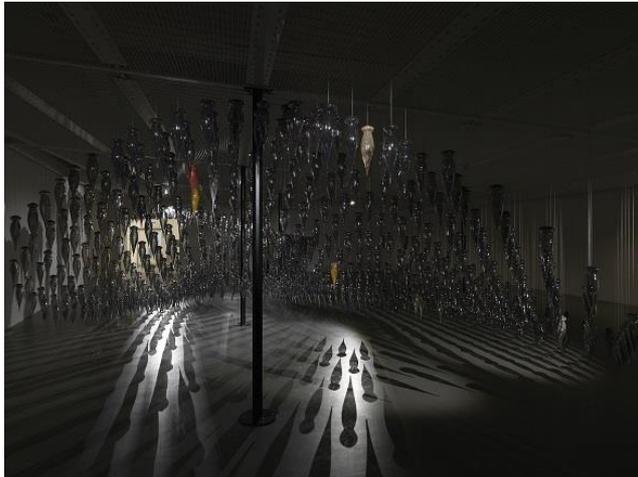


Press Release

**Magdalene Odundo: The Journey of Things**  
**3 August – 15 December 2019**  
**Launch event: Friday 2 August 2019, 12-2pm**



Magdalene Odundo OBE is one of the world's most esteemed artists working in the field of ceramics. This major exhibition will bring together more than 50 of Odundo's works. They will be shown alongside a large selection of objects chosen by Odundo from across the globe and spanning over 3,000 years, to reveal the rich and diverse range of objects and making traditions that have informed the development of her own work.

The exhibition will situate Odundo's work at the heart of a constellation of objects that she has drawn inspiration from: British studio pottery by Hans Coper and Lucy Rie; ancient vessels from Greece and Egypt; historic ceramics from Africa, Asia and Central America; figurative sculpture and objects from across the African continent; Elizabethan costume and textiles; as well as contemporary works including Yinka Shonibare and El Anatsui. There will also be sculptures by modern artists including Auguste Rodin, Barbara Hepworth, Henry Moore and Edgar Degas whose approaches to depicting forms have long been an inspiration for Odundo and highlight the primary importance of the human body as a reference within her work. Over 30 of these objects are from the Sainsbury Centre collection.

The Sainsbury Centre will also showcase *Transition II*, Odundo's largest work, made up of 1,001 individual suspended glass pieces. Presented in the context of Odundo's ceramic practice, and redesigned site-specifically each time it is shown, *Transition II* will be presented in a sweeping crescendo, suggesting flowing water or a murmuration of starlings. Odundo made this work during a residency at the National Glass Centre in 2014 in collaboration with glassblower James Maskrey.

Born in Kenya in 1950, Odundo moved to the UK in 1971 to attend art school. After choosing ceramics as a preferred medium, Odundo travelled to Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria to study their ceramic traditions. Her desire to learn about vernacular crafts has brought her across the globe: to Europe, Africa, Asia and Central America. This journeying has led to her exploration of her own diasporic identity and the charged role that objects have played, and continue to play, in intercultural relationships today.

The exhibition is designed by Adjaye Associates. British architect, Sir David Adjaye OBE is a leading architect of his generation. He has created important buildings such as the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture; the Idea Stores, London; and the Moscow School of Management SKOLKOVO. He is also known for collaborations with contemporary artists on exhibitions and installations. Artists he has collaborated with include Olafur Eliasson, Julie Mehretu, Chris Ofili and James Turrell. The exhibition comes to the Sainsbury Centre from The Hepworth Wakefield where it was designed by Farshid Moussavi OBE. The collaboration between architect, artist and architecture adds another crucial dimension to the interdisciplinary exhibition.

The exhibition is organised in partnership with The Hepworth Wakefield.

Exhibition Curator: Andrew Bonacina, Chief Curator at The Hepworth Wakefield  
Project Curator: Tania Moore, Curator at the Sainsbury Centre

Supported by the Henry Moore Foundation.

The exhibition is accompanied by a publication produced by The Hepworth Wakefield with support from the Paul Mellon Centre. It includes an interview between Magdalene Odundo and poet and novelist Ben Okri; an introductory essay by Andrew Bonacina; and essays by John Mack, Professor of World Art Studies at the University of East Anglia and Tania Moore, Curator at the Sainsbury Centre.

– ENDS –

### **Notes to Editors**

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Image credits:

Magdalene Odundo, *Transition II*, National Glass Centre. Photograph by Gilmar Ribeiro

Magdalene Odundo, *Untitled*, 1989. © Magdalene Odundo. Private collection, courtesy Anthony Slayter-Ralph.

### **About the Sainsbury Centre**

The Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts is one of the most important public university art galleries in Britain. Designed between 1974 and 1976, the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts was the first major public building designed by now renowned architect Norman Foster. It was opened in 1978 at the University of East Anglia (UEA) with the support of one of the nation's great philanthropic families, Sir Robert and Lady Sainsbury who donated their extraordinary art collection which includes works dating from prehistory to the late twentieth century from across the globe. A radical new building by Norman Foster was designed to house the collection and was his first public work.

The Sainsbury Centre holds one of the most impressive art collections outside of the national institutions. It includes a significant number of works by modern masters of

European art such as Pablo Picasso, Edgar Degas, Alberto Giacometti, Henry Moore, Francis Bacon, Jacob Epstein, Jean Arp, Chaïm Soutine and Amedeo Modigliani. There are major holdings from Oceania, Africa, the Americas, Asia, the ancient Mediterranean cultures of Egypt, Greece and Rome, as well as medieval Europe. Alongside the permanent collection, it hosts a range of exhibitions in the largest suite of temporary exhibitions galleries in Eastern England.

[scva.ac.uk](http://scva.ac.uk)

### **About Sir David Adjaye OBE**

Sir David Adjaye OBE was born in Tanzania to Ghanaian parents. He first set up a practice in 1994, reforming it as Adjaye Associates in 2000. They now have offices in London, New York and Accra and have worked across Europe, North America, the Middle East, Asia and Africa. His largest project, the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, was named Cultural Event of the Year by the New York Times in 2016 and won the 2019 Institute Honor Award for Architecture from the American Institute of Architects.

[www.adjaye.com](http://www.adjaye.com)

### **About The Hepworth Wakefield**

Designed by the acclaimed David Chipperfield Architects, The Hepworth Wakefield is set within Wakefield's historic waterfront, overlooking the River Calder. The gallery opened in May 2011 and was awarded Art Fund Museum of the Year 2017. Named after Barbara Hepworth, one of the most important artists of the 20th century who was born and brought up in Wakefield, the gallery presents major exhibitions of the best international modern and contemporary art. It is also home to Wakefield's art collection – an impressive compendium of modern British and contemporary art – and has dedicated galleries exploring Hepworth's art and working process. In summer 2019, The Hepworth Wakefield Garden will open alongside the gallery. Designed by Tom Stuart-Smith, it will feature sculptures and be one of the largest free public gardens in the UK.

[hepworthwakefield.org](http://hepworthwakefield.org)

### **About the Henry Moore Foundation**

The Henry Moore Foundation was founded by sculptor Henry Moore and his family in 1977 to encourage public appreciation of the visual arts. Today The Foundation supports innovative sculpture projects through its Grants programme and preserves the legacy of Henry Moore through its own venues, exhibitions, research and collections.

[henry-moore.org](http://henry-moore.org)