

March 2022
For immediate release

Emily Hesse: The Witches' Institution (W.I.)
27 May – 18 September 2022
The Tetley

The Witches' Institution (W.I.) is an exhibition by artist Emily Hesse, imagined and developed in collaboration with organiser and writer Andrea Phillips.

Bringing together Hesse's sculpture, curatorial practice and PhD research at the Belfast School of Art, Ulster University, *The Witches' Institution (W.I.)* also includes work by artists Ana Mendieta and The Otolith Group.

Clay acts as a key material for the exhibition. As well as using clay as a material for moulding, Hesse sees her sculptural practice as an expanded shaping of thoughts, histories and alternative futures. She uses the concept of magical materialism to produce objects, installations, diagrams and stories.

Her work is deeply rooted in radical narratives of the North Yorkshire landscape and the way it is (and has been) occupied through processes of oppression and possessive violence, where people, animals and objects stand accused of and marked by violence in the struggle for freedom (that of our bodies, our intellects, our ways of life, our genders).

Through a series of experimental works, discussions and experiences, the exhibition is envisioned as an exercise in world building, aiming to imagine what a cultural institution run by witches could be.

How can an institution be shaped and reshaped through magical material processes? What freedoms could it constitute and what would be its constituency? Rather than a hovel full of spiders and broomsticks, *The W.I.* is a temporal-spatial web of feminist ingenuity, a site of shifting possibilities, where social and territorial norms can be refigured.

In the same way that institutions have organisational structures, *The W.I.* presents a series of fictitious departments, for example: The Call to Re-inhabit; Relationships that Matter; Beyond Human; and Architecture, Ecology and Philosophy.

There is at once a necessity to find (or invent) the locations of alternative modes of thinking and believing together, and a need to interrogate if and how institutions of cultural production can host such things. *The W.I.* imagines the possibilities of doing so.

Emily Hesse: The Witches' Institution (W.I.) is part of The Tetley Jerwood Commissions programme, supported by Jerwood Arts' Development Programme Fund

Press Visits and Enquiries

For enquiries, images or to arrange a visit please contact Hannah Keating, Marketing and Communications Manager: hannah.keating@thetetley.org / 07800797245

NOTES TO EDITORS

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About The Tetley

The Tetley is a pioneering centre for contemporary art located in the stunning art deco headquarters of the former Tetley Brewery. From the heart of Leeds' South Bank, The Tetley creates a platform for amazing emerging artists, presents breathtaking free exhibitions and helps communities and young people in Leeds find their creative voice.

The Tetley is supported by Arts Council England, Tetley's Beers, Leeds City Council and Garfield Weston Foundation.

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