

deep _____ *veins*

Friends of Brompton Cemetery
International Women's Day Exhibition

Helen Barff
Pippa Beveridge
Alice Cunningham
Rachel Goodison
Lisa Pettibone
Sato Sugamoto

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I

Introduction by the Chair of Friends of Brompton Cemetery

Friends of Brompton Cemetery (FOBC) are proud to sponsor International Women's Day (IWD)¹ exhibition and tour. As part of this annual global celebration, we recognise the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. Brompton Cemetery is steeped in the history of women from all walks of life. The iconic chapel, nestled in a tranquil setting, is the perfect venue to showcase inspirational women's art.

The chapel is a wonderful Grade II listed neoclassical building that serves as the architectural focal point of Brompton Cemetery in West London. Designed by Benjamin Baud and completed in 1842, its domed, octagonal structure was inspired by St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.

The building's eight-sided shape is said to represent earthly life, while the lead-covered dome represents heaven. The interior contains eight giant Corinthian columns and an ornate ceiling decorated with marigolds, a Victorian symbol of grief. A major conservation project completed in 2018 restored the dome and original Victorian Bath stone flooring.

Brompton Cemetery (originally the West of London and Westminster Cemetery) is managed by The Royal Parks, and it is a working cemetery. The chapel is still used for funeral services, with seating capacity of approximately 80.

Over the years the Chapel has featured in many films and TV productions. It appeared in the James Bond film *GoldenEye* as a church in St. Petersburg and more recently in the BBC series *The Night Manager*.

I am delighted to introduce our new chapel curator, Catherine Li, a curator and public programme producer working across London, with a background in higher education and a strong commitment to inclusive, welcoming cultural experiences. Catherine has produced an amazing event, bringing together so many talented and empowering artists, in association with The Royal Parks and the Royal Society of Sculptors. We do hope you enjoy celebrating International Women's Day with us and look forward to welcoming you back to Brompton Cemetery.

Sarah

Sarah-Jane Ellis
Chair, Friends of Brompton Cemetery

¹The first National Woman's Day was observed in the US on 28 February 1909, following a 15,000-woman march in New York City the previous year demanding better pay and voting rights. In 1910, Clara Zetkin proposed an international day at the International Conference of Working Women in Copenhagen. The first IWD was celebrated in 1911 across Austria, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland.

Reflecting on what it meant to be a sculptor, Kathleen Scott writes: “There is much climbing about on ladders and scaffolds, with heavy weights to lift and mallets to swing,” yet for the willing it is “the most grateful, generous, and abundant of professions.”¹

¹Kathleen Scott, quoted in National Trust Collections, object record for These had most to give (NT 515080), accessed 24 February 2026.

II

Introduction by the Director of the Royal Society of Sculptors

The Royal Society of Sculptors is delighted to partner with our neighbours at the Brompton Chapel on this special project marking International Women’s Day 2026. The Society champions sculpture and the artists who create it and women have long been at the heart of the organisation since its founding in 1905. Lady Kathleen Scott (widow of the Antarctic explorer, Captain Scott), was one of the first female members of the Society, becoming an Associate Member in 1928 and a Fellow in 1946. Lady Kathleen’s granddaughter Emily Young is currently a Fellow of the Society. Today over 50% of the Society’s members are women and there are women at the helm in our President, Laura Ford and Director, Caroline Worthington.

Deep Veins brings together works by six artists working in sculpture, Helen Barff, Pippa Beveridge, Alice Cunningham, Rachel Goodison, Lisa Pettibone, and Sato Sugamoto, as a collective response to International Women’s Day that thinks through motherhood, craft, and the female body as a system of connection and endurance. Veins run through the exhibition as an imagery that stays close to the body while reaching outward into materials and the natural world: as circulation and inheritance, and as a material logic found across organic forms and sculptural structures shaped by them. Making is central. Handwork, texture, and repetition draw attention to what is often kept unseen, including the labour of care, the entanglement of body and role, and the ways resilience is built slowly over time.

Installed in the Chapel at Brompton Cemetery, the exhibition sits within a landscape of remembrance where time feels physical and continuity is never abstract. Brompton Cemetery is also the resting place of many notable women, including Emmeline Pankhurst, leader of the suffragette movement, the novelist Geraldine Jewsbury, who wrote sharply about women’s lives and constrained social roles in the nineteenth century, and Marchesa Luisa Casati, the Italian arts patron and fashion icon

whose unconventional presence shaped avant-garde culture in the early twentieth century. In this setting, *Deep Veins* also considers what women have historically been expected to carry and asks what forms of agency can emerge when embodied experience and skilled making are treated as knowledge in their own right. Bringing together sculptural works that use processes and materials including casting, stone carving, recycled elements, glass, and yarn, the exhibition draws on the perspectives of women in sculpture to foreground the kinds of attention and urgency that continue to expand the field.

* * *

Circles, arcs, and crosses shape the gestures of these works here and beyond: inside this round room of the Chapel and out in the cemetery, where a ring of colonnades encircles the building.They are wonderful shapes and forms that rehearse a feminist mentality in making and curating. A circle gathers and keeps; an arc shelters, cradles, and receives; a cross marks a balance, a meeting-point, entanglement. They hold. They distribute weight. They make space for others

- for contemplation, for connection. They allow coexistence inside pressure, and growth without spectacle. They represent the natural flow of the outside world and our inner body: the turning of seasons, the bend of a river, the branching of roots, the looping path of breath.

Artist Magdalena Abakanowicz gives language to this material kinship between body and world: “I see fibre as the basic element constructing the organic world on our planet...It is from fibre that all living organisms are built, the tissue of plants, leaves and ourselves...our nerves, our genetic code, the canal of our veins, our muscles...We are fibrous structures.” Read beside the site and the works gathered here, that logic becomes a curatorial method: to treat sculpture as something that behaves like a body. In a cared heritage site this matters. A cemetery is often understood through function: what it is “for.” But here it is more useful to think in landscape terms: an open system that can transform over time, assimilating multiple uses and interpretations. The cemetery asks for stewardship rather than control, for what might be called a strategy of controlled decay and growth: attending to what must be preserved, while allowing time to remain present as weathering, composting, and return. Curating

here echoes that ethos and becomes a practice of holding: like veins, like roots, like the persistent life that Fanthorpe imagines rising from under the motorway.

*Petrol and diesel will both dry up
But that doesn’t happen to a buttercup.
Flowers shoot upwards with mighty heaves
And sprout in a flurry of stems and leaves.
Here they come shouldering through the road,
Willowherb, Woodruff, Woundwort, Woad.
U. A. Fanthorpe, “Under the Motorway”*

Catherine Li
Chapel Curator, Friends of Brompton Cemetery

Works

Helen Barff

Alice Cunningham

Lisa Pettibone

Rachel Goodison

Pippa Beveridge

Sato Sugamoto

My sculptural practice is rooted in communication with people across a wide demographic, transforming these exchanges into tactile form. I often explore autobiographical memories embedded in personal belongings, particularly clothing, using them as vessels for lived experience and emotional residue. My experience of motherhood is a recurring focus, informing both material choices and conceptual direction.

I am interested in how materials are shaped by temporality, and how memory becomes embedded in matter over time. **A sensitivity to touch is central to my practice.** I often work with displaced people, documenting personal stories and material traces as a way of helping to maintain a sense of identity in the face of dislocation.

In this time of human conflict and widespread environmental destruction, there is a glimmer of hope in the work of Helen Barff. Evidenced by intriguing, thought provoking castings and drawings, that speak of emptiness and remnants of memory... reflecting humanitarian issues. Identifying the power of the human spirit to prevail.

Freemy Yianni, Close Ltd.





The Ground That Gathers Beneath My Feet II, 2025

Plaster, blanket

12 x 30 x 23 cm

The Ground That Gathers Beneath My Feet III, 2025

Plaster

13 x 17 x 27 cm

Plaster casts of bare feet rest on stone and blankets, suggesting temporary absence. Each cast records physical traces of use and movement – weight, pressure, and the marks of time. The casting process developed through workshops I led at the YMCA with people who have experienced homelessness and displacement. The casts are of my own feet and those of my twelve-year-old daughter. Presented together, they reflect a mother–daughter relationship shaped by shared experience and individual journeys, registering proximity, growth, and separation through the body.

Text courtesy of Helen Barff. Image © Helen Barff. Photograph: Lucy Newman Cleeve.

Hug, 2015

Plaster, cotton fabric, steel

27 x 21 x 18 cm

Hug is made up of three cast components tightly held together by a handkerchief. The handkerchief belongs to my late father. It was made with the idea of the necessity for human contact and togetherness. Each component is cast from an item of clothing belonging to me or my children, and each is shaped by the proximity to each other and the tight hug.



Text courtesy of Helen Barff. Image courtesy Close Ltd.

Bust, 2015

Concrete, rope

149 x 19 x 10 cm

When I stopped breast feeding my second child, I filled both my maternity bras with concrete. It was quite an instinctive action – both celebratory and grieving. I called the work *Bust* for obvious reasons, but as well as being bodily it's a strong word – it feisty. It can refer to sculptural bust, a portrait as well as meaning broken, at bottom of one's reserves. Like a pair of boxing gloves, they hang with the weight of a visceral memory embodied in materials.

Text courtesy of Helen Barff. Image © Helen Barff.



Alice Cunningham MRSS

Alice Cunningham is a UK-based visual artist and sculptor whose practice spans a rich dialogue between material, environment, and human experience. She works across a diverse range of media – from carved stone and earth works to site-responsive installations, prints, and socially engaged projects – bringing equal attention to concept and craft in every piece. **Her work is deeply rooted in material exploration, often using sustainably sourced or environmentally conscious materials to reflect on the physical and metaphorical traces we leave on the world.**

Collaboration and community engagement are central to her approach. Many of her projects evolve through dialogue with people, places, and environments, whether in residencies, public commissions, or participatory works that unfold over time. Research and exchange guide these processes, allowing ideas to develop organically and for the work to respond to specific contexts.

Cunningham's practice also engages with pressing environmental themes – most notably in her residency with the University of Bristol's Earth Sciences Department, where she explored notions of climate change through sculpture. Her projects reflect a commitment to inclusivity, communication, and the ways we interact with our surroundings, creating art that is as much about conversation and connection as its aesthetic form.



Time makes a mockery of us all, 2025

Devonian Marble

37x46x27x14cm

My first figurative work and torso. Influenced by images of broken bodies from Gaza, when I first saw the Devonian marble’s fleshy freckled pink colour, I instantly thought of the human form. This work reflects our potential yet fragility, it celebrates the changing form of the female body and stands as a reminder that we all come from the earth and will one day return to it.

Falling Apart, 2024

Sandstone

18 x 23 x 14cm

This is the first stone carving I made after the birth of my second daughter. It is inspired by the reconfiguration, body and mind that happens after giving birth and becoming a parent.

Text courtesy of Alice Cunningham. Image © Alice Cunningham.



Rachel Goodison's work includes installations, sculpture, paintings and works on paper. Her materials tend to incorporate the 'everyday' and familiar: from discarded textiles and yarn, dried food and sweets, to excess packaging and found objects.

She explores the parallels between the human and natural worlds, seeking shared patterns and shapes to emphasise that we are essentially all part of the same matter. **In particular, she is interested in the largely 'unseen' wonder of the natural world**, whether plant, animal, bird or insect. She often magnifies small shapes or details to a human scale, intending to engage viewers in a celebration of nature's complexity and beauty. At the same time, she seeks to remind us of our destructive impact on nature, and therefore ultimately on our own survival.





Guardians, 2025

Plaster, recycled coffee pods

50cm x 50cm (thin stand 150cm high)

Mirroring the universal sign for female, the circle with a cross, this work consists of two circular discs, each standing on a wooden cross below. They are convex in shape, echoing the shape of a pregnant belly. I have taken the beetle as motif for these pieces, inspired both by my residency in Brompton & a fascination with insects, and a recent residency in Aswan where the scarab beetle symbolizes rebirth and eternal renewal.

The patterns here are inspired by the 14-Spotted Ladybird, and the Tortoise Beetle. I am also fascinated by the way symbols drawn from nature are used to express spiritual beliefs across cultures, and the mosaic effect intends to reflect those found in sacred sites worldwide.

Text courtesy of Rachel Goodison. Image © Rachel Goodison, Photograph: Lucy J. Toms

A visual artist, curator and teacher with a passion for materials, I create sculpture, installations and photo-led prints that explore points where nature, humans and science intersect.

Originally from California, I grew up in an era that produced psychedelia and the Moon landings. As a child, I collected sea glass, dissected toys, climbed granite mountains and dreamt of escaping suburbia. After a period of wanderlust, I settled in London and now work from a garden studio in rural Surrey. Steps away, I can stargaze, watch the ISS or ponder our connection to an indifferent but stunning universe.

Interests in astronomy and physics have led to three space-based artworks, sparking a determination to advocate for art in space exploration through writing and talks. Studying

philosophy helps me to knit universal concepts with material aesthetics.

I'm mesmerised by glass and its power to record movement through bending, stretching and sagging in the kiln. Witnessing fundamental forces at work, I peek inside at critical points, sensing the falling in my own body. Capturing the momentary is key. **Sculptures emerge as a collaboration between heat, gravity and imagination.**

I'm drawn to juxtaposing different materials to add meaning: rocks refer to solidity or deep time; cords or wires mark tension between objects. The work comes alive through real or implied movement: folded or collapsed glass signals transitional form, some sculptures have no fixed position. My aim is to provoke thought and incite sensory experience.

Opening 4, 2021

Glass, thread

39 x 30 x 25cm



This sculpture explores conceptual viewpoints, voids and volume and can be positioned in several ways. Probing the concept of 'up' and 'down', it can be positioned in several orientations thus requiring the viewer to interact with the piece. The piece has been fused and bent in the kiln over six firings and burnished to a velvety finish. The curvaceous form is interlaced with vibrant fluorescent thread emphasising the strength of the feminine.

Text courtesy of Lisa Pettibone. Image © Lisa Pettibone

Seed, 2024

Pinecones, firehose, at the centre sits a glass vessel with seeds

200 x 200 x 6cm

I'm fortunate that my studio is surrounded by trees. A majestic conifer drops hundreds of pine cones each year with winged seeds tucked inside. Nature is so prolific and determined to survive. One day I sadly realised that the warming climate means many of these trees will not endure the transition. Surrey has lost 11% of native species – higher than the national average, despite being the most wooded county in England. Nature can't reproduce fast enough to keep up with our damaging obsession with fossil fuels and technology. This work shouts 'emergency' as the climate spirals out of control.

For *Deep Veins*, this floor sculpture we can reflect on the forest as our lifeblood, the bed of reproduction. On International Women's Day I consider the role of women to nurture and support all biological life.

Text courtesy of Lisa Pettibone. Image © Lisa Pettibone



'We live in a society that sanctifies memory, keeping traces of each story and each object sometimes obsessively. Through printing and photography combined with glass, I build on the theme of traces, highlighting the objects and details I discover to forge histories and construct identities.'

My work is concerned with time and memory: the fleeting and transitory, absence and displacement, identity and loss. By juxtaposing and repeating forms which reflect these concepts, I try to further my understanding of the relationship between past and present, time and space, reality and fiction. Glass is my medium of choice because of the wide range of lyrical messages it can convey. I use a variety of techniques – from making prototypes and moulds, to kiln-forming, lost wax, cold-working, surface decoration, printing techniques and photography – to express ideas which originate in a practical and poetic sense from its properties: **strength, resilience, transparency and reflection.**

Material investigation and process are central to my practice. I have an abiding interest in the Arts and Crafts movement, not only because of the value it places on aesthetic and high-craft aspects, but also for its philosophies and values. Architectural details, surface decoration, wallpapers and the natural world provide sources of inspiration. I am drawn to the melancholy and beauty of cemeteries, which chime with the aesthetics and concepts behind my work and have provided the setting for a number of my installation pieces.

My studies in landscape architecture have been a constant influence on my practice as an artist and educator, in particular with relation to site-specific projects. I am currently working with the Scottish charity PAMIS on a project to create sites of remembrance throughout Scotland featuring stone waymarkers with mirrored textured-glass elements.

www.philippabeveridge.com



Lost and Found, ongoing

Cast glass, photography, metal

12 x 10 x 5cm approximately

Lost and found is a series of purses made during an artist’s residency in France and deals with the concept of collective and individual identity through the everyday form of a purse: an object which fits easily into the hand, yet is often lost, stolen or mislaid. I invited women who lived in the village to reveal the contents of their purses, which ranged from shopping lists and poems to family photographs and keepsakes. I photographed and then transferred the resulting imagery onto glass. The images distort as the glass melts providing subtle clues to the lives and identities of the owners of the purses, inviting the viewer to consider their own memories contained inside everyday objects.

Text courtesy of Pippa Beveridge. Image © Pippa Beveridge.
Photograph: Robyn Manning

The Human Presence in the Absence of the Figure IV

Lost wax kiln-formed glass, steel, leather.

65 x 35 x 25cm



The female breastplate is a form I frequently return to in my work. Although it protects, it also represents a certain vulnerability at a given time, its fragility raising the question of threatened identities and the way freedom of expression is suppressed in contemporary society. The breastplates represent the body of each and every individual as well as the various stages of life. They contain a vitrified memory, but the body remains absent and they become an empty, discarded shell or vessel.

The textures on this piece take inspiration from an abandoned zinc architectural detail which I photographed then redesigned and carved into linoleum, allowing me to reproduce multiples in wax. It is made from an industrially produced soda lime glass – the same microspheres of glass which, when mixed with paint, are used for road markings – reinforcing some of the primary concepts behind the work: traces of a journey made and remnants left behind.

Text courtesy of Pippa Beveridge. Image © Pippa Beveridge.

Sato Sugamoto's work visualises the complexity of human thought and emotion through conceptual sculptures and installations. Using colourful fibers and electrical cords, these entangled strings evoke neurological circuits symbolising the harmony and the contradictions within our values, perceptions, and decisions.

Her interest in divergent thought stems from her experiences in Japanese society – navigating the tension between expected conformity and desired independence.

Projects like *Glimpse* examine social media's influence on our physiological states, exposing its tension and seduction. While the *Balance* series explores women's struggle to reconcile selfhood with societal expectations. Each of her works reveals how external forces shape our internal landscapes.





Balance,2025

String, yarn, cloth, foam, copper, aluminium, iron, brass

H190xW80xD40 cm (left)

H200xW70xD40 cm (right)

This piece combines rounded shapes and sharp, rigid forms to explore the interaction between women’s individual autonomy and societal norms. The rounded shapes symbolize the minds and bodies of women, while the sharp, rigid forms represent societal expectations. I incorporate strings and yarns, often associated with the domestic sphere, to evoke femininity. By examining the varied expressions of these materials, I aim to reflect the diverse personalities and inner lives of women. The work highlights the tension and balance between these opposing elements, commenting on a woman’s delicate equilibrium between self and society. Rather than expressing only women’s vulnerability, I aim to convey their resilience. They coexist with social norms and expectations, absorbing them as part of their strength. So that’s why this sculpture cannot stand without pipes. My practice often considers the balance between individuality and collective influence. In this piece, I focus on women’s autonomy, using three-dimensional forms as a lens to question norms.

Text courtesy of Sato Sugamoto. Image © Sato Sugamoto.

The Royal Society of Sculptors

The Royal Society of Sculptors was established in 1905 with the aim of championing contemporary sculpture and the artists who create it. We welcome everyone interested in exploring this art form and its many possibilities and enjoy leading the conversation about sculpture today through exhibitions and events for all. We are an artist-led, membership organisation, supporting and connecting sculptors throughout their careers.

Website: sculptors.org.uk

About

The Friends of Brompton Cemetery

The Chapel

Inspiring Women Walking Tour

The Friends of Brompton Cemetery (FoBC)

The Friends of Brompton Cemetery (FoBC) is a voluntary charitable organisation (UK Registered Charity No. 1181027) established to support the preservation, restoration and public appreciation of Brompton Cemetery.

FoBC coordinate and curate the Chapel’s weekend use, which includes exhibitions, music events, guided tours, and community events. Our aim is to help care for the cemetery and support activities that bring together history, art, and local life. The Friends also run the Information Centre at the North Lodge, open daily. Our knowledgeable

volunteers welcome visitors from around the world and offer specialist guidance. For more information, please visit our website.

We work independently, in close partnership with The Royal Parks, who manage Brompton Cemetery. All Chapel coordination and event support are provided on a voluntary basis. You can join us as a Friend, volunteer with us, and support our work through a donation. If you use social media, follow us on Facebook and Instagram: @FOBCOfficial

Website: brompton-cemetery.org.uk

The Chapel and the FoBC Chapel Curator

Designed by architect Benjamin Baud and completed in 1842, the Chapel stands at the heart of Brompton Cemetery, a Grade I-listed site in West London. Built in a neoclassical style, it has a circular domed nave encircled by a colonnade, inspired by the layout of St Peter’s in Rome. The design places the Chapel at the head of the central avenue, almost like the high altar in an open-air cathedral.

The Chapel was originally built for funeral services and continues to be used in this way today, while also hosting other activities and short exhibitions. Brompton Cemetery is a much-loved place for local residents and visitors to London, and even a brief exhibition in the Chapel can attract a high number of visitors.

The Chapel underwent major restoration in 2018, funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, The Royal Parks and The Friends of Brompton Cemetery as part of the Brompton Cemetery Conservation Project. The work included significant repair and improved access, and has helped to secure the building for public use.

The FoBC Chapel Curator, Catherine Li, curates and coordinates the Chapel’s arts programme, working with artists and partners to develop exhibitions and events that respond to the site and its surroundings.

Contact: chapel.arts@brompton-cemetery.org.uk

FoBC Inspiring Women Walking Tour

I created and began leading this tour in 2023 to coincide with International Women’s Day, which falls on the 8th of March.

Brompton Cemetery is the resting place for several famous and inspirational women such as suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst and adventurer Elizabeth Le Blond. However, I am passionate about the many women who are largely forgotten or seldom talked about despite their good work, creative achievements, and the contribution they made towards supporting and changing the lives of others. My tour has evolved over the past three years to include new characters and their stories, and the audience (women and men both young and old) has also grown, such is the

interest. As part of the evolution, this year sees the introduction of a shorter tour for those who are less mobile and who need a slower pace.

We offer many general and specialist tours here at Brompton Cemetery and I’m delighted that my Inspiring Women Tour has become an annual fixture in the calendar.

As the tour takes place in March, I remind participants to wrap up warmly and to wear something purple. Purple is the international colour for women’s equality and represents amongst other attributes, dignity and justice.

Caroline Ellis, FoBC Special Interest Tour Guide

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Caroline Worthington, Director, The Royal Society of Sculptors
Catherine Li, Chapel Curator, Friends of Brompton Cemetery
Caroline Ellis, FoBC Special Interest Tour Guide, Friends of Brompton Cemetery

Designed and edited by Catherine Li

Artist statements, artwork texts and images courtesy of the artists: Helen Barff, Alice Cunningham, Rachel Goodison, Lisa Pettibone, Pippa Beveridge, and Sato Sugamoto

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