

# Introduction

South Hill Park is an attractive, historic park located south of Bracknell Town centre. The park is home to a number of site-specific, commissioned art works which are described in this leaflet. The sculptures can be found in the grounds, which extend across 56 acres and include landscaped gardens, lawns, lakes and woodland habitats and in the mansion. This beautiful old Grade II listed building has been under ownership of a wide variety of people and organisations, but is now the home of South Hill Park Arts Centre – a perfect setting for these sculptures!

## 1 Ghost (Tall Hall) Artist unknown

Great mystery surrounds this artwork at South Hill Park, and sadly, very little is known about the artist or the piece itself. It is believed to be inspired by a photograph of a ghost taken in the Tall Hall and is thought to show a glimpse of the historical décor in this room. The piece can be viewed from the ground floor, or the first floor gallery leading to the Studio Theatre. The Arts Centre leaflet titled 'Ghosts of South Hill Park' has more information about ghostly tales within the historic Grade II listed building.



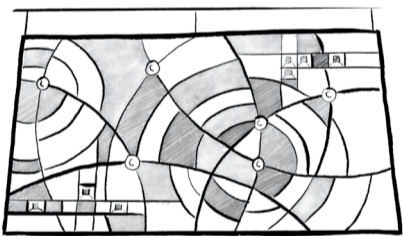
## 2 Afterlife (Tall Hall) by Martin Donlin (2005)

Afterlife is dedicated to the memory of the life and work of Dominic Barber, Director of Theatre Productions at South Hill Park between 1984 and 1994. Martin Donlin is a UK based artist, known for creating public art pieces. Donlin's images, texts and composition are site specific and the result is always art which is inextricably linked to the history, culture and purpose of its surroundings. The text of Afterlife is by Andrew Motion (Poet Laureate 1999-2009):



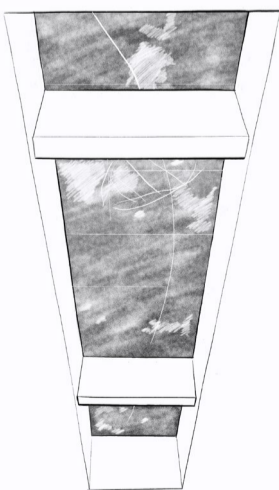
## 3 Stained Glass (Atrium Bar) by Caroline Loveys (2012)

Caroline Loveys created these stained glass panels using mouthblown glass, bevels and glass lenses. The design is abstract, using the colours of the spectrum across the three panels. The square bevels reflect the geometry of the Georgian windows of the Arts Centre building and the round lenses tie in with the etched glass panel in the Tall Hall.



## 4 Overhead Window (Printmaking Studio) by Martin Donlin (2005)

Created as part of the major refurbishment project at South Hill Park, this coloured window uses antique glass that is acid etched and bonded to toughened safety glass. The design is based on the abstracted image of a seed – a metaphor for the beginning of an idea.



Please note this piece is available to view when the studio is not being used for classes – please call the Arts Centre box on 01344 484 123 for further details.

## Afterlife

For the sake of an argument (it's one I've had ever since I died and was sent back to live), just suppose body manufactured soul – something concealed yet self-sufficient and whole, made by the blows that gives

to human hope, and by hope itself, as it hangs in there, and finds its resilient shape in the stream of things continuing.

I do just suppose. Or rather, I did that big day we drove inland, rose

four thousand feet in an hour, and touched our heads on the lid of the visible world: a sun-smashed scrap of cloud which slid off into nothing at once,

and left the way clear for one of those marvelling talks about how we arrive where we are – that dribble of talc: our road,

that regular dark green stitch: olive groves; there, that pink/grey flash: a tilted-up patch of granite, catching the light.

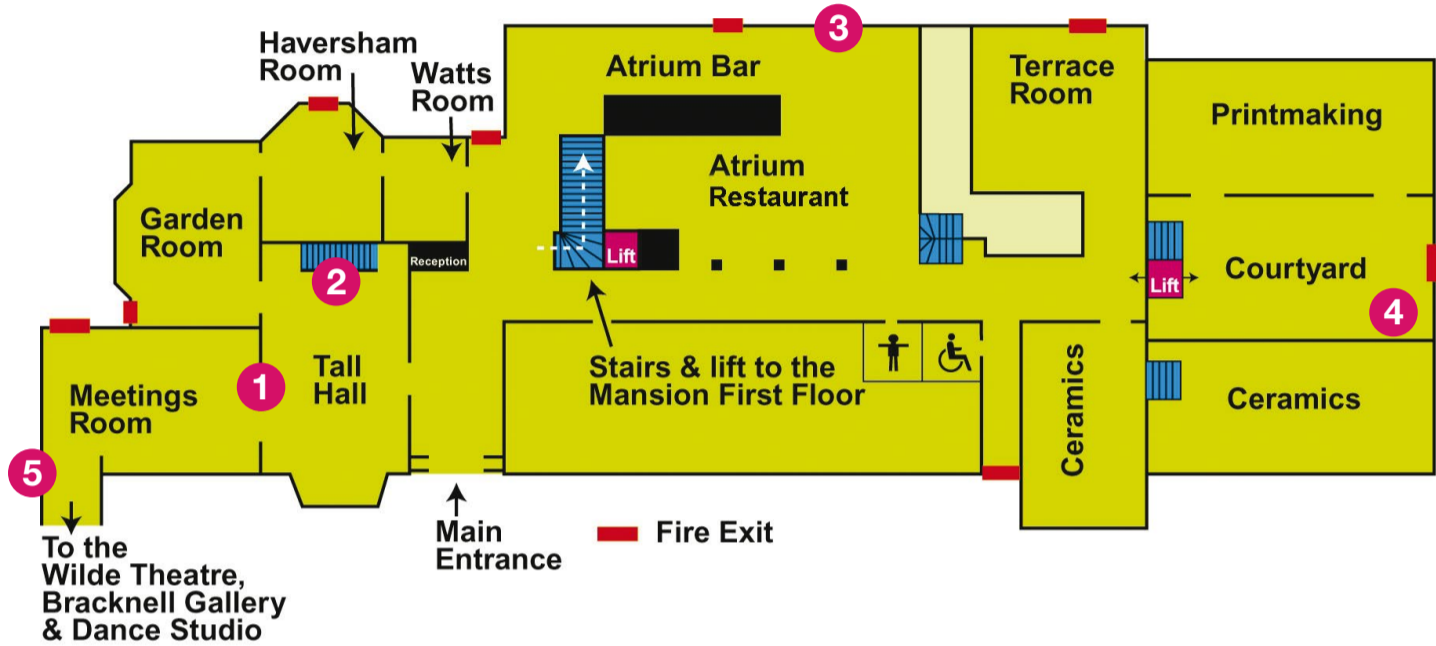
And when this was done a something else none of us

had in our plan: two golden eagles surprised from their ledge at our feet, two flakes of fires, struck out with a double wing-beat-over the valley, first,

then over our heads, so their eyes met ours with the flat expressionless look in the eyes of faces on coins. With that,

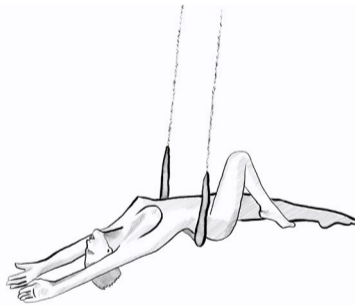
they tilted their wingtips up, climbing straight to the sun, and our mortal remains sank away as they let the thought of us drop.

Andrew Motion



## 5 Balance (ceiling of Wilde Theatre Foyer) by Antony Donaldson (1977-81)

Antony Donaldson's sculpture Balance is associated with the British Pop Art movement. The woman in Balance is a generalised figure, not a specific individual. She embodies the pleasure, leisure and relaxation finally found after years of post war austerity in Britain.



Pop Art explored the relationship between society and industrialisation and the development of mass communication such as TV, cinema, advertising and colour printing. Pop Art was targeted for the masses, questioning art as an exclusive activity of the elite.

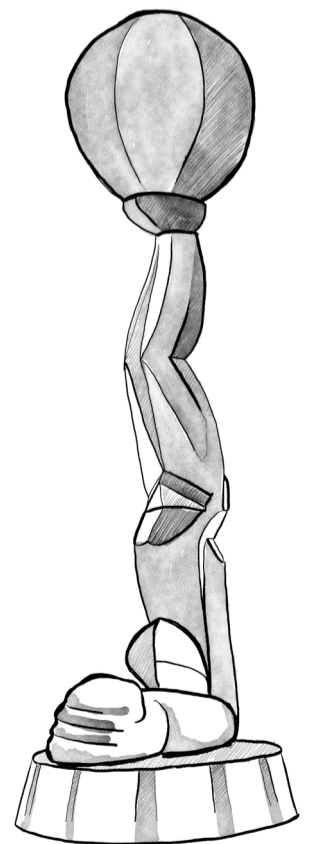
This leaflet was produced by Bracknell Forest Council in association with South Hill Park Arts Centre.

Illustrations by Kate Ratcliffe 2015

Copies of this leaflet may be obtained in large print, Braille, on audio tape or in other languages. To obtain a copy in an alternative format, please telephone 01344 352000.



# South Hill Park Sculpture Trail

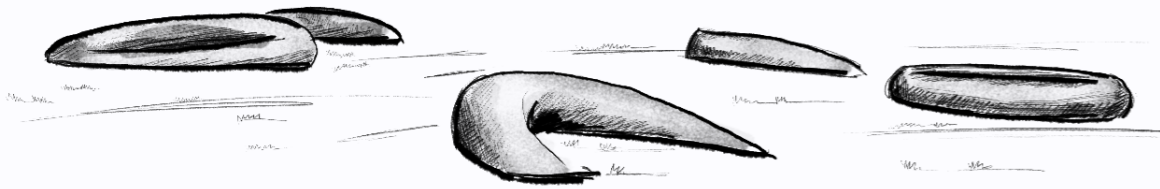


Your guide to the sculptures of South Hill Park.



# Sculptures in the Grounds of South Hill Park

## 6 The Rings of Pachamama by Lucy Strachan (2012)



This piece was commissioned as part of the restoration project at South Hill Park. The sculpture is made from fibre reinforced concrete which has been sprayed into a mould and the surface then etched to create a non-slip finish.

### The story of Pachamama

The story begins in Argentina, where an indigenous people live in a mountainous area, cut off by a deep ravine that isolates them from the rest of the country. At the top of the highest mountain is a sacred piece of land that is the very soul of Pachamama, Mother Earth.

A guardian is chosen at birth to preside over this sacrosanct area and his first 18 years are spent hidden away, alone in a cave. His only experience of the world is brought to him conceptually and he is visually denied any access to the reality.

The miracle and beauty of the land and universe is described to him in great detail until finally, when he becomes a man, he is brought out of the cave and is confronted by the reality of nature in all its glory. The theory being that the world, in reality, is so beautiful and what he had imagined so poor in comparison, that he would be overcome with awe and as a result, would

treat his guardianship with the reverence that was needed as the caretaker of Pachamama. Up there on the mountain plateau in the early 1980s, brown rings of dying grass started to appear and it became apparent that Pachamama was dying.

They decided that the world must be alerted to her plight, because it is our lifestyle that was killing her. So they built a bridge across the ravine which had kept their society isolated and someone was chosen to go down to find the 'civilised' people and warn them that Mother Universe was dying.

Of course, his prediction fell on deaf ears and the messenger returned home... nothing changed.

Lucy Strachan states

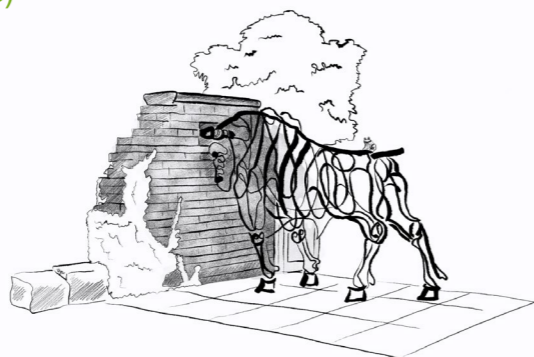
"The forms I use are spherical or have a continuous surface, one that has no beginning and no end, akin to our globe. The forms interact with the ground, so we are not sure if they are being expelled or rejected from within the earth like a foreign body or something alien being swallowed or consumed."

## 7 Bull at the Gate by Marcel Baettig (1995)

Bull at the Gate was commissioned in 1994 from Marcel Baettig, the official artist in residence at that time. It was a time of major upheaval and change for South Hill Park and the sculpture Bull at the Gate subtitled 'La grenouille s'ennuyer' (The Bored Frog) was commissioned to reflect this change. The uninterested frog in question is a bureaucratic comic character overseeing the constant battle between the need for progress and our need to preserve the past.

Marcel Baettig uses linear structures to draw three-dimensionally in space and it is this style which helps the sculpture to appear dynamic, capturing a specific moment in time.

He uses animals within most of his work to create a new language – one which is separate from the dominance of man within cultural history. The use of animals such as 'bull'



and 'stag' refer to masculine words within the context of modern society. Baettig uses sculpture to explore the understanding of these words against their female counterparts (such as 'deer' and 'cow'), and it then becomes a key tool for a deeper understanding of both himself and mankind.

### Sculptures inside the Arts Centre

- 1 Ghost (Tall Hall)
- 2 Afterlife (Tall Hall)
- 3 Stained Glass (Atrium Bar)
- 4 Overhead Window (Printmaking Studio)
- 5 Balance (ceiling of Wilde Theatre Foyer)

### Sculptures in the Grounds of South Hill Park

- 6 The Rings of Pachamama
- 7 Bull at the Gate
- 8 Totem
- 9 Gravity XII
- 10 Ripple Wall

## 10 Ripple Wall by William Pye (1982)

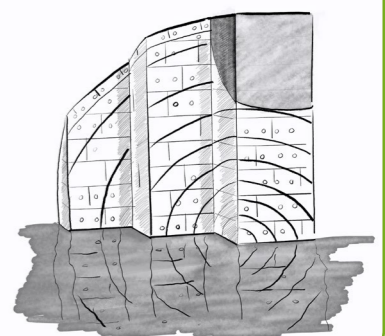
William Pye's Ripple Wall marks a change in direction of his work. Where Pye had always been fascinated by reflection and water, he had not used water as a material itself until the early 1980s. In the previous decades he used stainless steel to create the properties of water that fascinated him.

Pye states "This sculpture is simply a wall, but a wall where shadows fall in surprising ways and where appearances are deceptive". The white arcs etched into the fired brick clay form perfect, entire circles when

examined in the reflection of the water.

The outdoor location of Ripple Wall not only allows his use of water, but also provides fluid and unpredictable qualities of light and atmosphere which also interested Pye.

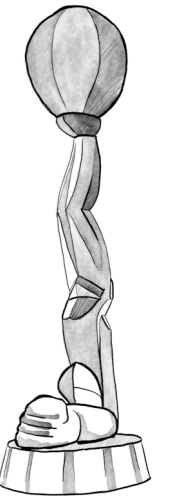
William Pye describes brick as a natural material for the sculpture, as brick walls are a familiar feature in garden design, often providing a backdrop for flowers and shrubs. His intention was therefore, for the sculpture to harmonise with the surrounding garden setting.



## 8 Totem by Robert Carruthers (c.1986-88)

Robert Carruthers enjoyed a distinguished 60 year career as both a renowned sculptor and teacher. He taught at the Royal College of Art, London and also at the School of Art and Design at Swindon College for 38 years. His work has been exhibited at the Royal Academy, Museum of Modern Art and the Serpentine Gallery in London. Following a short illness, Robert Carruthers died on 1 November 2009, aged 84.

Sadly, little is known about the ideas or process behind this sculpture. On closer inspection, the piece made of hard wood and copper, shows a female in a shoulder stand, balancing a ball on her feet. After nearly 30 years outside subjected to the elements, Totem was in need of repair. In 2013 this was made possible thanks to funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund.



## 9 Gravity XII by Barry Mason (1980)

Barry Mason states "the idea behind a sculpture is paramount – the methods and materials chosen to express the idea should be the best available". This statement has been a guiding principle in Mason's sculpture since his first professional commissions in the mid-1970s.

Gravity XII consists of two pyramids, one inverted and held apart by chain. The sculpture, made of hard wood and iron, develops its own space, proposing a dialogue between its constructed presence and the surrounding landscape of trees and other greenery.

