

# Art Imitating Life

*A new exhibition of contemporary sculpture seeks to inspire, surprise and even challenge visitors to Buckland Abbey. CLAIRE SAUL talks to the creative force behind *The Art of Reflection**

THE work of renowned sculptor Andrew Logan can be seen in the most famous public collections and major galleries throughout the world. Now, '13th century former Cistercian monastery' can be added to this venue list, a direction which is, suitably 'on reflection', unsurprising for an artist who thrives on challenging convention.

*The Art of Reflection, Andrew Logan at Buckland Abbey* opens this month at the National Trust's tranquil location near Yelverton. The abbey was a Cistercian monastery dating from 1278 and later sold to Sir Roger Grenville during the Dissolution of the Monasteries. It was modified into a house before becoming home to its most celebrated owner in 1580, the seafaring adventurer and privateer Sir Francis Drake, whose family retained it for four centuries.

"The Abbey is wonderful, it is a very beautiful place, a little hidden gem with layers of history," enthuses Logan, a true English eccentric but a charming and refreshingly unpretentious one at that.

"The physical aspects of the building really fitted in well with my work to create a sort of story as visitors go around the house. I have always believed that art should be shown everywhere. My work is about joy and it is about celebration. I really hope the exhibition is going to enthral visitors and be like *Alice in Wonderland*...full of surprises."

Reflecting themes of exploration and discovery, peace and tranquility, and nature and the universe, *The Art of Reflection* finds 18 sculptures drawn from five decades of the artist's career placed in 13 different locations throughout the house and gardens.

Sir Francis Drake himself features prominently in the selection in the form of a brand new jewel and painted glass portrait that will hang inside the house.

"I just thought that a portrait was a nice little homage, really. I based it on one of the paintings of him at the National Portrait Gallery in London which was very 16th century in terms of style but it also had rather a human feel to it as well, especially in the eyes and just the way that he had been caught. I am really pleased with it."



## DON'T MISS



A detail from *Goldfield*, a field of wheat stalks which will be shown in the Buckland Abbey barn



*Excalibur* will rise from the abbey's Cart Pond

Elsewhere in the house is Logan's Elizabethan-influenced *Tiara*, first designed as part of a collection for his great friend, designer Zandra Rhodes and the ornamental *Elements* and *Universe* thrones used in The Alternative Miss World pageant, an event which Logan conceived and which has been running for over 40 years.

During the exhibition, Buckland's visitors will be able to try out the thrones for themselves in the Great Hall, a room that has welcomed many famous noblemen and dignitaries during its colourful history.

Buckland's lucky volunteers will wear 'apple' pendants and brooches specially created by Logan in celebration of the abbey's 700-year-old history of apple growing and cider making. The Great Barn will be

host to *Goldfield*, a towering field of 4.5m high wheat stalks accompanied by mice and floating butterflies which was one of his earliest public commissions in 1976.

"It is exciting to mix new and old work and to see *Goldfield* going on show again after 41 years. It was a huge success at the Whitechapel Art Gallery and I hung onto it afterwards. It was very exciting when I saw the barn at Buckland and I realised how well it would suit this installation. I'm also really pleased to have recently rediscovered a tape containing the original musical accompaniment to *Goldfield* written by the composer Richard Hartley, so that is now going to be played too."

*Excalibur*, a three-metre glass sword rising out of the abbey's Cart Pond is a stunning piece that evolved from one of the original wings made and subsequently discarded for *Monument to Hope*, a large winged Pegasus sculpture now held in a private collection.

"That *Excalibur* has actually come from the wings of Pegasus, I quite like, it is quite poetic!" Logan laughs. "It usually sits in my museum in mid Wales next to the *Cosmic Egg*," he adds matter of factly, in the way only a man famed for his artistic fantasy and once described as 'the Wizard of Odd' can do.

The location of *The Art of Reflection* at Buckland Abbey seems equally poetic. No doubt, given his evident eye for colourful treasures, Sir Francis Drake would agree. ♦

*The Art of Reflection - Andrew Logan at Buckland Abbey opens on 1 July and runs until February 2018. [nationaltrust.org.uk/buckland](http://nationaltrust.org.uk/buckland) or call 01822 853607. [andrewlogan.com](http://andrewlogan.com)*



*World of Smiles* in Drake's Chamber, echoes his circumnavigation of the globe. "This formed the central part of *Universe of Smiles* that I did for Expo 2000's Basic Needs Pavilion in Hannover," says Logan. "Really of course that is what the world should be doing, we should all be smiling."



Exhibited for the first time in the Long Gallery, a space historically used for recreation and dancing, *Life and Oomph* features former ballerina Lynn Seymour reaching out from a sea of pearls. "There is just something about pearls," says Logan. "They are timeless and I find the so-called imperfect ones particularly interesting."



*The Four Flowers of the Apocalypse* displayed in Buckland's garden is a unique floral tribute to the abbey's spectacular natural setting. "It is a joy working with Buckland Abbey for this exhibition and drawing inspiration from its great beauty, peace and tranquility, resting in the Devon hills," says Logan.