

ARTEFACTS



Friends of
Birmingham
Museums

MAY - JULY 2016

BAFM

MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATION
OF FRIENDS OF MUSEUMS

Reconstruction of Ichthyosaurus fossil skeleton, Accession number 1955G35.1. By Robert Nicholls © Birmingham Museums

FRIENDS OF BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS MAGAZINE

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WAGNER *Tannhäuser* O Star of Eve

SAINT-SAËNS *Samson et Dalila*, Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix

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VERDI *Aida* Ritorna vincitor, PUCCINI *Turandot* Nessun dorma

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AMBITIOUS CONTEMPORARY ART PROGRAMME



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WHAT ARE FRIENDS FOR?

BY DAVID FOSTER

Your Committee's job is to make decisions on how to support Birmingham Museums Trust on your behalf. Read on to find out how the Friends recently enabled the Trust to apply for a very substantial grant to support its work.

"We need your help!" The Friends Committee hears this quite often, but not usually with the urgency with which Birmingham Museums Trust's (BMT) Senior Management Team approached us in late September 2015. BMT had only a very few weeks to construct a bid for three years of major funding from Arts Council England (ACE). They needed to find matched funding support to make the application, and they knew that the Friends, one of their regular funders, would be able to give a decision quickly.

This was an important opportunity for BMT. As part of the Arts Council Collection National Partners Fund, ACE were seeking 3 regional UK partner galleries who might be willing to display (and capable of displaying!) major items from the Arts Council Collections, alongside their own works. These would be a series of eight exhibitions over three years and ACE would be granting up to £600,000 to each of the successful bidders.

For its part, BMT had to demonstrate that they had the space to present the items (some of which could be large) and the imagination to devise displays which would make the best use of them. Given the various spaces at BMAG, Thinktank and the Heritage Sites (remember the giraffe in the Aston Hall library in 2012?) and its expert and creative teams of curators, the Trust could readily meet these criteria. But it had also to guarantee a minimum of 10% cash funding matched from external sources – which is where the Friends came in.

For some years, the Friends has managed its finances so that it is able to offer BMT up to £25,000 in any year to support its work. As a result, the amounts being asked of us – £15,000 a year for three years – were within our capability; and the scope of the project fitted the type of support we believe



Laura Ford, 'Giraffe', 1998 – part of the 'Curious Visitors' exhibition at Aston Hall, 2012. Photograph by David Rowan.

our members want to give to the Trust. Therefore, the Committee decision was easy to make that day.

This opportunity demonstrates well what the Friends are able to do for BMT. The funds we collect from members' subscriptions and donations (in just a few days in March 2016, a number of our members sent us generous donations totalling £285), the margin we make on our events, as well as income from our investment fund, are used to support BMT. Following the objectives which were set out when the Friends of Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery was founded in 1931, Friends' funds are used to help BMT

make acquisitions, invest in capital projects, commission new work and fund conservation. In fact, with 85 years of support we can claim to be one of BMT's most loyal funders. We have provided such financial support in (almost) every year since 1931. Others may have deeper pockets, but none can claim that record of consistency. Furthermore, as an independent charity we can be an impartial voice supporting Birmingham Museums, as we did a year or so ago when we assisted BMT's campaign to reduce the impact of Birmingham City Council's proposed funding cuts. And, with your continuing support, we shall carry on doing that.

Those with sharp eyes will have noted that, early in February 2016, ACE announced that BMT's application had been successful and the Trust had been selected to be one of the four Arts Council Collection National Partner Organisations. BMT will be displaying the Arts Council Collection – its 'lending library' of artistic treasures. BMT is now busily working on the display ideas, and this will include recruiting extra staff to develop, support and deliver the projects. The £600,000 grant is going to be extremely useful. And we, the Friends, helped to win it! (Please see BMT's article, about being awarded the ACE grant, on page 16.) ■

Wolverhampton Art Gallery



Reflection in Black, ©Petr Bamberoušek

WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

23 July -
18 September 2016



A Big Bang - Part 2

Until 13 August 2016

Discover how works by leading lights of the Pop movement found their home in Wolverhampton.



Gallery Café: 10.30AM - 4.30PM

With a great selection of salads, quiche, Illy coffee, loose leaf tea and naughty-but-nice cake there's a tempting treat for everyone.



Made by Herri I, ©David Ward

David Ward: In a Landscape

29 April - 9 July 2016

A solo exhibition that explores the artist's relationship with landscapes across the globe.

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www.wolverhamptonart.org.uk

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EVENT APPLICATIONS

For members of the Friends, the event applications will be included as a supplement in the centre of this magazine. If you are not a member and would like to apply for one of our events, send a letter to the Friends' Office address on page 3 stating: the title of the event(s); and your name; address; telephone number; how many places you require; the cost; the pickup point for coach trips; and any other relevant information. Include a cheque for the total amount made out to 'FBMAG'. Please also include a S.A.E. for the return of your tickets.



ORIGINS OF THE INSTITUTE: THE HISTORY OF THE BIRMINGHAM & MIDLAND INSTITUTE

Event type: Evening Event

Date: Tuesday 7 June 2016, 6:30pm-8:30pm

Speaker: Dr Connie Wan, Deputy Administrator and Programme Development Manager at The Birmingham & Midland Institute

Cost: £9/£12 non-members. The ticket includes a glass of wine and a slice of pizza

Venue: Edmunds Lounge Bar, 106-110 Edmund Street, Birmingham, B3 2ES; www.edmundsbar.co.uk for a talk; and then move on to the BMI for a tour

This event is open to non-members – see note on page 6.

Join Dr Connie Wan for a talk, followed by an informal tour of the building and find out more about one of Birmingham's hidden gems. The Birmingham & Midland Institute has a rich and illustrious history; established by Act of Parliament in 1854 for 'the

Diffusion and Advancement of Science, Literature and Art amongst all Classes of Persons resident in Birmingham and the Midland Counties', it had Charles Dickens as one of its early Presidents. Located in a prominent Grade II* listed building on Margaret Street, the Institute continues to promote science, literature and the arts through study days and lectures. It is also home to the original Birmingham Library, established in 1779. (NB: This is a repeat of a sold out event in the last edition of *Artefacts*. If you came to the event on 8th March, please do not reapply.)



'TURNING TO SEE: FROM VAN DYCK TO LUCIAN FREUD'

Event Type: Guided Tour

Date: Monday 13 June 2016

Speaker: Lisa Beauchamp, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, Birmingham Museums Trust

Cost: £9 - Guided Tours are exclusive to Friends

Meeting point: The Round Room in Birmingham

Museum & Art Gallery at 10:30am for an 11:00am start

This is the first ever exhibition curated by West Midlands born and internationally renowned artist, John Stezaker, who takes Van Dyck's dramatic turned pose as his starting point. Showcasing major loans from the National Portrait Gallery alongside highlights from Birmingham's collection, the display will create a spectacle of turning in the gallery and will mirror the way the viewer moves around the space. From Rembrandt and Rossetti to Picasso and Bomberg, 'Turning to See' is filled with celebrated names from art history. There's also the chance to view fragile works on paper not normally on display, such as Burne-Jones' sketches for the *Pygmalion* series from Birmingham's collection.

Far left: Inspire 16 – Celebrating the Young Creatives of Birmingham
Left: Day Trip to Lyme Park © Graham Bowerbank



‘‘A LABORATORY FOR LOOKING’’: THE BARBER INSTITUTE OF FINE ARTS’

Event type: Evening Event

Date: Tuesday 14 June 2016, 6:30pm-8:30pm

Speaker: Andrew Davies, Communications & Marketing Manager, The Barber Institute of Fine Arts

Cost: £9/£12 non-members. The ticket includes a glass of wine and a slice of pizza

Venue: Edmunds Lounge Bar, 106-110 Edmund Street, Birmingham, B3 2ES; www.edmundsbar.co.uk

This event is open to non-members – see note on page 6.

The Barber has been referred to as many things: ‘small but perfectly formed’; ‘a mini National Gallery for the Heart of England’; and ‘a hidden gem’ among them. Andrew Davies, the Barber’s Communications and Marketing Manager, sheds some light on what the Barber is all about: the history of the building and its founders, what goes on behind the Art Deco walls, and what the future might hold.



‘BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY: A MASTER PLAN FOR REDEVELOPMENT’

Event Type: Daytime Event

Date: Thursday 23 June 2016

Speaker: Janine Eason, Director of Engagement, Birmingham Museums Trust

Cost: £9/£12 non-members (Includes entrance and refreshments)

Meeting point: The AV Room - Gas Hall 10:30am for 11:00am

Janine will talk about the future plans for Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery (BMAG). Birmingham Museums Trust are working in partnership with Birmingham City Council to redevelop BMAG in a way that reflects its historic significance while ensuring its long-term future as a museum and art gallery of international stature. This presentation covers the early stages of architectural and display master planning to create new visitor facilities and displays that attract and

engage bigger, more diverse audiences with the collection. Anyone interested in the future of BMAG will not want to miss this.



HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT & THE JEWEL TOWER OR MUSEUM AREA

Event Type: Outing

Date: Monday 27 June 2016

Cost: £24 (Includes guided tour, coach and driver’s tip)

3 Pickup Points: South Parade Car Park (opposite Plantsbrook School), Sutton Coldfield at 7:00am; Edmund Street (close to BMAG) at 7:30am; or Yateley Road, Harborne at 7:45am.

Return from Westminster at 4:45pm and opposite the V&A at 5:00pm. Arrive in Birmingham at approximately 8:30pm. The journey should take approximately 2 hours 15 minutes from the last pick up and there will be a 20 minute comfort break each way.

This event is open to non-members – see note on page 6.

We will go by coach to The Houses of Parliament for a guided tour which will begin at 11:45am and finish at approximately 1:30pm. At 1:30pm you are free to visit the gift shop before the coach collects us at 2:00pm and takes us to the V&A. The Natural History and Science Museums are within 5 minutes walk. In this area there are many restaurants to please all tastes, both inside and outside the Museums OR you may remain in Westminster, visit the shop, have lunch, see Westminster Bridge, Downing Street or one of the many other things to do and see in this area. Then join a free tour of the Jewel Tower at approximately 3:30pm. The Tower is located opposite the Houses of Parliament. The Jewel House is one of only two buildings from the medieval Palace of Westminster to survive to the present day. (NB. This was not an option on our last visit to Westminster as it is not open in November.)

(NB. This is a repeat of a sold out event. If you came on or were transferred from the event on 12 November 2015, please do not reapply.)

Sutton Coldfield MP Andrew Mitchell has authorised this event and we are very grateful to him and his staff for their efforts.

'TENNYSON AND THE PRE-RAPHAELITES'

Event Type: Daytime Event

Date: Tuesday 5 July 2016

Speaker: Brendan Flynn BA AMA

Cost: £9/£12 non-members (Includes entrance and refreshments)

Meeting point: The AV Room - Gas Hall at 10:30am for an 11:00am start

Brendan Flynn was recently appointed as Hon. Professor of Art for the RSBA. Previously, he was Curator of Fine Art and lead officer at BMAG for the CAS Special Collections Scheme (Painting) and Art Fund International Scheme (retired). He is now working as a freelance Curator and Lecturer. The poetic works of Tennyson were a major source of inspiration for the Pre-Raphaelites. This lecture, first presented for the Farringford Tennyson Society at the artist's home on the Isle of Wight, examines the amazing, productive but sometimes turbulent relationship between the poet and the members.

'INSPIRE 16: CELEBRATING THE YOUNG CREATIVES OF BIRMINGHAM'

Event type: Evening Event

Date: Tuesday 12 July 2016

Speaker: Andrew Fowles, Learning and Access Manager, Birmingham Museums Trust

Cost: £9/£12 non-members. The ticket includes a glass of wine and a slice of pizza

Venue: Edmunds Lounge Bar, 106-110 Edmund Street, Birmingham, B3 2ES; www.edmundsbar.co.uk

Join Andrew Fowles to discover Birmingham Museums' initiatives to celebrate and encourage participation in the arts for the young people of Birmingham. 2016 is Birmingham's year of arts and young people, and so, to respond to this call, Birmingham Museums will be taking over the famous Gas Hall exhibition space to showcase a series of projects and programmes that explore the breadth and talent of Birmingham's young people. The exhibition, taking place over the summer, will present



Above: A Vernon Elliott from 1760; a military Light Dragoon pistol

fantastic artwork including competition entrants and winners of BMT's first 11-19 youth arts competition, a 10th anniversary exhibition of Arts Council England's Arts Award achievers, alongside a display of sculptural models created by local Birmingham schools and inspired by the Birmingham Big Art Project and the creation of a new sculpture for the city.

This is also an opportunity to find out how BMT engagement teams develop our summer programmes and create fun, creative and entertaining activities for kids. We also offer great one-off arts master classes for young people wanting to explore art a little further.

LYME PARK HOUSE & GARDENS (NATIONAL TRUST)

Event Type: Outing

Date: Tuesday 19 July 2016

Cost: £26 (includes coach, refreshments on arrival, introductory talk and driver's tip)

NB. Entrance to Lyme Park is not included so please bring your National Trust card with you; non-members pay on the day.

3 Pickup points: South Parade Car Park (opposite Plantsbrook School), Sutton Coldfield at 8:30am; Edmund Street (close to BMAG) at 9:00am; or Yateley

EVENT KEY



ANNUAL EVENT



DAYTIME EVENT



EVENING EVENT



GUIDED TOUR



OUTING



stool with a Birmingham made barrel & lock © Vince Scothern

Road, Harborne at 9:15am.

The journey should take approximately 2 hours and there will be a comfort break each way.

Nestling on the edge of the Peak District, Lyme Park, House and Gardens is a glorious house surrounded by gardens, moorland and deer park which was once home to the Legh family and was, in its heyday, a great sporting estate. Lyme is now managed by the National Trust. Highlights in the house include: the Wardrobe Department, where visitors can dress up and feel like a walk-on extra in a period drama; Truelove, the butler's suite of rooms, where silver was polished, wine was decanted and newspapers pressed; the cine film lovingly created by, and starring, the last generation of the Legh family to be born and raised at Lyme; and the library where visitors can relax and view the 15th Century Lyme Missal prayer book, the single most important printed book in the National Trust's collection.

The 1,300 acre estate, with its medieval herd of red and fallow deer, offers fantastic walks and stunning views. For a more tranquil walk explore the Edwardian rose garden, ravine garden or luxuriant herbaceous borders next to the reflecting lake where a certain Mr Darcy (Colin Firth) met Miss Bennett in the BBC production of *'Pride and Prejudice'*.



'LIFE IN THREE DIMENSIONS'

Event Type: Guided Tour

Date: Thursday 11 August 2016

Speaker: Jane Howell

Cost: £9 - Guided Tours are exclusive to Friends

Meeting point: The Round Room in Birmingham

Museum & Art Gallery at 10:30am for an 11:00am start

In this tour we shall look at many objects that are three dimensional. Some are made of bronze, some of ceramics and also of many other materials. Some tell a story and others are simply beautiful. We shall share the stories and the beauty and maybe we can identify other three dimensional items which are often overlooked.



'THE PORTUGUESE REVOLUTION OF 1910: HOW PORTUGAL BECAME A REPUBLIC AND HOW BRITAIN REACTED TO IT'

Event Type: Daytime Event

Date: Monday 22 August 2016

Speaker: David Johnson

Cost: £9/£12 non-members (Includes entrance and refreshments)

Meeting point: The AV Room - Gas Hall at 2:00pm for a 2:30pm start

In the early years of the 20th Century the Portuguese monarchy had become increasingly unpopular with the political classes in Portugal. The Republican movement became stronger by the year despite opposition and repression by the Portuguese government. Meanwhile, the Monarchist parties who monopolised the government were quite unable to solve the financial problems of the country. In the end, the state could only operate under authoritarian measures, including royal decrees, which directly involved King Carlos in the machinery of the state. Under the surface revolutionary plans were made, exploding into violence in 1908 when the King and his eldest son were assassinated in Lisbon. A demoralised government was eventually overthrown in 1910, and Portugal became a republic.

How did Britain react to the turbulence in its oldest Ally? What happened to the young King and his supporters after the Revolution? What effect did the

new republic have on the relationship with Britain in the crisis-ridden atmosphere of the years leading to the First World War?



HARDWICK HALL (NATIONAL TRUST) & CRICH TRAMWAY VILLAGE

Event Type: Outing

Date: Wednesday 7 September 2016

Cost: £29 (includes coach, entrance to Tramway Village and driver's tip)

NB. Entrance to Hardwick Hall is not included so please bring your National Trust card with you; non-members pay on the day.

3 Pickup points: South Parade Car Park (opposite Plantsbrook School), Sutton Coldfield at 7:45am; Edmund Street (close to BMAG) at 8:15am; or Yateley Road, Harborne at 8:30am. The journey should take 1 hour 30 minutes including a comfort break.

10:00am: Hardwick Hall & Estate – until 12:30pm

It was the formidable 'Bess of Hardwick' who first created Hardwick in the 1500s. This year visitors can take a closer look at the life of Duchess Evelyn Devonshire, the 'Last Lady of Hardwick' as her newly restored bedroom completes the family rooms on the middle floor. You can discover more about the life of the duchess, her pioneering conservation work and the dramatic changes she made to the east view landscape, in the East Court Rose Garden. Find out about Arbella Stuart, the granddaughter of 'Bess of Hardwick' and niece to Mary Queen of Scots. She had a strong royal lineage and a realistic claim to the throne after Elizabeth I died. Educated and raised as a princess, but whose desperate attempts to seek freedom ended with her being imprisoned in the Tower of London. The Hardwick estate, which surrounds the magnificent Hall, covers around 2,500 acres of stunning parkland, woodland, wetland and farmland. Hardwick is also a working farm, so see if you can spot the rare-breed Longhorn cattle.

1:00pm: Crich Tramway Village – until 5:30pm

Nestling on the edge of the Peak District, this award

winning museum takes you on a mile-long scenic

journey through a period street to open countryside

with panoramic views over the Derwent Valley. Enjoy unlimited vintage tram rides, and explore 30,000 sq ft of indoor attractions. The Exhibition Hall houses the largest collection of vintage electric trams in Britain. On arrival you will collect your old penny to pay the conductor your tram fare, and receive a ticket you can use all day. Trams depart regularly from Town End, calling at various stops along the mile long track. The National Museum is an Accredited Museum and is home to a world renowned vintage tram fleet as well as vast collections of photographs and archive materials. The Tramway Museum is also home to a collection of period street furniture, which includes a Post box, a Police Box and a stench pipe.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Event type: Annual Event

Date: Tuesday 20 September 2016, 7:30pm

Venue: John Lee Lecture Theatre, The Birmingham & Midland Institute

This year, the AGM will follow the third of our new quarterly series of Science Shorts which are being held in conjunction with the BMI. Professor David Williams, an engineering professor at Loughborough University, will talk about the story of gunmaking in Birmingham and the Black Country from the 17th Century to today (see page 12 for more details). The lecture will be held from 6-7pm in the John Lee Lecture Theatre in the BMI and will cost £3. If you wish to attend, please fill in a booking slip.

Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available before the AGM from 7pm until 7:30pm at no cost. More substantial snacks will be available from the coffee shop but these will be chargeable.

A booking slip for the AGM will be included in the August-October edition of Artefacts which you will be asked to complete for our record purposes. The AGM will commence at 7:30pm in the John Lee Lecture Theatre and we anticipate that it will conclude by 8:30



– 9:00pm. (NB. There will be no talk after the Meeting as has been the case in previous years.)



CHICHESTER WEEKEND

Event type: Annual Event

Dates: Friday 30 September – Monday 3 October 2016.

Pickup Points: South Parade Car Park (opposite Plantsbrook School), Sutton Coldfield at 7:30am; Edmund Street (close to BMAG) at 8:00am; Yateley Road, Harborne at 8:15am.

This year we go to the south coast, with accommodation in Chichester. It will be a mixture of old favourites, new experiences, and a couple of surprises.

Friday: Our first visit will be to the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, situated within a working Naval Base and home to a collection of fantastic attractions, historic ships and museums. Portsmouth Historic Dockyard is the only place in the world to see the Royal Navy past, present and future and is a must see for anyone visiting the south of England. Then we go to Chichester for 3 nights dinner, bed & breakfast at the Chichester Park Hotel. Twin bedrooms will be available for sharing and avoiding the Single Supplement.

Saturday: In the morning we will take the ferry from Portsmouth to the Isle of Wight and Osborne House. Queen Victoria said of Osborne House, her palatial holiday home: 'It is impossible to imagine a prettier spot on the Isle of Wight'. Visit Victoria and Albert's private apartments, their bathing beach and the children's play-cottage for an intimate glimpse of royal family life. Then stroll through the garden terraces where the stunning views across the Solent reminded Prince Albert of the Bay of Naples.

Sunday: We shall spend Sunday in Brighton, firstly at the Royal Pavilion - an exotic palace with a colourful history. Built as a seaside pleasure palace for King George IV, this historic house mixes Regency grandeur with the visual style of India and China. Audio Guides are included to provide fascinating facts and background information as you take your tour. After free time we will meet at a brand new attraction – 'British Airways i360' – an 162-metre (531 ft) observation tower that is being constructed on the Brighton seafront, near to the West Pier. The 'i' in the title stands for independence and innovation and the i360 was designed, engineered, manufactured and promoted by the team responsible for the London Eye. Dutch steelwork specialist Hollandia prefabricated the cylindrical steel sections of the tower, known by the team as 'cans'. The column is 4 metres in diameter and, with a height-to-diameter ratio of forty to one, the team expects the tower to appear in the 2017 Guinness Book of Records as 'the world's slenderest tall tower'. The British Airways i360 will also be the world's first vertical cable car and the world's tallest moving observation tower.

Monday: We start the last day of our trip with a tour of Chichester Cathedral, followed by free time in the city. We then head for Chartwell (NT), and our included lunch. This property was the principal adult home of Sir Winston Churchill. In 1922, Churchill and his wife, Clementine, bought the property, located two miles south of Westerham in Kent. They undertook extensive renovations to simplify and modernise their home, completely transforming it. In 1946, when it became clear to the Churchills that they could not afford to run the property, a consortium of wealthy businessmen, organised by Lord Camrose, purchased the estate. >

Below: The beam from the Smethwick Engine as it can be seen at Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum. The beam dates from 1779 and is an interesting survivor of the original installation

The arrangement was that, for payment of nominal rent, both Sir Winston and Lady Churchill would have the right to live there until they died, at which point the property would be presented to the National Trust. When Sir Winston died in 1965, Clementine decided to present Chartwell to the National Trust immediately. Leaving at 5pm we will return to Birmingham, arriving at approximately 9pm.

Cost: £375 per person in a double bedded room or £435 in a single. This includes travel and hotel (3 nights D, B & B), driver's tip, ferry to Isle of Wight, lunch at Chartwell, audio guides at Brighton Pavilion and all entrance charges (except NT properties).

Travel Insurance: To simplify refunds, etc associated with cancellations we are asking all applicants to ensure that they have travel insurance. If you require Coach Holiday Travel Insurance please indicate this on your application form. We will then send you the necessary information to apply by telephone or online. The cost for the four days will be approximately £19, depending on your age and medical conditions.

To secure your place(s): Send the application



form with your non-returnable deposit of £50 per person. Also please indicate if you require Coach Holiday Travel Insurance. As we have to pay some venues prior to our visit, please also indicate on the application form whether you are members of the National Trust, English Heritage and Art Fund. If you require any additional information please contact Barbara Preece or John Pownall (see page 3). ■

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

 **October 2016: Wentworth House**

 **Friday 11 November 2016: 'The Age of Jazz! Art Deco Fashion and Style' – Presentation by Sally Hoban**

SCIENCE SHORTS

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THINKTANK AND THE BIRMINGHAM & MIDLAND INSTITUTE

Our series of quarterly short science talks are based on Thinktank's collection. They will be held from 6-7pm in the John Lee Theatre at the Birmingham & Midland Institute (BMI).

Cost: £3 for Members of the Friends of Birmingham Museums and BMI; and £5 for non-members (NB. Refreshments are not provided).

LOOKING AFTER THE WORLD'S OLDEST WORKING STEAM ENGINE

Tuesday 21 June 2016, 6-7pm. Jim Andrew, Volunteer at Thinktank.

Displayed in Thinktank, the Birmingham Science Museum, the Smethwick Engine designed by James Watt raised water on the Birmingham Canal from 1779 to 1891. It is the world's oldest working steam engine, but once again needs some repairs and conservation. Jim will outline the engine's history with details of the work of repair and conservation carried out for its move to Thinktank as well as the current project.

A HISTORY OF GUNMAKING IN BIRMINGHAM IN 10 OBJECTS

Tuesday 20 September 2016, 6-7pm. Professor David Williams OBE FREng.

This talk by David Williams will use objects and images from Birmingham

Museums alongside other collections to tell the story of gunmaking in Birmingham and the Black Country from the 17th Century to today. It will show how Birmingham gunmaking contributed to the economic prosperity and precision manufacturing heritage of our region and explore its influence both nationally and internationally. David is an engineering professor at Loughborough University and was born and brought up in Birmingham.

SPITFIRE: FIGHTING TO PRESERVE BIRMINGHAM'S HERITAGE FOR THE FUTURE

Tuesday 6 December 2016, 6-7pm. Lizzie Miller, Conservator, Birmingham Museums Trust.

The Spitfire Gallery at Thinktank represents a small window into the history of the people, the places and the plane itself through the artefacts that were involved in Birmingham's wartime manufacture. The conservation team at BMT were a fundamental part in enabling these artefacts to be on public display. This talk will look at the role of the conservator within BMT, and how they participated in the planning, preparation, installation and long term care of the Spitfire Gallery. ■

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6 May 2016 – 26 February 2017



**ALL THE
WORLD'S
A STAGE**

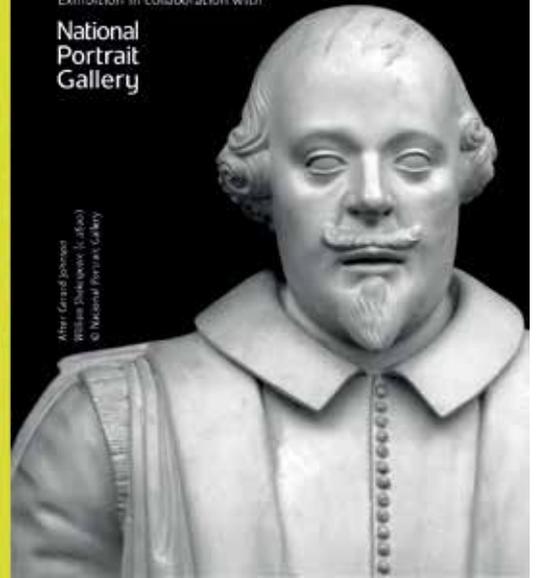
COURT, PATRONS AND WRITERS IN
SHAKESPEARE'S CIRCLE

10 JUNE – 25 SEPTEMBER 2016

Exhibition in collaboration with

**National
Portrait
Gallery**

After Gerard Jones
Wesley Shakespeare (c.1600)
© National Portrait Gallery



**Baddesley
and Packwood**

Two very different properties nestled in the heart of Warwickshire. Watch the seasons change, explore the rich tapestry of stories and enjoy a varied events programme.

Over the course of its 500 year history, Baddesley Clinton has provided refuge for those seeking to escape the outside world, never more so than when it became a place of safety for Catholic priests living in dangerous times. This year we take a closer look at their story.

Over at Packwood explore the story of Graham Baron Ash who created at Packwood his own private world – a stage set against which he could live the life of an English country gentleman.

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National Trust



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NEWS FROM THE OFFICE

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

- Free entry to special exhibitions in Gas Hall
- Free entry to all Birmingham Museums' Heritage Sites
- *Artefacts* magazine four times a year
- Opportunity to join the many Friends' social events and outings
- 10% discount at Opus Restaurant (Cornwall Street) on production of a valid Friends membership card. Available for lunch or dinner, 7 days a week.

Plus discounts at the following venues (T&Cs apply):

- BMAG and Heritage Site shops
- 50% entrance discount to Thinktank at Millennium Point: www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/thinktank
- Shakespeare Birthplace Trust shops (excluding admission prices): www.shakespeare.org.uk
- Ironbridge Gorge Trust: www.ironbridge.org.uk
- Potteries Museums & Art Gallery shops/cafés: www.museums.stoke.gov.uk

GIFT MEMBERSHIP

Gift membership is available all year round and includes 3 extra months free. A Gift Membership form can be downloaded from: www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/support-us/friends. Alternatively, you can use the standard application form in this magazine. Complete the form with the recipient's details and send it with a covering note giving your own name and contact details.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to our new members: Ms M Johnstone & Mr H Swinbourne, Mr A & Mrs V Greggs, Miss S Black, Mr S & Mrs S Bullock, Mr C & Mrs C Laverty, Mr B & Mrs J Ackers, Miss B Patman, Mr M McLean & Mrs S Rutter, Mrs J Nash, Mr W & Mrs C Hair. ■

FRIENDS OF BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS APPLICATION FORM

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Please sign below and send to: Friends' Office, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, Chamberlain Square, Birmingham B3 3DH, together with your cheque (if applicable) to be made payable to 'FBMAG'

giftaid it

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 28p of tax on every £1 that I gave up to 5 April 2008 and will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give on or after 6 April 2008.

Signature:

Date:



ABOVE: 'Faith in Birmingham' Working Group

Our volunteer team have had a wonderful start to 2016, with lots of exciting projects and fabulous work being done. I am always amazed when I come to write about our team and what they have been up to, as there is always so much to cover. A few highlights from the last few months are below but they are only really scratching the surface of what has been achieved.

February saw the opening of the Faith in Birmingham Gallery at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, a new gallery which provides a unique insight into many of the faith groups that make up Birmingham's diverse communities. A huge thank you has to go out to the 20 volunteer members of the Faith Gallery Working Group who worked together to develop content, offer advice to the project and provide the Trust with an insight. We couldn't have achieved such a wonderful gallery without all their hard work and passion, so we were very lucky to have them on board.

In the same month Birmingham Museums also had volunteer teams out at New Street Station promoting the Trust and all nine sites. In costume, and with handling objects from the collection, volunteers

talked to visitors and shared their love of history. We repeated the promotion over Easter with five more events at the station and many visitors to the sites mentioned they had spotted the team out and about, so a huge thank you to all involved!

With the new season upon us all the Heritage Sites are now fully opening up. As I write this the Easter holidays are drawing to a close and amazing volunteers have been at all sites engaging with our visitors. We have had an Easter egg hunt at Weoley Castle, milling days at Sarehole Mill, lots of activities at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery and an Open Day at Aston Hall. Again I am naming only a few things that the team have got stuck into.

Our garden teams have been in action at both Blakesley Hall and Sarehole Mill too and have been keeping our gardens looking beautiful. The Sarehole team also popped over to Soho House to give the grounds some tender loving care. Meanwhile the Friends Desk in the Industrial Gallery at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery continues to be a hive of activity with visitors always wanting a chat and the Infinity Box always drawing attention!

So it has been another great few months for all things volunteering. If you would like to join the team, either by volunteering for the Friends or other projects for the Trust then take a look at www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/volunteering. ■

NEWS FROM THE VOLUNTEERS

BY BECKY FLETCHER, BMT VOLUNTEER
DEVELOPMENT TEAM LEADER



ABOVE: Garth Evans 'Blue No. 30' (1964) observed by Kerry Stewart 'Untitled (Lucy)' (1996), Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London © the artists 2016. Photo: Anna Arca.

FRIENDS SUPPORT BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS' MOST AMBITIOUS CONTEMPORARY ART PROGRAMME

BY TOBY WATLEY, DIRECTOR OF COLLECTIONS,
BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS TRUST

In January, Arts Council England announced that Birmingham Museums Trust (BMT) had beaten off stiff national competition to be selected as one of three regional gallery partners for the Arts Council Collection National Partners programme.

This special three year programme marks the 70th anniversary of the Arts Council Collection, with Arts Council England (ACE) investing in three organisations outside London (Birmingham Museums, Walker Art Gallery Liverpool and Towner Art Gallery Eastbourne) to form a network of galleries and museums along with the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. Together they will develop a series of exhibitions and learning programmes drawn from the internationally renowned Arts Council Collection, from April 2016 to March 2019.

An ACE grant of £600,000 was awarded to BMT over three years to produce innovative contemporary

art exhibitions of international quality that seek to increase the number and diversity of people experiencing the Arts Council Collection. However, this major achievement would not have been possible had it not been for the Friends of Birmingham Museums pledging £45,000 to help raise the minimum 10% match funding needed in order to qualify for the scheme. The scheme represents BMT's biggest ever investment in engaging new audiences with excellence in modern and contemporary art.

BMT expects the programme to attract up to 580,000 visitors to the eight exhibitions it plans to develop;

and to engage 68,500 children and young people with the Arts Council Collection over three years through dedicated school, family and community outreach programmes. It will deliver a year round, highly visible and dynamic programme of exhibitions which draw on BMT's unique assets: its diverse range of city-centre and heritage venues; its encyclopaedic museum collection of international significance; and its demonstrable ability to engage large numbers of adults and children.

The Arts Council Collection is the UK's most widely seen collection of modern and contemporary art. With nearly 8,000 works by over 2,000 artists, it represents many of the most influential modern and contemporary British artists over the past seventy years. Artists include Antony Gormley, Bridget Riley, Grayson Perry and Rachel Whiteread, to name just a few.

BMT will present the Arts Council Collection in a wide range of different contexts and creative approaches, alongside its own nationally important collection, with at least one Arts Council Collection exhibition taking place in Birmingham at any one time from November 2016 to March 2019. Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery's (BMAG) Gas Hall will be the main venue for at least three of the main exhibitions, with the funding enabling free entry (unlike current Gas Hall exhibitions), guaranteeing large visitor numbers and creating a hub for children and young people's workshops.

BMT will launch its programme in mid-November 2016 in the Gas Hall with a specially commissioned Arts Council Collection 70th anniversary touring exhibition *'Night in the Museum'*, curated by the English artist Ryan Gander. The Gas Hall will then show two major, five month exhibitions in April – August 2017 and October 2018 – February 2019. BMAG will also showcase a number of smaller shows in other spaces including the Waterhall Gallery. As a 'grand finale' to the programme, BMT will commission an internationally renowned artist to transform BMAG's 19th century Round Room gallery into a stunning new art intervention in autumn 2018, drawing on both Arts Council and BMT collections and using the full scope of the room to provide a visual spectacle for current and new visitors.

In addition to BMAG, Birmingham Museums is also planning a digital art programme especially for family audiences at Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum. Located adjacent to the Planetarium this programme will explore themes of space and visions of the future. It will be the highest-profile contemporary art programme ever undertaken at Thinktank since it first opened in 2001.

By contrast, 2018 will see a multi-site exhibition introducing contemporary art interventions from the Arts Council Collection into period room settings across three of BMT's heritage sites: Aston Hall, Soho House and Blakesley Hall. Through this project, we will create opportunities for these local audiences to experience the Arts Council Collection and contemporary art for the first time. Much of the content for the programme is still under development and *'Artefacts'* will bring you updates in future issues as the planning progresses and the programme becomes more finalised.

BMT already has a strong track record of developing successful exhibitions in partnership with the Arts Council Collection including Grayson Perry's *'Vanity of Small Differences'* (BMAG 2014), *'For the Record'* (Waterhall 2014), *'Curious Visitors'* (Aston Hall 2012) and *'Bridget Riley's Flashback'* (Waterhall 2010). Based on the success of these past exhibitions, BMT expects this new three year programme to significantly raise the profile of not only the Arts Council Collection but also the Trust, attracting more visitors to Birmingham and its museums.

As a main funder of the Arts Council Collection National Partners programme, the Friends of Birmingham Museums will have the opportunity to enjoy a range of exclusive events including special curatorial guided tours of the exhibitions, talks by guest artists, fun craft workshops for friends and family, and special private events for some of the main exhibitions. Birmingham Museums Trust is exceedingly grateful to the Friends for their funding commitment to this ambitious programme. Thanks to their continued support, Birmingham Museums will be able to bring exhibitions of the highest quality to Birmingham for the enjoyment of many thousands of people in the city and beyond. ■

Dr Ellen McAdam, Director of Birmingham Museums Trust, celebrates a major success and looks forward to activities and exhibitions taking place across Birmingham Museums' sites during 2016.

SPRING INTO SUMMER

BY DR ELLEN McADAM

Birmingham Museums Trust enters its fifth year as an independent charity with a major success story. We were elated to hear that Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery had been selected as one of four venues in England to become Arts Council Collection National Partners, with an award of £600,000 to fund innovative contemporary arts exhibitions based on the Arts Council's outstanding collection over the next three years. The programme will raise the Museum & Art Gallery's international profile as a centre for contemporary art, as well as allowing us to create interventions at Thinktank and the heritage sites. I should like to thank the Friends of Birmingham Museums Trust for their generous support of £45,000 over three years towards this ambitious programme. Without their support we would not have been eligible to apply for the Arts Council England funding.

As Spring moves into Summer our seasonal programme offers a great variety of activities to keep our visitors entertained. Blakesley Hall will host a Tudor weekend, at which Shakespeare's Henry V will summon young volunteers to join the English Army. Don't miss it – *'gentlemen in England now abed shall think themselves accursed they were not there'*. Those who prefer

the pastimes of peace may foot it fealty in a Tudor measure, or pen an epistle in a fine secretary hand. Royalist or Puritan footsoldiers can join the troops at Aston Hall for a day out in the English Civil War and witness (from a safe distance) the grisly operations of the Barber Surgeon. Sarehole Mill offers the wholesome art of breadmaking, or you can find out more about Birmingham's history on heritage walks through the Jewellery Quarter. If you live in Birmingham and care for a family member or friend then have a look at our Creative Carers Programme – we are offering a range of art activities especially for carers at our museum venues across the city. There is more information about all our events and activities on the BMT website.

2016 is the Year of Arts and Young People (YAY16) in Birmingham. To celebrate Birmingham's creativity, we are launching our first arts competition for young people. The best artworks from the *Inspire 16 Youth Art Competition* will be shown in a major summer exhibition in the Museum & Art Gallery's Gas Hall, opening on 8 July. The competition is open to young people aged 11-19 who live in Birmingham, and the closing date is Friday 3 June 2016. Please encourage young people you know to take part. More details on our website (search for 'Inspire 16').

In my last Director's report I wrote about the HLF-funded *Collecting Birmingham* project which is enabling us to collect objects which tell the stories of people growing up, living and working in the Ladywood district. The first of four *Collecting Birmingham* exhibitions, *'Stories that should be shared'*, is now open at the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter. The exhibition features objects as heterogeneous as a door from Winson Green prison, reflecting the Victorian origins of the building; a portrait of Freda Mary Cocks OBE, the first woman to be Lord Mayor; and crockery from the heyday of the Grand Hotel on Colmore Row, one of Birmingham's most impressive buildings. We hope citizens and visitors to the city will all enjoy the stories these objects tell.

On 28 May we open *'Turning to See: From Van Dyck to Lucian Freud'*. This is the first exhibition to be curated by the internationally famous artist John Stezaker, who comes from the West Midlands. He takes Sir Anthony Van Dyck's last self-portrait, with its dramatic turned pose, as his starting point, exploring the concepts of physical and metaphorical turning

in portraiture. The exhibition brings together loans from the National Portrait Gallery with works from the city's collection by artists including Rembrandt, Rossetti, Picasso, Bomberg and Burne-Jones.

Friends who have visited the Museum & Art Gallery during recent months will have seen improvements to orientation and access throughout the building, including new signage and visitor maps, an improved reception area with a new desk and freshly revealed windows, automatic doors, and most importantly, refurbished toilets and a new accessible cloakroom close to the Gas Hall lift. These changes address some of the most problematic issues raised in visitor research and have been funded through grants from DCMS/Wolfson and Arts Council England.

As always, I am grateful to the Friends for all their support and interest in the work of Birmingham Museums Trust. I hope you will be able to join us over the coming months in our programme of events and activities. ■

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Chamberlain Square, Birmingham, B3 3DH
Open Sat - Thu 10am-5pm and Fri 10.30am-5pm
Tel: 0121 348 8000. **FREE ENTRY**

From Renaissance masterpieces and cutting edge contemporary art to Egyptian mummies and the iconic HP factory sign, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery showcases a world class collection and offers fascinating glimpses into Birmingham's rich and vibrant past.

Highlights include the finest collection of Pre-Raphaelite art in the world and the largest find of Anglo-Saxon gold ever discovered - the Staffordshire Hoard.

Don't miss the Birmingham History Galleries – packed with artefacts, local treasures and interactive displays that reveal captivating stories of Birmingham from the last 500 years.

NEW Turning to See:

From Van Dyck to Lucian Freud

*Saturday 28 May – Sunday 4 September. Curated by John Stezaker. **FREE ENTRY.** Acquired for the nation in 2014, Sir Anthony van Dyck's last self-portrait takes centre stage in this striking exhibition exploring the concepts of physical and metaphorical turning in portraiture.*

The exhibition is curated by West Midlands born and internationally renowned artist, John Stezaker, who takes van Dyck's dramatic turned pose as his starting point.

Filled with celebrated names from Art History, the display will create a spectacle of turning in the gallery and mirror the way the viewer moves around the space.

Faith in Birmingham Gallery

*Now Open. **FREE ENTRY.** Discover the many faiths that make up Birmingham's rich and diverse community.*

Find out about how six different faiths have influenced

Below: Take a stroll around Aston Hall



and shaped the city. Uncover sacred objects used in religious practice and explore the role of faith in places of worship, at home and within our journey through life.

Objects on display include the *Birmingham Qur'an* – recently identified as one of the oldest surviving copies of the Qur'an in the world (on display 5 February - 3 August 2016).

Other highlights include the *Sultanganj Buddha*. Discovered by British engineers building the Indian Railway in 1861, the Buddha was one of the first objects to enter Birmingham's collection and is the largest surviving metal Buddha from Ancient India and is over 1,000 years old.

LAST CHANCE TO SEE: New Art West Midlands

Until Sunday 15 May 2016. Waterhall Gallery. FREE ENTRY. Returning for a fourth year, *New Art West Midlands* presents intriguing work by artists who have recently graduated from the region's university art schools.



Highlights include Laura Haycock's extraordinary self-portraits in which she reclines, nude, in the style of Venus - a reference to Velasquez's 17th century oil paintings and Jakki Carey's painterly video work, *Ís*, capturing a glacial lake in Iceland in what appears to be a direct warning from nature about climate change.



75-80 Vyse Street, Hockley, Birmingham, B18 6HA. Open all year round. Tue - Sat 10.30am-5pm. Closed Sun and Mon except Bank Holidays. Tour charges apply to non-members Step back in time to a perfectly preserved jewellery workshop. When the owners of the Smith & Pepper jewellery factory decided to retire after 80 years of trading, they simply locked the door leaving a time capsule for future generations.

Enjoy a lively factory tour (available all year round) that includes demonstrations of traditional jewellery making and offers a unique glimpse into working life in Birmingham's famous Jewellery Quarter.

NEW Collecting Birmingham: stories that should be told

Now Open. FREE ENTRY. This is the first in a series of four exhibitions from the *Collecting Birmingham* project, showcasing objects collected from local people, telling their stories of life in Birmingham.

Collecting Birmingham is an exciting initiative launched by Birmingham Museums that invites local communities to share their stories and contribute to the priceless collection of objects that Birmingham Museums cares for on behalf of the people of Birmingham.



Trinity Road, Aston, Birmingham, B6 6JD. Open from Friday 25 March onwards. Charges apply to non-members.

Left: Get hands-on at ThinkTank's Science Garden



Discover the splendour of a grand Jacobean mansion. Explore majestic state rooms, including the imposing Long Gallery, as well as the servants' quarters and beautiful gardens. Uncover captivating stories about the people who visited the Hall and learn about its central role in the English Civil War.

The exciting events programme and child friendly access makes Aston Hall the perfect place to visit with all the family.



Blakesley Road, Yardley, Birmingham, B25 8RN.

Open from Friday 25 March onwards.

Charges apply to non-members.

Experience one of Birmingham's finest timber-framed Tudor houses. Built in 1590 for Richard Smalbroke, a Birmingham merchant, Blakesley Hall is a peaceful haven set in an urban location. Discover the fascinating history of the Hall and enjoy the herb garden, orchard and beautiful grounds. With its spacious gardens, family trails and activities programme, Blakesley Hall is the ideal location for a family day out.



SAREHOLE MILL

Cole Bank Road, Hall Green, Birmingham, B13 0BD.

Open from Friday 25 March onwards.

Charges apply to non-members.

Explore the idyllic childhood haunt of J.R.R Tolkien. Sarehole Mill is one of only two surviving working watermills in Birmingham and provides a unique insight into the lives of the millers who once worked here. On Wednesdays and Sundays, our volunteer millers demonstrate the mill in action.

Find out about J.R.R Tolkien's early life in Birmingham. Both the mill, and nearby Moseley Bog, were inspirations for his classic works *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. Today, the mill retains its tranquil atmosphere and the millpond provides a haven for kingfishers, moorhens, newts and herons.



SOHO HOUSE

Soho Avenue, off Soho Road, Handsworth, Birmingham, B18 5LB.

Open from Friday 25 March onwards.

Charges apply to non-members.

Left: Guided tour at Blakesley Hall

Discover the elegant Georgian home of the Birmingham industrialist and entrepreneur, Matthew Boulton. Get a glimpse into Boulton's world, including the family and servants' rooms as well as the lavish spaces in which he received his eminent guests - the leading 18th-century intellectuals of the Lunar Society.

Don't miss the visitor centre displays which explore Boulton's output from button making and coin minting to silverware and steam engines.



WEOLEY CASTLE

Alwold Road, Weoley Castle, Birmingham, B29 5RJ.

The ruins at Weoley Castle are over 700 years old and are the remains of a moated medieval manor. The site has been inhabited from the 12th century and, according to the Domesday Book, was part of the estates of William Fitz Ansculf. Weoley changed hands several times between 1485 and 1531 when it began to fall into disrepair. In the centuries that followed, stone from the castle was removed to build a nearby farm and the Dudley no.2 canal.

Today the site is a scheduled Ancient Monument of national importance. The ruins can be viewed from a viewing platform. Direct access to the ruins is only available on special event days or for groups and schools by a pre-booked guided tour. Please call 0121 348 8120 for further information.



thinktank
Birmingham science museum

Millennium Point, Curzon Street, Birmingham, B4 7XG.

Open daily 10am-5pm. Tel: 0121 348 8000

Charges apply to non-members.

Thinktank offers an extraordinary, fun-packed day out for all the family. From steam engines to intestines, this exciting museum is home to thousands of fascinating objects, and over 200 hands-on displays on science and technology.

This includes a state-of-the-art digital Planetarium, and an interactive outdoor Science Garden. With an ever-changing programme of demonstrations, workshops and events, there is always something new to discover.

NEW Marine Worlds Gallery

Now Open. Entry included in admission charge. Discover the Thinktank ichthyosaur in this brand new gallery. New research has allowed us to display the Thinktank ichthyosaur skeleton in full, for the first time. This amazingly preserved skeleton is over 3.5 metres long, and is nearly 200 million years old. Plus, find out about the dinosaurs and other creatures who shared the planet with the ichthyosaur.

Spitfire Gallery

Now Open. Entry included in admission charge. Uncover Birmingham's Spitfire Story - a new gallery that sheds light on the Supermarine Spitfire Mark IX that hangs from the ceiling at Thinktank. Learn how Spitfires were built and about the science behind how aeroplanes fly. Delve into the history of the Castle Bromwich factory and the local men and women who brought over 10,000 Spitfires to life. Plus, discover why the Spitfire is still so important today.



**MUSEUM
COLLECTIONS
CENTRE**

25 Dollman Street, Birmingham, B7 4RQ.

The Museum Collections Centre is where 80% of Birmingham's collections are stored. There are free open afternoons from 1.30pm - 3.30pm on the last Friday of every month. These must be booked in advance. Guided tours are also available by arrangement on other days. Please call 0121 348 8231 for more information or to book. ■

For more information on all events, exhibitions and other activities, visit birminghammuseums.org.uk

IN THE AREA

BARBER INSTITUTE

*University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TS.
Tel: 0121 414 7333. www.barber.org.uk*

Into The Woods

Until Sunday 12 June 2016. From leafy bowers sheltering weary travellers to the melancholy or menace of brooding forests and overgrown paths, these prints and drawings explore man's relationship with trees, woods and forests, and are drawn from a wide-ranging geographical area and period.

Curated around one of our latest long-term loans, '*Path Through a Dark Wooded Landscape*' by John Bernard Gilpin, this display includes stylistically diverse works by distinguished artists such as Jacob van Ruisdael, Theodore Rousseau and Samuel Palmer.

BIDDLE & WEBB

www.biddleandwebb.co.uk

Saturday 21 May 2016. Biddle and Webb Auctioneers and Valuers are delighted to return to one of Birmingham's artistic treasure troves for another day of valuations. Last November, Biddle and Webb enjoyed a day at the Barber Institute valuing numerous items of artwork that local residents of Birmingham had dug out from under the bed or simply been hanging on the wall for generations. We are always fascinated to see paintings with local history and this particular valuation event attracted a great deal of paintings from local artists as well as some classics. In particular, a beautiful pair of oils by 18th Century Maritime legend Francis Swaine (c.1715 - 1782), after being brought to the Barber for valuation, were put under the hammer, achieving a fantastic £1200. These two small but delicately executed paintings were every auction house's dream lot, with the owner having kept a perfect trail of provenance with exhibition catalogues and original receipts of purchase.

Auctioneers Jeremy Thornton and Catherine White will be in the foyer of The Barber Institute from 11am – 4pm on 21st May offering valuations and friendly auction advice on all your paintings, and Fine Art items.

IKON GALLERY

*1 Oozells Square, Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HS
Tel: 0121 248 0708. www.ikon-gallery.org*

Dan Flavin - It is what it is and it ain't nothing else

Until Sunday 26 June 2016. Taking his statement "*It is what it is and it ain't nothing else*" as a departure point, Ikon's exhibition exemplifies Flavin's emphasis on the importance of the context of artistic experience.

After studying at Columbia University in the late 1950s, Flavin became acquainted with other emerging American artists whose work contrasted to Abstract Expressionism, including Sol LeWitt, Robert Ryman, Frank Stella, Barnett Newman and Donald Judd. He was especially close to the latter – both sharing an interest in artworks that refer to nothing but their factual presence, with an emphasis on industrial materials and intense colour – and significantly he dedicated a number of works to Judd.

One of the earliest works in the exhibition is '*Alternate Diagonals of March 2, 1964 (to Don Judd)*', made shortly after Flavin centred his entire artistic practice on the use of fluorescent light. The bright red and yellow are Judd-like, likewise the fluorescent lamp combinations of white, pink, red, yellow, blue and green in '*Untitled (to Don Judd, colorist) 1-6 (1987)*'. These standard colours are as beguiling as they are industrial and ordinary, together bathing the exhibition space in pale radiant light.

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue, including an essay by Jeffrey Weiss, Senior Curator, Guggenheim Museum New York, and installation photographs of the exhibition. Visit Ikon's online shop for the full range of Ikon's catalogues and limited editions.





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Tony Allain, Team Blue



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- Second-hand bookshop

The Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum
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call: 01543 264972
email: sjmuseum@lichfield.gov.uk
www.samueljohnsonbirthplace.org.uk

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Exhibition supported by *Crown Fine Art, Glenn Howells Architects, The Henry Moore Foundation* and *David Zwirner/The Estate of Dan Flavin*.

Jesse Bruton

Wednesday 6 July - Sunday 11 September 2016. Jesse Bruton is one of the founding artists of Ikon, having helped to establish the gallery in 1964. This exhibition tells a fascinating story of artistic development, starting in the 1950s and ending in 1972 when Bruton abandoned painting for painting conservation. Bruton's works were inspired by landscape – alive to the aesthetic possibilities of places he visited, especially in Wales, he made vivid painterly translations based on a stringent palette of black and white and a process of stylistic distillation.

THE HERBERT

Jordan Well, Coventry, CV1 5QP

Tel: 024 7623 7521. www.theherbert.org

Coventry Open 2016

Until Sunday 12 June 2016. This is the ninth Coventry Open for West Midlands and Warwickshire artists. Work in a wide range of media is selected for the



exhibition by a panel of judges. This year's selection panel is artist Peter Kennard, artist Matthew Macaulay and curator and art historian Professor Lynda Morris. This exhibition is organised by the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum. West Midlands professional, semi-professional and amateur artists.

Grayson Perry: The Vanity of Small Differences

Until Sunday 3 July 2016. 'The Vanity of Small Differences' is a series of six large-scale tapestries by the Turner-Prize winning artist Grayson Perry, which explore the British fascination with taste and class.

Inspired by the 18th century painter William Hogarth's moral tale, 'A Rake's Progress', Perry's tapestries follow the life of a fictional character called Tim Rakewell, as he develops from infancy through his teenage and middle years, to his untimely death in a bloody car accident.

The tapestries are rich in both content and colour and depict many of the eccentricities and peculiarities associated with life in the UK, from interior design to British cuisine, political protest and celebrity gossip. The composition of each tapestry also recalls early Renaissance religious painting, drawing us in to an art historical, as well as a socio-political exploration.

The UK tour of the tapestries is supported by the Art Fund and Sfumato Foundation.

Alongside this exhibition, there will be a display of the Herbert's collection of studies made by Graham Sutherland for the monumental tapestry which hangs behind the altar of Coventry Cathedral.

Korabra by Gavin Jantjes

Until Sunday 21 August 2016. In partnership with the Black Artists and Modernism project, the Herbert will present paintings from the 'Korabra' series by >

DAN FLAVIN ~ IT IS WHAT IT IS AND IT AIN'T NOTHING ELSE

Until Sunday 26 June 2016

Ikon Gallery

Untitled (in honor of Harold Joachim) 3 (1977), © 2015 Stephen Flavin Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York; courtesy of David Zwirner, New York, London

APPLE STORE GALLERY



MONTHLY EXHIBITIONS OF LOCAL ARTISTS' WORK
ARTISTS' WORKSHOPS : POETRY & MUSIC EVENTS
PRINTS, CARDS & BOOKS FOR SALE
ARTISTS' STUDIOS TO RENT
AND A BESPOKE FRAMING SERVICE

LIFE & LIGHT
DRAWINGS & PAINTINGS BY SUZANNA REYNOLDS
11TH MAY TO 11TH JUNE
FREE ENTRY

HATTON'S HORSES
ILLUSTRATED TALK BY ROBIN THORNDYKE
TUESDAY 21ST JUNE, 7.00 TO 8.30
£10.00 INCLUDING WINE/JUICE

MYCELIUM - EUREKA
IAN GORTON AND FELLOW ARTISTS
FROM THE FOREST OF DEAN
15TH JUNE TO 16TH JULY

WEDNESDAYS TO FRIDAYS 9.30 TO 4.30
SATURDAYS 10.00 TO 1.00
OTHER TIMES BY ARRANGEMENT

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warwickshire
open studios

18 June - 3 July

Meet hundreds of artists
visit beautiful venues
discover hidden gems

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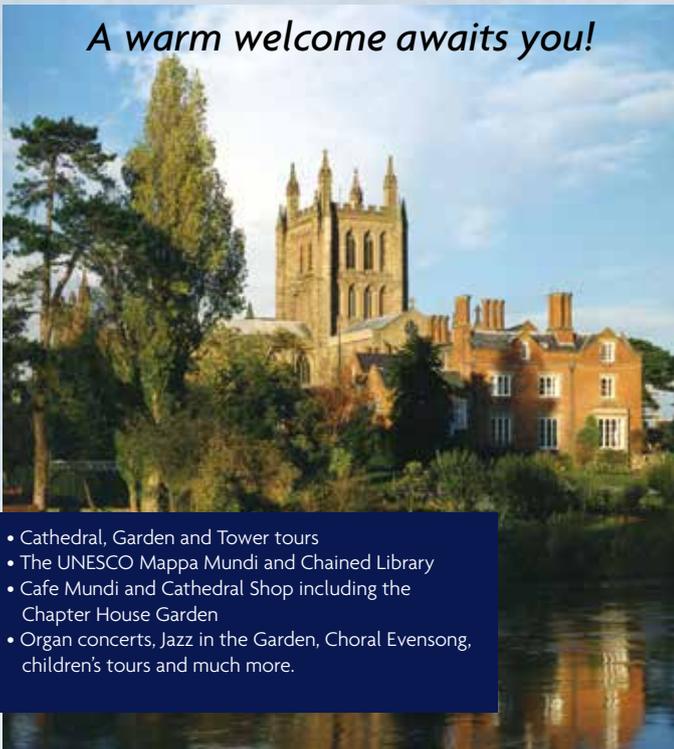
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Open: 10am to 3pm Monday to Friday
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FREE admission and parking

Group bookings call (01384) 812756

THE HEAT IN ON - 11 June - 10 July

A contemporary glass exhibition organised by Bruntnell Astley to celebrate the opening of Allister Malcolm's new hot glass studio at White House Cone (opposite Red House Glass Cone)

Call **01384 812750** or visit
www.redhousecone.co.uk

Red House Glass Cone, High Street, Wordsley DY8 4AZ



WARWICKSHIRE OPEN STUDIOS

Saturday 18 June - Sunday 3 July 2016

Various Venues

Bianca (Binks) Edmonds, Unit 13 Gallery, Moreton-in-Marsh

Gavin Jantjes. Created in 1986 at the West Indian Association Club in Coventry, the paintings explore the transatlantic slave trade.

Up until the nineteenth century, around 300 million people from Africa were seized from their homes, and exported to become slaves. This series of paintings explores the issues surrounding this trade of people, and the suffering of those involved. The word 'Korabra' comes from Ghana and means 'to go and come back'. It is also a name for a funeral drum sounded for the dead. Many people died on the transatlantic crossings because of the terrible conditions in which they were held.

This exhibition is one of a series of interventions around public art collections in the UK carried out as part of the Black Artists and Modernism project.

WARWICKSHIRE OPEN STUDIOS

Various venues

www.warwickshireopenstudios.org

admin@warwickshireopenstudios.org

Open Studios 2016

Saturday 18 June - Sunday 3 July 2016. Visit hundreds of colourful homes, studios and gardens - all filled with the finest quality paintings, ceramics, sculptures, jewellery, textiles, glass, furniture and more! You'll receive a warm welcome everywhere you visit and enjoy delicious refreshments whilst chatting to artists, watching demonstrations and taking a peek behind the scenes.

With so many lovely things to browse and buy, most people choose to visit several venues - you could plan a day out in a particular area, indulge in your favourite type of art or combine your visit with a trip to one of the county's historic towns or attractions. There are plenty of places to stop off to eat and drink, with a variety of tea rooms, pubs and restaurants.



WOLVERHAMPTON ART GALLERY

Lichfield St, Wolverhampton, West Midlands, WV1 1DU

www.wolverhamptonart.org.uk

Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2016

Saturday 23 July - Sunday 18 September 2016. Now in its fifty-first year, the 'Wildlife Photographer of the Year' competition provides a showcase for the world's very best nature photography. The resulting exhibition is put together by the world-renowned and trusted British institution, the Natural History Museum. The exhibition is brought to Wolverhampton as part of a worldwide tour. Take in some of the world's most astonishing sights and see nature at its most staggering in this blockbuster show put together by the world-renowned and trusted British institution, The Natural History Museum.

'Wildlife Photographer of the Year' is the most prestigious photography event of its kind, providing a global platform that showcases the natural world's most astonishing and challenging sights for more than 50 years. ■



SCOUR: The Hidden Landscape

10 June - 3 July

Artists Keith Ashford and Elizabeth Turner use this exhibition to explore Forge Mill's needle collection and its unique scouring mill through the mediums of sculpture, video and sound.



To accompany the exhibition:

29 & 30 May -

'From Pond to Power' family workshop

27 June -

Blind Embossing workshop

20 June -

Art and Heritage Interpretation workshop

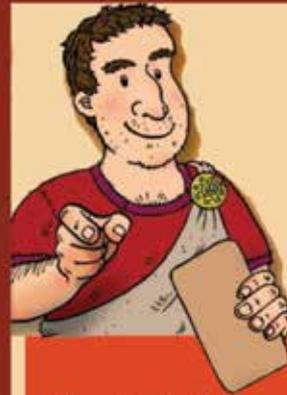
23 & 24 July -

Sculpture workshop

Please visit www.forgemill.org.uk for full details and booking information.



Forge Mill Needle Museum & Bordesley Abbey Visitor Centre
Needle Mill Lane, Riverside,
Redditch, Worcs, B98 8HY
Tel: 01527 62509



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The Barber Institute of Fine Arts (foyer),
Birmingham B15 2TS

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For more information, please call 0121 455 8042 or visit www.biddleandwebb.com



image: Bridget Macdonald, 'Landscape with Mill', 2018. © Bridget Macdonald, photograph: Adam Johnson

Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum THIS GREEN EARTH

Bridget Macdonald and the landscape tradition of Claude Lorrain, Samuel Palmer and Peter Paul Rubens

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Museums Worcestershire is grateful to C'ART for their sponsorship of the packing and transport of artworks for This Green Earth Exhibition.



For more information visit
www.museumsworcestershire.org.uk



ICHTHYOSAUR SKELETON

AT THINKTANK SCIENCE MUSEUM

BY JILL WARREN

This remarkable prehistoric sea creature is the centrepiece of the new Marine Worlds Gallery at Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum. Luanne Meehitiya, Natural Sciences Curator, talks to ‘Artefacts’ about the Ichthyosaur skeleton’s significance and its journey to its present home.

Luanne has been with Birmingham Museums for three years and prior to that she spent seven years working on natural science collections, mostly at the Natural History Museum in London. Her specialism is in palaeontology so she was excited to start work on planning the conservation and research of a damaged ichthyosaur skull two years ago after being granted funding by the Arts Council PRISM Fund and the Dorothy and Edward Cadbury Trust. Luanne subsequently started to look for the rest of the skeleton in store after becoming suspicious that only a skull was excavated and was surprised to find a very fragmented skeleton that had been misplaced many decades ago.

The remains were found locally in Shipston-on-Stour in Warwickshire in 1955 by a farmer digging a new drainage ditch. Luckily he recognised something unusual and the site was excavated by Birmingham Museum curators. Although the skeleton has been in the museum for a long time, it’s clear from the

condition of the bones when they were found that only the skull has ever been on display.

It has been the job of Conservator Nigel Larkin to clean and piece together the skeleton. Another grant from the Curry Fund of the Geologists Association allowed the museum to create replicas of the existing bones to complete the skeleton. For example, the complete left paddle was CT scanned and the 3D model “flipped” and 3D printed to create a replica paddle on the right side.

The ichthyosaur, a name which literally means “fish-lizard”, looks a bit like a dolphin but is in fact a reptile rather than a mammal. It had a streamlined body with an elongated snout and a tail that moved from side to side rather than up and down like a dolphin. Ichthyosaurs swam in the sea during the time that dinosaurs walked on land. This particular ichthyosaur is almost 200 million years old and belongs to a group called *Ichthyosaurus*. At three and a half metres long it is the largest known example in the *Ichthyosaurus* group in the world (although not the longest ichthyosaur by a long way!). This and other



ABOVE: Reconstruction of Ichthyosaurus fossil skeleton, Accession number 1955G35.1. By Robert Nicholls © Birmingham Museums

distinctive features suggest that this may even be a new species. Research is still going on with Dean Lomax, an ichthyosaur researcher who advised on the conservation project.

The ichthyosaur is the centrepiece of the new permanent Marine Worlds gallery. A life-size artistic reconstruction of the ichthyosaur by palaeo-artist Robert Nicholls helps to bring the skeleton to life. There is also a 3D model that visitors can interact with to see how the creature moved. The gallery as a whole looks at animals from the past and present that have adapted to life in the sea. Luanne said, *"Ichthyosaurs are a brilliant example of land-living and air-breathing animals that evolved to return to a marine life. Marine Worlds looks at the many fascinating animals that have also left the land and adapted to the sea, including penguins, walrus and a prehistoric marine crocodile."*

Thinktank has linked the exhibition to learning to create a *Season of Sea Monsters*. Children are always keen on 'monsters' and dinosaurs so it is an engaging place to visit. Luanne enjoys the interaction with the public that her job provides and one of her favourite parts is when a

family bring in a fossil they have found on the beach for identification. Birmingham's natural science collection runs to over a quarter of a million objects so there is a lot to care for and research. The collections that are not on display are stored at the Museum Collections Centre, where they are studied by researchers like a reference library to the natural world.

Luanne says about the ichthyosaur project, *"It has been a delight to see the Thinktank ichthyosaur develop from just a broken skull that couldn't be displayed to a beautifully conserved and completed skeleton that is the centrepiece of a new permanent gallery. The project has been full of surprises, including finding the rest of the skeleton in storage and discovering quite how important this specimen is - the longest Ichthyosaurus in the world with remarkable 3D preservation. It is amazing for Birmingham Museums to have this in our collection, and I've already enjoyed watching how people react to it in the gallery!"* ■

The exhibition is a permanent one at the Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum, Millennium Point, Curzon Street, Birmingham, B4 7XG Telephone: 0121 348 8000 www.birminghammuseums.org.uk

THE BARBER INSTITUTE OF FINE ARTS

BY JILL WARREN

The Barber Institute of Fine Arts is housed in one of Birmingham's finest Art Deco buildings, purpose built and opened by Queen Mary in 1939. Founded by Lady Barber in 1932 in memory of her husband, Sir Henry Barber, a native of Birmingham, it is today funded predominantly by the Henry Barber Trust. Their mission is constant: To promote 'the study and encouragement of art and music' – for the benefit of the University of Birmingham and the wider public. Andrew Davies, Communications and Marketing Manager, discusses the aims of the Barber and his role within it.

The Barber Institute is a public art gallery with a similarly high-profile and high-calibre (albeit slightly smaller!) collection to those at the National Gallery and the Wallace Gallery in London. It contains key works of art by Monet, Manet and Magritte; Renoir, Rubens, Rossetti and Rodin; Degas, Delacroix and Van Dyck – as well as Botticelli, Poussin, Turner, Gainsborough, Gauguin, Van Gogh, Bellows, Hodgkin and Auerbach. Although established for the benefit of the University of Birmingham, this magnificent collection is wholly owned by the Henry Barber Trust and is a public, living art gallery with a collection that is still growing thanks to occasional new acquisitions.

Andrew Davies has been working at the Barber for 12 years and still draws inspiration from walking around the gallery. His degree in History of Art combined with 12 years as a journalist

on regional daily newspapers, made him ideally suited to his present role in promoting the museum and its activities via media relations, marketing, and social media, as well as overseeing its membership schemes. The building, which is owned by the University, was purpose built to house the art collection and a chamber orchestra concert hall and was an award-winning design by Robert Atkinson (1883-1952), one of Britain's leading architects of the 1920s and '30s. With its clean lines and uncluttered spaces, the Barber was designed after extensive touring and study by Atkinson, and first director Thomas Bodkin, of the most up-to-date and new museums around Europe and was cutting-edge when it opened. Andrew feels a leisurely 1-2 hour stroll around the galleries allows the visitor a comprehensive overview of the history of European art from the Renaissance to the present day with plenty

TOP RIGHT: The Barber Institute of Fine Arts

RIGHT: A view down the Green Gallery, with the Jan de Beer altarpiece panel 'Joseph and the Suitors'

FAR RIGHT: Andrew Davies, Communications and Marketing Manager of The Barber Institute



of scope for returning to look at particular favourites or discover something new. Andrew sees the staff as a positive force for the gallery as they interact with the public on a friendly and knowledgeable basis to help create a memorable experience for all.

The Barber's visitors are drawn partly from the University staff and students, but more extensively from the surrounding area, with a core audience of loyal locals who sometimes visit many times a year. There are regular concerts by top international classical performers, (in keeping with Lady Barber's original vision), plus art workshops for children and adults, talks, book groups and family days throughout the year. In addition, up to three temporary exhibitions a year draw a much wider audience from around the UK and abroad. In keeping with the Barber's role as a university research institute. Exhibitions often



contextualise one of the collection's masterpieces, but are sometimes drawn from topical events, such as this year's 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death. The Barber's summer show, *'All The World's A Stage'* (10th June to 25th September), features major portraits lent by the National Portrait Gallery of court patrons and writers from the era, including Ben Jonson, the Earls of Essex, Dudley and Southampton, a rare First Folio and several images of Shakespeare himself. Co-curated by the art history masters' students at the University, the exhibition gives them sound 'hands-on' experience, and is one of many of Birmingham's top cultural organisations involved in a city-wide *'Our Shakespeare'* festival, featuring works by or connected with the Bard.

As recently summed up in its latest mission statement, *"The jewel in the cultural crown of the University of Birmingham, the Barber uses its world-class collections to create inspirational opportunities for learning and enjoyment for students, staff and the wider public"*

There is free admission to the gallery and all exhibitions, and the gallery is open every day throughout the year (excluding some key public holidays). www.barber.org.uk.

Andrew Davies, the Barber's Communications and Marketing Manager, will be shedding light on what the Barber is all about at a Friends' Evening Event - see page 7. ■

The Barber Institute of Fine Arts
University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
Birmingham B15 2TS



FRIENDS' CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

1. At the end of the straight (4)
3. Vehicle certification (abbr) (3)
5. Major goal of late nineteenth century explorers (4)
7. A modest blow or an easy challenge (6)
8. Great for huntin', fishin' and shootin' (rapids) (6)
9. From top to here covers the lot (3)
11. Sorts out text (5)
14. Only a poor workman blames these (5)
17. A lens can project one (5)
18. Identity denied by gnu (Flanders and Swann) (3)
19. A little one of sunshine helps (3)
21. Alarming forerunner of "Mayday" (m'aidez) (3)
24. Floor covering to be ticked off on (6)
25. Strong Irish spirit from an illicit still (6)
27. Happiness lies over this heavenly body (4)
28. Food. High in the sky and possibly unreal or unattainable (3)
29. Not good to get dropped in (4)

CLUES DOWN

1. Affectionate (?) term for a well know public service (4)
2. Reroute (6)
3. Famed for his water lilies (5)
4. Track down (5)
5. "Get on with it, quickly" (6)
6. Light alloy romantic in Piccadilly (4)
10. All clicks, no bricks. Early internet only grocer (5)
11. At the centre of the storm (3)
12. This fluid conveys information (3)
13. Stray from the straight and narrow (3)
14. The most likely party at 4.00 pm (3)
15. Energy transmission device for marine propulsion (3)
16. Infinitely high by definition (3)
20. Give it an egg and it becomes quite sporty (5)
21. Move from upright, physically or metaphorically (5)
22. It reaches high and is a primary building feature (5)
23. Severe weather system (5)
24. Tranquil, of weather or human situations (4)
26. A stitch in time saves these (4)

1			2		3		4		5			6
7							8					
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27					28				29			

ANSWERS ACROSS: 1. Bend 3. MOT 5. Pole 7. Breeze 8. Canoes 9. Toe 11. Edits 14. Tools 17. Image 18. Elk 19. Ray 21. SOS 24. Carpet 25. Poteen 27. Moon 28. Pie 29. Mire Down: 1. Beeb 2. Divers 3. Monet 4. Trace 5. Pronto 6. Eros 10. Ocado 11. Eye 12. Ink 13. Sin 14. Tea 15. Oar 16. Sky 20. Spoon 21. Stoop 22. Spire 23. Storm 24. Calm 26. Nine

JUNE

-  Tuesday 7 * *'Origins of the Institute: The History of the Birmingham & Midland Institute'*
- Dr Connie Wan
-  Monday 13 * *'Turning to See: From Van Dyck to Lucian Freud'* - Lisa Beauchamp
-  Tuesday 14 * *'A Laboratory for Looking': The Barber Institute of Fine Arts'* - Andrew Davies
-  Tuesday 21 # Science Short: *'Looking after the world's oldest working steam engine'* - Jim Andrew
-  Thursday 23 * *'Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery: a master plan for redevelopment'*
- Janine Eason
-  Monday 27 * Houses of Parliament & The Jewel Tower or Museum Area

JULY

-  Tuesday 5 * *'Tennyson and the Pre-Raphaelites'* - Brendan Flynn
-  Tuesday 12 * *'Inspire 16: Celebrating the young creatives of Birmingham'* - Andrew Fowles
-  Tuesday 19 * Lyme Park House & Gardens

AUGUST

-  Thursday 11 * *'Life in three dimensions'* - Jane Howell
-  Monday 22 * *'The Portuguese Revolution of 1910'* - David Johnson

SEPTEMBER

-  Wednesday 7 * Hardwick Hall and Crich Tramway Village
-  Tuesday 20 * Science Short: *'A History of Gunmaking in Birmingham in 10 Objects'*
- Professor David Williams
-  Tuesday 20 ++ Friends AGM
-  Friday 30 - * Weekend Away in Chichester
- Monday 3 October

NOVEMBER

-  Friday 11 ++ *'The Age of Jazz! Art Deco Fashion and Style'* - Sally Hoban

DECEMBER

-  Tuesday 6 ++ Science Short: *'Spitfire: Fighting to Preserve Birmingham's Heritage for the Future'* - Lizzie Miller

* Details are enclosed with this mailing, and application forms are included in posted versions of this magazine (see note on page 6).

** Full booked, sorry!

++ Dates for your diary, no applications in this mailing.

Included in a previous mailing, but places are still available and application forms are included in posted versions of this magazine (see note on page 6).

EVENT KEY

ANNUAL EVENT



DAYTIME TALK



EVENING EVENT



GUIDED TOUR



OUTING

THE NEXT ISSUE OF ARTEFACTS WILL BE PUBLISHED IN JULY 2016

Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

GRAYSON PERRY

The Vanity of Small Differences



Grayson Perry Expulsion from Number 8 Edin Close, 2012.

ALSO SHOWING

MAKING A MASTERPIECE

GRAHAM SUTHERLAND'S CHRIST IN GLORY



© The estate of Graham Sutherland

22 April – 3 July 2016

Free

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