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ENGLAND**

TRUST NEW ART PRESS INFORMATION

**Dorothy Una Ratcliffe Artist/Illustration Fellowship at Acorn Bank (Cumbria)
Spring 2016**

**Continuing a tradition of artistic production at Acorn Bank
Freya Pocklington's artist residency will celebrate Beatrix Potter in 150th anniversary
of her birth**



Freya Pocklington, Janice Wears Dolce, 2014.
Courtesy the artist.

Following a tradition of patronage of the arts started by writer and traveler Dorothy Una Ratcliffe, Acorn Bank continues a programme of activities with contemporary artists to continue Dorothy's legacy, bringing her story to life.

Now in its second year, the 2016 Dorothy Una Ratcliffe fellowship has been awarded to artist Freya Pocklington. The three month residency will start in late February and is part of a larger programme of activities across National Trust properties that celebrate the legacy of Beatrix Potter, marking the 150th anniversary of her birth in 1866.

Freya Pocklington is a London based artist who grew up in the South Lakes. Often working on a large scale, her drawings combine layered ink and pastel to give them a distinctly painterly finish.

Freya depicts largely female characters set against fantastical and domestic backdrops that examine our increasingly distant relationship to nature. Her subjects vary from live sitters to images found online and are accompanied by an array of animals including cats, hares, foxes and rams, loading the images with narrative. Freya re-contextualises her characters to unpick the societal role of pets and our urge to humanize animals. During the residency she will explore the notion of the physical archive in an increasingly digital world through a new series of drawings and audio recording.

“Having grown up in the South Lakes this residency is of particular interest to me especially because of the uncertain future of national parks, preserving

wildlife, celebrating Lake District farming traditions and the role of women in primarily male roles.

During the residency I will be seeking out present day contemporaries of Beatrix Potter and Dorothy Una Ratcliffe who are actively involved in challenging gender roles within farming and preserving the Lake District landscape. I will be recording conversations with the participants which will hopefully inspire future generations as well as being a digital archive of this time. Alongside the sound pieces I will be drawing and making animations about the women in farming and the animals they are so passionate about which will form a physical archive.”

Acorn Bank will be hosting ‘Open Studio Days’ for visitors to meet Freya and see the work developing on Saturday 2 and Sunday 3 April, and Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 May. Additional talks and events will be announced shortly.

The first Dorothy Una Ratcliffe fellowship was awarded to Chichi Parish in 2015, whose illustrative work focused on Acorn Bank’s comprehensive herb collection.

Dorothy Una Ratcliffe bought Acorn Bank with her second husband Capt Noel McGrigor Phillips in 1934. An independent, creative woman she filled the house with a vibrant collection of art and commissioned illustrators and artists to work with her. She opened up the house to evacuees during World War II and regularly gave space within the grounds for travellers to stay whilst on their way to Appleby Horse Fair. Dorothy was a published author and editor, an avid collector of rare books and manuscripts and developed a passion for Romany culture, actively engaging with members of the Romany community and Gypsy Lore Society. She gifted the house to the National Trust in 1950.

The house was given to the National Trust with none of its original contents. Her impressive collections of paintings, sculpture, glass and fans were bequeathed to the City of Leeds on her death in 1967.

Beatrix Potter also lived and worked in Cumbria and was a near contemporary of Dorothy Una Ratcliffe. Best known as the author of the much loved Peter Rabbit books, Potter was also a scientist, botanical illustrator and in later life a farmer and conservationist. She had an enormous influence on the work of the National Trust in the Lake District. When she died in 1943 aged 77 she left over 4000 acres of land and 15 farms to the National Trust for the benefit of the nation. In 2016 we are celebrating 150 years since the birth of this remarkable woman.

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For further information contact:

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Images available via Dropbox:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/gixj9pi1qqew7bv/AABHMXGEFfNm5MZIxDITu11Ea?dl=0>

National Trust events celebrating the Beatrix Potter anniversary:

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lists/celebrating-beatrix-potters-anniversary-in-the-lake-district>

Notes to Editors:

Acorn Bank is a tranquil haven at the heart of the Eden Valley, with spectacular views to the Lake District. It was donated to the National Trust in 1950 by the traveller, writer and patron of the arts, Dorothy Una Ratcliffe, and has an almost forgotten industrial past. Its wide estate has hidden gypsum-mining remains and an abundance of wildlife. The walled gardens shelter a medicinal herb collection and traditional orchards. Woodland paths along Crowdundle Beck lead to the watermill, now working again after more than 70 years. The unfurnished 17th-century sandstone house is partially open to the public while restoration work progresses.

Freya Pocklington was born in Lancaster, England. She studied her BA in Drawing and Painting at Edinburgh College of Art (2006) and an MA in Drawing at UAL (2009). Her work is held in collections such as The British Museum, The Royal Scottish Academy, Victoria and Albert Museum, Glasgow Airport, Chichester Cathedral, West Dean College and The National Open Art. She has exhibited at The Jerwood Drawing Prize, James Freeman Gallery, Breese Little, Mall Galleries, Sluice Art Fair, Moorwood Art, The Art Shop and Chapel in Wales, Somerset House and many others. Residencies include an Arts Council Funded project in Portugal, The Royal Scottish Academy John Kinross scholarship to Italy, Chichester Cathedral, Somerset House for NOA, West Dean College and The Florence Trust Studios in London. Pocklington has been featured in Elephant Magazine, BBC online, Art Daily, The Week, Wall Street International Magazine, Country Life and Printmaking Today.

Trust New Art is the National Trust's programme of contemporary arts inspired by our places. National Trust has been working with living artists since the 1980s, and in 2009 created Trust New Art through a partnership with Arts Council England. The programme makes contemporary arts available in National Trust properties; builds new and diverse audiences; and offers new opportunities to artists to work in new contexts.

The National Trust is Europe's largest conservation charity and we believe in the importance of nature, beauty and history in people's lives. We care for 20% of the Lake District National Park, including England's highest mountain, Scafell Pike, its deepest lake, Wastwater, its precious wildlife, 90 tenanted farms, and the cultural heritage within a dozen historic buildings. We support 300 jobs in Cumbria and the Lake District and each year we work with local volunteers, who help us look after one of England's most inspirational landscapes. The Trust is dependent on the support of its members and the visitors we welcome to our special places each year: every penny we raise in Cumbria is invested in caring for this special place, for ever, for everyone.