

## **Metamorphoses: Porcelain Sculpture by Rachel Kneebone**

**23 September 2026 –25 April 2027**



The acclaimed artist Rachel Kneebone (b.1973) is displaying a series of arresting sculptural interventions among the dazzling artworks of the Wallace Collection this autumn.

For this installation, she has created two new pieces, *Bower* and *Temple*, which can be seen for the first time as part of the display.

The Wallace Collection is renowned for its sumptuous collection of Old Master paintings and decorative arts, epitomised by the creations of Rococo painters such as François Boucher (1703-1770) and Jean-Honoré Fragonard (1732-1806), and its beautiful Sèvres porcelain. It is into this luxurious setting that artist Rachel Kneebone will place nine white porcelain sculptures, two of which have been specially made for the display. In displaying these works at the museum, she follows in the footsteps of artists such as Grayson Perry (2025), Flora Yukhnovich (2024), Damien Hirst (2009) and Lucian Freud (2004).

White porcelain is a material traditionally associated with stillness and perfection. By contrast, Kneebone's white sculptures, finished with a clear gloss glaze, move light across the surface, breaking and connecting form, inviting the viewer to look closely and delve for meaning. Surreal and profuse, her works also suggest

narrative and movement, resonating with the Roman poet Ovid's stories of metamorphoses and transformation.

Having long been fascinated by dance and movement, Kneebone is keen to engage with works relating to this theme in the Wallace Collection. Examples include *Dance*, which will be placed on a table in the Billiard Room to echo the bronze *Borghese Dancers* (17<sup>th</sup> century) on a nearby wall. Unlike the stately movement of these figures, however, the disembodied limbs that comprise her piece convey riot and fragmentation. Similarly, the *After the Dance* sculptures, with protruding legs, can be seen as a playful response to the rich Baroque decoration of the Back State Room and the dynamic bronze sculptures that line the Great Gallery.

One of the works, *Pull*, an unfurling hive-like configuration, will be suspended from the conservatory ceiling on the first-floor landing. Others, including *Bower* (made in response to Fragonard's famous *The Swing*), are placed at eye level, encouraging the viewer to peer into tangled masses of interconnected forms offered up for close viewing.

Kneebone's sculptures will appear strikingly different from the works that comprise the permanent collection. Aware that they will look startling in this environment, Kneebone believes they will not jar due to the many ways they blend with the surrounds, inviting the viewer to tease out connections with it, making the past appear contemporary, and the present historic.

Rachel Kneebone says: *"The Wallace Collection has long been a rich resource for me; a place of pleasure, delight and instruction, like discovering a new world with each visit. I would take away so much, and now it is such an honour to be invited to this time leave something behind, to add to the Collection."*

Dr Alison Smith, Director of Collections and Research and curator of the exhibition, says: *"Rachel Kneebone's works may at first appear distinct from the artworks of the Wallace Collection, yet they are deeply connected, be it through shared textures, motifs, or forms. Through placing the sculptures in response to the artworks and decorative interiors of the museum, we hope to cast a fresh perspective on her own intriguing work."*

Dr Xavier Bray, Director of the Wallace Collection, says: *"Our permanent collection was gifted to the nation in 1897, and yet we continually find new ways to respond to and contemplate the finite works within it. New and returning visitors alike can engage with Rachel Kneebone's intricate sculptures and come to appreciate anew the enduring works of the Wallace Collection that surround them."*

This intervention was made possible thanks to generous support from Christian Levett and White Cube.

## **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

**HIGH RESOLUTION IMAGES FOR MEDIA USE CAN BE [DOWNLOADED HERE](#).**

**Left above** - Rachel Kneebone, *Pull*, 2023. Porcelain, steel and adhesive. 27 9/16 x 19 5/16 x 20 1/2 in. (70 x 49 x 52 cm). © Rachel Kneebone. Photo © White Cube (Theo Christelis)

**Right above** - Rachel Kneebone, *Temple*, 2026, Porcelain, 26 1/2 x 17 x 17 in. (67 x 43 x 43 cm). © Rachel Kneebone. Photo © White Cube (Theo Christelis)

**Rachel Kneebone** was born in Oxfordshire (1973) and completed a MA in Sculpture at the Royal College of Art, London in 2004. Working primarily with white porcelain, she has developed a unique way of moulding

and handling clay to create vitrified organic forms suggestive of movement and the experience of inhabiting the body.



Themes of dance, metamorphosis, creation and destruction dominate her vision, informed by a wide range of literary and artistic references. These influences can be seen in many of the projects she has staged in recent years, including the *Raft of the Medusa* installation at the Foundling Museum in 2017, and *399 Days*, a 5-metre-high porcelain tower inspired by a plaster cast of Trajan's Column in Rome, which was shown at the V&A from 2017-19. Her most recent exhibition *Punoutua* was shown at the Gösta Serlachius Museum, Mänttä, Finland in 2022.

As one of Britain's preeminent cultural institutions, **the Wallace Collection** is home to one of the most significant ensembles of fine and decorative arts in the world. Highlights include oil paintings from the 14th to the late 19th centuries by artists such as Titian, Velázquez, Rubens and Van Dyck; princely arms and armour; and one of the finest collections of 18th-century French paintings and decorative arts. Visitors can also enjoy superb medieval and Renaissance objects, including Limoges enamel, maiolica, glass and bronzes. Displayed at Hertford House, former home to Sir Richard and Lady Wallace, this outstanding collection is displayed in a manner designed to evoke the lives and tastes of its founders, creating a special ambiance that remains an essential part of its charm. [www.wallacecollection.org](http://www.wallacecollection.org)

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

Facebook: [@wallacecollection](https://www.facebook.com/wallacecollection)

LinkedIn: [TheWallaceCollection](https://www.linkedin.com/company/TheWallaceCollection)

YouTube: [TheWallaceCollection](https://www.youtube.com/TheWallaceCollection)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, INTERVIEWS AND IMAGES**

Tracy Jones, Brera PR – [tracy@brera-london.com](mailto:tracy@brera-london.com) / 01702 216658 / 07887 514984 / [www.brera-london.com](http://www.brera-london.com)