

Press Release

Date of Issue: Thursday, 5 March 2026

HOUGHTON HALL ANNOUNCES LARGEST EXHIBITION OF BRITISH SCULPTOR LYNN CHADWICK IN OVER TWO DECADES

‘Lynn Chadwick at Houghton Hall’
Saturday, 2 May 2026 – Sunday, 4 October 2026 / Houghton Hall, Norfolk



Lynn Chadwick, *Sitting Couple on Bench*, 1990. Install image of *Lynn Chadwick at Houghton Hall*, opening 2 May – 4 October 2026. Courtesy of the artist's estate/Pangolin London Photo: Steve Russell Studios.

Opening on 2 May 2026, Houghton Hall will present a major exhibition of sculpture by the celebrated post-war British artist Lynn Chadwick CBE (1914–2003). Spanning four decades of the artist’s career, from the 1950s to the 1990s, this new presentation will showcase previously unseen and rarely exhibited works alongside his best-known sculptures across the house and grounds of Houghton Hall. It will form the largest exhibition of Chadwick’s work in the UK in more than two decades, following the artist’s death and the retrospective at Tate Britain’s Duveen Galleries in 2003.

Curated by Pangolin London, the exhibition will present over 30 works across multiple exterior and interior sites at Houghton Hall, including early works, a powerful group of dynamic beasts, kinetic sculptures, and a selection of Chadwick's best-known paired figures ('couples'), all set in dialogue with the Neo-Palladian architecture and extensive parklands of Houghton Hall in Norfolk, England.

Chadwick came to sculpture through unconventional means, initially training and working as an architectural draughtsman before turning to mobile constructions for trade fairs. The success of these early mobiles and free-standing sculptures, two of which were shown at the Festival of Britain in London in 1951, encouraged him to pursue sculpture full time.

Unlike many of his contemporaries, Chadwick's practice was rooted in construction rather than modelling. Working primarily in bronze, he moved from kinetic mobiles in the late 1940s to the iconic angular figures — often paired and drawn from human and animal forms — from the 1950s onwards. He began by welding an iron armature, or 'space frame', which he then filled with Stolit, a man-made stone composed of gypsum and iron filings, building up the surface into a solid form. Starting from abstraction and gradually giving his figures a strong sense of life and movement, Chadwick's process reversed traditional sculptural methods. The result is a body of work marked by tension, attitude, and rich surface textures.

Chadwick came to international prominence in 1952, when he was included in the British Council's *New Aspects of British Sculpture* exhibition at the XXVI Venice Biennale. In 1956, he returned to the British Pavilion, where he won the International Prize for Sculpture, beating Alberto Giacometti. He remains the youngest sculptor ever to receive the award. Seventy years on, this anniversary offers a timely moment to revisit Chadwick's pivotal role in the history of post-war British sculpture.

Lord Cholmondeley, of Houghton Hall, said: "Sculpture has long been central to the story of Houghton Hall, and Lynn Chadwick's work brings a compelling new chapter to that history. As an artist deeply attuned to how sculpture inhabits architectural and outdoor settings, he feels especially well-suited to Houghton. His works will introduce fresh energy and movement, inviting visitors to experience the house, landscape and the spaces between them from striking new perspectives."

Sarah Marchant, daughter of Lynn Chadwick, said: "I have worked for the Estate of Lynn Chadwick for nearly 30 years. Initially, I worked with my parents and learnt a huge amount from both Lynn and Eva. Having been born at Lypiatt Park, I suppose that an understanding and appreciation of my father's work has always been part of my life. This exhibition at Houghton Hall is a unique opportunity to showcase my father's work, and I have deeply appreciated the professionalism of Pangolin London and Houghton Arts Foundation in bringing this exhibition together."

Daniel Chadwick, son of Lynn Chadwick, said: “Growing up at Lypiatt Park — the medieval manor house in Gloucestershire my father acquired in 1958, in the same decade in which he produced the earliest works in this exhibition — we were always aware of how deeply he considered the way his sculpture lived within the spaces of the house and landscape. It is especially rewarding to see the work placed in dialogue with the architecture and grounds at Houghton Hall, where that spatial sensitivity can be experienced in a new way.”

Polly Bielecka, Co-curator and Director of Pangolin London, said: “This exhibition offers a rare chance to experience a new presentation of one of the UK’s leading post-war sculptors for the first time in decades. Lynn Chadwick was a notably private artist who preferred not to work on commission, and as a result, few have had the opportunity to encounter such an extensive collection of his dynamic, large-scale sculptures outdoors. The remarkable setting of Houghton Hall provides a fresh and monumental context for rediscovering Lynn Chadwick’s work.”

Chadwick went on to secure an international reputation, with works in many of the great public collections of Europe, North and South America, and Japan. Many honours and awards also followed, including a CBE in 1964 and election as a Royal Academician in 2001.

Houghton Hall was built for Britain’s first prime minister, Sir Robert Walpole, in the 1720s and stands as one of the finest surviving examples of Palladian architecture in the UK. The house was designed by architects Colin Campbell and James Gibbs, with construction overseen by Thomas Ripley, Surveyor of the King’s Works. Sir Robert Walpole later engaged the influential architect and designer William Kent to decorate the lavish interiors. The estate entered the Cholmondeley family through marriage in 1797 and, more than two centuries later, remains their family home.

Since 2015, Houghton Hall has presented an ambitious programme of major contemporary art and sculpture exhibitions, attracting significant national and international attention. Recent solo exhibitions have included Richard Long (2017), Damien Hirst (2018), Henry Moore (2019), Anish Kapoor (2020), Tony Cragg and Chris Levine (2021), John Virtue and Ernst Gamperl (2022), Sean Scully (2023), Antony Gormley and Magdalene Odundo (2024), and Stephen Cox (2025), across the house and grounds.

Houghton Hall is home to a world-class Sculpture Park set within its gardens and grounds, bringing together both permanent and temporary installations by leading contemporary artists. The first commission, realised in 2000, was created by the American artist James Turrell. Since then, sculptures by major artists, including Antony Gormley, Richard Long, Sean Scully, Anya Gallaccio, Stephen Cox, Jeppe Hein, Rachel Whiteread, Claudio Parmiggiani, Ryan Gander, Phillip King, Nigel Hall and Richard Wentworth have joined the collection.

The exhibition is organised by the Houghton Arts Foundation, supported by Pangolin London and the Estate of Lynn Chadwick.

Exhibition Information:

Location: Houghton Hall, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE31 6UE

Please see website for opening days.

Tickets: £22 when booked online; £24 at the gate

Aged 18 and under go free. Students £10. Houghton Hall welcomes pre-booked groups, schools and colleges.

<https://www.houghtonhall.com>

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Press Kit including hi-res images available for download:

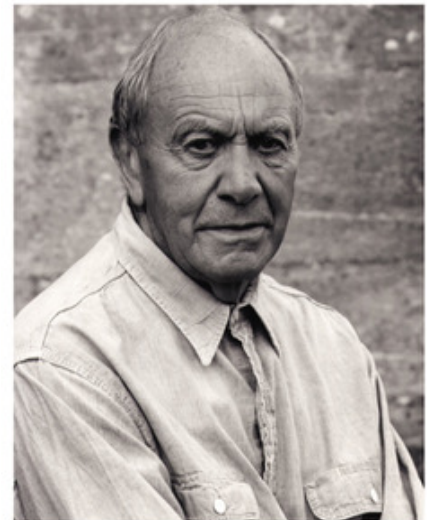
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NOTES TO EDITORS

Lynn Chadwick Biography

Lynn Chadwick CBE RA (1914, London – 2003, Gloucestershire) came to sculpture through unconventional means, initially working as an architectural draughtsman. He began his sculptural career making mobile constructions for building trade fairs and it was the resulting success of these early mobiles and stabiles, two of which were shown on the South Bank during the Festival of Britain in 1951, that first allowed him to seriously consider becoming a freelance sculptor.

Chadwick's unique approach was based on construction rather than modelling. First, he welded a linear armature or skeleton onto which he applied a skin, building up the surface to a solid form which would then be cast in bronze. By beginning with an abstract form or 'space frame' and investing it with an allusive vitality, Chadwick's working process is the reverse of most traditional approaches. The results are equally original, and each work has a carefully considered 'attitude' communicated through stance, texture and finish. Speaking on the process of making art, Chadwick noted:



"It seems to me that art must be the manifestation of some vital force coming from the dark, caught by the imagination and translated by the artist's ability and skill... whatever the final stage, the force behind it is... indivisible."

Chadwick first came to international prominence in 1952 when he was included in the British Council's New Aspects of British Sculpture exhibition for the 1952 Venice Biennale alongside Kenneth Armitage, Reg Butler, Bernard Meadows, Geoffrey Clarke, Robert Adam, William Turnbull and Eduardo Paolozzi,

a group whose work was labelled by the critic Herbert Read as 'the geometry of fear'. Representing Britain with a solo exhibition in the 1956 Venice Biennale, he went on to win the International Prize for Sculpture, beating the established favourite, Alberto Giacometti. At 42, he was the youngest sculptor to receive the prestigious prize. Many honours and awards followed this period, and his work was widely collected both privately and by major institutions globally.

In 1958, Chadwick bought an impressive but dilapidated medieval manor house outside Stroud, Gloucestershire. Blessed with space, but also faced with the challenges of maintaining a large old building, Chadwick was able to explore creating larger works that could interact with the landscape, later establishing his own personal sculpture park. These large works bridged figurative and geometric abstraction, with the motif of a 'Couple' or 'Watchers' allowing him to explore the relationships between faceless figures through body language. Another motif to which he was drawn was that of the 'Beast', which reflected the broader anxieties in the post-war age. In 1964, he was awarded a CBE and in 2001 was elected a Royal Academician.

During the 1990s, Chadwick revisited his signature beasts, recapturing the spirit of his earlier creations in polished stainless-steel panels. During this period, he also returned to the mobile, this time expanding it to a monumental scale. After a career spanning fifty years, he completed his final sculpture, *Ace of Diamonds*, in 1996. A major retrospective of his work was held at Tate Britain, London, in 2003. Sadly, Chadwick passed away five months before it opened.

The Houghton Arts Foundation

The Houghton Arts Foundation continues to build a collection of contemporary art at Houghton Hall, including a number of site-specific commissions. With links to colleges and public institutions across the region, the Foundation's aim is for Houghton Hall to become a focus for those who wish to see great art of our time in a historic setting.

Pangolin London

Pangolin London is a London-based gallery dedicated exclusively to sculpture, located in King's Cross. It represents established and emerging artists, as well as artist estates, and presents a year-round exhibition programme spanning historic British sculpture and contemporary practice. The gallery is closely affiliated with Pangolin Editions, Europe's leading sculpture foundry, and offers specialist expertise in the making, commissioning, and installation of sculpture.

Estate of Lynn Chadwick

Lynn Chadwick's estate is based in Gloucestershire, where the artist lived for nearly 50 years. It holds both original works and extensive archives.

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