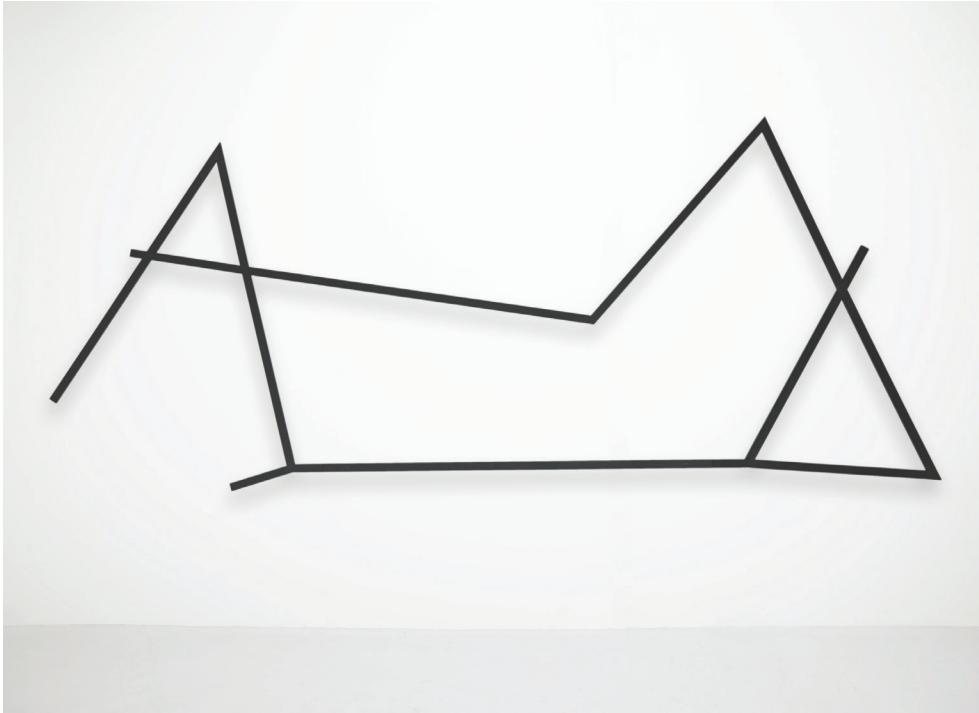


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# WILLIAM TUCKER

Drawings & Wall Reliefs: 1970 - 2020

PANGOLIN  
LONDON

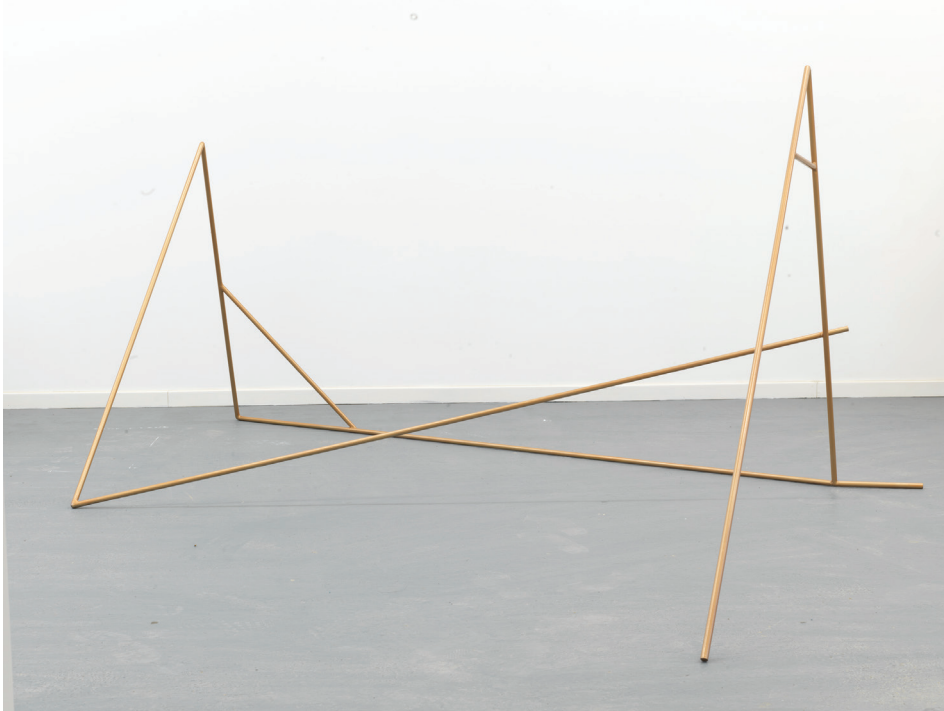


*Cats Cradle III*  
2020, Aluminium  
222 x 546.5 cm

**Pangolin London is delighted to announce a new exhibition of work from highly regarded sculptor, writer and Royal Academician William Tucker. Presenting a series of five powerful new wall reliefs which take as their inspiration works made over 50 years ago, this exhibition highlights the artist's continued fascination between flat image and three-dimensional form.**

Britain was an energetic melting pot of sculptural dialogue and progression in the middle of the twentieth century. In a mere few decades sculptural language evolved from the organic, abstract forms of modern pioneers Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore to the 'spiky' welded figurative forms of Lynn Chadwick and the so-called 'Geometry of Fear' artists of the '50s, to the comparatively stark minimalism first introduced by Anthony Caro in the 1960s.

Having studied history at Oxford University alongside drawing at the Ruskin, William Tucker enrolled alongside fellow sculptors Philip King, Michael Bolus and David Annesley at St Martin's School of Art. Under the dynamic leadership of Frank Martin and tutored by Anthony Caro it was a time when new materials, healthy dialogue, intellectual criticism and influences from abroad encouraged artists to question what sculpture could be and explore its boundaries. Throughout the '60s Tucker experimented with juxtaposing soft, rounded three dimensional forms with flat planes such as in *Subject and Shadow* or *Their Name is Light* and combining fluid forms in dynamic series which gradually became more geometric and formal.



*Cat's Cradle IV*  
1971, Painted  
stainless steel  
Unique  
124 x 244 x 173

In 1969 Tucker moved house and was inspired by a wooden structure he found in the basement. He says:

*It was a hinged, folding frame, evidently designed and built years before for some unknown purpose by a previous owner, a carpenter named Shuttler. My first impulse was to draw from it, before I decided to take the structure apart and then modify and re-combine its components.*

This became the *Shuttler* series of sculptures which in turn led to the *Cat's Cradle* series which Tucker considers the 'most optical' of his works. These series were vitally important as they challenged the viewer as to what space and contained mass in sculpture could be. Looking back they also compound the importance of the relationship between Tucker's drawing and sculpture and the essence of what has driven Tucker's works ever since which is that elusive transition between an optical sensation and a visceral one.

The early 70's was a busy decade for Tucker – he represented Britain in the Venice Biennale alongside painter John Walker in 1972; had a major survey of recent work at the Serpentine Gallery, London; published one of the most important books on sculpture 'The Language of Sculpture' in 1974 and curated 'The Condition of Sculpture' at the Hayward Gallery in 1975. In 1976 however Tucker chose to emigrate first to Canada and then to New York and his work whilst still linear began to take on more mass and eventually elements of figuration.

This exhibition explores that circle of experimentation from the crucial years of the 1960's and 1970s through to the figurative works of the 1980s and back again with a powerful new series of wall reliefs that take as their inspiration those linear and optical works that were first inspired by the carpenter Shuttler. As Sam Cornish explains in the exhibition essay: *The reliefs see him [Tucker] returning to his interlinked series of the early 1970s: the Shuttlers, Cats Cradles and Portes. These works explored the idea of 'drawing in space', that had been a central part of modernist sculpture since the early twentieth century, and which had become an even more important part of post-war art.*

First expressed in a ground-breaking exhibition at Buchmann Gallery in Berlin in 2019 where the reliefs were cut into the gallery wall here they sit proud of the walls surface constructed at scale in aluminium and patinated. As Cornish describes 'In both sets an initial impression of stark simplicity gives away to unexpected complexity, based on an ambiguity between the visual and the physical'. As Tucker has done throughout his career these fresh and dynamic works challenge us the viewer to consider how we see and respond to sculpture and asks us to experience and interrogate that oscillation between dimensions in an exciting and playful new way.

## NOTES TO EDITOR:

William Tucker was born in Cairo in 1935 and moved to England with his family in 1937. He studied history at Oxford University and during this time attended classes at the Ruskin School of Drawing, along with R B Kitaj, Jonathan Kingdon and John Updike. Between 1958-60 he studied sculpture at St Martin's Schools of Art under the maverick leadership of Frank Martin and Anthony Caro. Fellow students included David Annesley, Phillip King and Michael Bolus, all of whom were included in the influential New Generation exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London in 1965.

In the late 1970's Tucker taught at Columbia University, and the New York Studio School. He received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1981 and the National Endowment for the Arts fellowship in 1986. He currently lives and works in Massachusetts, USA and was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Sculpture Centre in 2010.

He has exhibited widely and his work can be found in many prestigious permanent collections such as Tate Britain, London, The Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum and the Solomon R Guggenheim Museum, New York, as well as further afield at the Hakone Open Air Museum in Japan, and the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia. Pangolin is delighted to represent William Tucker in the UK.



*Study for Tauromachy*  
2007, Charcoal on paper



*Subject & Shadow*  
1962-2017, Aluminium  
& fibreglass