

art matters

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art
works

www.artworksinfo.org.uk

chairperson's thoughts

Another year has sped by and reading through this new newsletter, one realises just how different and varied people's experiences and lives are! Some of the experiences described here have clearly greatly impacted on these members of Artworks and inspired and fed into their work. It is this, 'every picture/sculpture/installation tells a story' aspect of art that contributes to the hugely life-enhancing and positive impact that art can have on all our lives. Through art we connect with another person's experience, emotion, viewpoint. This is reflected in some of the comments we have had from various visitors to the Artworks exhibition. Here are just a few from last year.

'Some amazing and original work. A treat to see.'

'An enriching afternoon.'

'Some great work – the exhibition gets better each year.'

'I'm so lucky to be able to nourish my soul with your great art exhibitions yearly – excellent.'

'Inspirational.'

Our selection meeting in February resulted in two new members joining Artworks - Eleanora Knowland and Valerie Armstrong bring fresh talent to this year's exhibition. Jenny Goater is taking the year out. And Lesley Bermingham, Hilary Evans and Anne Paton have returned after their year out.

We are looking forward this year to having an enlarged shop area at the exhibition in September with more space to view the work. Also two events planned to coincide with this year's show are **'Artists Making an Exhibition of Themselves'** – a not-to-be-missed evening of artist demonstrations on Thursday 20 September from 6.30-8.30pm (tickets £3.00 on the door to include a glass of wine). Following on from the success of last year's concert, we have organised another concert. **'At Home with the Bach Family'** promises to be an evening of sparkling arias and harpsichord and clavichord solos from the *Anna Magdalena* notebook. Just ring our box office on 01359 270421 to book.

We are all looking forward to welcoming you to our 8th annual exhibition this September.

Penny Bhadresa



at the private view party

from the editor

I hope you like this new format for *artmatters*. Last year we got away with the larger format which used C4 envelopes for mailing. The new format allows us to use the C5 envelopes and therefore keeps our costs down!

For the first time this year, you can read (and also download) **the full 'colour' version** by simply logging onto our website. As ever *artmatters* tries to give you a flavour of what has been happening in the past year - we can't cover everything but I hope you enjoy what you see and read.

I am always interested to hear from readers and so if you have any comments to make, you are more than welcome to e-mail them to me at tygertyger1757@aol.com Thanks!

the ultimate sensation

I was in Bhutan during November/December last year, finishing my portfolio of watercolours of the *Dzongs* (monasteries). This was my third visit to record the 20 fortress monastic castles of God, on the roof of the world. Having finished the illustrations of 19, there was only one to go and at 5000m the most difficult to reach. It needed horses, a guide and a horseman. The Tarayana foundation who I was collaborating with advised me not to attempt the trek! Well, I hired a cook, always more useful than a guide, a horseman - the Quasimodo of the equestrian world as it turned out, 5 pack horses, and one riding horse, and set off from *Drugyel Dzong* for the final *Lingshi Dzong* close to the Tibet-China border.



It was a 5-day trek to the base camp to the 5000m *Nyile La* (=pass) and a day to go over it. As if it wasn't hard enough trekking high up in the Himalayas, the weather changed and we had to cross the pass in heavy snow and what was worse, my guys marched ahead! Having dismounted to go down the north side I lost the party, made it to the pass base, only to discover they had gone on. Good job I knew Yak tracks from horse tracks! I finally caught up with them at the night camp 5 hours later in the *Lingshi* valley. The temperature at night dropped to -12°C ! - when the sun has gone, the temperature goes down much faster than one can imagine.

Totally disorientated, gasping for breath, fumbling with frozen fly zippers and unable to defrost my walking boots, it crossed my mind, that perhaps I was too old for this type of caper. Drawing the last illustration of the collection on horseback in a howling gale, and thinking the following day my life depended on my relationship with this four-legged friend to recross the Pass, made me feel more vulnerable than at any point in my life!



The Dzong at Lingshi

Doug Patterson

To experience the power and the splendour on the roof of the world is the ultimate sensation.....

Doug Patterson

Doug (incidentally back safely in England) will be exhibiting this collection and his Mount Athos collection at the National Theatre in London in May 2008.

in search of inspiration

In February I spent an unforgettable three weeks traveling through Rajasthan. For me India was such an onslaught on the senses, I found it hard to concentrate enough to draw and paint, so I used photography as a tool to gather inspiration. The camera also proved to be a wonderful way of making friends.



Our trip took us 3000km from Delhi, through the vast Thar desert, to the beautiful desert cities of Jaisalmer and Jodhpur, then on to Ranakpur,

Udaipur, Pushkar, Jaipur and finally the Taj Mahal in Agra.

The contrasts, colours, smells and sheer exoticism of the region embraced all the senses, but what most moved me was the friendliness and spirituality of the Rajasthanis. Everywhere, we were embraced with a combination of flattering curiosity combined with warmth and a desire to be helpful. Everywhere we made new friends. There was a nobility about the people that seemed to sweep straight back to the Rajputs, the men in their brilliantly coloured turbans and magnificent moustaches, standing straight and proud. The women looked as if they had stepped straight out of Indian 'miniatures', were gracefully adorned in brilliant reds, greens and yellows, brightening up the drabest of surroundings.

In Udaipur we met *Shamima* who was obviously intrigued by me as a woman; simply, she slipped her arm through mine and invited us to her home - an impeccably tidy, beautifully painted small room. She shared with us tea and small sweets and proudly showed us the school books of her son *Imran* who was clearly the first of the family to be educated. We were much touched by that gentle family.



Upset by the plight of the children begging on the streets and railway stations, you could not but want to help in some way. With this in mind, I have already started work for an exhibition in London organised by volunteers from an Indian educational charity. All the commission will go to the charity.

Val Armstrong

serial artist

It's not easy to get the time to work on a particular series of paintings when you are committed to several exhibitions a year. However, over the last few years I've been putting aside paintings that I feel belong together and would not sit comfortably in exhibitions where they may be separated.

The series comes from various things that wrecker's yards and municipal dumps hand me on a plate - stories to tell through everyday detritus. Ordinary things are the 'stuff of life'. Their basic components (colour, tone, line) can form interesting compositions and their symbolism (what they evoke) can form interesting thoughts - together they can add up to something that their familiarity often makes us miss. The only trouble is that others may



Skip

Lillias August

not find dismantled cars and bulging skips as evocative as I do!

I like making order out of chaos; I like making something out of nothing; I like to confront rather than avoid. I'd rather a painting moved me than soothed me. I like art of any form to be provocative - paintings that I own are often troubling. I'm trying to present these things in such a way that they can speak. It may sound rather grand but basically I like ugly things because, to me, they are beautiful.

Artworks may give me the opportunity to hang them all together sometime but at the moment I still feel that other paintings may join the series. So the group slowly grows in the background while I get on with other work.

Lillias August



Burnt Out

Lillias August

shadowscapes

Long dark shadows will always create a certain drama in a landscape much as we experience them on a theatrical stage. It was C.S Lewis who coined the word 'shadowlands' in his creative writings.



Shadowscapes (detail)

Bernard Baker

I have found myself drawn into the unceasing dialogue between the ever changing brightness of sunlight with the responding darkness created in the forms of shadows. Shadows, like silhouettes, have always, for me, expressed an element of mystery and sometimes by their uncompromising forms determine the whole nature and composition of a painting. I have therefore entitled my recent paintings 'shadowscapes'.

Bernard Baker

a new direction

Since starting an MA in Art Therapy at the University of Derby in 2005, my work has taken on another direction.



My Mother In Me

lina Hunter

Influenced by my studies, especially Kim Etherington's ideas in *Becoming a Reflexive Researcher: Using Our Selves in Research* (2004), I have been investigating self-identity and the human body through my art. The focus is primarily on my own personal journey of growth and creativity. An analysis and examination of the self both physically and mentally, it acknowledges the impact of my own experiences and culture on my art and my relationships with others – a journey seen in the context of love and lust of womanhood.

Using various materials like plaster, textiles, metal and prints, not forgetting my initial medium of clay, I have been rebuilding around found objects to create installations. These portray how the body and mind function together. Manifest in the work is the fragmentation of bone structures and other bodily changes that occur due to movement and ageing. I have found this reflection on how self-awareness can enrich my art quite a life-enhancing process.

lina Hunter

One can exist without art but one cannot *live* without it.

Oscar Wilde

the cow and bull story

Would you be happy to find a cow looking at you in the shower?

Anne Paton recently undertook an unusual commission to create a *trompe l'oeil* for a bathroom in a barn conversion in Suffolk - a larger than life portrait of a cow peering through the window. In a second bathroom she 'created' a bull leering down!



Needless to say, Anne, who has had work hung in the RA summer exhibition, has also been creating lively mixed media paintings of the East Coast from Brancaster in Norfolk to West Mersea in Essex for this year's exhibition.

new in 2007

Valerie Armstrong

artist/printmaker

Valerie graduated from Croydon College of Art. After a year in the Design Department of a ceramic factory in Sweden, she moved to Paris to paint, and to work for a Publishing House. In 1976, she qualified and subsequently worked as an art therapist for many years. In recent years, a fascination for experimental printmaking, collage, and mixed media has taken her in a new direction - towards a more narrative and oblique way of working. Valerie is also a member of the Suffolk Craft Society and the Sudbourne Printmakers Group.

"My most recent collection of work takes a humorous and affectionate look at the language of interaction, glimpsed encounters, and vulnerability. I believe that my experience as an art therapist and images which flow from a vivid dreamworld influence my work. I weave visual stories which sometimes touch the absurd. At other times, they reach out to the darker side that lurks deep within the mind." **VA**



The Message

Val Armstrong

Eleonora Knowland

painter

Born in Holland in 1952, Eleonora Knowland moved to London at the age of three and was educated at a Rudolph Steiner school. Married to a Suffolk farmer, she has lived in East Anglia for over 30 years and much of her creative inspiration is derived from the subtle beauty of the open Suffolk landscape.

A career in interior design and fashion led Eleonora to study Fine Art at Colchester School of Art and Design from where she graduated in 2006. She is a member of the Suffolk Open

Studios and 'Down To Earth' - a collaborative group of London and East Anglian artists.

"The low coastal profile of East Anglia leaves the viewer with an awareness of the horizon and an understanding of the immensity of space. Using curved canvases my paintings are informed by the soft rolling undulations of nature and the straight lines of human intervention: freezing fog rising in front of a burning sunset; shadows from winter trees before a calm stretch of water; icy blue light defined by the black weather-boarding of a barn - all produce exciting contrasts of colour that are as unexpected as they are brief. It is these delights that inspire my work." **EK**



8:47 Summer

Eleonora Knowland

artworks-funded schools' projects

This year's collaboration between **artworks** and local schools, again illustrates just how successful the creative interaction between professional artists and pupils has become.

Both participating schools, Moreton Hall and Thorndon Primary, will be exhibiting their workshop-produced work at the **artworks'** annual exhibition. At Moreton Hall, under the encouraging guidance of Lina Hunter, the inventive possibilities of using wire and clay, inspired a group of children to discover their own imaginative and interpretive skills to create forms of wild fantastic beasts.



Pupils with their sculpture at Moreton Hall School

Renewing their association with **artworks** for a second year, Thorndon Primary chose to have two half-day workshops, one with sculptor Jenny

Goater and the other with printmaker Hilary Evans. Under Jenny's expert guidance, the children set to work with great enthusiasm using chicken wire to make all sorts of animals - rabbits, elephants, dinosaurs. Using wire was new to the children and they took to its potential like ducks to water!

Hilary's action-packed afternoon saw the children working with card cut-outs, overprinting them with a variety of textures using crumpled foil, fabric and sequin waste. Whilst the first prints were drying, the pupils experimented with monoprints. Hilary also divulged the techniques of etching, linoprinting and collagraphy.

Children's work has become a real highlight at the annual exhibition with visitors being very impressed by the standard of the artwork. This suggests that through being given the opportunity to explore a variety of art forms, children can develop their general creative skills which can greatly assist with their learning.

Four schools have already been selected for **artworks**-funded workshops for next year. If, as a school, you are interested, please download the necessary information/form from our website to apply for 2009!

Gabrielle Stoddart and Hilary Evans

artworks www.artworksinfo.org.uk

Set up in 2000, **artworks** comprises 30 contemporary East Anglian artists ranging from painters and printmakers to sculptors, a photographer and an installation artist. It's diverse and inspiring shows have been vibrant and wide-ranging. Artworks' annual exhibition in September is held at the impressive Blackthorpe Barn, just off junction 45 on the A14 at Rougham, three miles east of Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk.

Valerie Armstrong Mike Ashley Lillias August Bernard Baker Lesley Birmingham Penny Bhadresa Rasik Bhadresa (admin) Gillian Crossley-Holland Verena Daniels Helen Dougall Hilary Evans Christine Dovey (secretary) Chris Gamble Roger Gamble Ann Hart Lina Hunter Lynn Hutton Alison Jones Eleonora Knowland Mac McCaughan Christine McKechnie Katie Millard Mary-Anne Morrison Elaine Nason Anne Paton Doug Patterson Graham Portlock Jenny Portlock Colin Slee Gabrielle Stoddart Constance Stubbs Liz Waugh McManus

Further details can be found on our **website or ring 01359 221404**