

Abigail Reynolds: *Works in Glass*

6th July – 1 September 2024

<https://www.sculpture.uk.com/abigail-reynolds-i-works-in-glass>

The New Art Centre at Roche Court Sculpture Park opens *Abigail Reynolds: Works in Glass*, a solo exhibition

Abigail Reynolds works across a wide range of media, including sculpture, collage and print. This exhibition celebrates her works in glass from 2018 to the present day, as well as a selection of her paper collages from the series *Universal Now*, in which the folding and layering of historic images brings into focus our relation to time.

Working from her studio in Porthmeor, St Ives, Reynolds draws from the Cornish landscape and its rich cultural heritage: inspired by ancient Cornish customs such as burning seaweed to use in glass making, or beating the bounds, the artist adopts age-old practices to convey contemporary messages. She reuses found glass, or her own handmade glass, to create lenses through which the landscape beyond can be seen in a new light. In September 2019, having spent a summer gathering sand and seaweed, a furnace was built at Kestle Barton, Cornwall, to melt these simple materials into glass. By presenting the glass in basic forms of roundels or sheets that you can look through, Reynolds feels that she can evoke a renewed closeness to our landscape.

Abigail Reynolds studied English Literature at St Catherine's College, Oxford University, and subsequently a Fine Art MA at Goldsmiths College, University of London. Literature has a resounding influence in her work, with the artist drawing thematic inspiration from famous authors, libraries, and novels. *When Words Are Forgotten* (2018) - one of her large-scale pieces on display - mimics library shelves laden with overlapping books, inspired by a pilgrimage which Reynolds embarked on in 2016 to the sites of 15 lost libraries along the ancient 'Silk Road'. Similarly, *Tol II* (2024) stems from literary roots, with Reynolds imagining viewing the Cornish landscape through the eyes of three women who worked in it before her – Barbara Hepworth, Daphne du Maurier and Virginia Woolf. Within its steel framework are set panes of printed glass with images referencing du Maurier's *Vanishing Cornwall* (1967), and Woolf's

novel *To The Lighthouse* (1927).

Situated in the gallery, Reynolds' glass creations engage in a shifting dialogue with their surrounds. With light constantly altering this relationship, her work invites us to contemplate our sense of time and place within the landscape at Roche Court.

Over 2021-22, Reynolds exhibited across all four cities of the British Art Show 9 tour. In 2022, she completed a permanent major commission for the Kresen Kernow, the Cornish Archive Centre, accompanied by a publication. In March 2016, Reynolds was awarded the BMW Art Journey Prize at Art Basel to travel to lost libraries along the Silk Road, an ancient trade route connecting China to the Roman Empire. Her book documenting this journey, *Lost Libraries*, was published by Hatje Cantz in 2018.