

Whitechapel Gallery Children's Commission: Francis Upritchard

10 June – 28 September 2014

Outset Project Gallery (Gallery 5) & 176/Zabludowicz Collection Project Gallery (Gallery 6)

Free Entry

London-based New Zealand artist **Francis Upritchard** is creating the Whitechapel Gallery's annual Children's Commission, a new work of art made specially for children and families and presented throughout the summer. Her new installation, which features a papier-mâché dinosaur and other figures, is inspired by craft traditions from Brazil and her native New Zealand and experiments with materials, forms and textures.

Upritchard's work is rooted in cultural history, rituals, and storytelling, from the 1960s hippie movement and psychedelia to gothic folklore. As part of her new installation the artist presents a series of playful figures made from balata, a rubber-like material found in the Amazon rainforests. She discovered and mastered the material during a residency in Brazil, where balata is used by skilled local craftsmen to create colourful toys which depict humans, animals and monsters, each inspired by myths and legends of Amazonia.

A 2-meter long dinosaur rests on a table, accompanied by a series of sculptures presented on specially designed shelves and plinths. The works, made of glass, clay, bronze and plastic, draw on the artist's research into ceramic traditions of New Zealand potters and her exploration of colour, texture and opacity.

Collaboration is an important element of Francis Upritchard's work and she often produces artist-books to accompany her exhibitions. To coincide with the Children's Commission she will make a new publication designed by James Goggin and Shan Connell.

On Saturday 21 June a day of fun free activities for families will take over the Gallery. Inspired by the Children's Commission, the family day includes creative workshops with artists and composers selected by Francis Upritchard. The artist will also take part in a discussion about her new work with artist Brian Griffiths on Thursday 3 July.

Previous Children's Commissions at the Whitechapel Gallery include Jake and Dinos Chapman's exhibition of modern-day scary fairy tales in 2010 and Eva Rothschild's *Boys and Sculpture* (2012) a film showing what happened when a group of local schoolboys were let loose in a gallery.

Notes for Editors

- Francis Upritchard was born in 1976 in New Plymouth, New Zealand. In 2009 she represented New Zealand at the 53rd Venice Biennale and her work is included in 'A Thousand Doors', NEON and the Whitechapel Gallery at The Gennadius Library of The American School of Classical Studies at Athens in Greece (4 May – 30 June 2014.). Her recent solo exhibitions include; *Francis Upritchard*, Kate MacGarry, London, UK, 2014; *Mandrake*, The Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin, 2013; *Potato Poem*, MIMOCA, Japan, 2013; *War Dance*, Anton Kern Gallery, New York; *A Hand of Cards*, Nottingham Contemporary, UK, 2012; *A Long Wait*,

Press Release

.....

Whitechapel Gallery

77–82 Whitechapel High Street
London E1 7QX

T +44 (0)20 7522 7888

F +44 (0)20 7539 3340

whitechapelgallery.org

Whitechapel Gallery Trustee Limited is a private limited company, registered in England and Wales, registered company no. 4093862 and the corporate trustee of Whitechapel Gallery, registered charity no. 312162. VAT no. 863 586 582.

Contemporary Arts Centre, Cincinnati, 2012 and *In Die Höhle*, Secession, Vienna, 2010.

- Past Publications include *Doomed Doomed All Doomed* (2005), *In die Höhle* (2007) and *Save Yourself* (2009).
- The Children's Commission is curated by Sofia Victorino, Daskalopoulos, Head of Education and Public Programmes and Selina Levinson, Curator: Families.

Visitor Information

Opening times: Tuesday – Sunday, 11am – 6pm, Thursdays, 11am – 9pm.
Free. Whitechapel Gallery, 77 – 82 Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.
Nearest London Underground Station: Aldgate East, Liverpool Street, Tower Gateway DLR. T + 44 (0) 20 7522 7888 info@whitechapelgallery.org
whitechapelgallery.org

Press Information

For further press information and images please contact:
Alex O'Neill, Press Officer, on 020 7539 3360 or
email AlexONeill@whitechapelgallery.org



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**