

## PRESS RELEASE

### Rachel Whiteread's *Place (Village)* to go on permanent display at the V&A Museum of Childhood

Rachel Whiteread's celebrated artwork *Place (Village)* (2006-2008) will go on permanent display at the V&A Museum of Childhood from Saturday 25 March 2017. *Place (Village)* is a sculptural work featuring a 'community' of around 150 dolls' houses which were collected by Whiteread over 20 years. The artwork will join the 100+ dolls' houses in the Museum's own collection.

The large-scale artwork is an assembly of around 150 vintage dolls' houses in a variety of architectural styles and averaging around one metre high. The houses will sit on stepped platforms, evoking a sprawling hillside 'community'. The houses will be lit from within, but deserted, their emptiness evoking haunting memories and melancholy.

The dolls' houses are devoid of furniture, but many have wallpaper, carpets, trompe l'oeil curtains and even artwork, echoing the details sometimes found on the surfaces of Whiteread's cast rooms.

With *Place (Village)* Whiteread reverses interior and exterior space through lighting instead of through plaster casting.

The variety of architecture represented in the installation, evoking an English suburb, ranges from Georgian mansions to Tudor cottages to Modernist fortresses. Some of the houses are handmade, others manufactured. All were acquired second hand in antique shops or on websites like eBay.

Rachel Whiteread said:

*'I am pleased that Place has found a permanent home in Bethnal Green, as I have lived and worked in East London for many years and know the Museum of Childhood well. I started collecting dolls' houses when I first left college. This work connects to my earlier work because these houses have no people in them and there is no furniture. I was interested in the interiors of these houses and also the fact that they had been through many generations of family. They may have been made by the father. There was a lot of love involved with them and then eventually the love was lost. They were transferred through generations. That transaction is always something that's been in my work. The things that I've worked with have all been used, had a life before.'*



Image credit: Rachel Whiteread, *Place (Village)* 2006, on display at Hayward Gallery's *Psycho Buildings*, 2008. Credit Stephen White (London)

*Place (Village)* will go on display in the Museum's mezzanine gallery in a new dedicated space covering 56 square metres. The artwork was first shown in Naples in 2007 which reminded Whiteread of Hackney. And it has also been shown at London's Hayward Gallery, at Centro de Arte Contemporaneo de Malaga and at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, each time in a different configuration. The Museum is working with the artist's studio to create a new, site-specific layout.

The V&A Museum of Childhood has a world class collection of dolls' houses, around 100 in total, from tiny terraces to huge mansions. This variety of styles is also present in Whiteread's artwork. 20 dolls' houses dating from 1673 to 2014 are on display within the Museum's permanent galleries including *The Nuremburg House*, 1673 and *3 Devonshire Villas*, 1900-5. The Museum's extremely popular *Small Stories: At home in a Dolls' House* exhibition opens in Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery on 4 March 2017.

Rhian Harris, Director of the V&A Museum of Childhood, said:

*'We are delighted to welcome Rachel's brilliant and atmospheric work 'Place (Village)' and share it with our visitors. It is also a wonderful example of how the national childhood collections inspire artists. Displaying the work at the V&A Museum of Childhood is particularly poignant because Rachel came here as a child and has lived and worked near the Museum for most of her career. In a sense it is coming home.'*

## **The artist**

Rachel Whiteread, CBE (born 20 April 1963) is a British artist who primarily produces sculptures, which typically take the form of casts. She was the first woman to win the annual Turner Prize in 1993. Whiteread was one of the Young British Artists who exhibited at the Royal Academy's *Sensation* exhibition in 1997. Among her most renowned works are *House*, a large concrete cast of the inside of an entire Victorian house, the Holocaust Memorial sculpture in Judenplatz Vienna and her resin sculpture for the empty plinth in London's Trafalgar Square. Whiteread lives and works in London and her work is represented in many private and public collections worldwide.

## **Ends**

For further press information please contact Rebecca Ward on 07977 071450 or email [Rebecca@rebeccaward.co.uk](mailto:Rebecca@rebeccaward.co.uk)

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## **Notes to editors**

### **V&A Museum of Childhood, Cambridge Heath Road, London E2 9PA**

Nearest tube: Bethnal Green. Open daily: 10.00 – 17.45, last admission 17.30. Admission FREE.

Switchboard: 020 8983 5200 [www.vam.ac.uk/moc](http://www.vam.ac.uk/moc)

The V&A Museum of Childhood is the UK's National Museum of Childhood. It is the largest institution of its kind in the world. Its mission is to hold in trust the nation's childhood collections and to be an international leader in engaging audiences in the material culture and experiences of childhood.