Yorkshire Contemporary



Yorkshire Contemporary is excited to announce the Jerwood Sculpture Award, which recognises five outstanding early-career sculptors from the region.

With generous support from Jerwood Foundation, the Award builds on the county's significant sculptural legacy by championing the next generation of emerging artists as part of Yorkshire Sculpture International 2027.

The Jerwood Sculpture Award will enable the artists to create ambitious new works to be unveiled in solo presentations across partner venues in Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield, representing all five districts of West Yorkshire. In addition, the artists will take part in a paid professional development programme including guidance, mentorship and networking with leading industry professionals. Taking place during the UK's largest dedicated sculpture festival, the Award will provide a platform to propel Yorkshire's most exciting sculptural voices onto the national and international stage, recognising emerging talent across the region.

The project partners, **The Art House**, **Bradford District Museums & Galleries**, **Our Cultural Heart (Kirklees Council)**, **The Piece Hall**, **South Square Centre**, **University of Huddersfield**, **Yorkshire Contemporary** and **Yorkshire Sculpture International**, selected five early-career artists whose practices demonstrate exceptional talent, rigour and readiness for a major public commission. The Award will provide both a timely opportunity to showcase their practice and a step change in their careers.

We are delighted to name artists **Bijan Amini-Alavijeh, William Braithwaite**, **Katrina Cowling**, **Aliyah Hussain** and **Lucie Kordačová** as recipients of the Jerwood Sculpture Award.

Bijan Amini-Alavijeh (he/him) is an artist born in Dewsbury and currently working in Wakefield and Hull. Amini-Alavijeh's practice investigates recurring patterns and shapes through drawing, sculpture and installation. Inspired by geometry, nature and architecture, he uses a range of techniques and materials to create colourless abstract forms which together build balance and tension.

Recent exhibitions include *something soft suspends*, GLOAM Gallery, Sheffield (2026), *a glimmer*, The Art House, Wakefield (2024) and *Capital P, Capital ISIN*, Castlefield Gallery, Manchester (2017).

William Braithwaite (he/him) is an artist born and based in Doncaster. Braithwaite's practice examines the relationship between sculpture and architecture. Considering materials, forms, scale and context, his works often respond to architectural ideas, plans or specific sites and buildings. Sculptures serve as a tool to examine the aesthetic and spatial qualities of architecture, reflecting on the differences and similarities between the two disciplines.

Recent exhibitions include *New Contemporaries*, South London Gallery and MIMA, Middlesbrough (2025-6), *Sculptors Show*, Doddington Hall (2025) and *Reduct,* Royal Scottish Academy Edinburgh (2020).

Katrina Cowling (she/her) is an artist, born in Bradford and currently working in London. Her practice shifts between formal sculpture, bricolage, kinetics, stained glass, drawing and installation. Rooted in play, Cowling's sketch-like works combine intricately made sculptures with found everyday objects. She is concerned with sincerity, stupidity, failure, and pathos in life and art, and how affect can be communicated through objects.

Cowling has previously exhibited at *If Not Now, When? Generations of Women in Sculpture in Britain, 1960-2022*, The Hepworth, Wakefield and Saatchi Gallery, London (2023) and *Of Brightwork and Edgelands*, Herbert Art Gallery, Coventry Biennial (2019). She was appointed the Kenneth Armitage Sculpture Fellow at Leeds Arts University (2021-3).

Aliyah Hussain (she/her) is an artist born in Blackburn and based in Todmorden, West Yorkshire. Hussain works with ceramics, sound and collage, often using clay to make sculptures inspired by musical instruments. Her work draws inspiration from feminist science fiction, speculative storytelling and ecology, incorporating personal and historical references from a decolonial lens.

Recent exhibitions include *Plant Dreaming*, Leeds Art Gallery (2025-6), *Forbidden Territories*, The Box, Plymouth and The Hepworth, Wakefield, (2024-5) and *She Was Waiting For Her Roots*, the Lowry, Salford (2024). Between 2023-25 she undertook an artist fellowship in the ceramics department at the University of Lancashire.

Lucie Kordačová (she/her) is an artist born in Czechia and currently working in Sheffield. Kordačová's practice responds to specific sites through sculpture, moving image, costumes and performance. Her work focuses on the transformation of landscapes and species caused by human intervention. She examines the stories, myths, traditions, rituals and objects that relate to these surroundings, often working with textiles as well as reclaimed and foraged materials.

Kordačová has recently exhibited at Royal Botanical Gardens Kew (2026), Yorkshire Artspace, Sheffield (2026) and Czech National Gallery, Prague (2026). She won the Deptford X Fringe Award in 2016.

The commissions will be on display in free presentations across West Yorkshire in partnership with organisations throughout the region, all committed to the next generation of innovative sculptural practice: Bradford District Museums & Galleries and South Square Centre (Bradford), The Piece Hall (Calderdale), Our Cultural Heart (Kirklees Council) and University of Huddersfield (Kirklees), Yorkshire Contemporary (Leeds) and The Art House (Wakefield). Full details of dates and venues to be announced early next year.

Hayley Dixon, Director of Yorkshire Contemporary, said
"In a year when attention rightly returns to celebrate our region's history of sculptural excellence, Yorkshire Contemporary is thrilled to platform five exceptional emerging artists as part of Yorkshire Sculpture International 2027. The Jerwood Sculpture Award builds on Yorkshire Contemporary and Yorkshire Sculpture International's longstanding commitment to supporting emerging regional practice, made even more impactful through our partners' collaboration. By offering major solo presentations and tailored professional development, we recognise and champion these distinct artistic voices, propelling them onto the national and international stage and, in turn, positioning West Yorkshire as a centre of pioneering contemporary art practice. Our thanks to Jerwood Foundation for supporting our vision."

Godfrey Worsdale, Director of the Henry Moore Foundation, on behalf of Yorkshire Sculpture International, said
"Yorkshire Sculpture International has always been dedicated to celebrating the rich history and vibrant future of sculpture across our region. Partnering with Yorkshire Contemporary to host the Jerwood Sculpture Award as part of the 2027 festival allows us to bring fresh, ambitious, and diverse artistic voices into direct dialogue with our communities and international audiences. We look forward to seeing these five talented artists shape the future of contemporary sculpture right here in West Yorkshire."

Lara Wardle, Executive Director and Trustee of Jerwood Foundation, said
"Empowering talented early-career artists at pivotal moments in their development lies at the heart of Jerwood Foundation's philanthropic mission. Through this new partnership with Yorkshire Contemporary, the Jerwood Sculpture Award will recognise and champion exceptional emerging talent, providing five outstanding sculptors with funded

commissions, dedicated mentorship, professional development opportunities and high-profile presentations across West Yorkshire to help them take the next step in their careers."

Notes to Editors

Jerwood Sculpture Award is presented by Yorkshire Contemporary and delivered in partnership with The Art House, Bradford District Museums & Galleries, Our Cultural Heart (Kirklees Council), The Piece Hall, South Square Centre and University of Huddersfield as part of Yorkshire Sculpture International 2027. Funded by Jerwood Foundation.

High-resolution press images can be downloaded from Yorkshire Contemporary's website.

Full exhibition dates to be announced in early 2027.

For further information and images, please contact:
Helina Bassey, Marketing and Development Coordinator, Yorkshire Contemporary
helinabassey@yorkshirecontemporary.org

Jo Craven, Communications Advisor
jo@jocraven.com

Yorkshire Contemporary
Yorkshire Contemporary is an arts organisation based in Leeds, working across West Yorkshire to create exciting opportunities for people to experience ambitious and inspiring contemporary art for free. We provide needs-led professional development for early-career artists, particularly voices less likely to be heard, building national and international networks to help talent thrive. Working beyond traditional gallery walls and leading the sector in play-based approaches to contemporary art, we champion art and play to spark curiosity, bring new perspectives, and position West Yorkshire as a celebrated hub of creative excellence.
www.yorkshirecontemporary.org | @yorkshirecontemporary

Yorkshire Sculpture International
Yorkshire Sculpture International (YSI) is a festival of sculpture across West Yorkshire. It was founded by four of the region's leading art institutions: Henry Moore Institute, Leeds Art Gallery, The Hepworth Wakefield and Yorkshire Sculpture Park. Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore grew up in West Yorkshire and began their careers here. YSI connects that history with the sculptors working today, to show the region as the home of sculpture. Together the founding partners look after world-class collections, and their exhibitions reach 750,000 people a year.

The first YSI took place in 2019 across Leeds and Wakefield. YSI returns from July to November 2027 and will then take place every three years. The 2027 festival is the first to reach all five districts of West Yorkshire: Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and

Wakefield. It is delivered with the YSI Partner Network of more than 40 galleries, artist-led spaces, universities, community groups and venues across the region.

YSI is shaped by what sculptors in Yorkshire need. Since 2019 the partnership has directly supported 67 artists through its Associate Artist programme and the YSI Sculpture Network, a professional development programme for artists across the region who work with sculpture.

YSI is supported by Arts Council England and Henry Moore Foundation.
yorkshire-sculpture.org | @ysi_sculpture

Jerwood Foundation
Established in 1977 for John Jerwood MC (1918-1991) by Alan Grieve CBE (1928-2025), **Jerwood Foundation** is a UK charity committed to supporting excellence and emerging talent in the arts in the UK. Alan Grieve served as Chairman for over 30 years and the organisation is now led by Lara Wardle, Executive Director and Trustee. To date, Jerwood Foundation has committed over £3,423,977 to support arts in the UK.

2027 marks Jerwood Foundation's 50th anniversary. This significant milestone provides an opportunity to celebrate five decades of partnerships and programmes and to reflect on the Foundation's contribution to cultural life in the UK. Throughout the year, we will be marking the anniversary with a range of significant grants, initiatives and opportunities to share Jerwood Collection, highlighting both the Foundation's legacy and its continued investment in the arts.

Jerwood Foundation owns the **Jerwood Collection** of modern and contemporary art, and an important part of Jerwood's philanthropic mission is delivered by the Collection through its loaning programme and promotion of a broader understanding, interpretation and enjoyment of art.

Also included in the Jerwood group of organisations is **Jerwood Space**, which was Jerwood's first major capital project when established by Jerwood Foundation in Southwark in 1998. Jerwood Space is a dedicated rehearsal space providing theatre, musical theatre, opera and dance companies with an outstanding environment within which to create their work.
www.jerwood.org

The Art House
The Art House brings artists, communities and curious minds together through a year-round programme of free exhibitions, events, workshops and professional development opportunities.

Visitors can explore the free public gallery, enjoy a coffee, browse the shop or take part in one of the many free events and activities. For those feeling creative, the Print Studio, Ceramics Studio and Darkroom provide opportunities to learn, experiment and make.

The Art House is also home to artist studios and offers residencies and professional development opportunities, supporting a thriving community of local and visiting creatives.

At the heart of The Art House is a belief that creative spaces thrive when they are open, inclusive and welcoming to all. Through supporting curiosity, celebrating diverse voices and making creativity accessible to everyone, The Art House aims to create a space where creativity and community can flourish.
www.the-arthouse.org.uk

Bradford District Museums & Galleries
Cartwright Hall Art Gallery is Bradford's civic art gallery and one of four museums managed by Bradford District Museums & Galleries on behalf of Bradford Council. Set within the beautiful surroundings of Lister Park, just one mile from Bradford city centre, Cartwright Hall Art Gallery has been welcoming visitors since 1904. Home to Bradford's art collection, the gallery brings together Victorian, modern and contemporary art alongside changing exhibitions, family activities and events throughout the year.
https://bradfordmuseums.org/venue/cartwright-hall-art-gallery/

Our Cultural Heart (Kirklees Council)
Our Cultural Heart is Kirklees Council's ambitious programme to transform Huddersfield town centre into a vibrant destination for culture, arts, leisure and community life.

At the heart of the programme's second phase is a major new Museum & Art Gallery, which will provide a landmark cultural destination for Huddersfield and the wider region. Bringing together the area's rich heritage, nationally significant collections and exciting opportunities for contemporary art, the new venue will offer inspiring spaces for exhibitions, learning, creativity and cultural participation.

The Museum & Art Gallery is being developed as part of a wider transformation of Huddersfield's cultural offer, building on the opening of the new Library Hub and Queensgate Square in September 2026. With construction underway and opening anticipated in 2029/30, the project represents a significant investment in the town's cultural future, creating new opportunities for artists, communities and visitors to engage with art and heritage.
www.ourculturalheart.co.uk/

The Piece Hall
The only remaining Georgian cloth hall in the world, The Piece Hall in Halifax is a site of global significance run by a charitable trust for the benefit of the people of Calderdale. This unique architectural and cultural wonder originally opened in 1779 for the trading of 'pieces' of cloth produced on handlooms as part of Yorkshire's famous cottage industry.

The grade 1 listed building is now an award-winning contemporary culture, heritage and retail destination. It has welcomed more than 20 million visitors through its historic gates since it re-opened on 1 August 2017 and contributed more than £680 million to the local economy.

The Piece Hall's iconic 66,000sq ft open air courtyard, which is on a par with the great piazzas of Europe, is home to a treasure trove of high-quality independent shops, boutiques, unique bars, cafes and restaurants, and hosts a year-round programme of world class music shows, including Live at The Piece Hall, art exhibitions, community events and seasonal markets.
www.thepiecehall.co.uk

School of Arts and Humanities and Centre for Cultural Ecologies in Art, Design and Architecture, University of Huddersfield
The School of Arts and Humanities at the University of Huddersfield provides a dynamic environment for research that explores the relationships between culture, society, creativity, and public life. Central to this research environment is the Centre for Cultural Ecologies in Art, Design and Architecture (CEADA), which brings together academics, artists, designers, architects, cultural organisations, policymakers, and communities to investigate the role of arts and culture across West Yorkshire. This includes exploration of how cultural ecologies are formed, sustained, and transformed through the interactions between creative practice, institutions, places and publics. In particular, the Centre provides a distinctive platform for public realm exhibitions and work with artists and creative practitioners, through the Cultures of _ programme. The Bath House Galleries on Hepworth Park at the University of Huddersfield provides a gallery venue for showing art.
www.research.hud.ac.uk/institutes-centres/ceada

South Square Centre
South Square is a contemporary art centre in the semi-rural village of Thornton, around five miles west of Bradford city centre. It is based in a unique Grade II listed courtyard of workers' cottage originally built in 1832.

The centre is home to artist studios, galleries, a local history archive, a picture framer, a traditional pub and vegetarian café as well as indoor and outdoor community spaces. From the centre we deliver a year round programme of contemporary art exhibitions, hands-on creative sessions and workshops, and we host local groups for all kinds of events, activities and gatherings.

In 2025, we delivered OUR TURN, a contemporary art festival designed to provide a platform and opportunities for artists across Bradford district while the city was hosting the Turner Prize as a part of UK City of Culture. We're now working with a dedicated steering group to develop this into a recurring festival for the region, with the second edition due to take place in 2027.
www.southsquarecentre.co.uk