

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For further information contact:
Katharine Evans at Pangolin
London 020 7520 1480
katharine@pangolinlondon.com

WILLIAM TUCKER RA

UNEARTHING THE FIGURE

15th October - 29th November 2014



SLEEPING MUSICIAN
1998, Bronze
Ed of 6
29.2 x 43.2 x 33 cm

Following on from his hugely successful show in the Spring of 2010, during which he was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award by the International Sculpture Centre, Pangolin London are proud to announce a new exhibition 'Unearthing the Figure' by the highly acclaimed sculptor William Tucker.

To describe the work of William Tucker is to almost contradict oneself; he is both figurative and abstract sculptor. His *oeuvre* is one of continual evolvement with each new decade of sculpture marking a departure from the last. To reference Dore Ashton in her opening essay for the catalogue to Tucker's seminal Yorkshire Sculpture Park exhibition in 2001, what sets Tucker apart as a sculptor is his "willingness to depart from received ideas about modern sculpture".

PANGOLIN
LONDON

Kings Place
90 York Way
London
N1 9AG

020 7520 1480



SECRET
2010, Bronze
Ed of 3
133 x 183 x 117 cm

Tucker's figurative work, of which this exhibition takes as its focus, pushes figurative sculpture to the brink of abstraction. Spanning the last four decades these organic, primordial forms betray the artist's hand bringing an almost sensual, tactile quality. His powerful works engage with the viewer in a way his earlier geometric forms could not; removing any idea of frontality, the viewer is forced to assess their own mass and form in relation to the large mass of Tucker's sculpture. The exhibition includes examples of his early figurative works as well as new casts; Tucker's aim for these sculptures is for them to be sensed internally, through the body, rather than interpreted by the eyes and mind.

Born in Cairo to English parents in 1935, but raised in Great Britain, William Tucker studied History at Oxford University before he was inspired to make his first sculptures by the work of Henry Moore at the exhibition '*Sculpture 1857 – 1957*' at Holland Park. He made his first abstract constructions in steel and wood whilst studying at the Central School of Art and Design and subsequently at St Martins School of Art with Antony Caro between 1959-60. In this early stage of this career Tucker experimented with industrial materials, fibreglass, and strong, bright colours with a focus upon clean lines, purity and logic.

The early to mid-1980's saw a turning point in Tucker's sculpture when he began to think about new ways of perceiving sculpture. This coincided with a trip to Italy to view the Riace bronzes which inspired Tucker to think again about bronze; its permanence in

comparison to wood and plaster, as well as a surface that can be patinated hundreds of ways, light playing differently on each.

Fragmentation and mythology are both major themes in Tucker's figurative works. Referencing the colossal foot in Rome, for Tucker it calls to mind a monumental sculpture and yet is complete; a sculpture in itself. The fragmentary nature of the Elgin marbles also became a source of inspiration and planted the seeds of thinking about working off the floor. As he developed his sculpture Tucker began to pick up discarded fragments of moulds or the cracked residue of plaster from his studio floor. *Leonidas*, 1995, a newly cast work which will feature in the exhibition in bronze for the very first time, is one such example; this started as a found image of a foot, which became a sculpture that to Tucker seemed "like the torso and thighs of a wounded male figure, as in *The Dying Gaul*"¹. His *God's* series which includes *Gaia* and *Messenger* developed from an interest in Matisse, who kept a cast of Michelangelo's *Dying Slave* with him in the studio. *Dying Slave* being an unfinished fragment of a sculpture that was intended for Pope Julius II's Tomb.

William Tucker has exhibited widely and is represented in many prestigious public collections worldwide including; 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. His numerous accolades include representing Britain in the 1972 Venice Biennale, publishing one of the most distinguished sculpture publications '*The Language of Sculpture*' in 1974 and becoming a Royal Academician. Tucker also won the Jack Goldhill prize for sculpture at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in 2009.

'*Unearthing the Figure*' is a rare chance to see previously unseen bronze casts of the US based artist's protean sculptures in a solo show. Featuring examples of his early figurative pieces from the early 1980's to the present day, including a new bronze cast of a maquette for his 1984 sculpture *Gymnast*.

This selling exhibition includes sculpture and works on paper and is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue. For further information on the exhibition please contact:

Celia Bailey at Paget PR
celia@pagetpr.com
0208 239 9482

Gallery open Monday - Saturday 10am - 6pm

1 The ancient Roman marble of a lost Hellenistic sculpture thought to be originally cast in bronze.

P
A
N
G
O
L
I
N
L
O
N
D
O
N

Kings Place
90 York Way
London
N1 9AG

020 7520 1480