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Make the Most - Somerset Art Weeks 2013, Transforming Antiquity

Somerset's magnificent Barrington Court will be transformed in September 2013 by five internationally-renowned makers. Using locally sourced willow, paper, wood, leather and stone, the new dynamic works will acknowledge the contribution of the local raw material suppliers and local manufacturers to the local economy and ecology of the county. The Make the Most exhibition is a core element within the Somerset Art Weeks 2013 festival that will run September 21 - October 6. The National Trust is taking part in Art Weeks by offering Barrington Court as a venue - some of the works will be commissioned specifically for display within the house.

One of the featured makers is Laura Ellen Bacon whose large-scale willow work will grace and augment Barrington Court's 'Old Kitchen'. The work is a collaboration with Musgrove Willows in Bridgwater. She says: "The sculptures that I make have a closeness with a host structure or the fabric of a building; their oozing energy spills from gutters, their 'muscular' forms nuzzle up to the glass and their gripping weave locks onto the strength of the walls. Whilst the scale and impact varies from striking to subtle (sometimes only visible upon a quizzical double take), I relish the opportunity to let a building 'feed' the form, as if some part of the building is exhaling into the work." Laura will commence the willow installation in mid-August.

Another feature of the National Trust Barrington Court transformation will be Maeve Clancy's paper work within the Great Hall. Maeve is collaborating with the Two Rivers Paper Company, Watchet, to redefine this glorious space with large-scale cut paper installations incorporating a narrative about the history of Barrington Court and its gardens, with specific reference to the restoration work of Alfred Hoare Powell and gardener Gertrude Jekyll. Comments Maeve: "I want to take the stories from Barrington Court's arts and crafts past and look to the present arts and crafts movement in the area." Maeve will start her residency in late June. To help in the process, artist/maker Julie Roberts will lead two school workshops in paper making using pulp from Two Rivers and natural materials collected from Barrington Court's gardens. Maeve will incorporate this paper into her main installation.

In addition, the 'Treasures of Somerset' programme will feature a selection of six local makers in order to highlight the vitality and wealth of craft practitioners whose work is not always seen locally.

Make the Most is an initiative of Somerset Art Works in partnership with the National Trust at Barrington Court, and curated by Craftspace. It is funded by Arts Council England, National Trust and Somerset County Council CIDF.

The attached pdfs show an example of Maeve Clancy's intricate and large-scale paper work and Laura Ellen Bacon's willow piece 'Form of Intrigue', installed at Sudeley Castle for the Sotheby's exhibition 'Material Worlds'.

- Ends -

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Notes to Editors:

1. Somerset Art Weeks is organised by Somerset Art Works (SAW Ltd), a non-profit organisation that promotes the visual arts and creates opportunities for visual artists and makers in Somerset through advocacy, promotion and development.
2. Somerset Art Weeks was launched in 1994 and has developed into one of the biggest arts festivals in the UK. Originally biennial, it is now firmly established as an annual event. The focus of Somerset Art Weeks alternates yearly between an open studio event and an exhibition-based event. The 2012 Open Studios was a great success attracting well over 50,000 visitors to 221 venues.
3. The Somerset Art Weeks **free** guide will provide a fully illustrated introduction and commentary on all of the artworks on display during the event. The catalogue will be available from July 2013 within tourist information centres and libraries across Somerset.