

Press release: November 2016

Anthony Caro's work and legacy - examining the role of the studio assistant

Artist Boss exhibition at the New Art Centre, Roche Court questions the status of production, originality, authenticity, and authorship within twentieth-century British sculpture

A new exhibition opens on 19th November 2016 to accompany the *Artist Boss* pioneering creative research project, which explores the relationship between artist and assistant. Initiated by Bath Spa University and Norwich University of the Arts, *Artist Boss* specifically focuses on the prolific sculptor Sir Anthony Caro (1924 – 2013), investigating the 'traditional assistants' role, its impact on learning and artistic careers.

The exhibition runs at the New Art Centre until 29th January 2017. It will feature some of Caro's work and will provide the public with a unique opportunity to see how artists unified by the forefather of British sculpture explore the language of sculpture today.

Four assistants from five successive decades of employment will be represented with recent works, alongside pieces by Caro that were made during their respective eras in the studio. The works of Guy Martin, John Gibbons, Ian Dawson and John Wallbank will all demonstrate the different ways in which the evolution of sculptural language has been negotiated.

Artist Boss is led by Bath Spa University's Senior Lecturer in Fine Art, Jenny Dunseath, who was herself a studio assistant to Sir Anthony Caro. The project takes an uncharted approach on the reading of Caro's work and legacy in sculpture today. There will also be an associate exhibition at Bath Spa University's Bath School of Art and Design, starting on the 6th December.

The exhibition is accompanied by a book, published by Wunderkammer Press and co-edited by Dr Mark Wilsher, subject leader of MA Curation at Norwich University of the Arts. It gives unique insights into the experiences of working with Caro through a series of interviews with his studio assistants. Collectively, they offer a range of perspectives on the frequently contentious and widely discussed role of the artist's assistant. It inquires into the role of artists' assistants, exploring the different ways in which the evolution of sculptural language has been negotiated. This is the first and only extended engagement with the sculptor who is regarded as the 'greatest of his generation' and his studio assistants.

Commenting on the project, Jenny Dunseath said: "There are collaborative elements which often influence and change the course of an artist's work. We set out to provide an intimate and frank interpretation of the artist and ways of working, gaining some wonderful insights from those closest to Caro in the studio and exploring how the experience has shaped their careers.

"At Bath School of Art and Design we encourage our students to consider the effect that the influence of others has on their artistic work. Research such as this not only opens up access to new work and engages new audiences with sculpture, it also stimulates new possibilities and creative thinking for students, academics, artists, and the public."

Stephen Feeke, Director of the New Art Centre, said of the project: "'*Artist Boss* explores a fascinating aspect of Caro's enduring legacy: the influence he had on a younger generation. Caro always struck me as someone who was genuinely interested in the work of other artists, particularly

those who worked with him on his own sculpture; he valued their opinions and encouraged their contributions but also wanted to know what they were making for themselves. His studio was remarkable for its sense of community and camaraderie.”

Tim Marlow, Artistic Director at the Royal Academy of Arts who contributed a foreword for the publication, said of the project: “*Artist Boss* offers a fascinating perspective which reveals the complex and often challenging systems behind the work. A rare opportunity to gain access to the artist’s thought processes, it illustrates how ideas can take shape collaboratively whilst raising important questions on issues such as individuality and authenticity of the pieces. It is a fresh and engaging way to celebrate new and emerging sculptors together with a distinguished artist from the past.”

For more information about Artist Boss click [here](#).

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Further information and image permission

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Notes to Editor

About Artist Boss

The book:

Artist Boss: Anthony Caro’s studio assistants and issues of legacy in British sculpture

Softback, 192 pages with 91 full colour photographs of historic and contemporary artworks
Published by Wundekammer Press

Forewords by Tim Marlow and Karen Wilkin. Essays by Jenny Dunseath and Dr Mark Wilsher, Dr Michael Petry, Professor K Patricia Cross and Sam Cornish.

Contributors: Anthony Caro, Guy Martin, James Wolfe, Willard Boepple, Andre Fauteux, John Gibbons, Jon Isherwood, Shaun Cassidy, Ian Dawson, Beth Cullen-Kerridge, Gavin Morris, Tim Peacock, Hywel Livingstone, Jonathan Gilderleeves, William Fausset, Patrick Cunningham, Olivia Bax, Neil Ayling and John Wallbank. The book is available to purchase on Amazon [here](#)

Exhibitions:

The New Art Centre, Roche Court 19th Nov 2016 – 29th Jan 2017

Presents work by Anthony Caro and former studio assistants Guy Martin, John Gibbons, Ian Dawson and John Wallbank.

Bath School of Art and Design 6th Dec 2016 – 20th Jan 2017

Presents documentation and footage of the Artist Boss project.

The Cut

Pool Group: Neil Ayling, Claire Baily, Olivia Bax, Rafael Blasco-Ciscar, Jean-Philippe Dordolo, Jenny Dunseath, Sophie Hoyle, Hywel Livingstone and John Wallbank.

Website

The Artist Boss website chronicles the research project and provides a range of learning resources: www.artistboss.org.uk

About Bath Spa University

Bath Spa University is where creative minds meet. Offering a wide range of courses across the arts, sciences, education, social science and business to 7,000 students, the University employs outstanding creative professionals, which support its aim to be a leading educational institution in creativity, culture and enterprise.

Based in stunning countryside just a few minutes from a World Heritage City, Bath Spa University ensures its students graduate as engaged global citizens who are ready for the world of work. In fact, 93 per cent of graduates find themselves in work or further study within six months.

www.bathspa.ac.uk

Norwich University of the Arts

Norwich University of the Arts (NUA) is an independent specialist arts, design and media University with a 170 year reputation for excellence.

NUA is dedicated to providing vocational, practice based courses, which allow students to enter an exciting and challenging community of artists, designers and makers who share their passions and interests. Whilst the institution's history can be traced back to 1845, it is contemporary and forward thinking with industry standard facilities in its city centre campus. Today NUA continues to thrive as an established University sector institution, with a national reputation for excellence and a strong ethos as a creative academic community. www.nua.ac.uk

Sir Anthony Caro

Sir Anthony Caro (1924–2013) studied sculpture at the Royal Academy Schools and worked as assistant to Sir Charles Wheeler and Henry Moore. He came to public attention with a show at the Whitechapel Gallery in 1963. Caro taught at St Martin's School of Art in London (1953–81). Major exhibitions include retrospectives at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1975); Trajan's Market, Rome (1992); the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo (1995); Tate Britain, London (2005); and three museums in Pas-de-Calais, France (2008), to accompany the opening of his Chapel of Light at Eglise de Saint-Jean-Baptiste, Bourbourg. He was awarded many prizes, including the Praemium Imperiale for Sculpture in Tokyo in 1992 and the Lifetime Achievement Award for Sculpture in 1997. He held many honorary degrees from universities in the UK, USA and Europe. He was knighted in 1987 and received the Order of Merit in May 2000. Retrospective exhibitions include Museo Correr, Venice, (2013); and Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Leeds Art Gallery and The Hepworth Wakefield (2015).

The New Art Centre

The New Art Centre was founded in 1958. The original gallery was located in Sloane Street, London. In 1994 it was relocated to Roche Court in Wiltshire, a nineteenth-century house in parkland. The existing house and Orangery were built in 1804. Together with the grounds, Roche Court is now used as a sculpture park and educational centre where work is shown inside and out providing a survey of sculpture for the enjoyment of the public. The New Art Centre represents various artists' estates including Barbara Hepworth, Kenneth Armitage and Ian Stephenson.

The gallery at Roche Court is the venue for a changing programme of exhibitions. It was designed by architect Stephen Marshall, opened in autumn 1998 and has won six architectural awards including the RIBA Stephen Lawrence Prize for best small building. www.sculpture.uk.com