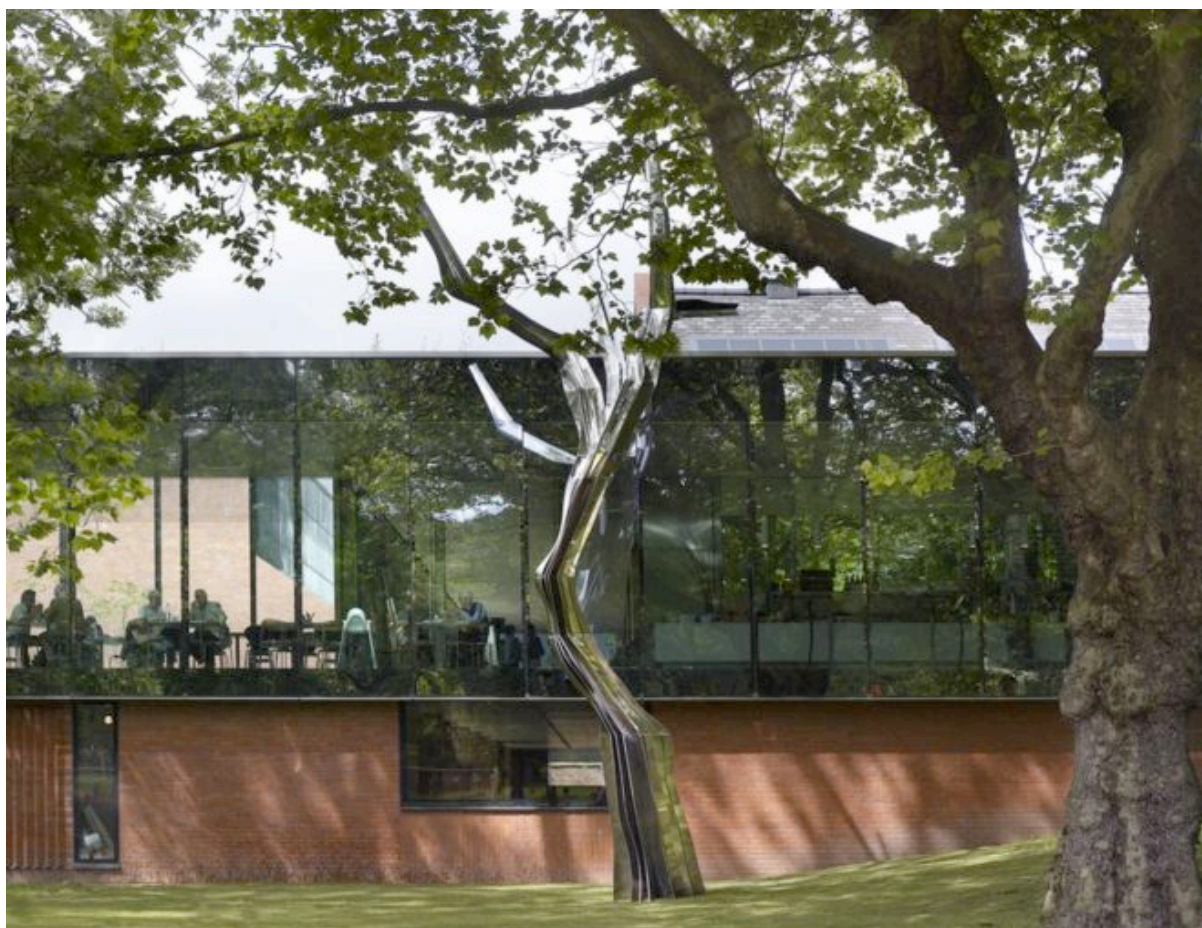


## THOMAS DANE GALLERY

Chris Long, 'Anya Gallaccio Breaks out with First Permanent Artwork', *BBC*, 28 June 2016



MICHAEL POLLARD

**Former Turner Prize-nominee Anya Gallaccio has made her name creating transient works using organic material, famously placing hundreds of gerberas behind Perspex and coating gallery walls with chocolate. Her new work, however, could not be more permanent, cast as it is in metal.**

Untitled 2016 is a life-size stainless steel replica of a tree situated beside the Whitworth gallery in Manchester, it is the artist's "first permanent public work" - discounting a piece in Edinburgh, which she says is "more of a private public space".

Informally, it is known as the "ghost tree", a reference to its inspiration, a dead tree which was felled during the recent renovation of the gallery.

She says she chose to work in stainless steel, rather than her usual organic materials, for several reasons. "One of the main elements of the work on the building by [the architects] Muma was opening up the building to the park and bringing the outside in.

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"That was really exciting to me as someone who has often worked with nature and its relation to architecture or culture.

"[Sir Joseph] Whitworth himself had a strong relationship to steel, to industry and to innovation, so working with steel seemed an obvious starting point.

"I also really love the stainless steel mullings on the building, so it seemed like a way of acknowledging the building.

"It's a circular thing. The tree is part of the gallery, in that it was commissioned by that institution, and it's now part of the park - it's a knitting of everything back together."

The piece came about after she was asked "to do a project" by the gallery's director Maria Balshaw. "We were talking about trees - when we discussed what I might do and what it might cost to make something of that scale, I was like 'okay, that's not going to happen'.

"It's quite difficult to make that leap in scale because - to be brutal about it - financially, the whole narrative changes and it's hard to find people to back something when they don't know what it is. "So I forgot all about it. Amazingly, I got a phone call last spring saying 'we've raised the money and we want the sculpture'. I was like 'oh my gosh!'"

Working in steel has brought a permanence that Gallaccio is not used to - she says that it was never her intention only to create transient works, but rather that "mostly, people don't give me the opportunity to make permanent things".

"I've never sat down and thought 'no, I won't make a permanent thing', it's just often that isn't what I'm asked to do."



DAVID OATES

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As a result, she says that "every now and again, I get a little nervous that people are going to get bored of [Untitled 2016], because I'm not used to my things knocking around for such a long time.

"And you can't move it - it's here, it's fixed and it's not going anywhere."

However, she says that does not mean it is without a link to the works she is best known for.

"Whilst it is a very physically present object materially, what I'm hoping is that, in using this mirrored material, optically it will shift and shimmer.

"It changes with the light and with the weather. At the moment, it is reflecting the green grass, but in the winter it will be very different.

"So whilst it is a permanent architectural structure, it has a more ethereal presence - and in that sense, it's conceptually consistent with my larger practice.

"But I can see this hesitation that people will be like 'that doesn't look like an Anya Gallaccio sculpture' because it's not going to rot or fall down."

As it is a "very public" piece, she also hopes it will be taken to people's hearts.

"I hope that people will love it and make it their own.

"I think that it is open enough as an object to engender different kinds of conversation and dialogue.

"There was a family here with a little girl, who went inside one of the triangles of the tree - and I wanted it to be like that, like a hall of mirrors. She was very excited to see 11 of herself.

"It's a starting point for many different narratives - from the geeky material people, who can be amazed at the welding and the engineering, to others, like that little girl thinking it was like a Jack-in-the-Beanstalk fairytale tree.

"For me, that's fantastic. It isn't just one thing."

However, she says she keeps returning to the fact it is so enduring and says that is something she isn't quite comfortable with yet.

"I'm very proud but I feel a little anxious.

"It's a bit showy-offy for me, because you can see it from everywhere.

"I'll just have to get used to that."

*Untitled 2016 is in Whitworth Park, Manchester.*

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-36639402>