

Press Release

17 July 2025

A summer of fun, creativity and discovery for all ages at Yorkshire Sculpture Park



Sophie Ryder, *Sitting*, 2007. Photo © Paolina Hurry, courtesy YSP

Set against 500 acres of stunning landscape in West Bretton, Wakefield, YSP's summer programme offers more than just a day out - it's a chance to step into a world where art meets nature, and every visitor can explore, play, and connect through creativity. With plenty of indoor and outdoor spaces, there is always something to do and see, whatever the weather.

This year's indoor exhibitions are as bold and thought-provoking as the landscape. **William Kentridge's *The Pull of Gravity*** transforms both gallery and outdoor spaces with over 40 sculptures and captivating video and sound works that invite visitors to see the world through a new lense. Inside The Chapel, artist **Laura Ellen Bacon's *Into Being*** offers a sensory experience - a vast, woven willow sculpture growing from the walls.

A new exhibition ***Fashion Play*** by **Lesley Barnes and Ross McAuley** celebrates the joy of bold colour and pattern the whole family will enjoy, while at The Weston Gallery, ceramicist **Felicity Aylieff's *Expressions in Blue*** presents a series of towering porcelain vessels, their cobalt-painted forms capturing the drama and beauty of large-scale making. In each gallery, discover free family activity sheets and handling materials to help entertain and inspire all ages.

Outdoors, the Park comes alive with free family-friendly activities that bring art, nature and creativity together. Every Tuesday from late July, families can get stuck into **Outdoor Sculpture**

Building sessions, taking inspiration from over 90 outdoor sculptures at YSP and the breathtaking Yorkshire landscape.

Thursdays and Fridays offer drop-in woodland play in the **Hidden Forest**, where children will be guided through creative activities underneath the magical canopy of trees.

Little Wild Wood is a sustainable outdoor play space where children can build dens, leap from platforms and get close to artworks. Providing shade from sun or rain, visitors can enjoy several picnic benches and the nearby cafe for refreshments. An **Art and Nature Hunt** leads curious minds on a journey through YSP's artworks, wildlife, and scenery. **Tree Discovery Kits**, available from the Visitor Centre, turn every stroll into a chance to learn about the Park's impressive and ancient tree collection.

The programme is packed with special events too. Budding artists can try their hand at **Life Drawing on 18 July**, sketching among Aylieff's monumental ceramic forms in a relaxed, tutor-led workshop at The Weston. Friends and patrons can enjoy an exclusive **Out-of-hours Curatorial Tour on 19 July**, with behind-the-scenes insights into the summer exhibitions.

On **26 July and 30 August**, **The Chapel** becomes a space of calm and connection with a series of **Yoga and Sound Bath** sessions nestled among Laura Ellen Bacon's willow forms. For those seeking creative inspiration, **31 July** sees a vibrant **Jason and the Wakefield Adventure Community Day** with local-born artist Jason Wilsher-Mills, where families can drop-in, meet the artist, and make their own bold artworks in the Bothy Garden. On **2 August**, poet **Matt Howard** will host a special **reading in James Turrell's Deer Shelter Skyspace**, offering a unique moment of reflection framed by light and sky. The **Family Day in partnership with Star Bereavement** on 7 August is a time to come together with artist-led activities, suitable for families of all ages.

YSP's youngest visitors aren't left out - **Sculpture Baby** in August provide a gentle, creative space for babies and their adults to explore colour, texture, and movement through sensory play in the galleries. And for those looking to get hands-on with fashion and craft, an **Artist Smock Making Workshop on 16 August** with The Stitch Society offers the chance to sew your own creative garment, guided by expert makers.

YSP's Head of Programmes Alex Hodby said: *"We're thrilled to welcome everyone to YSP this summer for a season that's all about creativity, discovery, and togetherness. Whether you're building sculptures outdoors, getting hands-on in The Studio, or simply enjoying a picnic surrounded by world-class artworks, there's something here to inspire every visitor. We hope families will make lasting memories and feel part of our creative community."*

Throughout the summer, **The Studio** in the Underground Gallery is also open as a drop-in space, where families can explore art-making materials, discover activity baskets, and get creative together.

With free parking, free entry for 18's and under, dog-friendly and accessible facilities, and cafés serving everything from ice cream to hot meals and £5 lunch bags, YSP is the perfect place to spend a summer day.



William Kentridge, *Paper Procession (IV)*, installation view at YSP, 2025. © William Kentridge. Courtesy the artist, Goodman Gallery, Galleria Lia Rumma and Hauser & Wirth. Photo © Jonty Wilde, courtesy YSP.

Conveniently located near Wakefield, Leeds, and Sheffield, YSP is easy to reach by car from the M1 (junction 38), by bus (96 from Wakefield and Barnsley), and by train to Wakefield Westgate and a short taxi or bus ride. Car parking is always free, and there are several disabled bays available for pre-booking.

Plan your visit and explore the full programme at yosp.org.uk.

Summer Highlights

Fun-Filled Outdoor Activities

- **Hidden Forest Drop-Ins** – Thursdays and Fridays, offering woodland wonder and playful learning.
- **Little Wild Wood** – A natural play space where children can explore, climb and connect with nature.
- **Art and Nature Hunt** – Updated activity sheets guide families through the park in search of creative clues.
- **Tree Discover Kit** – Learn about YSP's majestic trees with a new, engaging self-guided pack.

Special Summer Events

- **Life Drawing: Felicity Aylieff** – 18 July
- **Out of Hours Curatorial Tour for YSP Friends** – 19 July
- **Yoga and Sound Bath: Laura Ellen Bacon** – 26 July and 30 August
- **Jason and the Wakefield Adventure Community Day** – 31 July
- **Poetry in the Skyspace with Matt Howard** – 2 August
- **Family Day in partnership with Star Bereavement** – 7 August
- **Sculpture Baby: Felicity Aylieff** – 13 August
- **Artist Smock Making Workshop with The Stitch Society** – 16 August

Rainy Day Activities

- **Afternoon tea** with panoramic views across YSP
- Spend time in the galleries and soak up world-class art by **William Kentridge, Laura Ellen Bacon, Felicity Aylieff, and Lesley Barnes and Ross McAuley**
- Browse YSP two **award winning shops** and have a **leisurely brunch or lunch** at The Weston
- Pick up a **free activity basket** and let the kids get creative in the **Underground Gallery**, ending up in **The Studio** and create artworks inspired by William Kentridge
- Brave the summer rain with an invigorating **walk around the lakes** at YSP

-ENDS-



Hidden Forest. Photo © Paolina Hurry, courtesy YSP.



Lesley Barnes and Ross McAuley, *Fashion Play*, installation view at YSP, 2025. Photo © Joanne Crawford, courtesy YSP.



Photo © Paolina Hurry, courtesy YSP.



Felicity Aylieff, *Expressions in Blue*, installation view at YSP, 2025. Photo © India Hobson, courtesy YSP.

Notes for Editors

Press enquiries

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Download images at ysp.org.uk/press

Listings information

Yorkshire Sculpture Park, West Bretton, Wakefield WF4 4LG

Near Wakefield and Barnsley – M1 Junction 38

+44 (0)1924 832631 | ysp.org.uk | @YSPsculpture

Check online for opening hours.

Book tickets at ysp.org.uk

Social media

Instagram: @YSPsculpture

Facebook: @YorkshireSculpturePark

LinkedIn: Yorkshire Sculpture Park

#YSPSculpture

About Yorkshire Sculpture Park

Awarded VisitEngland's gold accolade in 2023-24 for an outstanding visitor attraction, Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP) is the leading international centre for modern and contemporary sculpture. Welcoming around 380,000 visitors each year, YSP is a registered charity and accredited museum situated in the 500-acre, 18th-century Bretton Hall estate in West and South Yorkshire.

YSP was founded in 1977 by Sir Peter Murray CBE, it is the largest sculpture park of its kind in Europe. It is the only place in Europe to see Barbara Hepworth's *The Family of Man* in its entirety, alongside a significant collection of sculpture, including bronzes by Henry Moore, important pieces by Hemali Bhuta, Roger Hiorns, Damien Hirst, Suhasini Kejriwal, Kimsooja, Marc Quinn, Hank Willis Thomas and Erwin Wurm, and site-specific works by Katrina Palmer, Andy Goldsworthy, Alfredo Jaar, David Nash, Sean Scully and James Turrell.

YSP mounts a year-round temporary exhibitions programme including some of the world's leading artists across three indoor galleries and the outdoors. Highlights include exhibitions by Fiona Banner, Anthony Caro, Tony Cragg, Leonardo Drew, Robert Indiana, Amar Kanwar, KAWS, Joan Miró, Henry Moore, Lindsey Mendick, Annie Morris, Giuseppe Penone, Jaume Plensa, Ursula von Rydingsvard, Sean Scully, Yinka Shonibare CBE, Chiharu Shiota, David Smith, Joana Vasconcelos, Bill Viola and Erwin Wurm.

Across its 48-year history, YSP has worked with over 1,000 artists from more than 40 countries, on varied projects from short-term residencies to major surveys. YSP supports artists at vital stages in their careers and is rare in having the accommodation, workshops and expertise to enable open-ended and risk-taking practice, giving artists space, time and support to think and to develop new ideas.

Over this time, YSP has sought to ignite, nurture and sustain interest in and debate around contemporary art and sculpture, especially with those for whom art participation is not habitual or familiar. It enables open access to art, situations and ideas, and continues to re-evaluate and expand the approach to considering art's role and relevance in society. Supporting 40,000 people each year through YSP's learning programme, this innovative work develops ability, confidence and life aspiration in participants.

YSP's core work is made possible by investment from Arts Council England, Wakefield Council, the Liz and Terry Bramall Foundation and Dunard Fund. YSP was named Art Fund Museum of the Year in 2014 and awarded the 2023 Visitor Attraction of the Year and Cultural Award in the Yorkshire Post Tourism Awards.



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