

# Press release: 'Still Water' to become new national memorial to British victims of terrorism overseas

Tobias Ellwood, the Minister asked by David Cameron in 2015, to deliver the Memorial, is delighted to confirm that this work has been selected by an independent Panel, chaired by Baroness Lynda Chalker, following invited proposals by a number of artists, and based on a public consultation carried out in 2016.

The selection process included sharing two short-listed proposals with families who responded to the consultation saying that they had lost loved ones in terrorist incidents overseas, and were willing to be consulted further on the Memorial.

The Memorial is expected to be installed at the National Memorial Arboretum, in Staffordshire, by the end of this year, with a dedication event likely to follow in the Spring of 2018.

Mr Ellwood said:

My hope is that this memorial will become a peaceful and contemplative site, offering solace and comfort to those affected by the terrible terrorist events that we have seen taking place overseas, and impacting on British Citizens.

I am grateful to Baroness Lynda Chalker and the Panel that has taken time to select a thoughtful design, from an internationally renowned and respected artist. Alison Wilding and Adam Kershaw's design is simple, sensitive and beautiful.

This memorial shows our recognition, as a nation, of the loss that has been suffered by British families over a number of years, and will stand for those events that, sadly, are likely in future years.

The Chairman of the Panel that selected the Memorial, Baroness Lynda Chalker, a former Minister at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, said:

This has been a challenging commission to best reflect the many views we received from those who responded to the Government's consultation in 2016. It was clear then that David Cameron's proposal for a Memorial had public support, with a wide range of views of what the Memorial should be like.

I am grateful to those artists that responded to the brief with

sensitivity and creativity. I am delighted that we have chosen Alison and Adam's work because it represents calm and stillness, echoed in the title of the proposal. We have shown this design to a small number of the families who feel a connection to the Memorial, and they have appreciated its openness and accessibility, and the generous seating, making it easier for visitors to approach.

Whilst there is no dominating symbolism, the families that we shared the design with appreciated imagery that represented the global reach of terrorism, but also the continuation of life.

Alison Wilding and Adam Kershaw said:

We are thrilled to have been chosen to make this memorial and have been encouraged by the positive feedback from the families and others who took part in the selection process.

Sue Dilley, whose brother, Gordon Cousland, was killed in a bomb attack at Moscow's Domodedovo airport in 2011 said:

I would like to thank the Panel for the supportive and sensitive manner in which they consulted with the families. I found it extremely poignant to meet others affected by acts of terrorism, taking place over the last 30 years. The innovative design of 'Still Life' will allow all its visitors to reflect on such tragic events and give families a memorial to remember their loved ones.

Sheelagh and Barry Alexander, whose son Nick was killed in the terrorist attack at the Bataclan Theatre in Paris in 2015 said:

We appreciate all the work and consideration that is being put in to complete this memorial, which will be very important to so many. We are very grateful.

Belinda Green, whose husband Stephen was killed in an attack on an Algerian gas plant in 2013, said:

Still Water represents the calm after a storm. For me it reflects how the trauma of the event for any person who suffers loss will eventually lessen but not be forgotten. I like the openness of this design very much, the ability to look out to the surroundings in any direction, and importantly that its openness will not exclude anyone.

The proposed memorial is sited a short distance within the copse so that it

might gradually reveal itself, like coming across a hidden pool within a woodland glade.

The pathways leading to the memorial will be made of natural materials and softened by the growth of the woodland floor so that this feeling of discovery is enhanced.

The memorial itself is composed of a concrete ellipse set just below ground level so that its perimeter becomes blurred and softened as nature takes its course.

Colour is added to the top layer of cement, which is hand-trowelled to give a ruffled effect, as if the dark waters of the hidden pool are being stirred by a gentle breeze. The concrete ellipse is crisscrossed with brass meridian lines that form a strong armature for the base of the work and also echo the lines encircling the globe.

The surface of the ellipse contains seven pale cast concrete shapes, which shift between figuration and landscape and reference a mountainous terrain.

Three elements: water, land and air, come together in the work which is titled 'Still Water'.

If sitting by a woodland pool offers a kind of balm, the artist hopes that so might this memorial. The seating comprises a two-tiered quarter section which follows the curve of the concrete ellipse, with slats of heat-treated ash providing the base and back between the armrests. It is turned away from the main pathway to allow for quiet contemplation.

The Memorial will clearly display the attribution: Still Water, 2017 Alison Wilding Adam Kershaw

Additionally, text will be engraved onto the external curve of the seating:

"IN REMEMBRANCE OF ALL THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY TERRORISM OVERSEAS"

The then Prime Minister, David Cameron, announced in July 2015 that the Government would create a National Memorial to British Victims of Terrorism Overseas.

Tobias Ellwood MP, then Minister at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, launched a consultation to help the Government to understand what would be important to people in a National Memorial.

The responses to the consultation provided a rich insight into what matters to people. Fundamentally, it showed that the vast majority of respondents were wholly supportive of the proposal to create this important Memorial.

In July 2016, the Government published a document summarising the responses, and capturing the detail of what people think.

The Government hopes to create a Memorial that provides meaning for the optimum number of those who feel a connection with it, with particular

emphasis on those most directly affected.

Overall, the consultation has shown strong support from the public. There was a clear sense that the Memorial should be a place of remembrance for the families, and for the public and society as a whole to pay their respects to the victims of terrorism overseas. Respondents felt that it was right and fitting to create this Memorial.

## **Biographical details of Artists**

Alison Wilding makes abstract sculpture. She is known for the wide range of both materials and processes she employs, as well as her capacity to work at the extremes of scale: from the hand held object to all but monumental sculpture.

Born in Blackburn, Lancashire, in 1948, Wilding graduated from the RCA in 1973. She came to prominence in the 1980s as one of a group of sculptors including Richard Deacon and Antony Gormley. Wilding's first major solo exhibition was at the Serpentine Gallery in 1985. Since then she has shown extensively throughout the UK and abroad, and has been acquired into major public collections in the UK. Public commissioned works include Migrant, 2004 for Snape Maltings, Shimmy, 2013 at 10 New Burlington St, London and Herm 2017- a drinking fountain for a new garden in Rathbone Place. Wilding was nominated for the Turner Prize in 1988 and 1992 and elected to the Royal Academy in 1999. Awards include a Henry Moore Fellowship at the British School at Rome (1998), Joanna Drew Travel Bursary (2007), Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award (2008) and Bryan Robertson Award (2012). Wilding lives and works in London and has been represented by Karsten Schubert since 1987.

Adam Kershaw is a sculptor/maker of objects and furniture, he has spent the years since leaving the Royal College of Art collaborating with, and working for clients to find solutions to the challenges of designing and making both complex and beautiful pieces. Whilst always attuned to his clients' and collaborators' ambitions, his own vision about the pursuit of quality and feel of workmanship informs the handling of the work. His specialist knowledge in the use of materials combined with years of experience, passion and exploration is evident in everything he produces.

Of their collaboration on this memorial Alison Wilding said:

Adam Kershaw was my assistant in the 1990s and over the years he has continued to make some of my work and solve intractable problems for me. We have often talked of collaborating on a project and are both delighted to be working on this memorial together.

## **Notes to Editors**

Baroness Lynda Chalker of Wallasey has been a member of the Lower and Upper Houses of the UK Parliament for over forty years. Between 1986 and 1997 she was Minister of State at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, holding

responsibility for Africa and the Commonwealth and for Overseas Development. Lynda was made a Life Peer in 1992.

The other members of the Panel are:

- Aaron Cezar, Director, Delfina Foundation
- Caroline Douglas, Director, Contemporary Art Society
- Penny Johnson CBE, Director, Government Art Collection
- Keith Lane, previously medical planner with the Royal Air Force and project manager with Cruse Bereavement Care
- Sandy Nairne CBE FSA, writer and curator, former Director of the National Portrait Gallery