



HAMPTON COURT PALACE

Press Release

6 April 2005

GREYWORLD: TRACE
Hampton Court Palace Maze
Opens 6 May 2005 - £3.50 adults, £2.50 children

'...it's absurd to call it a maze, only to become completely lost.'

Reference to Hampton Court Maze from *Three Men in a Boat* by Jerome K Jerome.

A major new and permanent public artwork *Trace*, by the internationally renowned sound artists **Greyworld**, has been commissioned for the maze at Hampton Court Palace by **Historic Royal Palaces** and developed and managed by **Artpoint Trust**.

Drawing on its history and on the idea of the maze as a place of furtive conversation and flirtation, Greyworld have created a gentle soundwork that affects the visitors' experience of their journey from entrance to centre and back again. The commission forms part of a wider project to transform visitor engagement with the maze that includes the improvement of its infrastructure, re-planting of hornbeam hedges and the redesign of its entrance.

As visitors pass through the many green corridors of the maze, they are tempted to follow tantalising sounds – a fragment of music, a snatch of laughter, the seductive rustle of fine silks or the whispers of an illicit conversation as it disappears around a corner and into a dead-end. Slowly the sounds weave together in the visitors' mind to create a rich tapestry of the other people who have passed through the maze over the centuries and lost themselves in the seductive privacy of its secluded corners.

On reaching the centre of the maze, a series of simple benches become apparent where the visitor can relax and contemplate their journey. Sited at the very heart is an object looking similar to a compass. When approached, the steel needle within begins to slowly spin inside its glass case and after a moment points to a new direction across the maze where corresponding sounds from its trajectory will be played, mixed with grabbed local noise. Over a thousand self-generating sounds are incorporated in the maze ensuring the visitor will never experience the work in the same way twice.

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- A press launch for Greyworld's *Trace* and the newly restored maze will take place at 11am on 21 April 2005.

For details of press launch, images and further information contact:

Artpoint, Nick Hallam on 07709 887 814 or 0115 9502 283 - nick_hallam@hotmail.com
or Vikki Wood at Hampton Court Palace on 020 7488 5662 - vikki.wood@hrp.org.uk

Notes to Editors:-

Greyworld

Andrew Shoben, former lecturer at the Royal College of Art and a Research Fellow at Goldsmiths University founded Greyworld in Paris in 1993. They have exhibited their work around the world, with permanent installations in twelve countries including recently *The Source*, which opens the London Stock Exchange every morning and is watched by millions everyday on BBC Breakfast News - the work has recently been nominated for a *BAFTA Interactive Art Award*. This year Greyworld will be unveiling several new installations in London, Cape Town and Berlin. Greyworld have exhibited in major international exhibitions, received prestigious awards including the Royal Society of Arts, *Art for Architecture Award* twice. Greyworld also have an extensive discography. Visit www.greyworld.org

Hampton Court Palace

Hampton Court Palace is managed by Historic Royal Palaces (HRP), a charity that receives no funding and is reliant on visitor income, commercial enterprise and private donations for the care and presentation of unoccupied royal palaces. Visit www.hrp.org.uk for further information.

The Maze

The historic maze at Hampton Court is visited by 300,000 people a year from all over the world and for centuries has been a place where visitors have come to enjoy themselves. It was planted around 1690 for King William III as part of a wider area known as the Wilderness, featuring Baroque alleys and paths. Originally planted in deciduous hornbeam but re-planted in yew in modern times, the maze has always featured prominently in the accounts of visitors to the palace. It is probably the most famous feature of the gardens and the experience of losing oneself in the twists and turns of its hedged paths is exciting and memorable.

The maze has been in need of restoration for sometime and this commission will form part of a wider project to transform the experience of the maze, which will include improvement to its infrastructure and planting, redesign of its entrance, new measures towards disabled access and the introduction of information boards detailing its history. The aims of the project are to add significance to this important site, raise awareness and engage with new audiences.

Artpoint

Artpoint is a creative company working with artists to support new thinking and practice for the built environment and public space across the South East region. Operating as a 'not for profit' limited company with charitable status, we have a track record of delivering innovative projects to budget and on schedule. In the past five years we have delivered sixty projects, worth £2.5 million.

The Project Team

"Mazes have been part of the English garden since time immemorial. They mirrored the twists and turns of human life in a format which was at once both profound and playful. Who knows who trod the paths or indeed what happened in this most famous of mazes." **Sir Roy Strong**

The project was guided and overseen by a specialist team including renowned garden historian Sir Roy Strong, English Heritage, Artpoint Trust, as well as curatorial and gardening experts at Historic Royal Palaces.