

Writ in Water

A major architectural artwork by Mark Wallinger, in collaboration with Studio Octopi, that celebrates the enduring legacy of Magna Carta at Runnymede.

It offers an immersive space for reflecting on the founding principles of democracy at Runnymede.

Over 800 years ago, Runnymede witnessed the feudal barons forcing King John to seal Magna Carta - a founding moment in shaping the basis of common law across the world.

A gathering space at the heart of this ancient landscape, **Writ in Water** reflects upon the founding principles of democracy through a meeting of water, sky, and light, creating an immersive space for reflection and contemplation for visitors.

Mark Wallinger has drawn inspiration from Clause 39 of Magna Carta and the fundamental principles of justice it embodies.

'No free man shall be seized or imprisoned, or stripped of his rights or possessions, or outlawed or exiled, or deprived of his standing in any way, nor will we proceed with force against him, or send others to do so, except by the lawful judgment of his equals or by the law of the land.' – **Clause 39, Magna Carta**

Mark Wallinger is one of the UK's leading contemporary artists. He is known for his engagement with ideas of power, authority, artifice and illusion, that interweave the mythological, the political and the everyday.

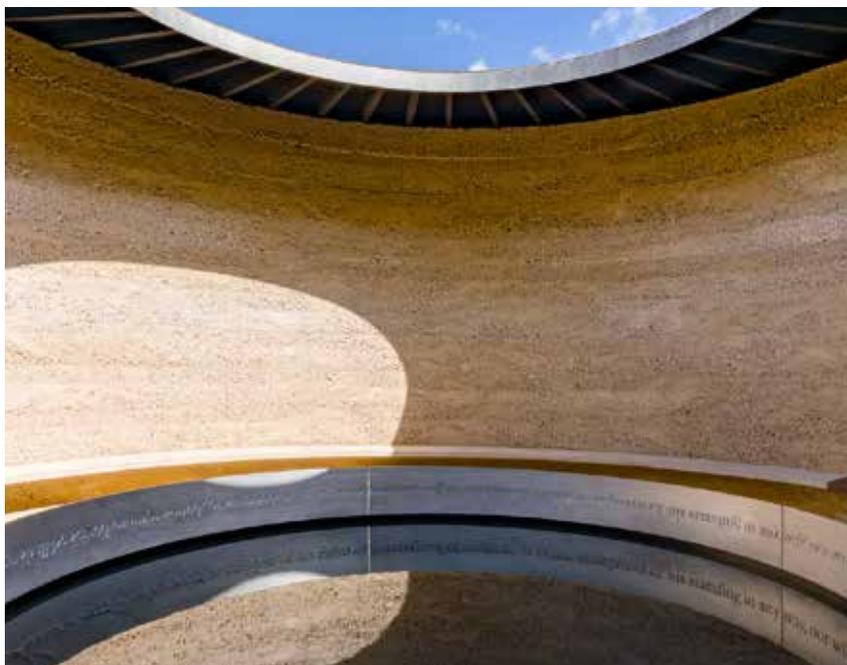
An architectural artwork

Commissioned in association with arts producers Situations, Mark Wallinger developed **Writ in Water** in collaboration with London based architectural practice Studio Octopi.

The large-scale architectural artwork appears to emerge from the hillside, sitting in a meadow which is flanked by the River Thames on one side and an ox-bow lake on the other. Responding to this feature of water in the surrounding landscape, **Writ in Water** takes its name from the inscription on John Keats' gravestone, which reads, *'Here lies one whose name was writ in water'*.

On entrance, a simple labyrinth opens out into a central chamber. Here the sky looms through a wide opening above a pool of water, as reflective as a still font. The sides of the pool are inscribed on the inner side, the water reflecting the reversed lettering of Clause 39, an invitation from the artist to move around the pool and reveal its words.

Writ in Water is a public artwork created in response to the history and landscape at Runnymede, that celebrates the enduring legacy and significance of Magna Carta today.



Visitor information

Writ in Water is open seven days a week and is free to enter. Please do use the benches inside to sit and spend some time inside the artwork.

Its location is roughly a leisurely 15 minute walk across the meadow from the memorial car park and café, past *The Jurors* along the meadow footpath. To find the artwork you will need to bear right through the kissing gate into the meadow adjacent to the ABA memorial to Magna Carta. (Please note there may be cattle in this area, they are very docile if undisturbed, **please ensure gates are closed behind you**). Bear left so as not to climb the slope and you will see **Writ in Water** ahead of you, at the base of Cooper's hill, which can be accessed through a final kissing gate.

To find out more about **Writ in Water** please visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/runnymede

Writ in Water has been made possible with National Lottery funding through Arts Council England and the generous support of Art Fund, the Sigrid Rausing Trust, the Henry Moore Foundation and Lord and Lady Lupton. With additional support from Iwan and Manuela Wirth, Valeria and Rudolf Maag-Arrigoni and Harris Calnan.



Art Fund

THE
SIGRID
RAUSING
TRUST



Harris
Calnan



STUDIO
OCTOPI

SITUATIONS

HAUSER & WIRTH

Writ in Water was commissioned in association with Situations as part of our contemporary arts programme, Trust New Art, which is inspired by its places.