

# Holy Ground

Take off your shoes

**Holy Ground is a collection of shoes and stories from Christians all around the world.** The stories are short statements about what it means for each person to believe in Christ in their particular situation. Among those represented are a thief, a refugee, the despised, the rejected—people who Jesus specially sought out—as well as those who have known great opportunity, wealth and success.



There are those who are beautiful, those who are disabled, those struggling to make a living and raise a family, those who have known great loss and tragedy, and those asking the deep questions of life. All have encountered the living God, arriving at a place of holy ground, where they must—metaphorically at least—remove their shoes in acknowledgement of God's holiness.

At the centre of the installation is a stainless steel tree, partly painted red and partly blackened with a blow torch. Coloured lights trained on it change and flicker, creating a fiery effect. The empty shoes facing towards it call to mind Moses' encounter with God at the burning bush in which God tells Moses, 'Take off your sandals, for the place you are standing is holy ground'.

Paul Hobbs

## Comments:

- 'I kept returning to the art work Holy Ground. There was something very special about the personal stories and experiences of the individuals represented. I was fascinated, too, to see people from different backgrounds and of different ages stopping to read and reflect on the stories and their meaning for them.'*
- 'Most deeply affecting, showing the beauty of God and people.'*
- 'Never could I imagine a message so simple but so deep.'*
- 'What a great way to tell stories. I chose shoes that looked interesting and read their story - with tears and smiles. Thank you! I expected little and was moved greatly.'*
- 'Very touching and inspiring stories that make us think beyond our own small problems!'*

# Holy Ground Guidelines for hiring installation

The Holy Ground Project is available for hire, and may be used in settings such as conferences, schools, festivals and churches. The exhibit may be hired with the artist in attendance to speak with visitors, give talks or lead related workshops; the exhibit may also be loaned for a number of days. In either case, the artist would need to set up the exhibit.

## Set-up and Modes of Display

The exhibit can be shown in two main ways:

1. Full scale: 6.5m diameter circle of matting and shingle with 'tree' at centre and 28 pairs of shoes at the edge of the circle.
2. Medium scale: 3-4m diameter circle of matting and shingle with 'tree' at centre and 12-16 pairs of shoes at the edge of the circle.
  - The stories may be displayed on the floor next to the exhibit or on the walls nearby, as well as being available in the exhibition catalogues.
  - The artwork is to be set up according to the artist's plan of display.
  - The exhibit may only be shown indoors.

## Curating Guidelines

1. At least one person must curate the exhibit all the time the venue is open to the public or otherwise in use.
2. It is recommended that whoever is curating should make themselves familiar with many of the stories, and be willing to welcome people and to engage them in conversation about the artwork as appropriate.
3. Visitors are not to touch the exhibit or walk on the edge of it. [Should this happen, the curator is to restore the exhibit to its original set-up.]
4. It is hoped that Holy Ground Catalogues will be sold at the venue. A small percentage of the price of sales may be retained by the host venue.

## Use in Services

The artwork may be used in church or school assemblies, either as a full or partial installation, or by using some of the pairs of the shoes individually—subject to prior discussion with the artist.

## Costings (2025)

### Artist attended Exhibitions

Paul Hobbs to set up and attend for a day with the exhibit	£350 + Travel Expenses
PH to attend 2nd day	£280
PH to attend subsequent days	£140 per day

### Loaned Exhibitions/Customer Curated

Paul Hobbs to bring and set up the exhibit	£350 + Travel Expenses
Agreed number of days to hold the exhibit	Free
Disassembly and collection of the exhibit	£280 + Travel Expenses
Returnable Deposit for Loaned Exhibitions	£420

## Contact and Bookings

For enquiries contact Paul Hobbs on 07985 308428, or [paul@arthobbs.com](mailto:paul@arthobbs.com)