



## Artist commissioned to create new feminist public sculpture

Rachel Reeves - Member of Parliament Leeds West, Leeds Arts University and Leeds City Council are delighted to announce Pippa Hale as the artist chosen to create a new public sculpture to champion the achievements of women in the city of Leeds.

Pippa's design, 'Ribbons', has been chosen in response to a project which aims to redress the gender balance of public sculpture in an innovative way, celebrating the achievements of the women of Leeds with an avant-garde approach.

### **Pippa said:**

*"I am thrilled that my proposal has been selected by the panel! It's a huge honour to create a new art work for my home city that celebrates the women of Leeds - and in such a prestigious location too. The work will be a timely addition to the city's sculpture offer that puts women centre stage, be they historical figures or the unsung heroes of today.*

*Women make a massive contribution to our city - creatively, economically and socially - and this is an opportunity to celebrate them."*

Four artists were shortlisted and had the opportunity to exhibit models of their proposed designs at the Blenheim Walk Gallery at Leeds Arts University. Visitors to the exhibition were given the chance to contribute to the selection process, providing feedback which was taken into consideration by the judging panel.

The panel were very pleased that the artists had such a diverse and thoughtful approach to the sculpture and how it would contribute to the new public areas and celebrate women across Leeds. The quality of the shortlist was extremely high but Pippa's concept was chosen unanimously, and was also the favourite with the public vote.

**Professor Simone Wonnacott, Vice-Chancellor, Leeds Arts University said:**

*“I am delighted that the winning artist is someone who is passionate about Leeds and whose sculpture is not only stunning, but also represents women both past and present with the opportunity to celebrate women who are quietly achieving and contributing to society.”*

**Rachel Reeves, Member of Parliament for Leeds West, added:**

*“After launching this project over two years ago it’s incredibly exciting to be that much closer to seeing a sculpture that truly celebrates the women of Leeds installed in the city. Pippa’s is a great design that really champions the achievements of women across our city through public art.*

*I’m delighted that so many people came to see the exhibition and gave their views and backing for this project, and I hope many more will see the sculpture when it is installed next year and work with us as we turn this vision in to reality.”*

**Councillor Judith Blake, Leader of Leeds City Council, said:**

*“We’re thrilled to be supporting this piece and to see an artist with such a distinctive talent and creative vision becoming part of the city’s cultural landscape.*

*Leeds proudly celebrates the achievements of the many women whose individual struggles and accomplishments have helped make our city the place it is today and this new artwork will stand as an example of inclusion and progress for future generations.”*

The chosen artwork will be located between Leeds City College’s new Quarry Hill Campus and the newly redeveloped Leeds Playhouse, providing a scenic entranceway to the wider area which is undergoing significant regeneration. The sculpture will be sited prominently at the top of a green landscaped, tiered public space visible from Eastgate and The Headrow as part of the wider SOYO development at Quarry Hill, also home to BBC Yorkshire and Northern Ballet.

This is a joint project developed by Rachel Reeves (Member of Parliament for Leeds West) in partnership with Leeds City Council and Leeds Arts University. Supporters of the project include Leeds City College, LeedsBID (Leeds Business Improvement District) and Caddick Developments.

The exhibition at Leeds Arts University will remain open until Thursday 04 July, giving visitors the chance to see work by the four shortlisted artists, Briony Marshall, Pippa Hale, Wendy Briggs, and Zsófia Jakab, alongside examples of work from other cities to highlight the broader context for women's visibility in the public realm across the UK.

**-ENDS-**

### **Editor’s Notes**

#### **Exhibition and events**

#### **Feminist Public Sculpture: Championing women’s achievements in Leeds**

24 May - 04 July 2019

The Blenheim Walk Gallery, Leeds Arts University, Blenheim Walk, Leeds, LS2 9AQ.

#### **Research forum: Thursday 4 July 3pm**

Confirmed speakers include: Professor Griselda Pollock, Hazel Reeves, Sharon Thomas, and Rachel Reeves. The event is free and open to all.

For more information, filming and image requests or to arrange interviews contact: Sophie Miller Wallace, PR & Communications Officer, 0113 202 8044 or [sophie.millerwallace@leeds-art.ac.uk](mailto:sophie.millerwallace@leeds-art.ac.uk)

*Image: Pippa Hale with her winning design ‘Ribbons’. Photo by Memory Potifa.*

## **Pippa Hale**

Pippa Hale is a contemporary artist based in Leeds whose practice centres around social history and geography. Her work is often site specific and is always led by the idea and its location. Outcomes include large-scale installations in heritage venues and the public realm in a range of media that includes film, sound, large constructions, neon and found or loaned objects.

Much of Pippa's work seeks to close the gap between past and present, drawing on history and interpreting it through the lens of contemporary art to connect with audiences in new and exciting ways.

<https://pippahale.com>

## **Leeds Arts University**

Founded in 1846 as the Leeds Government School of Art and Design, Leeds Arts University has contributed significantly to the development of art education in Britain and across the world. The University has recently opened £22m state-of-the-art building expansion at the Blenheim Walk site which includes a 230-seat performance auditorium, a new public gallery and industry standard film and photography studios.

[www.leeds-art.ac.uk](http://www.leeds-art.ac.uk)

## **Caddick Developments**

Caddick is a home grown, privately owned Yorkshire-based company that specialises in the acquisition, development, construction and management of commercial, residential and retail projects around the UK. The Group has a vast array of in house expertise covering all aspects of the property development and construction process.

<https://caddickdevelopments.co.uk/>

## **Leeds City College**

Leeds City College is one of the largest Further Education institutions in the country and operates out of three main campuses - Park Lane, Technology and Printworks - as well as having provisions in smaller community centres across Leeds. It has 1,267 members of staff, over 20,000 students and is one of the biggest providers of apprenticeships nationally. In 2019, Leeds City College will be opening a brand new campus at the heart of the cultural quarter to revolutionise the college's digital, creative arts and health science provisions.

[www.leedscitycollege.ac.uk/](http://www.leedscitycollege.ac.uk/)

## **LeedsBID (Leeds Business Improvement District)**

A business-led, not for profit organisation, LeedsBID is focused on delivering an ambitious business plan to transform Leeds city centre.

Representing close to 1,000 businesses and organisations in the city centre, LeedsBID leads on inspiring, exciting plans, projects and events to make Leeds city centre a great place to live, work, visit and do business. Initiatives brought to the city by LeedsBID range from the introduction of new street teams to improve the welcome and experience for people, the creative use of art, lighting and experiential activities to animate public spaces to the introduction of standout events to put the city on the map.

LeedsBID is the third largest Business Improvement District in the UK and the largest outside London.

[www.leedsbid.co.uk](http://www.leedsbid.co.uk)