



National
Trust

Press Release

Nunnington Hall August 2023

Yorkshire farming life explored in latest exhibition at Nunnington Hall

Fields, Folds and Farming Life is the next exciting photography exhibition to open at National Trust property Nunnington Hall.

The exhibition, which begins on Saturday 9 September, aims to share candid moments from a year in the lives of upland farmers in Bransdale, a valley and surrounding moorland in North Yorkshire.

The exhibiting photographer is Valerie Mather, a documentary, travel and portrait photographer based in Yorkshire. Valerie says:

“Photography has the power to capture a moment in history, and my hope is that these images paint a picture of the spirit, stoicism and joy of these local farming families and communities today. I wish to share some of the joy & inspiration about farming and nature that I discovered from my year in Bransdale.”

Through the exhibition, the work of Valerie and specially produced films and artwork reveal the hard work and determination of the people at the heart of the farming community; as they continue to navigate the ever-changing agricultural world to achieve a better farming future for people, the environment, and the local wildlife.

Looking after land is central to the National Trust’s founding principles and mission – to care for places of historic interest and natural beauty. Laura Kennedy, Experience and Programming Manager at Nunnington Hall, says:

“With all work for this exhibition undertaken on the doorstep of Nunnington Hall, we’re excited to share the work in Bransdale with our visitors.

Farming has existed on and around the North York Moors for millennia and around 80% of the land in the care of the Trust is farmed in some way. Like many other places across the country, Bransdale is cared for by the tenant-custodian farmers, the National Trust and its volunteers alongside the National Park Authority.

The Trust is exploring opportunities across the places we care for to ensure all our land is used to its full potential. Working closely with Valerie to tell this story through this exhibition has been an absolute pleasure.”

Fields, Folds and Farming Life opens to visitors to Nunnington Hall on Saturday 9 September and runs until Sunday 17 December.

Nunnington Hall is open from 10.30am – 5.00pm, with last entry at 4.15pm. (Reduced hours for winter from 24 November, please refer to website). No booking is required.

Normal property admission applies with free admission for National Trust members and under fives.

For more information to help plan a visit, go to www.nationaltrust.org.uk/nunnington-hall

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For more information or to arrange a press visit please contact:

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**Images: Attached; please credit © Valerie Mather
(High resolution images available on request)**

For regular updates:

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About the National Trust

The National Trust is a conservation charity founded in 1895 by three people: Octavia Hill, Sir Robert Hunter and Hardwicke Rawnsley, who saw the importance of the nation's heritage and open spaces and wanted to preserve them for everyone to enjoy. Today, across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, we continue to look after places so people and nature can thrive.

The challenges of the coronavirus pandemic have shown this is more important than ever. From finding fresh air and open skies to tracking a bee's flight to a flower; from finding beauty in an exquisite painting or discovering the hidden history of a country house nearby - the places we care for enrich people's lives.

Entirely independent of Government, the National Trust looks after more than 250,000 hectares of countryside, 780 miles of coastline and 500 historic properties, gardens and nature reserves. The National Trust is for everyone - we were founded for the benefit of the whole nation. We receive on average more than 26.9 million visits each year to the places we care for that have an entry fee, and an estimated

100m visits to the outdoor places that are free of charge. Paying visitors, together with our 5.6 million members and more than 53,000 volunteers, support our work to care for nature, beauty, history. For everyone, for ever.

For more information and ideas for great seasonal days out go to: www.nationaltrust.org.uk

About Nunnington Hall

Nunnington Hall is a Yorkshire manor house with organic garden and exciting programme of changing exhibitions in the heart of Ryedale, North Yorkshire.

The former home of a Tudor physician and more recently the Fife family, it's a place where visitors can explore period rooms whilst hearing the Hall's many tales. There's also one of the world's finest collections of miniature rooms - the Carlisle Collection.

About Valerie Mather

Valerie Mather is a documentary, travel and portrait photographer based in Yorkshire. Following a successful career in law, she retired early to pursue a lifelong passion for photography. The words of Paul Caponigro inspire her interest in documentary photography: 'It's one thing to make a picture of what a person looks like, it's another thing to make a portrait of who they are'.

In 2020 Valerie was awarded the prestigious honour of an Associateship by the Royal Photographic Society for images from her lowland farm project: Yorkshire Born & Bred: Farming Life.

Valerie also has a great passion for teaching; being mainly self-taught she is keen to help others develop their skills.

Details of her photography and workshops can be found at:
www.valeriematherphotography.co.uk.

Follow her on Instagram and Facebook: *@valeriematherphotography*