

Artworks by Ai Weiwei, Andrew Sabin, and Jane and Louise Wilson to be unveiled in London as part of the 14th edition of Sculpture in the City



Roots: Palace by Ai Weiwei - Courtesy of Lisson Gallery

(19 June, 2025) Artworks by Ai Weiwei, Andrew Sabin and Jane and Louise Wilson will be installed amidst the iconic architecture of the City of London from this summer as part of the 14th edition of Sculpture in the City, the annual public art exhibition set in the heart of the Square Mile.

Launching on 16 July 2025, the 14th edition of Sculpture in the City continues its mission to transform the City of London into a vibrant open-air gallery, placing world-class public art in the heart of one of the world's most iconic urban environments.

Sculpture in the City is delivered by the City of London Corporation, alongside LACUNA, a leading cultural studio.

Offering a striking contrast to the surrounding urban landscape, **Ai Weiwei's** cast-iron tree root sculpture *Roots: Palace* will be installed at St Botolph without Bishopsgate. Part of a series created in collaboration with Brazilian artisans and communities by moulding sculptures from the roots and trunks of endangered Pequi Vinagreiro trees, the work



explores uprootedness. It references the artist's personal exile, as well as global refugee crises and the displacement of Brazil's indigenous peoples. Crafted using ancient "lost wax" casting techniques, elements of these rare tree roots are transformed into evocative compositions that resemble both mythical creatures and fragmented natural forms.

A new work by artist duo **Jane and Louise Wilson**, *Dendrophiles*, highlights hidden stories beneath London's modern architecture, exploring the fragile connection between The City's high-rise skyline and its ancient past. Situated beneath the escalators of The Leadenhall Building, the work combines ink drawings based on images of DNA with 3D scans of ancient oak wooden samples that date over 2,000 years old. The archaeological material was excavated on the site of Bloomberg's European headquarters in 2012 and believed to have once supported a crossing over the River Walbrook. The microscopic imagery was developed with the Department of Biohybrid Architecture at the Royal Danish Academy, Copenhagen and MOLA, London. With this juxtaposition, the artists want to spotlight the loss of hands-on knowledge and remind us that the most important part of technology is often social: learning by transferring skills and techniques from one generation to the next. The sculpture is a continuation of the themes explored in the twins' upcoming site specific commission, *Performance of Entrapment*, which will be presented from 17 July at the nearby London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE.

Outside 70 St Mary Axe, a new large-scale sculpture by **Andrew Sabin**, *Looping Loop*, was created by first sculpting shapes in soft margarine, which were then used to create moulds. The combination of soft, textured mould surfaces with hard, colourful casting material gives the sculpture a lively, pulsating sensation. Its continuous, rising and falling form traces a gentle path around its circumference, punctuated by shifts in colour, texture, and mood.

The new sculptures will join six works retained from previous editions of Sculpture in the City, along with two permanent acquisitions, highlighting the legacy of the programme in shaping The City of London's relationship with public art.

Works remaining on show

A playful and interactive work first unveiled in 2024, *Kissing Gate* by **Maya Rose Edwards** remains on show in Aldgate Square, placing a rural kissing gate into the urban landscape, inviting moments of interaction between city-goers.

Also installed in 2024 as part of the 13th edition of Sculpture in the City, on the corner of 99 Bishopsgate and Wormwood Street, *Temple* by **Richard Mackness** turns the humble paper bag into a sculptural, gilded monument, giving a familiar tool of daily errands the reverence of a shrine.

Julian Opie's four sculptures, *Charles*, *Jiwon*, *Nethaneel*, and *Elena*, at 100 Bishopsgate,



depict diverse faces using strict vertical symmetry, blending classic portrait techniques with the visual language of modern technologies such as facial recognition, while referencing the traditional aesthetics of public monuments.

At Mitre Square, *CAUCUS*, a vibrant yellow sculpture by artist and designer **Samuel Ross**, who this year is leading the London Design Biennale as Artistic Director, invites interactions from the public with the sculpture, encouraging familiar gestures like sitting, standing, and leaning.

Two sculptures by **Daniel Silver**, part of his *Rock Formations* series, present interpretations of the human body inspired by ancient statues and busts. Composed of “collages” of stone and bronze heads placed on pieces of Michelangelo marble, the artworks are situated at 40 Leadenhall (one by the Fenchurch Street entrance and one by the Leadenhall Street entrance).

Permanent acquisitions

As a testament to Sculpture in the City’s lasting influence, permanent artwork acquisitions have been made through the programme, becoming part of the permanent public art offering in The City of London. This is the case of *In Loving Memory* by **Oliver Bragg**, an artwork composed of humorous engraved brass plaques situated on existing benches around the City. The plaques commemorate fictional or abstract ideas with a mix of optimism, humour, and reflection. Also permanent is **Elisa Artesero’s** *The Garden of Floating Words*, a poem displayed using neon that appears to be floating amongst the foliage outside 70 St Mary Axe.

Stella Ioannou, Artistic Director of Sculpture in the City and Founding Director of Lacuna, said: "What continues to excite me even in our 14th edition is how each iteration feels entirely new. Seeing these works come to life in the heart of The City is never just about placing sculpture on site, it’s about the conversations that unfold between people, buildings and ideas. It’s a joy to witness how The City becomes a backdrop, a stage, even a collaborator in the work."

Chairman of the City of London Corporation’s Culture, Heritage, and Libraries Committee, Brendan Barns, said: "Sculpture in the City is a powerful example of how we bring culture to life in the Square Mile, opening up extraordinary contemporary art to all who live, work and visit here. The project continues to evolve with ambition and purpose, drawing on The City’s unique blend of heritage, innovation and global reach. We’re proud to support initiatives like this that animate our public spaces and reinforce The City’s position as a vibrant cultural destination."

Activations Programme

As in previous years, complementing the artworks on display, Sculpture in the City offers a diverse and **free activation programme** starting this summer and finishing in Spring 2026. Events include a silent disco in partnership with MSCTY, a Cocktail & Create workshop,



curated exhibition tours, a BSL guided tour, as well as offering again the popular Little Art Critics TV workshops for children.

To mark International World Mental Health Day, Sculpture in the City will host a long table discussion exploring the power of art for our wellbeing, *Sculpting Perspectives: The Art of Connection*.

A multimedia guide on the free arts and culture app **Bloomberg Connects** will allow visitors to explore the artworks with exclusive artwork information. In addition, **MSCTY x Sculpture in the City** will allow visitors to experience site-specific architecture-inspired music and sound art.

Sculpture in the City is a Founding Partner of London Sculpture Week, a collaboration with Frieze Sculpture, The Line and the Mayor of London's Fourth Plinth Programme. This year's edition will run from 20 to 28 September, with plans underway for an expanded programme including a symposium and a new celebratory event.

The City of London Corporation is one of the largest funders of heritage and cultural activities in the UK and invests over £130m every year. The organisation manages a range of world-class cultural and heritage institutions, including the Barbican Centre, Tower Bridge, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, Guildhall Art Gallery, The London Archives, and Keats House. It also supports the London Symphony Orchestra, which is based at the Barbican Centre, and the new London Museum.

ENDS

Link to [press pack here](#).

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Notes to Editors

About Sculpture in the City

Sculpture in the City is an annual sculpture park that uses the urban realm as a rotating gallery space. Every summer, the City of London, in partnership with local businesses, unveils a new selection of artworks by internationally acclaimed and emerging artists. World-class contemporary sculpture complements the unique architectural quality of the area and engages the passers-by, who range from local workers to architectural tourists and other visitors, animating one of the most dynamic parts of the City of London.

Started in 2010 as a public realm activation project for the area of St Helen's and Undershaft which resulted in an exhibition of just four artworks in June 2011, Sculpture in the City is



celebrating its 14th Edition in 2025, having shown a total of 137 artists and 162 artworks to date.

Explore the 14th Edition, on display in the City of London's financial district from 16 July 2025 — Spring 2026. Sculpture in the City is completely free and accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Learn more at sculptureinthecity.org.uk

Instagram: [@sculptureinthecity](https://www.instagram.com/sculptureinthecity)

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Project Partners: Aviva, Bloomberg, Brookfield Properties, CC Land, the City of London Corporation, Hiscox, Nuveen Real Estate, Tower 42. The Eastern City BID is the Activations Partner for the 14th Edition.

Project Patrons: Aldgate Connect BID, Foster + Partners, Mtec and Price & Myers.

With thanks to participating artists, galleries and representatives: Ai Weiwei, Andrew Sabin, Jane & Louise Wilson, Richard Mackness, Julian Opie, Samuel Ross, Daniel Silver, Maya Rose Edwards, Elisa Artesero, Oliver Bragg, Lisson Gallery, Brooke Benington, Maureen Paley, Julian Opie Studio, Friedman Benda Gallery, Frith Street Gallery.

Arts Advisory Group

The Arts Advisory Board includes: Shanay Jhaveri, Head of Visual Arts, Barbican Centre; Sepake Angiama, Artistic Director, Iniva; Iwona Blazwick OBE, Former Director, Whitechapel Gallery; Wendy Fisher, Collector and Philanthropist; Whitney Hintz, Hiscox Curator; and Andrea Schlieker, Former Head of Exhibitions, Tate Britain. In 2025, we also welcomed guest artist Vanessa da Silva, who exhibited in the 12th and 13th editions of Sculpture in the City.

About the City of London Corporation

The City of London Corporation is the governing body of the Square Mile dedicated to a vibrant and thriving City, supporting a diverse and sustainable London within a globally successful UK – www.cityoflondon.gov.uk

About Lacuna

Lacuna is a leading cultural studio realising contemporary art and events in urban spaces and local communities. Lacuna collaborates with urban leaders and collectives, decision makers and creative visionaries.

Lacuna is led by Stella Ioannou, Artistic Director of Sculpture in the City. Stella has been involved with Sculpture in the City from its inception in 2010 and has overseen the project's exponential growth in artistic content and partnerships alongside stakeholder management and fundraising. A trained architect, Stella was determined from the beginning that each



artwork is displayed in dialogue with the contemporary architecture and the unique urban environment. Stella contributes regularly to public events, selection juries and fundamentally believes that art and discourse improve the wellbeing of people, places and communities.

Lacuna has also delivered an ambitious public art programme of permanent and rotational art commissions at Paddington Square, a new urban precinct developed by Sellar/GWD Properties and designed by the Renzo Piano Building Workshop. As part of a three-year partnership with The Showroom, a new rotational piece by Long Distance Press will be launching at the end of July.

Lacuna has also more recently delivered three new artworks at 40 Leadenhall as part of the public art programme the team curated for this new state-of-the-art building. Commissioned by M&G, the public art programme includes Trip and Hurry by Erwin Wurm and May Day, a new site-specific commission by Lothar Götz.

<http://lacuna-projects.com> / @lacunaprojects

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In 2019 C C Land teamed up with MARK (formerly Meyer Bergman) and committed £182m for the joint development of “Whiteleys”, a former shopping center, to deliver an enhanced retail experience, a sophisticated residential development and new leisure facilities to the heart of London Bayswater.



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Source: Nuveen, 31 March 2025.

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Activations Partner



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For more information on the work of the BID, please visit easterncity.co.uk