

Baroness Thatcher visits Conservative Headquarters

This evening Baroness Thatcher was welcomed by David Cameron to Conservative Party Headquarters. During her visit she unveiled a statue to be permanently displayed in the party's offices. The bust, created by artist Margarita Hernandez, will sit opposite Winston Churchill's in the party's office reception. Baroness Thatcher's visit to the party headquarters was her first since the move to 30 Millbank last year.

Unveiling the statue Lady Thatcher said:

"It is always a delight to be back at Central Office. And it is a particular delight to see so many young people working hard for the Conservative cause.

"Unveiling this bust, which will stand opposite that of Sir Winston Churchill, is a very special honour. For Churchill reminds us of the enduring values of our Party. The Conservative Party has always been at its best, and at its most successful, when it has held firm to its beliefs.

"Today, as we face the challenges of the future, let us remain steadfast and sure. Let us set a clear course for our country. And, as Churchill taught us, let us never falter in proclaiming what we know to be right.

"So my message to you tonight is to have faith in all that we stand for and to go forward with confidence."

David Cameron said:

"We now have two bronze statues in Conservative Party Headquarters. One is of Winston Churchill, the greatest wartime leader this country has ever had. And now it is joined by a statue of the greatest peacetime leader this country has ever had.

"You are a humbling act to follow. I first met you when I was a researcher

working as the Trade and Industry researcher in our old offices in Smith Square, when you were coming round to meet the staff ahead of the Christmas party. We are all thrilled to have you here in our new offices and to see you looking so well.”

Caroline Spelman said:

"It is an honour to have Lady Thatcher here today and I know how excited those who work here were to see her. She is an iconic political figure. Margarita Hernandez has created an excellent bust and I am delighted to see it join the one of Winston Churchill in the reception of our party headquarters. It will serve as an inspiration to all of us who are committed to working for a new Conservative government in Britain."

ENDS

For further information, please contact Giles Bancroft on 020 7984 8250.

Note to Editors

Information on Margarita Hernandez:

Margarita Hernandez studied fine art at the School of Fine Art in Colombia, aged just 15. She went on to study history of art at the Dante Alighieri Academy in Rome.

She has exhibited in the Royal Academy of Art and the Bulgarian Embassy in London. In 2005 she unveiled her portrait of Winston Churchill at the Royal College of Defence Studies. In 2007 she again exhibited at the Royal Academy and her sculpture, *horse*, sold out. She has just completed the bust of Lady Thatcher.

Wherever Margarita has lived and travelled, it becomes a source of inspiration to her. Thus she has managed to create her very own unique style of art, which blends her experiences and the diverse aspects of her travels together. For the past several years she has made London her home. Here she felt the need to use a new form of expression that could be both intimate and tactile. Margarita's talent as a sculptress had already started in her early childhood years. She always had a strong desire to express herself creatively

in all areas of her life, whether it was in the form of interior design, painting or fashion. Her dynamic and passionate personality enabled her to translate her skills into sculpting art. With her detail for anatomy and realistic expression, Margarita Hernandez counts today to the world's most influential sculptors, specializing in figurative and characteristic portraits. Her art is featured in exhibitions around the world, and prominently in the hands of private collectors.

“Margarita is a dynamic artist, following her instincts with the fervent characteristics of those born on the Caribbean coast of Colombia. What is it then that makes her speak through her work? I believe that in her case it is the personal interpretation of the human body and its expressions. It is, in fact, her subconscious manifesting through a universal representation. What is important in her work is the power of communication at a single glance. It allows us to observe and learn from the energies of her life”.