

NewArtCentre.

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PRESS RELEASE

Anthony Caro - Millbank Steps, 2004

The New Art Centre is delighted to announce that an important monumental work by one of Britain's most renowned sculptors will be exhibited at Roche Court from mid-March 2008. **Millbank Steps** by Anthony Caro was commissioned in 2004 especially for the artist's major retrospective at Tate Britain, where it was sited in the Duveen Galleries. Standing at a height of more than 17 feet (5 metres) and measuring more than 25 feet (7.8 metres) across and 75 feet (23 metres) from end to end, the sculpture comprises four huge, stepped arches resembling ziggurats. Made from 100 tonnes of Cor-ten steel, it is one of Caro's most ambitious works exploring abstract form and space and the boundaries between sculpture and architecture.

This is the first time **Millbank Steps** has been reassembled since it was shown at Tate in 2004, and it will look magnificent in its new position at the entrance to the Sculpture Park. Although enormous in scale, the proportions of the stepped forms are designed in relation to those of the human body. The pyramidal internal spaces invite visitors to explore the interior of the structure and walk through it, as one would walk through a building. At Roche Court the landscape setting will heighten this experience, and the stepped arches will frame vistas of the surrounding parkland as one moves through the structure.

Anthony Caro made his first abstract sculptures in steel in 1960, after becoming disillusioned with his earlier figurative style. He purchased oxyacetylene welding equipment and a supply of scrap metal from London dockyards, and began to experiment with cutting, welding and bolting together pre-fabricated steel girders, meshes and sheet metal. The resulting works, painted in bright colours, explored scale, form, surface and space in a purely abstract way, and were hailed as revolutionary when they were exhibited for the first time in 1963. Caro later abandoned colour, and in 1974 he was given the opportunity to use industrial facilities to fabricate his first body of large-scale architectonic works, using heavier and thicker steel than before. A group of these sculptures, the *Flats* series, was exhibited at the New Art Centre last summer.

In recent years Caro has created sculpture on an increasingly monumental scale, too large to be produced in his own studio. **Millbank Steps** was manufactured off-site at Messrs William Hare's steel-working factory in Bury, where computerised machinery was used to cut and construct the forty-nine steel sections that make up the four-part structure. Transported to Roche Court on six lorries, and then lifted into place by cranes, the forty-nine sections have been assembled and bolted together by a specialist team over a two-week period. It is the largest and most complex installation the New Art Centre has ever embarked on.

Millbank Steps is for sale, and we hope that it will eventually be sited in a major architectural project somewhere in the world.

Sir Anthony Caro has been described as Britain's greatest living sculptor. Major exhibitions include retrospectives at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1975), the Trajan Markets, Rome (1992), the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo (1995), and Tate Britain (2005). In 2007 he exhibited Galvanised Sculptures at Annely Juda Fine Art and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York, and the Flats series, 1974, at the New Art Centre. In October 2008 his major installation, The Chapel of Light, will open at the Church of St Jean Baptiste, Bourbourg, France. Caro received the Praemium Imperiale Prize for Sculpture in Tokyo in 1992 and the Lifetime Achievement Award for Sculpture in 1997. He was knighted in 1987 and received the Order of Merit in May 2000. Anthony Caro is represented by Annely Juda Fine Art, London.

For further information and images, please contact Alice Houghton or Hannah Neale on 01980 862244.

The New Art Centre is open daily from 11am to 4pm