerous world. The calm, almost serene portrayal in this stone version of the martyr's head reasserts an underlying humanity and reverence for life, while in contrast, another version, *Study of Head (John the Baptist III)*, will be placed for a period, excluding Easter, on top of the font. More grizzly, yet more domestic in scale, this version has the severed head on a primitive wooden platter, with its blow-torched, charred and chain-sawn hair. Its inspiration lies in the artist's experience of Brazilian baroque and Amerindian sculptures. Small and large nails add an echo of the crucifixion to the hair. This is a revolutionary John, who spoke truth to Herod whose power then corrupted him.



Ana Maria Pacheco *Study for Requiem (John the Baptist I)*, 1989
Portland Stone, onyx, silver leaf Height: 48.3 cm (excluding base)



Ana Maria Pacheco *Study of Head (John the Baptist III)*
1992 Sculpture, polychromed wood. 31.8 x 50.8 x 74 cm

Notes to Editors

The four exhibitions are curated by Keith Roberts for the Norfolk Contemporary Art Society (NCAS), in association with Pratt Contemporary and in partnership with Norwich University of the Arts, Norwich Cathedral, Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery and The Cathedral of St John the Baptist, Norwich.

Timetable and Admission Times for the four venues:

The Gallery at NUA: 17 March to 25 April 2015.

The Gallery at NUA will show an early work, *The Banquet*, made in 1985 and completed in Norwich, along with a related contextual work and large scale prints.

Tue – Sat, 12 – 5 pm. Closed on Sun and Mon. ADMISSION FREE

Gallery will be closed from Friday 3 April to Wednesday 8 April inclusive.

Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery: 17 March to 31 August 2015.

Norwich Castle will show *Enchanted Garden*, a brand-new series of eight polychromed alabaster reliefs, in their Norman Keep.

Mon - Sat: 10 am - 4.30 pm. Sun: 1 - 4.30 pm

Norwich Cathedral: 17 March to 6 September 2015.

In its North Transept, Norwich Cathedral will show the 2008 sculpture, *Shadows of the Wanderer*.

Daily 7.30 am to 6.00 pm ADMISSION FREE

Recommended visiting times:

Monday to Saturday 9.30 am – 4.30 pm. Sunday 12 noon – 3 pm

The Cathedral of St John the Baptist, Norwich: 17 March to 6 September 2015.

The Catholic Cathedral of St John the Baptist will show *Study for Requiem (John the Baptist I)*, 1989 and *Study of Head (John the Baptist III)*, 1992.

Daily 9.00 am – 6.00 pm ADMISSION FREE (Tours extra)

Study of Head (John the Baptist III) is in the Baptistry from Tuesday 17 March - Sunday 31 May 2015, excluding Easter weekend and at times when the Baptistry is in use.

Study for Requiem (John the Baptist I) is in the North Aisle of the Nave: Tuesday 17 March - Sunday 6 September 2015

We acknowledge financial support from the following bodies:

Arts Council England
Norfolk Contemporary Art Society
East Anglia Art Fund
Norwich Cathedral Exhibition Fund
Norwich University of the Arts
The John Jarrold Trust

We also acknowledge enormous help and support from Pratt Contemporary

Associated events:

Norwich Castle in partnership with the Norfolk Contemporary Art Society

Ana Maria Pacheco in conversation with Colin Wiggins in the Castle's Town Close auditorium.
Friday 27 March 2015, 5.30 pm to 7.30 pm

Colin Wiggins is Special Projects Curator at the National Gallery. He is responsible for the Associate Artist scheme and curated Ana Maria Pacheco's National Gallery exhibition in 2000. Other artists he has worked with include Paula Rego, Peter Blake and Michael Landy.

5.30–6.15 Viewing of her new alabaster reliefs in the Castle Keep. Refreshments.
6.15–7.15 The Conversation will be held in the Castle's Town Close Auditorium
Seating is limited and this event is likely to be sold out, so pre-booking is essential.
Ticket/s can be reserved by emailing norfolkart@googlemail.com
£5.00 ncas members, £7.00 non-members, payment on the door

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Contact details of partners and individual Exhibitions:

NCAS www.n-cas.org.uk

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The GALLERY at NUA www.nua.ac.uk/thegallery/

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CASTLE MUSEUM & ART GALLERY www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/Visit_Us/Norwich_Castle

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THE CATHEDRAL OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, NORWICH www.sjbcathedral.org.uk/

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Ana Maria Pacheco Brief CV

Ana Maria Pacheco was born in Brazil in 1943. Following degrees in both Art and Music, she taught and lectured for several years at Universities in Goiás before coming to London in 1973 on a British Council Scholarship to the Slade School of Fine Art. She has lived and worked in England since 1973. From 1985-9 she was Head of Fine Art at Norwich School of Art; she has lectured widely and has been on various educational boards.

In 1999 she received the prestigious Ordem do Rio Branco from the Brazilian Government. She has received Honorary Degrees from the University of East Anglia and Anglia Polytechnic University and in 2003 was made a Fellow of University College London. In 2012 she was awarded the Comenda do Anhanguera by the State of Goiás, Brazil. From 1997 to 2000 she was Associate Artist at the National Gallery, London. This residency culminated in a major exhibition of her work that toured on to further venues in the UK. Pacheco has exhibited widely in the UK and abroad and her work is in a number of public and private collections.

Her work draws upon diverse sources: memories of the landscape of her childhood; the troubled and fantastic visions of Spanish art and literature, of Goya, Picasso and Federico García Lorca. She explores themes of performance and masquerade in sculptural settings of life-size mannequins. Her polychromed-wood carvings, notably *The Banquet* (1985) and *Man and His Sheep* (1989), place subjects in claustrophobic situations of entrapment and interrogation.

It is perhaps in her extensive series of intaglio prints, realised with consummate technical mastery, that Pacheco finds her most complete expression, for example the playful charade of *A Little Spell in Six Lessons* (dry point, 1988–9; boxes painted by artist, Norwich Castle Museum collection). Mythical and religious themes, usually given a dark edge, also figure in much of her work. Pacheco is also influential as an educator, advancing art as the product of extremes of experience, encountering and sharing the effects of continuous challenge.

Selected Solo Exhibitions:

- 1993 Oslo Kunstforening, Norway
- 1994 The Gas Hall, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery
- 1999-2000 National Gallery, London (touring)
- 2001 Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
- 2004 Brighton Museum and Art Gallery
- 2012-13 Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, Brazil
- 2012 Salisbury International Arts Festival – Sculpture in the Cathedral North Transept
- 2013 Edinburgh Art Festival 2013, Sculpture and Prints

Public Collections include Arts Council, British Museum; British Library; British Council; Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery; Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; Victoria and Albert Museum; Norwich Castle Museum; Towner, Eastbourne; Government Art Collection; Tate Gallery; Wolverhampton Art Gallery; The Fogg Museum at Harvard University; New York Public Library; Cincinnati Art Museum, Ohio; Setagaya Art Museum, Tokyo; Itaú Cultural, São Paulo.

Brief Bibliography:

- George Szirtes *Exercise of Power: The Art of Ana Maria Pacheco* Lund Humphries (2001)
- Frances Carey *The Prints of Ana-Maria Pacheco*. *Print Quarterly* (1988), Vol.5 p. 3
- Andrew Brighton *Ana-Maria Pacheco* (Sevenoaks, 1989)
- *Collected Essays: Texts on the Work of Ana Maria Pacheco*. Selected texts 1983 – 2004, Pratt Contemporary Art (2004)
- *Ana Maria Pacheco in the National Gallery*, foreword by Neil MacGregor, National Gallery Publications (1999)

Ana Maria Pacheco is represented by Pratt Contemporary.
www.prattcontemporaryart.co.uk/ana-maria-pacheco-2/

Further information about the partners:

Norfolk Contemporary Art Society: (www.n-cas.org.uk)

Since it was founded in 1956, to encourage the Norwich Castle Museum to acquire work in the modern idiom to balance its fine collections of the nineteenth-century Norwich School of painters, the Society has acquired its own art collection, which forms the basis of holdings in post-war art in the Castle. Among the items the NCAS has lent to the Castle are works by Edward Barker, Jeffrey Camp, David Carr, Prunella Clough, Alan Davie, Patrick George, Allen Jones, Peter Lanyon, Wyndham Lewis, F.E. McWilliam, Eduardo Paolozzi, Mary Potter, Anne Redpath, Alan Reynolds, Ceri Richards, Colin Self, Penny Slinger and Graham Sutherland. Among pieces that the Society has purchased and then given to the Norfolk Museums Service are works by Sandra Blow, Ian Chance, Derrick Greaves, Nigel Henderson, Howard Hodgkin, John Hoyland, L.S. Lowry, Tom Phillips, Mary Mellor, Derek Morris and Keith Vaughan. More recently, it has raised funds, often matched nationally pound-for-pound, to purchase sculpture for public places in Norwich. These include major pieces by George Fullard and Liliane Lijn, and a mural by Walter Kershaw. For the Castle Green, we commissioned a bronze, *Parrot Head* by the late Bernard Reynolds and the aluminium *Monument to Daedalus* by Jonathan Clarke. Mark Goldsworthy's *Will Kemp and his Men* was hewn from an oak trunk in situ in Chapelfield Gardens, and Ros Newman's *Bird Flight* is sited in the gardens of Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital.

NCAs has always organised and curated exhibitions in Norfolk (see www.n-cas.org.uk) In addition to our *NCA14* open exhibition in Norwich we have curated newly commissioned artworks that enliven the house and orangery at Felbrigg Hall, a National Trust property in North Norfolk. This was grant funded by ACE for £15,000. More details and images of our exhibitions can be found on our website at www.n-cas.org.uk. In the belief that raising the profile of the visual arts means effective networking, we collaborate closely with local galleries and other arts organisations such as the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norfolk Museums Service, Norfolk Open Studios, East Anglia Art Foundation, Norwich 20 Group, The Forum Trust and Norwich University of the Arts.

Pratt Contemporary (www.prattcontemporaryart.co.uk/)

Pratt Contemporary was founded in 1977 as a fine art printing and publishing studio and has evolved through a multitude of different activities including sculpture, painting and drawing. Since its inception the core activity has been printmaking and in 1987 Pratt Contemporary was the first studio invited to exhibit at the London Original Print Fair, the longest-running specialist print fair in the world, which is held annually at the Royal Academy of Arts. Since 1994 Pratt Contemporary has been a member of the International Fine Print Dealers Association (IFPDA) and exhibits at the annual New York Print Fair. They have represented Ana Maria Pacheco continuously since the late 70s and have published numerous books about her and her work.

Pratt Contemporary continues to collaborate with artists, presenting exhibitions of their work at museums, galleries and art fairs in the UK and abroad. Pratt Contemporary is at The Gallery, Ightham, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 9HH.

Keith Roberts, Curator.

Professor Keith Roberts OBE retired as Deputy Director of the John Innes Centre, Norwich in 2006. He is currently Emeritus Professor at the University of East Anglia. In 2009 he was elected to

membership of the International Association of Art Critics (AICA), and until last year he was Chair of the NCAS. He is currently working on the catalogue raisonné of Ana Maria Pacheco. He has curated other exhibitions, including *Making Faces* (2006, Wellcome Trust grant), *Photo-ID* (2009, Wellcome Trust grant) and wrote the two associated books. He also curated *Elements I and II* for the Forum Trust and the biennial *NCAS open exhibitions* at the Forum in 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014.

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