



NEWSLETTER

Friends of Harlow SCULPTURE & GIBBERD GALLERY

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Friends of Harlow Sculpture and the Gibberd Gallery Newsletter Winter 2015

Happy New Year to all our Friends

I would like to bring you all up to date with our work over the last year. Apart from the events that Lin has organised for us all to participate in we have raised funds to help us promote awareness of the Town's sculptures and their care and repair. We do not have any regular funding apart from the membership subscriptions from you, our Friends. So just over a year ago we applied for funding from the Essex Community Foundation and were awarded over £3,000.00 towards our work from the Harlow Recreation Trust. The following were all paid for by the grant:

- Our new updated Harlow Sculpture map which links with the Sculpture trails available on the App showing all 84 sculptures in the town;
- The cleaning of Iceni;
- Financed the transporting of school children to and from workshops in the Gallery;
- A small surplus to go towards the cleaning of a second Sculpture – as yet to be chosen.

I consider that we have been very fortunate in receiving this grant and hope we may be able to apply again in the future in order to keep on supporting Harlow Art Trust.

Another source of finance has been through the raffles organised by Lin of a painting by Jackie Chakravarti, the 2013 winner of the Harlow Open exhibition, and the Michael Middleton print. These funds have helped to maintain the work of the Gallery. Please support our next raffle which is a water colour by one of our well-known local artists who is also an art teacher.

You may be aware that we have not increased our membership subscriptions since the Friends were formed but in the light of rising costs all round we do now need to increase them. As from 1st April this year the subscriptions will rise to £10.00 concessionary members, £12.00 Members and £20.00 for Organizations. **Membership renewal is 8th April please.** Thank you all for your continuing support, we look forward to seeing you at the forthcoming events and hearing from you as well.

Jenny Lushington
Chair, Friends of Harlow Sculpture and the Gibberd Gallery

Mike Middleton – artist in many media

Talk by Mike Middleton

On Saturday 1st November Mike visited the Gallery and gave an eloquent talk about his work. There was a pleasing turnout for this, including many of our Friends.

The session afforded the audience the opportunity to ask questions and appreciate what goes into the making of art.

Mike is a lecturer and professional artist selling at Bankside, the Royal Academy and



other Galleries. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Painters and Printmakers and a member of the Royal Watercolour Society. His studio is in West Mersea.

Mike kindly donated an Artist's proof of an early lino cut for our Xmas raffle.

The lucky raffle winner of Mike's 'Trellis in Winter' is Barbara Burge. Proceeds go toward supporting the work of the Gallery.

Lin Hilton

Gallery News

Highlights of 2014 - A View from the Gallery

This year we have had seven fantastic temporary exhibitions in the main gallery space and many memorable events.

- We ran six successful cultural tours in collaboration with the Gibberd Garden attracting visitors from as far as Leeds and Northampton.
- The Gallery hosted the launch for the Essex Summer of Arts in June with invited guests from across Essex.
- Hundreds of people came along to a family day of poppy making and poetry readings in relation to the commemorative exhibition 'Lest We Forget'.
- Turner Prize nominated, BAFTA winning artists Langlands & Bell exhibited, for the first time, 30 of their working models here in Harlow.
- We won the Essex Community Partner Award from Denne/Moat Construction.
- Our innovative, education programme saw 10 young people gain their Silver Arts Award, complete a six month Young Curators course and host the "Dreams and Fantasy" exhibition, a student show with workshops .
- Our three John Nash watercolour paintings from the collection were loaned to the Royal West of England gallery in Bristol and our Rodin sculpture, "Eve" went on tour with the "Moore/ Rodin" exhibition to Compton Verney.
- The 'Open 15' exhibition attracted over 60 artists, a record number, to submit work and presented more than 100 beautiful pieces.



Corrina Dunlea (Gallery Director) - My 2014 highlights at the Gibberd Gallery are always welcoming new visitors, and seeing their surprise that Harlow has such a wealth of cultural attractions in all artistic disciplines. I'm particularly proud of the team and volunteers who are passionate about the arts in this town and work hard to make this gallery space interesting, inviting and memorable. Of course none of this would be possible without all the very talented artists that have exhibited here.

Alastair Howe (Chair of Harlow Art Trust) - For me the year has been a non-stop series of highlights, just anticipating what our fantastic Gallery team are going to pull out of the hat next. From a minimal budget but with maximum enthusiasm they create one outstanding show after another, the Gallery looking completely new and fresh each time. Further highlights are in the backstage discussions about the future: who we can get to show and what we can do next - watch this space!

As always we are grateful to our volunteers for their support of the Gallery, without them we would be unable to have such an exciting programme, or to involve so many different people.

What is coming up in 2015?



Next year we have another packed programme of exhibitions and events. Our January to July programme will be available in January but here are a few sneak peeks:

MIDPOINT emerging talent 2015 - Opens on the 8th January

Abe Pardue, Berlin, Oil on Canvas, 2014

Save the date - Saturday 31st January we are open between 11am - 3pm

'Meet the artist talk' at 1pm which offers you the opportunity to ask questions about the work on display and the artists' practice.

Light, Art, Action!

19th February – 27th March

Jazz as artists see it

9th April - 15th May

The Gibberd Gallery Team

William Mitchell – A full life

Most of us, at some time in our lives, have listened to boring talks or attended well-intentioned lectures that soon had us losing the will to live. Whilst the series of autumn lectures organised by the 20th Century Society (20C) – entitled Sculpture and Buildings 1914 – 2014 did not, at first glance offer any respite from the phenomenon of lectures inducing drooping eyelids – there was one name on the list of lectures that stood out, particularly if you have an interest in Harlow's sculpture collection. So, with no collective experience of this particular sculptor's powers of oratory, four members arrived at the headquarters of the 20C in Cowcross St, Farringdon on 4 December hoping to be engaged by this man whose work graces parts of Harlow town centre. I suppose it's a bit of a tough ask to expect someone in their 90th year to stay awake, let alone keep his audience alert and hanging on his every word, but that is exactly what William Mitchell did on that cold, wet evening – to the delight of his audience.

William Mitchell's contribution to Harlow's built environment is well known to us – the fountains in the Water Gardens and the decorative panels that once graced the back of the public toilets in the Civic Square and the balcony of the old town hall, and are now to be found high up on ASDA's white wall near the 'overflow' water feature, and in 'breeze block alley' opposite BHS. Perhaps the relocation of one of his works to breeze block alley is not entirely inappropriate as, during his talk we were entertained by a short 1960's film of him experimenting with the use of sandblasting on a breeze block wall. He produced a fairly typical, but completely spontaneous work in just a few minutes, using this potentially hazardous industrial equipment. He went on to tell us that he pioneered various techniques for producing his panels – such as vacuum forming.

From the very beginning of the talk it was clear that we were in the presence of someone who was very comfortable in front of an audience – no notes – no microphone – no standing behind a lectern; just speaking as if to friends it seemed. He said that he was a child of the LCC (London County Council), that he loved the LCC because they had fitted him for life. There was no mention of parents – but strong references to an early life of illness, which meant long stays in sanatoriums and other institutional establishments; all in the care of the LCC. National Service in the Royal Navy and a lifetime of serendipitous events led from job to job thereafter. Chance meetings led to art school and various commissions, leading on to the large scale works that can be found worldwide (lots of detail on the internet).

It would not be an exaggeration to say that we, Moira Jones, Mag Barrett, Alastair Howe and I were beguiled by William Mitchell, who gave a lecture at which nobody nodded off!

Heraldic Panel 1961 By William Mitchell



John Curry

Jeremy Deller at the Turner Contemporary

On 7 November Lin Hilton arranged an outing for the Friends to Margate's Turner Contemporary Gallery. The Community Bus was booked, driven by Jan, and was full to capacity. It was great to be driven and to be free to chat while admiring the passing scene.

The Turner Gallery overlooks the harbour in Margate. One wall is mainly glass, framing the sea and the sky in all their moods. You feel you could just gaze out for hours and have to remind yourself that you've come to see an exhibition. We were there for Jeremy Deller's 'English Magic', Britain's entry for the 2013 Venice Biennale, which has since been shown in three galleries in England. To try and reduce its content to a simply stated theme would be wrong, but a series of strong images stay in the memory.



On the wall, as we entered, was an enormous painting of a bird of prey crushing a Range Rover in its talons. Later we saw massively enlarged video images of wild birds, their movements slowed to a dreamlike beauty, their elegant claws contrasted with the grabbing arms of a wrecking machine in a breakers' yard - then more film of children happily jumping and playing on a huge Bouncy Stonehenge. Victorian artists and social thinkers were referenced. Another giant painting showed William Morris, knee-deep in a Venetian lagoon, dashing the vast, ostentatious yacht of a Russian oligarch. Filling another wall was the image of St Heliers - tax haven for the rich - in smoke and flames, as if after some revolutionary uprising. For this particular exhibition additional works by Ruskin and Turner were also shown.

There's much more to tell, but space and word count is limited!

As we left in the late afternoon, the sky was stormy and dramatic, as if to prove the truth of Turner's claim that 'The skies over Thanet are the loveliest in all Europe.'

Liz James

Damaged Sculpture

If you have any concerns over the condition of a sculpture please contact Sue McDonald.

sue@harlowarttrust.org.uk.

Membership details

To join the Friends of Harlow Sculpture and Gibberd Gallery, receive information about forthcoming events, invitations to private views, he newsletter, talks by artists, subsidised visits to local and regional exhibitions and become involved in investing in Harlow's heritage and future, please complete the following form:-

Membership costs £12.00 for Adults or £10.00 for Students and unwaged or £20.00 for organizations.

Name type of membership £..... Date

Address Post code

Telephone Mob Email

*Please make cheque payable to Friends of Harlow Sculpture and Gibberd Gallery, (FoHSGG) and forward to :-
The Membership Secretary, FoHSGG, The Gibberd Gallery, Civic Centre, The Water Gardens, Harlow, Essex. CM20 1WG. Cash payments can be made in person at the Gallery desk.*

Membership renewal is 8th April please.

Items for the next Newsletter to sarah.bracey1@ntlworld.com