

# SITE-SPECIFIC ART FOR HAY HILL

BY INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS ANNE & PATRICK POIRIER

## HOMAGE TO THOMAS BROWNE

A PUBLIC SCULPTURE FOR NORWICH



The artwork was funded by Arts Council England East and Norwich City Council

# HOMAGE TO THOMAS BROWNE

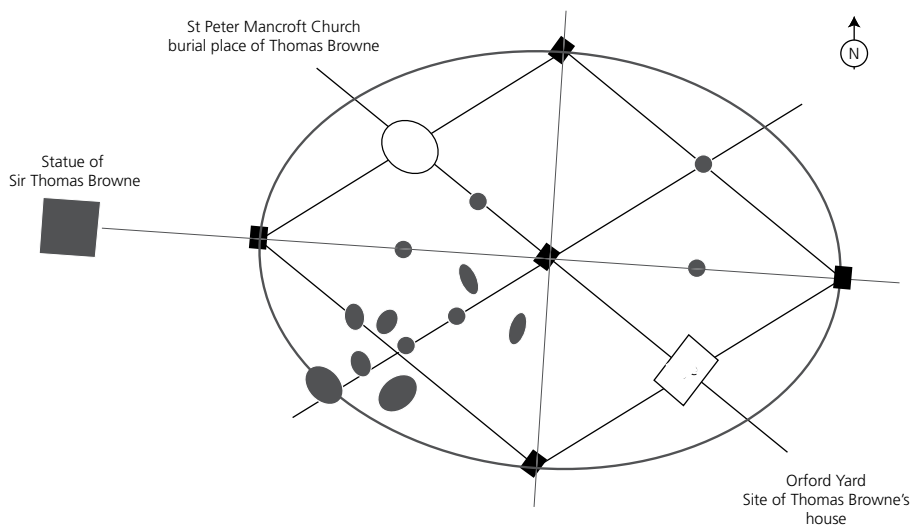
AN ARTWORK FOR HAY HILL, NORWICH BY ANNE & PATRICK POIRIER

This site-specific public artwork for Norwich consists of 20 pieces of sculpture and 22 lights which together are called 'Homage to Thomas Browne' by internationally renowned sculptors Anne & Patrick Poirier.

Sir Thomas Browne lived in Norwich, near Hay Hill, from 1636 until his death in 1682. He was a physician, philosopher, botanist and writer and was very important in England at the time. The statue on pedestal on Hay Hill by Henry Pegram honours Sir Thomas and was erected on 19th October 1905 for the 300th anniversary of his birth.

The sculptures are made of marble and granite, some polished and shiny, some rough and matt. They are strong and intended to be sat on, touched and used as furniture - a kind of living room for the city.

The sculptures are arranged in a pattern known as a 'quinconce' or 'quincunx', a five-pointed diamond shape which Thomas Browne believed existed throughout nature. They are inscribed with quotes from Sir Thomas Browne's writings.



The artists intended the space to be used as a meeting place and somewhere to sit and watch the busy world go by.

At night, the sculptures are lit to create a mystical glow. The lights are part of the work and set into the ground.

The largest pieces are a marble brain and eye carved in a classical manner. These pieces refer to Thomas Browne's approach to philosophy, religion and science as well as his home in Orford Yard and his burial in nearby St Peter Mancroft church.

There are also five granite chairs, two benches, three tables, six conical seats and two smaller pebble seats, which are well-used by the public.



## HAY HILL - SOME FACTS

Anne & Patrick Poirier work all over the world and have been an artistic as well as a married partnership for over 40 years since meeting at art school.

They have a well-established reputation for site-specific work in the public space and Norwich is honoured to have 'Homage to Thomas Browne' their first commission in the UK.

The sculptures were made by craftsmen in Pietrasanta, Italy where Michelangelo used buy stone for his work.

The work was commissioned in 2004 by Arts Council England East, Norwich City Council and Norfolk County Council through Commissions East, and installed in 2007

Sir Thomas Browne's skull was re-interred at St Peter Mancroft on 4th July 1922, after being accidentally dug up by workmen. A replica is on view in the church as well as a portrait and other documents.

The Norfolk & Norwich Millennium Library have a collection of Thomas Browne's works and books about him.

Norwich Castle Museum also has a number of artefacts.

MORE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE ON [WWW.SIRTHOMASBROWNE.ORG.UK](http://WWW.SIRTHOMASBROWNE.ORG.UK)