



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **SW based photographer awarded Trailblazers' commission**

***In the month that marks International Women's Day, NE's Discovery Museum launches new exhibition exploring achievements of women in science and technology & commissions four new portraits from renowned photographer Anita Corbin***

South West based photographer Anita Corbin has been chosen to undertake a very important commission on behalf of the North East region's science and industry museum, Discovery Museum in Newcastle.

Discovery Museum is launching a new exhibition, Trailblazers, exploring the achievements of women, both living and historic, who have made a significant contribution to the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) industries.

Trailblazers includes 24 portraits, drawn mainly from the National Portrait Gallery collection. All the portraits feature groundbreaking female scientists who have made their mark in science and technology over the past 250 years.

Four new photographic portraits of contemporary women in STEM fields have also been commissioned and it is these four women that Anita will be capturing in four iconic portraits which the Museum will be unveiling in June as part of the Festival of the North East. Anita is also planning to feature at least one of the four women in her ground breaking project "First Women" which will be unveiled in 2018 to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women's suffrage.

The four women who will feature in the new Trailblazers' commission are Jane Atkinson, Senior Vice President, Sembcorp Utilities UK Asset Management and In 2007 winner of the CBI First Woman Award in Manufacturing as she frequently has been at the forefront of women in engineering and industry; also Fiona Cruickshank, non-exec director at SCM Pharma, a leading business figure and a former North East Woman Entrepreneur of the Year. Joining Jane and Fiona are Nicola Pearsall, Director of Northumbria Photovoltaics Applications Centre (NPAC) and group leader for the Energy Systems and Materials research group in the School of Computing, Engineering and Information

Sciences; and Laura Wilkinson, the youngest of the four selected, and an Engineer with Northumbrian Water with a degree in Applied Biology which has allowed her to use her knowledge on microbiological processes to great effect.

Anita says, “I have spent my life promoting positive images of women and I am honoured to meet and photograph your four chosen subjects in the North East. I completely support Trailblazer’s ideals and I believe that powerful portraits can raise public awareness. Photography as a visual tool can inspire and change attitudes, by creating role models we can encourage young women to aspire to a life in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths.”

Anita won the commission thanks in part to the work she had carried out on ‘Science in Profile’ when between 1988-1989 she worked with her partner John O’Grady and The British Council on their collection of 24 colour portraits of Great British Scientists. This included the last official portrait of Nobel Prize winner Dorothy Hodgkin.



Dorothy Hodgkin photographed at Cambridge University, 1989. From the series of portraits ‘Great British Scientists’ by Anita Collins and John O’Grady.

The exhibition toured the world and was only recently shown in Britain in 2009, entitled ‘Science in Focus’ when a selection of 12 portraits were purchased by The National Portrait Gallery, helped by Trustee Ludmilla Jordanova, writer of ‘Sexual Visions, images of gender in Science and Medicine 18th-20th century’.

Anita continues, “I have been a portrait photographer all of my working life and I am passionate about creating images of girls and women that make people stop and think. My passion is fired by years of working as an editorial portrait photographer with the Sunday Times and Observer colour magazines, where I was often sent around the world to cover ‘human interest’ stories involving women.

“When on assignment I use my intuition and creativity, to shine new light on a person, to give the portrait originality and longevity. As a working photographer I have learnt to believe in my own convictions, developing my own style, creating portraits that I believe reveal the ‘true self’ of my subjects. I encourage my subjects to ‘be themselves’ and to trust me to interpret their individuality.

“It is this strong belief in the power of photography that has lead me to create my collection of ‘First Women’ portraits with the mission statement ‘Inspiring women in the UK’.

Anita's project First Women looks at how women will be remembered over the past 100 years. In the years leading up to 2018, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Women's Suffrage, Anita is shooting and collecting 100 iconic portraits of 21st century women who have achieved the landmark title "First Woman" across a range of fields.

In 2018 Anita will launch the First Women travelling exhibition throughout the UK in celebration of 20th and 21st century women. The exhibition will feature three types of photography: portraiture, documentary and archive and will be linked to an interactive website as well as the publication of a beautiful photographic book. Each unique portrait will feature extended captions and introductory essays.

*Picture Caption: Dorothy Hodgkin (photographed at Cambridge University 1989). From the series of portraits "Great British Scientists" by Anita Corbin and John O'Grady*

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### **About Corbin O'Grady Studio**

Anita and John, of Corbin O'Grady Studio, have been working together since 1984 and moved their business from London to Wellington in 2001.

Corbin O'Grady Studio specialises in making people look good. Commissions range from portraiture using complicated lighting set ups to lifestyle photography under natural light. The Studio also has years of experience in carrying out creative photography for businesses as well as assignments at schools and colleges and they specialise in producing high quality images for prospectuses and other corporate literature. They also excel in the making portraits of top business people for annual reports having worked for blue chip organisations such as ICI plc and Boots plc.

[www.corbinogradystudio.co.uk](http://www.corbinogradystudio.co.uk)

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