

Press Release

Roger Law: From Satire to Ceramics

18 November 2017 – 3 April 2018

Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, Norwich, NR4 7TJ



The Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts at the University of East Anglia (UEA), Norwich continues its autumn exhibition season with an exhibition of works by Roger Law, one of the most important satirists of the last half century.

Renowned for co-creating the hit 1980s and 1990s television series *Spitting Image* with Peter Fluck, Roger Law has been a seminal British artist and cultural commentator for the last four decades. He has subsequently become a major ceramic artist, becoming a pioneer figure in his work in Jingdezhen, one of China's most famous porcelain centres.

Roger Law: From Satire to Ceramics, opening on 18 November explores the full range of Law's extraordinary career, in an exhibition that looks at his artistic and intellectual formation, and the successive environments he worked in.

Structured around the work spaces that have shaped his artistic practice and life the exhibition presents his works in a series of spaces. **The Newspaper and Magazine Office**, presents his early career in the Art Department of the *Sunday Times*, where his first important cartoons and illustrations were made.

The Studio Workshop will explore Roger's time in Cambridge and his collaboration with Peter Fluck, with whom he established the partnership Luck and Flaw. Moving from drawing to three dimensional figures, Fluck and Law developed a uniquely biting vision, and a highly distinct style. Work in advertising - and increasingly television - quickly followed.

The Caricature Factory will chart the rise and success of *Spitting Image* which ran for twelve years between 1984 and 1996. Transforming the landscape of political satire, *Spitting Image* transposed the traditions of caricature and reshaped a people's views of their politicians and leaders world-wide. This section will look at how the puppets were produced, not just in the workshop in Canary Wharf, but increasingly around the world. A range of the

famous figures will be on display including, arguably his most iconic, that of Margret Thatcher.

Jingdezhen, the final section of the exhibition will explore how following the pressures of the *Spitting Image* years, Roger moved fully from puppetry to porcelain. A stint teaching at the National Art School in Sydney brought the natural wonders of Australian marine life to his attention. Animals such as crabs, jelly fish, turtles and crayfish encrust his ceramics, which range from huge, seven foot high vases, to small bowls. Fascinated by Jingdezhen, known for centuries as *Porcelain City*, the artist became completely embroiled in porcelain production. Employing the unequalled craft skills of the city, he began to live there for prolonged periods. The deeply carved decoration of his vessels is executed in true collaboration with Mr Wu Song Ming, a carver of great skill. Roger draws directly on the surface of the pots and as the carving proceeds changes are made by both artist and carver.

Commenting on the exhibition, Sainsbury Centre Director and exhibition curator Prof Paul Greenhalgh said: "Now is the perfect time to be looking at Roger Law's work. Satire has never been more relevant and rumour has it that a major American television company is seeking to revive the *Spitting Image* idea, whilst regular exhibitions are being staged of his monumental relief-decorated vessels."

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Gallery Information:

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Notes to editors:

Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts

The Sainsbury Centre is one of the most important public university art museums in the UK. It is situated on the campus of the University of East Anglia, Norwich.

It opened in 1978 after Robert and Lisa Sainsbury had donated their art collection to the University. The museum is situated in an extraordinary building by Norman Foster which was his first major public work. The Collection includes works dating from prehistory to the late twentieth century from across the globe. A significant number of works by masters of acknowledged European modern art such as Pablo Picasso, Edgar Degas, Alberto Giacometti, Francis Bacon, Jacob Epstein, Henry Moore, Jean Arp, Chiam Soutine, and Amedeo Modigliani.

These works are displayed alongside major holdings of art from Oceania, Africa, the Americas, and Asia; the ancient Mediterranean, classical cultures of Egypt, Greece and Rome, Medieval Europe. Alongside these permanent collections, it hosts a range of major temporary exhibitions and is one of the largest exhibition venues outside of the capital.