



NEWSLETTER

Friends of Harlow

SCULPTURE & GIBBERD GALLERY

Number 18

October 2013

Friends of Harlow Sculpture and the Gibberd Gallery Newsletter Autumn 2013

Summer memories, autumn news.

This edition of the newsletter will be received online by most of you, and apart from making this easier and cheaper for us; it has the advantage that we don't have to worry about space. There will be a shorter printed version for libraries etc, and for those of our members without email.

We start with Corrina's reflections on the big summer exhibition – Nick Turvey's All Alone Together, which was the best attended of all our summer shows, and which aroused a great deal of interest. Corrina also has details of new events, including the Michael O'Connell exhibition in the autumn, and other Gallery news. Other items reflect aspects of the Friends' activities. Jenny talks about Festival bus tours, and a VIP visit to the Gallery, and Sheila Marchant was so impressed by the visit to Barnard's Farm that she sent us her account of it.

One item of Gallery news came too late for Corrina's round-up: Sue MacDonald has been appointed HAT co-ordinator/admin person for 2 days a week. We welcome her to the team, and remind ourselves how far we have come in the last year, largely due to Corrina's hard work and our magnificent fund-application! Don't forget that the Gallery still needs invigilators, and there is a roster at the desk. All you need to do is write your name in (and turn up of course!)

We welcome your input. Is there anything you would like to see featured in the newsletter? All replies welcome, b_a_burge@yahoo.co.uk

Barbara Burge

Nick Turvey's Exhibition "All Alone Together"

"ALL ALONE TOGETHER" by Nick Turvey these comment are from the visitors book:

"A wonderful project we've been waiting for something like this - to build on the Harlow traditions of community, collective skills and experience... Creating a better and inclusive society..."

"Did not expect this experience, loved it ! XX

"Fascinating "

"Odd and cool" (11 year old)

"A shot in the arm for the Harlow art scene. Excellent ! "

"Great art for Harlow & community "

"Good to see the space optimised"

"Interrogation room quite disturbing"

"Visually special"

"The gradations of feelings experienced in the different bunkers was very moving..."

"Thought provoking & bold "... "With a considered and intellectual foundation "

These are just a few comments, in the last eight weeks we had over 1500 people come through the gallery plus community groups that built and dismantled the four tons of Bunkers.

I am really proud to have been part of Nick Turvey's concept and more so of the volunteers including film maker Michael Barrett, Harlow Youth Offending Team, Livewire and our local companies Specialist Training Courses at Bush Fair and our sponsors Wickes and Denne.

Without them we would not have been able to stage such an innovative sculpture exhibition and created a reaction in our town and Essex and Herts as a whole, and of course we are grateful to the Arts Council for our three year funding.

It would have been sensible to move onto a more sedate activity in the gallery but here we are at the beginning of another sensation in the form of the gallery's first major textile show.

Michael O'Connell was the innovator of a resist batik technique which was ahead of his time. This retrospective is the first time so many of his works will be exhibited together in England and we are proud that we were approached to do this.

Michael was born in Lancashire, joined the forces and spent some years in Australia where he developed his artistic style. Most of his later life he lived in Perry Green and taught at Ware College. We are showing work from the 50's -70's and a plethora of images and sketches which gives a wonderful insight into this man and his life.

The exhibition will close on 20th December

We have Saturday openings on 21st September, 26th October, 7th December
11-2pm.

Volunteers preparing for The Michael O'Connell Exhibition



A Michael O'Connell on display



Staff news at The Gibberd Gallery

We have been privileged to have had many new faces helping out this summer, especially students. We are always grateful for the help everyone gives us. It would not be possible to have such professional and impactful shows without this support. Although traditionally we have only manned the desk on sculpture shows it has made such a difference to visitors to have a chat to our stewards that it would be helpful to have as much cover as possible for the O'Connell show.

If anyone is interested in helping for a few hours a month please contact us on 01279 446404.

Unfortunately Rosie Walker left this summer after giving us a year of her experience and we were sad to see her go.

We have been able to take on two Managers to look after IT and education developments at one day per week. Congratulations to Hannah Lee and Amanda Westbury for beating such strong competition and enduring the heavy interview panel!

Lots to do please pop in when you are in town or have visitors to impress.

Corrina Dunlea

Gibberd Gallery programme 2013/2014

- 'The Lost Modernist' Michael O'Connell, textile hangings in Rayon, silk and cotton using resist dye technique, sketch books and two films. (19 Sept – 20 Dec 13). 3 Saturday openings and 2 workshops-Batik workshop on Saturday 7th December. 11am-1pm or 2pm-4pm. Max. 8 people per workshop. 'A fun Batik workshop suitable for beginners, this practical workshop will be led by Batik artist Ann Trotter, participants will learn new techniques and skills which will be transferable, to use with paper or fabric. At the end of the workshop you will take away the paper samples that you will have created.

Price £10 (includes all materials). www.gibberdgallery.co.uk or telephone 01279 446 404

- ‘Overspill’ James Smith, revealing overlooked details of new towns, architectural structures and environment. (8 -31 Jan 2014) Private View 9th January. 1 Saturday opening 18th January.
- Graham Boyd, ex-Principal lecturer at Herts College of A&D. Abstract oils. (7-28 Feb 2014) Private View 7th February. 1 Saturday opening.
- School show, led by the Young Curators. (11 March – 9 May) PV 13th March. 2 Saturday openings.
- Essex Collections, work loaned from Essex establishments to complement the Gibberd works and highlight “collections” to the public. (22 May – 20 June 2014,) PV 22nd May. 1 Saturday opening.
- Sculpture show. Langlands and Bell (1July-23rd August), PV, tbc .
- Commemorative installation Joanne Dennis, A field of silk poppies. (4-26 September) PV 4th September. 1 Saturday opening and workshop.
- Harlow Open 14 (9 October –21 December14) PV 9th October. 2 Saturday openings.

Windows for Hire

The window display is an opportunity for artists aspiring or established to showcase their talents, in a space that is visible to a great amount of visitors to the town. The windows are those at the main entrance, downstairs in The Civic Centre, (facing onto The Water Gardens). We have offered this opportunity since January. There is a simple procedure for booking the space, at a cost of £30 for two weeks. All work is welcome but final decisions on curating the art will be made by the Gallery Director.

www.gibberdgallery.co.uk or telephone 01279 446 404

VIPs Visit the Bunkers

Lots of very different people came to see the bunkers when I was invigilating, but the most intriguing group that I hosted were the VIPs. This stands for Visually Impaired People. Some were completely blind. They came with their clubs, which meet monthly in the Town, and really didn’t know what to expect to find in the Gallery – for some it was their first ever visit. (Most sighted people didn’t know what to expect either – we did have something very different this year.)

After a rest and an introductory chat they were very keen to explore the installations, starting with a ‘feely’ walk round the shelter made from corrugated iron and tree branches. They felt their way inside a few at a time, laughing at the wobbly planks and low roof. Eventually they managed to sit down on the sandbags inside. They all appreciated the atmosphere, smells and discomfort which brought back memories both sad and funny. Sad at the loss of young friends, but remembering the fun and games on the bomb sites, and the singing, Mums smoking, story-telling aunties.

They had difficulty working out the breeze block tower, with the bravest getting inside and guessing it might be a guard post. When we talked about the prints of people’s profiles with different things inside their heads they began to understand why the installation was called All Alone Together, because that was what they had experienced.

Several of us squeezed into the third bunker and listened. Nothing. It felt like a very silent lift. When we went through into the larger room with its table and comfortable chairs separated from the plastic chair where one of their helpers sat, most of the VIPs felt that this was something different. I had briefed one of the visitors and we sat on the comfortable chairs and questioned the helper in the plastic chair. What had she had for breakfast? Who gave it to her? We had a really good discussion then about secret places, what they could be used for – not just interrogation, but for secret broadcasts or planning sabotage. When we went out of the other door they were all amazed that such an exhibition could evoke so many memories and conversations that would last them for weeks.

These VIPs will come back for future 3D exhibitions I’m sure. Sculpture is not just for looking at. It can be felt and experienced by everyone.

Jenny Lushington

A Visit to Barnards Farm, Warley. Gardens and Sculpture Park

It was a really wet day on Thursday August 22nd, when a small group of us set off to explore Barnards Farm at Warley: 40 acres of farmland transformed into wonderful gardens with many and varied sculptures, a small gauge train and a flight pad.

Our base was a beautiful old barn, now used as a café. We felt at home right away due to the cheerfulness of the volunteers who run the project.

Doug and I were taken on a very wet but exciting trip round the park on a golf buggy, our driver David, showing us some lovely sights including a superb Japanese garden, stainless steel figures walking in the park, a bull made out of motorcar parts and an amazing carved wooden angel, which shone in the rain. Every turn of the buggy gave us more enchanting views and intriguing art.

To end the day Lin had arranged for us to visit the art nouveau church, St Mary's at Great Warley. Built in 1904 by local stockbroker and philanthropist, Evelyn Heseltine, its two designers were Townsend and Reynold-Stephens. Heseltine had it built in memory of his brother. Its plain exterior gives no clue to the treasures to be found inside.

There is tremendous diversity of materials used, ten metals, eight marbles, much mother of pearl and one wood-walnut. There are echoes of William Morris, Burne-Jones, the Pre Raphaelites and, I thought, echoes of Mackintosh. Eric Gill did the lettering over the lych gate.

A lovely end to a very enjoyable day. Although the group was small we were fortified by their enthusiasm and cheerfulness.

Thanks so much,
Sheila Marchant

Sculpture at Barnards Farm



Thank you Lin Hilton for the photo

Harlow Festival 2013

This year we ran two minibus tours from the Gibberd Garden during the July Harlow Festival. I thought we would have to hire a trailer for the second as we squeezed customers into every seat and just about left room for me. These tours are a real pleasure to conduct as everyone is so interested, not just in the sculptures but where they are placed. The contrast between old and new, such as those in New Hall (Sophrosyne and Methuselah 2010) and Great Plumtree (Contrapuntal Forms 1952) are enormous, but in each area the sculptures are in their own contemporary setting, showing them and the setting off to best advantage.

We were able to call in at the Museum gardens – where the Gilby still caught our attention and seemed worthy to be called an industrial sculpture, and the Arc, where the Wrestlers drew attention and brought back memories of the old Sports Centre. I hope we will be running more regular tours next summer, so if you would like to join us, or know anyone who might, keep a look-out early in the spring!

Jenny Lushington

New Membership Leaflet

We have a great new leaflet now available. Thanks go to all those involved in producing this, especially Lin Hilton. Our membership secretary is Pat Catlin, she can be contacted at p.catlin@btinternet.com or at Pat Catlin, Membership Secretary FHSC, 107, North Street, Nazeing, Waltham Abbey, Essex. EN9 2NJ

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