

GARDEN OF REASON

A season of contemporary art in the garden

28 April – 23 September 2012

Ham House and Garden

Richmond Upon Thames TW10 7RS



National
Trust



heritage
lottery fund

ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

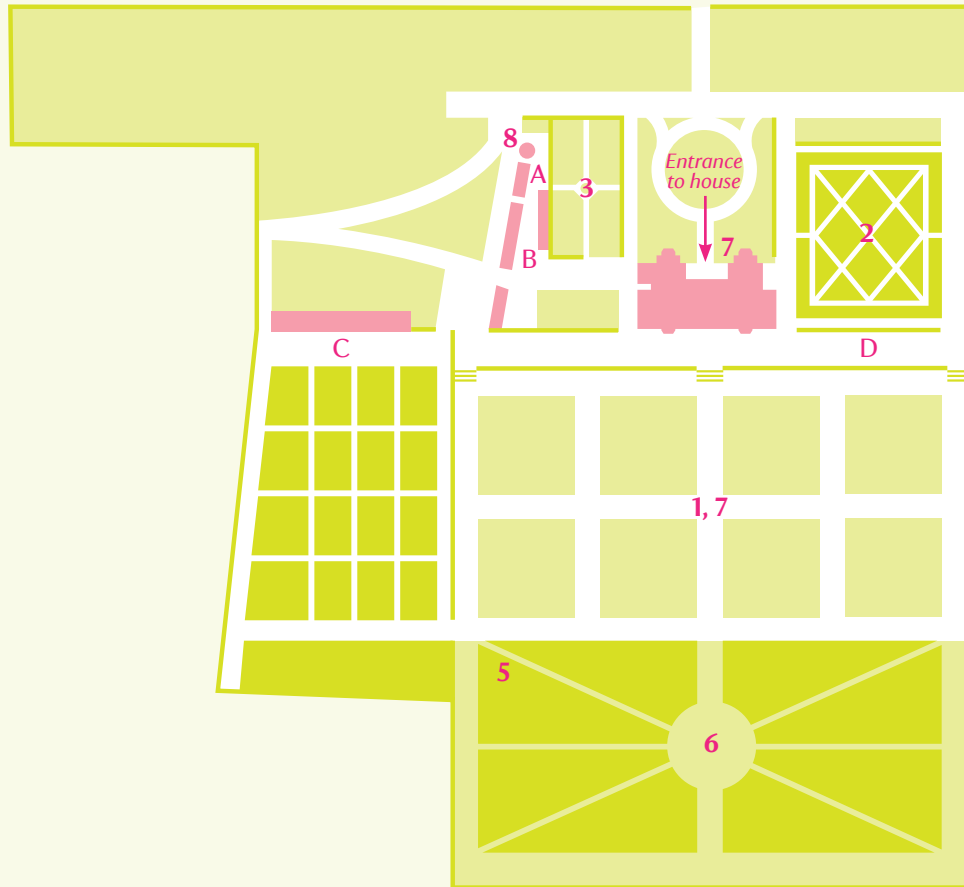
LOTTERY FUNDED



LONDON BOROUGH OF
RICHMOND UPON THAMES

GARDEN OF REASON

- A Resource Room
- B Shop / Toilets
- C Orangery Café / Toilets
- D Terrace Café



Artworks

- | | |
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Introduction

Welcome to **Garden of Reason**, an ambitious new initiative for Ham House and Garden, created in response to Trust New Art, a partnership between Arts Council England and National Trust to connect more people to National Trust sites through contemporary art and craft.

Seventeen contemporary artists, ranging from internationally acclaimed names to the less established, have been invited to make new work in response to the 17th-century garden, their owner Elizabeth Dysart, Duchess of Lauderdale, and the wider context of the period. The eight major commissions in the garden interpret themes such as Tulipmania, the lost monument, democracy in ruins, arcadia redesigned, and the impact of early scientific discovery by Galileo and Newton. Four live art commissions consider the status of cut grass, the relationship of Charles I to his whipping boy William Murray, Elizabeth Dysart as apothecary, and 17th-century music.

Ham House and Garden was at its peak at a time of great social and political change, which included the English Civil War, the Reformation and the development of scientific thought as instigated by Galileo, Newton and others. This period, known by some as the 'Age of Reason', was the start of a major cultural shift in Europe moving towards a more humanist society, based on scientific knowledge generated through empirical observation. The programme title 'Garden of Reason' focuses attention on the garden, and its rich history.

The interaction programme has provided Ham House and Garden with a very positive opportunity to build relationships with groups in the community. These groups have worked with artists and historians to produce art works interpreting the ideas within Garden of Reason.

Much thought has been given to providing visitors with background information about the programme. An artist's film documenting the ideas and working methods of the artists and historians can be seen in the resource room, and there is a weekend programme of talks and tours.

I offer you Garden of Reason, a programme that has given artists a unique context to make new work; and for the visitor, new perspectives on the historic gardens and greater understanding of the broader context of the 17th-century as narrated through sculpture, film, performance and sound. Garden of Reason asks you to consider what art is, what a garden is and where we are now.

I would especially like to thank the artists for their enthusiastic engagement with the project, and the staff and volunteers at Ham House and Garden.

Tessa Fitzjohn | Curator

Garden of Reason was curated and produced by Tessa Fitzjohn, in partnership with the staff and volunteers of Ham House and Garden.

Compass Alexandre da Cunha

Ready made object, metal | Courtesy the artist and Thomas Dane Gallery, London

Location 1: The plats



Alexandre da Cunha's work appropriates found objects and materials, which are playfully manipulated to create new forms and meanings, underpinned by a powerful aesthetic. He became widely known in 2003, with his participation in 50th Venice Biennale, where he presented the series *They Really Work for Me* (2000) and *Made to Measure* (2001–3), both groups of crutch-like objects. Visitors soon realized on closer observation that the contraptions would hinder walking, rather than help.

Da Cunha describes *Compass* as the invisible sculpture, functioning as it does as a utilitarian object. When joined together the objects create a pedestal inviting the visitor to climb to the platform, becoming part of the landscape and the artwork.

The title *Compass* suggests a play with ideas of orientation, seeking and navigation as well as the relationship between the sculpture and its location in the garden. *Compass* provides a modern response to the lost sculptures, as well as the 17th-century tradition of animating the gardens for the pleasure of visiting courtiers.

Born in Brazil and resident in the UK.

Only one person allowed on each ladder at any one time, except for children who must be accompanied by an adult.

Banquet of Sound Tom Dale

Cast concrete | Courtesy the artist and Poppy Sebire, London

Location 2: The cherry garden



The formal simplicity of Tom Dale's art is deceptive. Incisive and bold, his works raise questions around identity and ideology, taking delight in unravelling the initial assumptions we make about what we see before us and the nature of its appearance.

From *icave* (2010), an introspective 'gaudy boulder' of carnival masks, to *Vision Machines* (2011), a series of digital images which probe the political tensions simmering beneath the façade of a Polish housing estate, his works establish a platform from which we can re-examine the conditions of the present and the dynamics at work.

On first reading, this new work exposes the influence of the classical tradition of debate and discussion, much of which is explicit in the history of Ham House and its former residents. However, the arrangement of the lecterns and the techniques of their production remind us that this early idea of democracy was only ever intended for the benefit of a few and just how we adapt these ideas for the benefit of the many is a question very much of the present.

Born in Kendal and lives in London.

Please do not climb on the sculptures or touch the original statue of Bacchus.

The Theatre of Flora Kathleen Herbert

Ready made objects and text | Courtesy the artist and Danielle Arnaud Gallery, London

Location 3: The fountain garden



Kathleen Herbert's work explores history, site and context. She is interested in how we read different spaces and places around us as a form of spatial text. In particular she enjoys researching the apparently uninteresting or unsaid, which through further investigation reveal forgotten histories or unseen stories.

This is a new departure for Kathleen Herbert, using the medium of performance and documentary to question and engage with the historical and contemporary functions of a space. *Theatre of Flora* is created from propaganda pamphlets produced in Holland in 1637.

The work explores the synergy between the current financial climate and Tulipmania, when prized tulip bulbs became a measure of economic activity, and gross speculation caused fortunes to be made and lost – raising questions about the notion of value and risk.

Born in the UK and lives in London.

*Please do not touch this work,
or stray off the mown path.*

Arcadia Redesigned Harold Offeh

Glass fibre and costume | Courtesy the artist

Location 4: This work will move around the grounds, with four performances over the period of the exhibition.



Influenced by early filmed performance work from the 1970s, Offeh assumes the role of protagonist in his modestly produced video works that often use humour to address notions of desire, identity and the stereotyping of race within the everyday and in popular culture.

Harold Offeh's new work explores the notion of garden as playground for fantastical masques and entertainments, referencing 17th-century spectacles staged by Inigo Jones and others to provide diversions for the rich and influential to display their wealth and power.

In this work Harold Offeh will present audiences with an imagined Arcadia through four seasonal spectacles and a fictional installation of the 'Ham Hermit and grotto' with a supporting cast of players.

Born in the UK and lives in London.

Interaction Programme

Four projects where local people have been invited to collaborate, create, learn and participate in the Garden of Reason programme.

Animation Elizabeth Dysart's Garden

© Tim Mitchell



Presenting a living portrait of the historic garden of Ham House, the animation is inspired by historical research and features an original poem. The commission is complemented by a series of shorter animations produced by students mentored by the project team. Their work can be seen throughout the garden via QR codes. Local families spent time with the project team exchanging garden experience and knowledge as part of the commission.

Producers
Animate Projects

Artists
Carolina Melis, Simon Barraclough, Michela Bruno

Historian
Michael Ann Mullen

Community partners
Ham Multi-Cultural Women's Group, London College of Communication BA (Hons) Animation students

Digital artwork Urban interventions



© Tim Mitchell

Through the lens of contemporary life two groups of young people were invited to explore aspects of 17th-century leisure. The act of promenading (walking to be seen) inspired one group to employ their parkour skills to physically interpret the gardens, and a group of 17th-century musicians inspired the second group to create an original musical score that combines old with new.

Producers
Rolling Sound

Musical Score
Jonny Martin

Camera
Liane O'Toole

Editor
David Thompson

Historian
William Summers

Community Partners
Ham Youth Club, Grey Court School

Special thanks to: Elizabeth Lebas, Chloe Bird, Ellie Carpenter; Animate Projects: Abigail Addison, Gary Thomas; London College of Communication: Susie Wilkinson, Tim Shore; Ham Youth Club: Ben Skelton, Justin Johnson, Bobby Gordon Smith, Frankie Shrieves; Grey Court School: Paul Millar; Rolling Sound: Vincent Olutayo, Kris Turvey; SPEAR: Claire Granger

Artist's book The Gardens at Ham House

© National Trust | Photographer: Chloe Bird



The artist's book explores the gardens as they were during the lifetime of Elizabeth Dysart. The book takes the reader on a tour around the gardens highlighting features likely to have been important to the Duchess and illustrating plants known to have been grown by her. When developing the book the project team held workshops with service users from SPEAR.

Artist
Louise O'Reilly

Historian
Sally Jeffery

Community Partners
SPEAR a local charity working with homeless people

Short Film Commission
Sue Palmer, Artist and film maker
A documentary of the making of Garden of Reason.

Young curators Cultural event training



© National Trust

This programme is offering young people the opportunity to collaborate in the curation and production of a live event on 19 August 2012 that celebrates Garden of Reason. Participants are learning about the rich and vibrant history of the property and receiving mentoring and guidance from a cross section of specialists in the fields of heritage and arts.

Lead Curator
Marie McPartlin

Historian
Sophie Chessum

Participants
Young people aged between 18-24 years

Yew Tube Graeme Miller

Yew trees & optical lenses | Courtesy the artist and Artsadmin

Location 5: The wilderness



Graeme Miller is an artist, composer and theatre maker, who co-founded the influential Impact Theatre Co-operative in 1979. With the idea of being 'a composer of many things that may include music', he has made theatre, dance, installations and interventions.

Recent projects include *Beheld* (2006), an installation which maps places where stowaways have fallen from aircraft in Europe and North America, and *Moth Theatre* (2010), an outdoor theatre for moths, by moths, which was the first winner of the Latitude Contemporary Art Award.



Drawing on the optics and garden design of the 17th-century, *Yew Tube* is a pair of topiary telescopes, aligned to create a dialogue between passing viewers. *Yew Tube* offers a view into the wider context of the 17th-century and the work of early science, in particular Galileo and his experiments into new optics, which were not only reshaping religious and philosophical perspectives but were helping to generate new aesthetics in art and design.

Born in the UK and lives in London.

eight fculptures Simon Periton & Alan Kane

Mixed materials to include resin, printed vinyl, metal, painted wood and ready made objects

Courtesy the artists, Sadie Coles HQ, and Ancient & Modern, London

Location 6: The wilderness



The Asbo Mystery Play and other public works shown in June 2011 at Sadie Coles HQ, was a return to Simon Periton and Alan Kane working together. As the title suggests, the works are a playful response to society, and the 'public monument'. Works such as *Disco Drains for European City* (2011), and *Pavilion Model* (2011), a baseball cap held up by six Doric columns, propose witty alternatives to a rather cautious tradition of municipal public art. Periton and Kane will re-create the missing sculptures in the wilderness.

The archive provides evidence for '10 statues of lead, whereof two upon stone and wooden pedestals' including copies of Giambologna's *Mercury and Fortuna* (which have already been replaced by National Trust), as well as the celebrated Antique *Venus de' Medici*.

eight fculptures will replace the originals, working from themes loosely suggested by them and their loss, forging relationships between historical and contemporary sculpture, motifs explored in the artists' previous works and other elements from history and art as seem appropriate or interesting.

The tone of the works will imply an ad hoc though well intentioned effort to 'fix' this problem delivered through a jumble of ideas, styles, techniques and references, unified with a series of new wooden plinths suggested by the 'orringe' boxes which supported the original sculptures.

Weight of Air Ruth Proctor

Helium and air filled balloons and chalk | Courtesy the artist and Hollybush Gardens, London

Location 7: The plats, and the porticoes by the front door of the house



Ruth Proctor trained as a painter and retains a strong interest in formal values. She says that performing as an ice skater in her teens has given her an abiding interest in the relationship between how the figure plus movement manifests in space. This interest, combined with her knowledge of constructivist theatrical performance, has provided a new direction for her work: choreographing installations for performance or performance as a quietly dramatic moment in time.

The title *Weight of Air* is a reference taken from experiments Galileo made on the weight and speed of objects when dropped, and ideas about air pressure and atmosphere.

This understanding has informed two corresponding art works. The first consists of two printed helium and air filled balloons, captured and contained within the porticoes at the main entrance. The second work comprises drawings in chalk on four of the eight plats. Both works have been inspired by the Coade stone pineapples on the south terrace, and reference Charles II who was presented with the first pineapple grown in England, immortalised in a painting by Henry Danckerts (c1675).

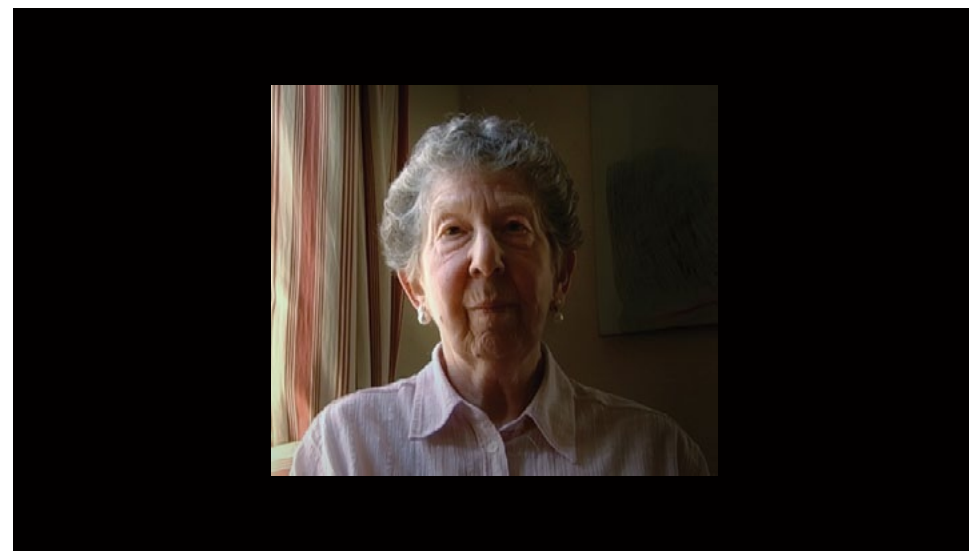
Born in the UK and lives in London.

*Please do not touch
the inflatable sculptures.*

I know what it's like Daphne Wright

Film (six minutes) | Courtesy the artist and Frith Street Gallery, London

Location 8: The ice house. This is a silent viewing, visitors will be limited to small groups and asked to wait for the start of film. Please move away promptly at the end to allow the next group to approach.



Daphne Wright's art is the result of a relentless curiosity into the way in which a range of languages and materials can create an involvement with often unspoken human preoccupations. Casting, sound recording, filmmaking and drawing result in rigorous series of works that explore a range of subjects from prayer, literature and song to ageing and death.

The film consists of an elderly woman's performance of six disrupted statements to camera; it is a haunting evocation of memory, heartache and isolation. Wright's research for this work led her to examine the representation of motherhood, guilt, love and vengeance in literature, theatre and art.

The Medea, for example, (a painting of which hangs in Elizabeth Dysart's private closet) is a Greek tragedy that tells the story of a woman who, betrayed by her husband, seeks revenge by killing her own children. The layered script has two main components; the first is based on Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth speech in which she goads her husband to murder, and the second is abstracted speech. The phonic sounds evoke the acquisition of letter sounds taught in schools or the gradual deterioration of language abilities such as repetition, digression and withdrawal associated with Alzheimer's. The final moments of the film heighten our discomfort even further.

Born in Ireland and lives in Bristol.

*With special thanks to Pameli Benham,
Mino de Francesca and Jo Lanyon*

Live Art Commissions

Manicure

Caroline Wright

The plats

Caroline Wright often makes work in response to specific sites, for audiences of one or one hundred, in materials as diverse as glass and gold or the human body. Wright has been awarded an Artsadmin bursary, and is an Arts Council England Escalator artist.

Manicure will recreate the past endeavour of the garden staff; creating a lawn by cutting the grass by hand, symbolizing the power of the aristocracy and the status in the 17th-century of a well trimmed lawn.

Earthly Matters – Buried in the Heart

Zierle & Carter

The still house

Zierle & Carter's work critically examines what it means to be human, addressing notions of belonging and the transformation of limitations. Site and context specific, their work has been exhibited nationally and internationally in galleries as well as in public spaces. They have deployed interactions in busy shopping areas and city parks, process based works in libraries, tunnels and bunkers, as well as wilderness interventions.

Taking inspiration from Elizabeth Dysart's expertise in making herbal remedies, Zierle & Carter will take the audience on a philosophical exploration through the gardens, distilling thoughts on freedom and ways of giving birth to new desires. The artists, supported by visitors, will create a potion that will encapsulate all contributions to be used in the day's final act.

Baroque Station / Whipping Boy-Man

Steven Paige

Promenade piece – this work will move around the garden

Steven Paige's practice embodies performative works, installation and video. His recent exhibition, *The ties that bind me to my brothers...* (2011) was pick of the week in *The Guardian*, a performance and video of a three minute re-enactment of 1987 US adult film *In Hot Pursuit*, where two actors negotiate a fraternal interchange and comradery.

A tender conversation between the young King Charles I and his 'whipping boy' William Murray, *Whipping Boy-Man*, will be transmitted across Ham House Gardens, to include pamphlets extolling the virtues of 'How to rule', 'Keeping your head' and 'Graceful Ornamentation and Statues for Grounds and Gardens' presented through *Baroque Station*, a playful temporary structure and centre for the latest in 17th-century topics.

Music to walk to

Toby Huddleston

Promenade piece – this work will move around the garden

Toby Huddleston is a contemporary artist who also works on curatorial projects.

He recently undertook three temporary public commissions; *Exchange* Radical Moments with LCCA in Riga, and *Iteration: Again* in Tasmania in 2011.

Music to walk to invites the visitor to experience a musical composition in a different way whilst walking through the gardens. In this new work, Huddleston provides an alternative tour of the garden based on soundtrack, encouraging an emotive and transcendental journey rather than focusing on historical narrative.

Weekend Programme

All events are free and start at 2.30pm

29 April

Curator's tour with Tessa Fitzjohn

5 May

12/13 May

20 May

26 May

Talk Kathleen Herbert, Artist

Performance *Manicure* Caroline Wright

Curator's tour with Lisa Panting, Director Hollybush Gardens

Talk *Culture gone to seed* Gabriel Coxhead, Writer and Critic, and Tom Dale, Artist

9 June

23 June

Talk Ruth Proctor, Artist

Talk Alexandre da Cunha, Artist; and Tom Dingle, Assistant Director, Thomas Dane Gallery

23 June

30 June

Performance *Midsummer Spectacle* Harold Offeh & cast

Talk Anne Goldgar, Historian and author of *Tulipmania*, and Kathleen Herbert, Artist

7/8 July

14 July

21 July

Performance *Earthly Matters – Buried in the Heart* Zierle & Carter

Curator's tour with Tessa Fitzjohn

Talk Harold Offeh, Artist

4 August

11/12 August

18 August

19 August

Curator's tour with Tessa Fitzjohn

Performance *Music to walk to* Toby Huddleston

Performance *Great Father Thames Spectacle* Harold Offeh & cast
Young curators' late event

8/9 September

8 September

Performance *Baroque Station / Whipping Boy-Man* Steven Paige

Talk Ilsa Consell, Author of *Malicious Damage*, the 'defaced' library books of Joe Orton and Kenneth Halliwell; followed by
Talk Simon Periton & Alan Kane, Artists

9 September

Talk Prof Robert Iliffe, Professor of History of Science, University of Sussex and Ruth Proctor, Artist

23 September

Closing event *Autumn Harvest Spectacle* Harold Offeh & cast
23 September is London Open House and entry to Ham House and Garden is free on this day

Programme correct at time of going to press.

Please visit our website for additions to the schedule: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hamhousegardenofreason

Opening Times

28 April – 31 May 11am – 5pm
 2 June – 16 September 11am – 6pm
 17 – 23 September 11am – 4.30pm

The exhibition is open every day except Fridays.

Last admission each day is half an hour before closing.

Admission – garden ticket (National Trust members free)

Adult £3.65 | Child £2.45 | Family £9.75 *Family tickets include two adults and two children*

Getting Here

Train & tube: Richmond
 Bus: 371, 65 from Richmond or Kingston
 Car: Free parking in the council car park just 400m away
 Disabled parking on site

- The Orangery Café is open for refreshments
- Our shop stocks a range of gifts and other items
- Level access for wheelchair users

Website www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hamhousegardenofreason

Blog www.gardenofreason.tumblr.com

Facebook www.facebook.com/GardenofReason

Twitter @GardenofReason

Credits and Acknowledgments

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