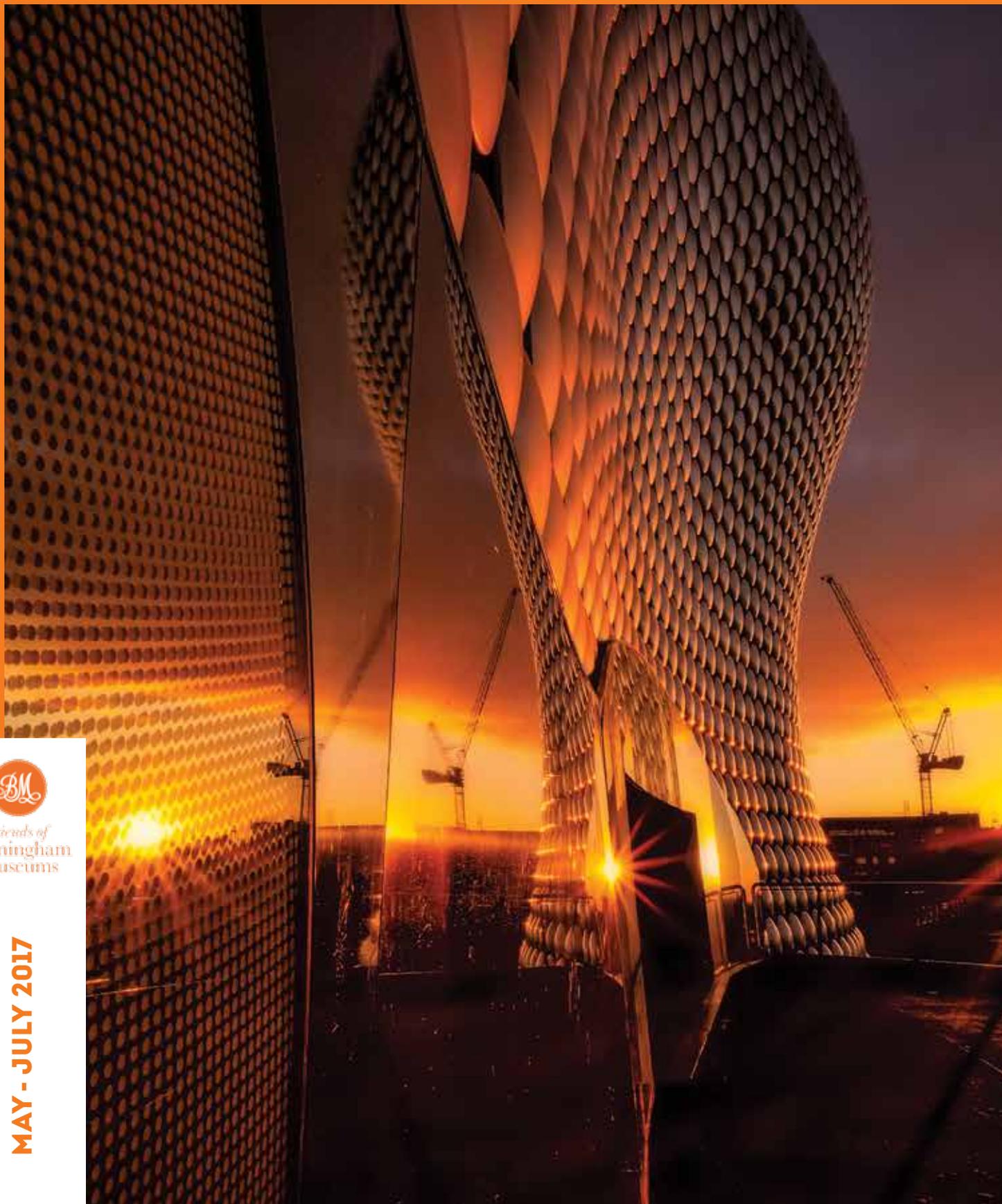


# ARTEFACTS



Friends of  
Birmingham  
Museums

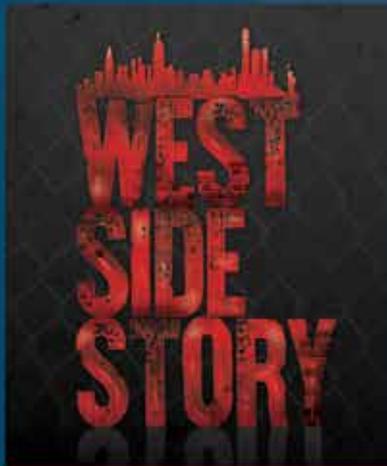
MAY - JULY 2017

BAfM

MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATION  
OF FRIENDS OF MUSEUMS

*The Bullring at Sunrise* © Verity E. Milligan Photography

**FRIENDS OF BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS MAGAZINE**



WED 23 - SAT 26 AUG



TUE 12 - SAT 16 SEP



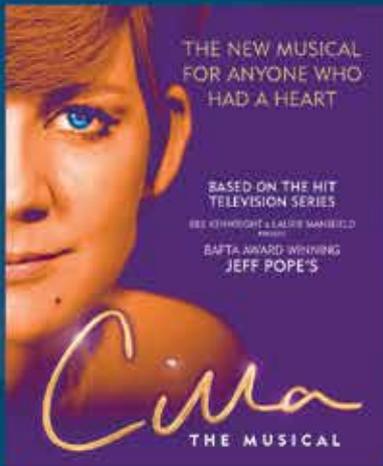
STAR IN **TANGO MODERNO**

TUE 19 - SAT 23 SEP



**MONTY PYTHON'S SPAMALOT**  
A comedy musical inspired by the 1975 picture  
MONTY PYTHON'S Holy Grail

TUE 3 - SAT 7 OCT

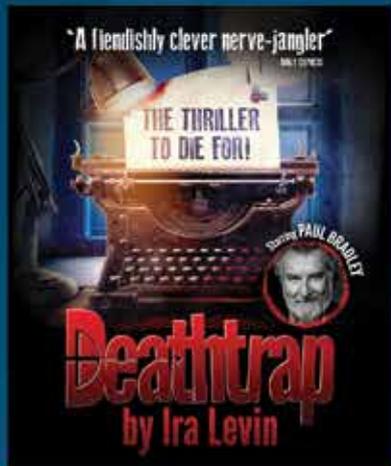


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FOR ANYONE WHO  
HAD A HEART

BASED ON THE HIT  
TELEVISION SERIES  
BY KEITH WRIGHT & LAUREN MARRICHO  
PRESENTS  
BAFTA AWARD WINNING  
JEFF POPE'S

**Cilla**  
THE MUSICAL

TUE 10 - SAT 14 OCT

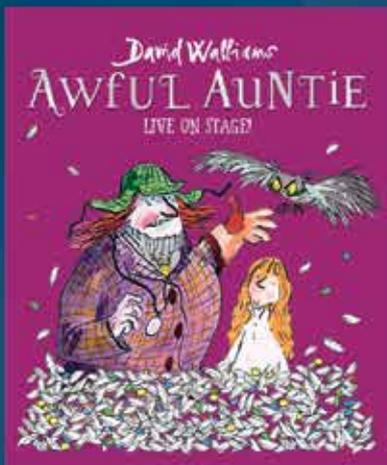


"A fiendishly clever nerve-jangler"  
MARTIN DINEEN

THE THRILLER  
TO DIE FOR!

**Deathtrap**  
by Ira Levin  
STARRING PAUL BEATTY

TUE 7 - SAT 11 NOV



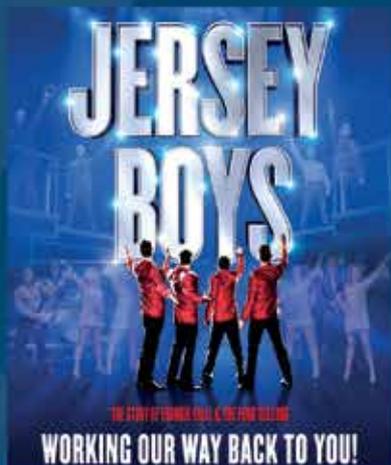
David Walliams  
**AWFUL AUNTIE**  
LIVE ON STAGE!

WED 22 - SUN 26 NOV



**Flashdance**  
THE MUSICAL

MON 4 - SAT 9 DEC



**JERSEY BOYS**

THE STORY OF FOUR BOYS & THE FIVE RECORDS  
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SAT 16 DEC - SAT 6 JAN

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## CONTACTS

### DAVID FOSTER

#### CHAIR

Email: [committee.fbmag@gmail.com](mailto:committee.fbmag@gmail.com)

### LYNDA PERRIN

#### MEMBERSHIP

Email: [fbmagmembership@gmail.com](mailto:fbmagmembership@gmail.com)

Tel: 0121 348 8330

### MELISSA HUGHES

#### ADMINISTRATOR AND ARTEFACTS EDITOR

Email: [melissa.page.fbmag@gmail.com](mailto:melissa.page.fbmag@gmail.com)

Tel: 0121 348 8330

### BARBARA PREECE

#### EVENTS COORDINATOR

Email: [barbara.preece.fbmag@gmail.com](mailto:barbara.preece.fbmag@gmail.com)

[friends.of.bmag@gmail.com](mailto:friends.of.bmag@gmail.com)

Tel: 0121 348 8332

### MARY WHETNALL

#### FINANCE AND EVENTS ADMINISTRATION

Email: [mary.whetnall@gmail.com](mailto:mary.whetnall@gmail.com)

Tel: 0121 348 8333

### MARGARET BONIFACE

#### ARCHIVIST

Email: [margaret.boniface.fbmag@gmail.com](mailto:margaret.boniface.fbmag@gmail.com)

### FRIENDS' OFFICE

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery,

Chamberlain Square,

Birmingham, B3 3DH

Tel: 0121 348 8330

Events: 0121 348 8332

Website: [www.fbmt.org.uk](http://www.fbmt.org.uk)

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#### DIANE STINTON

Email: [diane@pw-media.co.uk](mailto:diane@pw-media.co.uk)

Tel: 01905 727903



# HISTORY, ART & SCIENCE

## BY DAVID FOSTER

**By the time you are reading this, the second of the shows which partners Birmingham Museums Trust with the Arts Council Collection will have opened. The Friends played a material role in bringing these shows to Birmingham so we all have a vested interest in their success.**

*'I Want! I Want!'* shows what artists can do with modern technology and the ideas it stimulates. After the stunning success of *'Night in the Museum'*, the first of the partnership shows, I was delighted to discover that this show, too, is great fun. You can read my own reaction to *'I Want! I Want!'* in my report on the Friends' website, [fbmt.org.uk](http://fbmt.org.uk), under the tab 'Reports'. There will be a companion show at Thinktank, opening late in May, thus bringing together BMT's two premier sites.

As those of you who can recall my previous columns will know (I hope there a few!), I attach particular importance to the extraordinarily wide scope of Birmingham Museums' collections – a scope which extends over scientific and technological culture as well pictorial and historic arts. The Friends is enthusiastic about the whole.

This enthusiasm was critically effective in making our recent appeal to Birmingham City Council to maintain its financial support for the Trust. For those of you who did not follow the story as it unfolded, here it is in brief: in December 2016, the Council proposed to cut its support for BMT in the year 2017-18 by £500k on top of a previously proposed £250k reduction. Even the smaller reduction would have had serious consequences. After our appeal which, in concert with many thousands of other citizens, contributed to over 9,000 signatures to BMT's petition and generated many letters of support, the Council withdrew the whole £750k of the proposed budget cuts. (You can read our response to the Council on the Friends' website – [fbmt.org.uk](http://fbmt.org.uk) – also in the 'Reports' section.) The scale of our membership and the longevity of our support impressed the Council.

However, this will almost certainly prove to be just a skirmish. The Council's well-known dire financial position



Toby Ziegler - *Portrait of C.L.* 2006.  
Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery

means that we must be prepared to defend BMT again in future years.

Our Events schedule, which you can read about in the following pages, also speaks to the wide range of interests of our members. Gardens, cityscapes, world speed records and sculpture – we Friends are certainly eclectic in our interests! Although we make no secret of the fund-raising element of these events, the organisers aim to entertain and educate, so that you, our members, continue to want to be involved. To keep up-to-date with the Events programme, you can read the latest listing on the Friends website under the 'Events' tab.

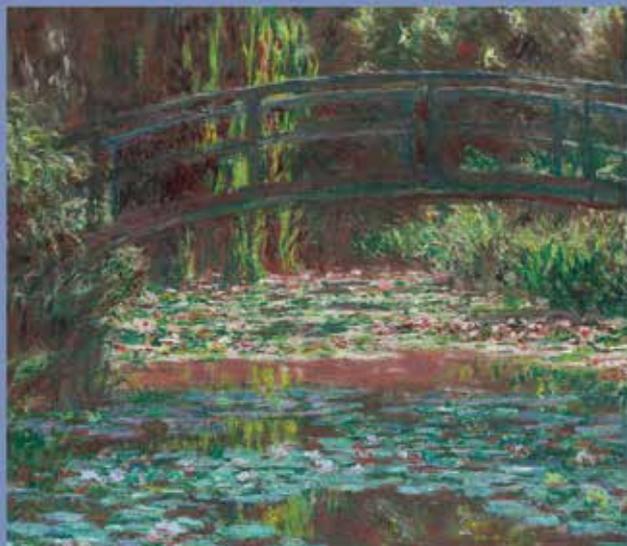
Those of you who have been using our website will have noticed some changes in recent weeks. Some are cosmetic, to make it easier to read and follow. More substantially, there is now a major tab: 'Artefacts'. Here you will find a link which enables you to read the latest edition of the magazine on your computer, tablet or smartphone. This section also includes links to past copies of the magazine where you can refresh your memories of earlier material. If anyone feels a need for a searchable index of articles, and would like to volunteer to create one, please get in touch with us by contacting the Friends' office (see page 3). ■

THE  
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Claude Monet

24 June – 10 September



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BIRMINGHAM

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& Gardens

### 2017 COURSES

#### BEGINNERS PHOTOGRAPHY COURSES

Time to trash auto and get creative...

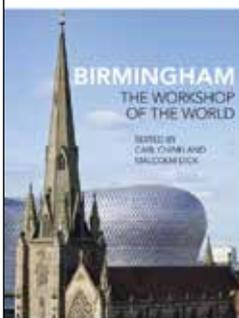
On our workshop you will learn how to manually set your camera to manipulate aperture, shutter speed and ISO to take great landscape photos throughout the photogenic location of Arley Arboretum.

After a day with local professional photographer Scarlett Shellis, you'll be able to take control of your camera and never need that auto button again!

Full Day Saturday Courses on  
**6th May**  
**10th June**  
**16th September**

£99 includes a one day workshop with some 1:1 tuition, lunch and drinks

## THE BIRMINGHAM & MIDLAND INSTITUTE



**BIRMINGHAM**  
THE WORKSHOP  
OF THE WORLD

EDITED BY  
CAROL CORRIE AND  
WILLIAM DICK

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**DAY SCHOOL** in partnership with  
the Centre for West Midlands History  
*Birmingham: the Workshop of the World*

**PART 1** Saturday 10 June

**PART 2** Saturday 1 July  
10.30am – 4pm

£32/£29 per day for Members of the BMI and Friends of the Centre for West Midlands History (includes lunch and refreshments)

These study days explore themes from the recent publication *Birmingham: the Workshop of the World* (2016). **PART 1** (10 June) looks at the history of Birmingham chronologically, including a talk from Dr Mike Hodder *Before Beorma: Prehistoric and Roman Birmingham*. **PART 2** (1 July) takes a thematic approach to Birmingham including a talk from Professor Roger Ward *Birmingham: A Political Profile, 1700-1940*.

#### BCU Poets' Night

Friday 16 June, 6 - 8pm

£5/£3 for Members of the BMI and Students (includes wine and refreshments)

Birmingham City University's School of English presents an evening of readings with poets near and far including Dr Gregory Leadbetter, Professor Patrick McGuinness, Dr Derek Littlewood and Anna Lawrence.

To book, visit:  
[www.bmi1854.  
eventbrite.com](http://www.bmi1854.eventbrite.com)  
(tickets are subject to  
a booking fee)  
or call 0121  
2363591

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& Midland Institute  
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Birmingham, B3 3BS  
[www.bmi.org.uk](http://www.bmi.org.uk)



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#### BEGINNERS ART COURSES

Get to grips with painting and drawing whilst spending the day taking inspiration from the stunning Arboretum & Gardens...

Participants will be guided through a series of creative exercises gathering visual 'material' and learning to record what is seen.

After a day with local artist Dean Melbourne, you'll see your surroundings in a new light, be able to compose beautiful pieces of artwork and skilfully work with a range of materials.

Full Day Saturday Courses on  
**13th May**  
**17th June**  
**15th July**  
**2nd September**  
**14th October**

£99 includes a one day workshop with some 1:1 tuition, all materials, lunch and drinks

Please book in advance as places are limited  
**01299 861368**

Visit our website for more information  
[www.arleyarboretum.co.uk](http://www.arleyarboretum.co.uk)

\*T&Cs apply. Some events on select days only. Some features are an additional cost. Please check website for more info. E&OE. The Roger & Douglas Turner Charitable Trust. Reg. No. 1154467



## 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.



### 'PIONEERS OF PHOTOGRAPHY IN BIRMINGHAM'

*Date: Tuesday 6 June 2017, 6:30-8:30pm*

*Speaker: Pete James FRPS, Independent Photographic Historian*

*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](http://www.edmundsbar.co.uk)*

In 1880 an article published in a local newspaper boldly claimed that *'If Birmingham cannot claim to have originated photography, she is at least entitled the merit of having assisted at its birth. She can also worthily claim the credit of having given it substantial help as it struggled through many difficulties to maturity. She can, in addition, claim that she gave the new art most welcome aid and sympathy; and that some of the most successful photographic discoveries and operators have been amongst those of her own household.'*

This summer, two new contemporary art projects, *'Thresholds'* and *'A White House in Paradise Street'*, will explore some of the events which marked Birmingham's response to the public announcement of the invention of photography in January 1839. This illustrated talk traces the events and people who pioneered photography in Birmingham.



### 'DETERMINING THE LIFE EXPECTANCY OF THE WILLIAM MORRIS HOLY GRAIL TAPESTRIES'

*Date: Tuesday 20 June 2017, 6-7pm*

*Speaker: Jane Thompson Webb, Conservation Team Leader, Birmingham Museums Trust*

*Cost: £3 for Members of the Friends of Birmingham Museums and the BMI/£5 non-members (NB.*

*Refreshments are not provided).*

*Venue: John Lee Lecture Theatre at the Birmingham & Midland Institute (BMI)*

*(NB. This event has replaced 'Nature comes to Birmingham' which was advertised in the February-April 2017 edition of Artefacts.)*

The Holy Grail Tapestries are some of the jewels of BMT's collection – it is the most complete set anywhere in the UK and always draws large crowds when any of the tapestries are on display. The set is in excellent condition and, bearing in mind Morris's own thoughts about custodianship expressed in the title quote, the Conservation team was keen that they should remain in excellent condition for as long as possible.

With pressure to increase the frequency of display, there was a lack of concrete evidence to show how long

## EVENT KEY



ANNUAL EVENT



DAYTIME TALK



EVENING EVENT



GUIDED TOUR



OUTING



SCIENCE SHORT

Far left: 'Clean Water in the Black Country' – Sandfields Pumping Station

Left: The light fading procedure in progress on one of the Holy Grail Tapestries © Bruce Ford

the tapestries would remain in excellent condition or if the conservation team was being overly cautious in its approach to display. This Science Short will describe why exposure to light is a problem and will discuss the micro fading technique that was used to determine the life expectancy. It will also reveal why you won't be able to see them for another 9 years!



## 'MICHELANGELO & SEBASTIANO' AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY

*Date: Saturday 24 June 2017*

*Cost: £39 (Includes coach, entrance to the exhibition & driver's tip) OR £20 (Includes return coach to London & driver's tip)*

*3 Pickup points: South Parade Car Park (opposite Plantsbrook School), Sutton Coldfield at 7:30am; City Centre, Margaret Street (B3 3BS) at 8am; or Yateley Road, Harborne (B15 3JP) at 8:15am. The journey should take approximately 2 hours 45 minutes, including a comfort break. Return at 5pm. Order of drop offs: Harborne; Colmore Row; and Sutton Coldfield.*

Explore the extraordinary relationship between two great Italian masters, Michelangelo and Sebastiano del Piombo, who found common ground in the fiercely competitive world of High Renaissance Rome. Having met in Rome in 1511, as Michelangelo was finishing his decoration of the Sistine Chapel ceiling, Sebastiano and he became friends and began collaborating artistically. Their meeting sparked a remarkable 25-year friendship and partnership; yielding outstanding works of art that neither could have created without the other – against a backdrop of war and religious conflict, but also of great intellectual energy and artistic innovation.

Central to the exhibition are two of their collaborations: 'Pietà' for S. Francesco in Viterbo (c.1512–16) and 'The Raising of Lazarus', painted for the Cathedral of Narbonne in France, and one of the foundational works in the National Gallery Collection.

The exhibition also features the exceptional loan of

Michelangelo's 'The Risen Christ' (1514–15) from the Church of S. Vincenzo Martire in Bassano Romano, Italy, and a cutting-edge recreation of the Borgherini Chapel in S. Pietro in Montorio, Rome – decorated by Sebastiano to partial designs by Michelangelo.

Comprising paintings, drawings, sculpture, and letters documenting correspondence between the artists, this groundbreaking exhibition presents works of striking force and originality.

NB. There will be 20 seats available on the coach for free time in London. Please book the return coach trip to London and spend the day doing your own thing.



## 'CLEAN WATER IN THE BLACK COUNTRY: A HIDDEN HISTORY'

*Date: Tuesday 27 June 2017, 6:30-8:30pm*

*Speaker: David Moore, Chairman of the Lichfield Waterworks 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](http://www.edmundsbar.co.uk)*

David Moore, Chairman of the Lichfield Waterworks Trust, a charity set up to save the Victorian Waterworks at Sandfields near Lichfield, will talk about the introduction of clean water in the mid-19th Century following a series of cholera epidemics when as much as 20% of the population of some urban Black Country villages died.



## 'ODYSSEY DRAMATIC PRESENTATION: LUNATIC ASTRONOMY'

*Date: Thursday 6 July 2017*

*Speaker: Andrew Lound, Lecturer, Writer & Broadcaster*

*Cost: £9/12 non-members (incl. entrance & refreshments)*

*Meeting point: The AV Room (at the back of BMAG's Gas Hall) at 10:30am for an 11am start*

The Lunar Society was one of the most influential >

Right: 'Portrait of Francis Eginton' by James Millar (1796) © Birmingham Museums Trust.

groups in the 18th Century. No aspect of science and industry was overlooked at their monthly dinner parties. Although the development of the steam engine and coinage production became the main focus for Matthew Boulton, he had developed a passion for astronomy. Andrew Lound tells the story of the Lunar Society's interests in astronomy based on new research that has revealed some surprising facts – a dramatic presentation beautifully illustrated, accompanied by music and presented with 18th Century flair in full 18th Century costume! Andrew has been presenting public lectures and staging exhibitions for over 40 years and has participated in over 5,000 events. He regularly tours the UK with his Odyssey Dramatic Presentations and is invited back time and again due to popular demand. He has also worked in USA and in 2005 became the first western science speaker to tour Libya following the removal of sanctions.

Andrew is the UK National Coordinator for The Planetary Society, the world's largest space group, for whom he has pioneered education techniques in science featuring telerobotics, rocket launches and live demonstrations. He can be heard regularly on BBC Radio where he is known as 'The Urban Space man' or 'WM's Titanic Expert...'. Andrew is a man of many interests who specialises in space science and astronomy from both a current and historical perspective. He is a former curator of the Avery Historical Museum located at the famous Soho Foundry in Smethwick. Andrew has two books published: 'Lunatick Astronomy' and 'Life in the Balance'. A third book about 'Titanic's Midlands Connections' is due to be released in 2017.



### **FRIENDS' ANNUAL LECTURE: 'BIRMINGHAM'S TRUE GENIUS ~ FRANCIS EGINTON AND THE GEORGIAN STAINED GLASS REVIVAL'**

**Date:** Wednesday 12 July 2017, 6pm

**Speaker:** Martin Ellis

**Cost:** £14

**Venue:** Council Chamber

Francis Eginton embodies much of the ambition and creativity flourishing in Birmingham in the late 18th Century. He was a friend, associate and partner of Matthew Boulton at Soho, a designer, button maker, enameller, developer of mechanical paintings and the most successful glass painter of his generation. Working with Benjamin West, Joshua Reynolds, James and Samuel Wyatt, amongst others, he played a key role in the blossoming of pictorial painted glass in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This lecture celebrates the work and world of an extraordinary artist.

Martin was a curator of applied art at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery for many years. He is now an accredited lecturer for NADFAS and the Australian Decorative & Fine Arts Society (ADFAS), as well as writing and presenting material for BBC Radio 4, undertaking curatorial consultancy work and working with his wife, Julia, in their art and antiques business. He is a Freeman of the Goldsmiths' Company, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Birmingham. The Lecture is open to non-members.



### **SOUTHWELL MINSTER AND THE WORKHOUSE (NT)**

**Date:** Thursday 13 July 2017

**Cost:** £28 (Includes coach, Audio tour and driver's tip).

**NB. Entrance to The Workhouse is not included so please bring your National Trust Card with you; non-members must pay on the day.**

**3 Pickup points: South Parade Car Park (opposite Plantsbrook School), Sutton Coldfield at 7:45am; City Centre, Margaret Street (B3 3BS) at 8:15am; or Yateley Road, Harborne (B15 3JP) at 8:30am. The journey should take approximately 1 hour 45 minutes, including a comfort break. Return at 4:30pm. Order of drop offs: Sutton Coldfield; Colmore Row; and Harborne.**

Southwell Minster: Southwell Minster is a hidden gem in the heart of Nottinghamshire with an amazing and intriguing history. For nearly one thousand years, the Minster has been a place of pilgrimage. Its rural location and stunning but quirky architecture have made it a 'must see' destination throughout the centuries.

#### **EVENT KEY**



ANNUAL EVENT



DAYTIME TALK



EVENING EVENT



GUIDED TOUR



OUTING



SCIENCE SHORT



John Betjeman noted that 'everywhere around is an atmosphere of peace and in the Minster there's one of prayer'. In 1884, Southwell Minster became the Cathedral church and should be called 'Southwell and Nottingham Cathedral', but the traditional name has stuck. In the 21st Century, visitors continue to come to worship, pray and admire the Minster and to enjoy one of England's finest medieval churches, which is now widely acknowledged to be Nottinghamshire's most loved building. The highlights include the delicate stone carvings in the 13th Century Chapter House and the fine wood carvings of foliage and animals in the Minster's Choir Stalls.

**The Workhouse:** Built in 1824, Southwell Workhouse is the best preserved workhouse in England. The system implemented here was developed by Reverend John T. Becher and George Nicholls, whose ideas shaped the way in which the poor were treated during the 19th Century. Becher's intention was for local parishes to combine funds and build a workhouse to support and house the destitute. Up to 158 inmates at a time, from 62 parishes, entered this building as a last resort. Becher's view was that workhouses should be a deterrent. Consequently, its architecture was influenced by prison design and a harsh regime was implemented and the Workhouse was

intended to achieve a 'moral' improvement. Becher and Nicholls' ideas were revolutionary but strict, and attracted much attention. Following the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, hundreds of workhouses were set up across the country as part of a national government system and were referred to as 'Union Workhouses', to reflect the union of the local parishes. In 1929, the workhouses were handed over to local authorities and The Southwell Workhouse continued as an institution for the poor, homeless and elderly. With the advent of the modern welfare system in 1948, the building's use changed, providing temporary homeless accommodation until 1976. It was mainly used for staff accommodation and storage until the 1980s while the rest of the site became a residential home for the elderly.

## 'I WANT! I WANT!: ART & TECHNOLOGY'

*Date: Tuesday 18 July 2017*

*Speaker: Deborah Smith, Curator, Arts Council*

*Collection National Partners Programme*

*Cost: £9*

*Meeting point: The Gas Hall entrance at 10:45am for an 11am start*

**NB. Guided tours are exclusively for members**

Join BMT's Arts Council Collection National Partners Programme Curator, Deborah Smith, who will guide us round 'I Want! I Want!: Art & Technology' - an exhibition featuring works by 26 artists who have been influenced by the rapid development of technology. The artists use computer animation and graphics, video, audio, photography, drawing and gaming technology to create films, moving image, sculptures, paintings, interactive games and small and large scale drawings. The artworks themselves tackle a range of themes such as human relationships and behaviour, surveillance and the habits of modern society. Works selected date from the mid-1990s to the present day and are drawn from the Arts Council Collection, Birmingham's museum collection and other public and private collections. The title is inspired by the etching 'I Want! I Want!', created by the artist William Blake over two hundred years ago, which depicts a man aspiring to travel to the moon.

The Friends contributed £45,000 towards the Arts >

Right: The Yellow Drawing Room at Elton Hall  
Far Right: Elton Hall from the garden

Council Collection National Partners Programme – so please come along and find out more about the exhibitions which the Friends are helping to create!



## BEHIND THE SCENES TOURS IN STRATFORD: HOLY TRINITY CHURCH AND THE ROYAL SHAKESPEARE THEATRE

*Date: Friday 11 August 2017*

*Cost: £20 (Includes guided tours of Holy Trinity Church and the Theatre, plus a visit to the Viewing Tower)*

*Meeting point: Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon at 11:20am OR Moor Street Railway Station at 9:45am. We will travel by train, then shared taxi, to Holy Trinity Church.*

**Holy Trinity Church – tour led by Jane Hornby:** Holy Trinity is the church where William Shakespeare was baptised, where he worshipped and where he is buried. This Church, on the banks of the Avon in Stratford, is first mentioned in the charter of 845, signed by 'Beorhtwulf', King of Mercia, and would have been a wooden construction. It is likely that the Normans replaced this with a stone building, but no trace of either remains. The present limestone building was begun in 1210, built in the shape of a cross.

**Royal Shakespeare Theatre & Viewing Tower:** The original Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, which opened in 1879, was destroyed by fire on 6 March 1926. A new season was about to commence rehearsals, but when a fire broke out, the mass of half-timbering chosen to ornament the interior provided dry tinder. By the following morning the theatre was a blackened shell. Fundraising began for the rebuilding of the theatre and, in January 1928, 29-year-old Elisabeth Scott was unanimously appointed architect for the new theatre which became the first important work erected in the United Kingdom from the designs of a female architect. Her modernist plans for an art deco structure were controversial, but the new Shakespeare Memorial Theatre was opened on Shakespeare's birthday, 23 April 1932. It was renamed the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in 1961, following the

establishment of the Royal Shakespeare Company the previous year. Scott's building, with some minor adjustments to the stage, remained in constant use until 2007 when it was closed for a major refit of the interior. The 1,018-seat Royal Shakespeare Theatre, a Grade II listed building which retains many of its original art deco features, re-opened in November 2010 after a three-year transformation project.



## 'IT'S A DOG'S LIFE'

*Date: Tuesday 15 August 2017*

*Speaker: Jane Howell Cost: £9*

*Meeting point: The Round Room at 10:45am for an 11am start. NB. Guided tours are exclusively for members*

Have you ever counted how many times dogs appear in the paintings around the museum? I gave up when I got to 60. They appear in paintings across the centuries from those in Luca Carlevaris' *The Arrival of the Fourth Earl of Manchester* (1707) to the microscopic dogs in the paintings by LS Lowry from the 1960s. On the other hand, after much searching, I can only find three cats! In this tour we shall explore the reasons why dogs appear so often.



## ELTON HALL & GARDENS

*Date: Tuesday 5 September 2017*

*Cost: £40 (Includes coach, Buffet Lunch, Entrance to House with Guided Tour, Entrance to Gardens and driver's tip)*

*Pickup points: South Parade Car Park (opposite Plantsbrook School), Sutton Coldfield at 7:45am; City Centre, Margaret Street (B3 3BS) at 8:15am; or Yateley Road, Harborne (B15 3JP) at 8:30am. The journey should take approximately 1 hour 45 minutes, including a comfort break. Return at 4:30pm. Order of drop offs: Sutton Coldfield; Colmore Row; and Harborne.*

An extraordinary, romantic, part-gothic historic house, Elton Hall stands in unspoilt landscaped parkland. The Hall is enchanting, with its gothic south elevation set at a right angle to the classical, French inspired, entrance wing. The Hall has belonged to the Proby family since 1660, and Sir William and Lady Proby and their four daughters continue to maintain and preserve their

### EVENT KEY





home and to welcome visitors to the Hall. Successive generations have embellished both the house and the collection, providing a fascinating insight into British history and taste. The house contains superb treasures, including fine French furniture, one of the best libraries in private hands and a magnificent collection of paintings. Art enthusiasts can gaze upon works by Renaissance artists dating from the early 15th Century, to 19th Century works by J.F. Lewis, Landseer and Millais. The collection also has works by renowned British artists Gainsborough, Constable and Reynolds. The collection is an amalgam of two houses, as the contents of Glenart Castle, the Irish seat of the Carysforts, were brought over in the early 1920s.

The gardens provide a stunning backdrop to the house. Prints displayed in the house show how the garden was laid out in the 1670s and how it developed during the 18th Century. During the 19th Century, the family mostly gardened in Ireland and Elton was left with a small shrubbery, some topiary, and the parkland you see today. There is something for everyone to see, from the State Coach, used by the family to attend the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of Queen Victoria, to Henry VIII's Prayer Book, which was given to him by Katherine Parr who was gifted the Manor of Elton by Henry VIII after their marriage. The present gardens are based on a design made in 1911 by A.H. Hallam Murray, father-in-law to Sir Richard Proby (d.1979).

A buffet lunch will be provided as we are asked not to eat picnics in the grounds. The buffet lunch includes: white and brown bread sandwiches, crisps, salad, home-made quiches, a selection of cakes and hot drinks.



## **'JOHN COBB'S 400 MILES PER HOUR ON FOUR WHEELS'**

*Date: Tuesday 19 September 2017, 6-7pm*

*Speaker: Jim Andrew, Volunteer at Thinktank*

*Cost: £3 for Members of the Friends of Birmingham Museums and the BMI/£5 non-members (NB.*

*Refreshments are not provided).*

*Venue: John Lee Lecture Theatre at the Birmingham & Midland Institute (BMI)*

Continuing our series of quarterly short science talks in conjunction with Thinktank and the BMI. In 1947 John Cobb, a fur trader and amateur racing car driver, took this car to a new record of 394 mph with well over 400 mph in one direction. In 1953 the Dunlop tyre company presented the car, the Napier Railton Special, to the Birmingham collections and it is exhibited in Thinktank, the Birmingham Science Museum. This lecture will explain some of the worries about looking after such an exhibit while also covering some of its fascinating history as a real engineering optimisation exercise.



## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

*Date: Tuesday 19 September 2017, 7:30pm*

*Venue: John Lee Lecture Theatre at the Birmingham & Midland Institute (BMI)*

The AGM will commence at 7:30pm in the John Lee Lecture Theatre and we anticipate that it will conclude by 8:30-9pm. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available from 7pm until 7:30pm at no cost.

If you wish to make a donation towards the costs of the meeting prior to the event please indicate the amount you are donating on the booking form, and include it in the amount you are paying for events >

bookings. Donation plates will also be available on the night. It is important that we know numbers for catering purposes, so please complete the Application Form and return it as soon as possible.

The AGM will follow our Science Short on John Cobb's Napier Railton Special. The Science Short will be held directly before the AGM, from 6-7pm in the John Lee Lecture Theatre at the BMI, and will cost £3 (see above).



## THE ART & HISTORIC HOUSES OF GREENWICH & SOUTH EAST LONDON

*Dates: Saturday 23 September – Tuesday 26 September 2017*

*Pickup points (Times to be confirmed): South Parade Car Park (opposite Plantsbrook School), Sutton Coldfield; City Centre, Margaret Street (B3 3BS) or Yateley Road, Harborne (B15 3JP)*

**Saturday:** Enroute to our hotel we visit Kew Gardens, world famous for its historic glasshouses, magnificent vistas and precious specimen trees, not to mention royal buildings, the Pagoda and the beautiful woods. There will be leisure time to explore the gardens and you may choose to enjoy a tour on the Kew Explorer land train, or visit The Hive – a critically acclaimed structure, designed by UK-based artist Wolfgang Buttress, encapsulating the story of the honey bee and the important role of pollination. We continue to our 3\* Clarendon Hotel at Blackheath for a three night stay on a half board basis.

**Sunday:** Our Blue Badge guide will meet us at our hotel and accompany us throughout the day. We will visit the National Trust's Red House, commissioned and lived in by William Morris, founder of the Arts and Crafts movement, and designed by Philip Webb. Only recently acquired by the National Trust, the building is of extraordinary architectural and social significance and contains a fine collection of furniture by Morris and Webb. In the afternoon we will enjoy a guided tour at Eltham Palace. An important royal palace from 14th to 16th centuries and childhood home of Henry VIII, the Palace is now a masterpiece of contemporary design and the scene of many society parties, dramatically showing the glamour and allure of the 1930s.

**Monday:** We spend a full day with our guide, beginning with a tour of Greenwich, where hemispheres meet and royal heritage combines with contemporary architecture. During our tour we visit The Royal Observatory. Over three centuries old and famous for a history rich in astronomy, it is home to John Harrison's world changing timekeepers. We continue to the National Maritime Museum, with its vast collection spanning artworks, maps, charts, memorabilia and thousands of other nautical objects. In the afternoon, we will visit the Queen's House. Inigo Jones's architectural masterpiece reopened in October 2016 after major restoration, with 22 spectacular rooms filled with great art representing 400 years. An ambitious new work in gold leaf by Turner Prize-winner Richard Wright has been revealed on the ceiling of the Great Hall, and the iconic Armada Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I is on permanent display for the first time.

**Tuesday:** After checking out of our hotel, we enjoy a guided tour of the Dulwich Picture Gallery, with paintings by notable artists such as Rembrandt, Rubens, Canaletto and Gainsborough. We continue to Wimbledon where we enjoy a behind the scenes tour of the grounds of the All England Lawn Tennis Club and visit the Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum. Taking carefully selected comfort stops en route, we return back to our original departure points.

**Cost:** £449 per person in a double bedded room or £508 in a single.

For more information or booking forms, please contact Barbara Preece: Tel: 0121 406 1145; Email: barbara.preece.fbmag@gmail.com.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

-  Wednesday 13 September 2017: *The Festival of Britain 1951 and its Design Legacy* - Dr Sally Hoban
-  October 2017: The Wilson Art Gallery, Cheltenham: *'Queen Victoria in Paris'*
-  Saturday 21 April 2018: Tate Modern, London: *The EY Exhibition Picasso 1932 – Love, Fame, Tragedy*



**ABOVE:** Blakesley volunteers in costume

So, we are now well on our way into 2017 and the summer season for our sites is just beginning. As I write, we are looking towards the Easter holidays with lots of events and activities scheduled, many of which will be assisted by our dedicated team of volunteers who work so hard to support Birmingham Museums Trust. But it hasn't been a quiet few months for the team leading up to this point. Here is just a taster of some of the things they have been up to.

In March, Blakesley Hall ran a Tudor Woman event to mark International Women's Week with lots of visitors learning about the role women played in Tudor England. This event was supported by wonderful volunteers at the site who helped with the initial planning and organisation and then delivered engaging tours of this gem of a building. The Hall received some fabulous Trip Advisor reviews as a result, which really show how passionate our volunteers are and the great experience that this gives visitors: 'Shirley was our guide - dressed as a Tudor woman, supported by two other equally passionate, knowledgeable volunteers' and 'It is

a well preserved example of a Tudor House with truly amazing volunteers whose knowledge and enthusiasm really bring the whole experience to life'.

Our volunteer Millers at Sarehole Mill also got a special Trip Advisor review from a visitor saying: 'they were brilliant!' Come rain or shine our fabulous Millers work hard to keep the mill running and producing flour. They do so much - using the mill to create flour, baking, maintaining the water wheel, and teaching visitors how the machinery works. They form a crucial part of the Sarehole team and over February half term it was really evident how engaged the team are as many of them made mini hobbit holes for a hobbit hole trail around the Mill. Their creations were amazing and so well received by visitors.

The Friends volunteers who man the Friends Desk in the Industrial Gallery at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery have also had a busy time over the last few months. This wonderful team form part of the friendly face of the museum; manning the Friends Desk to answer enquires and also acting as guides to Birmingham as visitors ask them all sorts of questions. So far this year they have helped unite a child with her lost bear, engaged many visitors with the Infinity Box which is on display next to the desk and orientated visitors looking for the Edwardian Tea Rooms or specific galleries around the building. They really are a very dedicated team and do so much for the Friends and for the Trust.

If you are thinking about volunteering and would be interested in joining the team, either by volunteering for the Friends or on other projects for the Trust, then take a look at [www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/volunteering](http://www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/volunteering). ■

# NEWS FROM THE VOLUNTEERS

BY BECKY FLETCHER, BMT VOLUNTEER  
DEVELOPMENT TEAM LEADER

# 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/cafés
- 50% entrance discount to Thinktank at Millennium Point: [www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/thinktank](http://www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/thinktank)
- Shakespeare Birthplace Trust shops (excluding admission prices): [www.shakespeare.org.uk](http://www.shakespeare.org.uk)
- 25% discount on Annual Passport Tickets at Ironbridge Gorge Trust: [www.ironbridge.org.uk](http://www.ironbridge.org.uk)
- Potteries Museums & Art Gallery shops/cafés: [www.museums.stoke.gov.uk](http://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 at [www.fbmt.org.uk/subscriptions/](http://www.fbmt.org.uk/subscriptions/). Alternatively, you can use the standard application form below. 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: Mr K & Mrs C Sherman, Ms J Cain, Mrs AJ Crawshaw, Mr P Rumney, Mrs F-A Goodwin, CG & Ms E Hayes, AJ & Ms PM Pitt, Mrs S Lander, Mr D & Mrs C White, Mrs Y Maslen, Mr B & Mrs C McEvoy, Miss AP Mason, Mr BP Langdell, Mr W & Mrs J Shakespeare, Mr G & Mrs A Foster, Dr M Grant, Mr B Smith, Mr PJ & Mrs YW Donaldson, Mrs E Wright. ■

## FRIENDS OF BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS APPLICATION FORM

Title:
Full Name:
Address:
Tel:
Email:
Where did you pick up this copy of <i>Artefacts</i> ?:

PLEASE WRITE IN CAPITAL LETTERS

### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY AND ANNUAL RATES

(Please tick)

SINGLE £32

DOUBLE £48  
(full rate Includes 2 children under 16)

### CONCESSIONARY RATES

SINGLE £21

DOUBLE £32

STUDENT £15

I enclose a cheque for £  or  I have transferred £  to SORT CODE 30-00-06  
A/C NO 00248432

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*

Boost your membership subscription/donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate. In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick this box:  I want to Gift Aid my donation of £  and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to Friends of Birmingham Museums (trading as FBMAG). I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signature:

Date:

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

BY RACHEL COCKETT, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

I would like personally to thank everyone who signed our petition and supported Birmingham Museums against the proposed funding cuts. I would particularly like to thank the Friends for their strong response to the budget consultation, highlighting a proud record of support, and many decades of investment in Birmingham Museums. As announced by Birmingham City Council in February 2017, we are pleased to confirm that the proposed budget cuts to Birmingham Museums Trust (BMT) have been postponed to the next financial year. While we are pleased to share this news, I must raise a note of caution: our Council funding beyond 2018 is uncertain, so we will continue to work to find a solution for our longevity.

BMT's challenging circumstances are not unique and we work with colleagues across the sector. As a founder member of the English Civic Museums Network, BMT has been working with senior museum professionals from local authority-supported museums and galleries across England. We are working together to support each other as civic institutions so that we can thrive and fulfil our role in civil society, enabling agency from the communities we are part of and ensuring engagement with the collections that form part of our shared cultural heritage. The Network is commissioning a 'Think Piece' to express the particular qualities, value and importance of civic museums, identify the current challenges to civic museums (notably in their funding) and explore what they should do to thrive in the future. We will use it to advocate to policy makers and funders. It will also serve as a challenge to people working in museums.

In the summer, the Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) will publish the outcome of their Museums Review which will consider how museums

and galleries across England can thrive and become even more inclusive. The Review is seeking to address "what is Government there for and to do" in supporting museums. The recommendations will consider what is within the gift of DCMS and its sponsored bodies and agencies including Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund. BMT has been an active participant in the review, which has covered many subjects including how museums can be more sustainable and increase participation in culture, as well as shared concerns about loss of curatorial and specialist expertise and collections storage capacity.

Despite the challenges we face, BMT continues to look optimistically to the future. We are delighted to have been awarded an Arts Council England's Change Makers grant of £136,000 to support increasing the diversity of senior leaders within England's arts and cultural sector in 2017. We are hosting a leadership placement for museum professional Sara Wajid, who is leading a programme to reinterpret the collections at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery (BMAG) to reach a wider audience. As part of this project we will be launching 'Display Lab' over the summer in Gallery 15. The space will be turned into an experimental display area where new approaches to interpretation can be prototyped, evaluated, reworked and re-evaluated with academics, target audiences and communities. The gallery will become a 'living' display where partners collaborate on developing innovative ways of using objects to tell stories of interest to diverse audiences. We hope Friends will come along and take part. Sara's work will be bringing together staff, communities and academics to shape the direction of the interpretation for BMAG's ambitious redevelopment project. ■

# DOCUMENT COPYING AND A FAMOUS ENGINEER

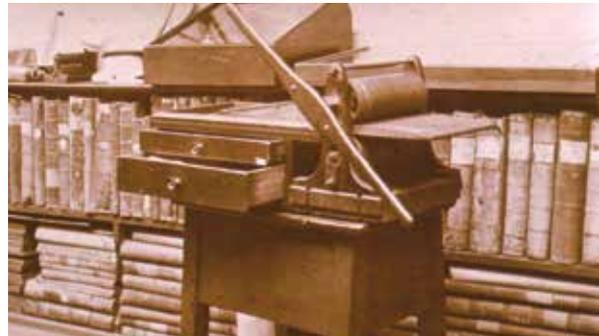
BY JIM ANDREW

**By the late eighteenth century, engineers and consultants like Boulton & Watt were becoming increasingly frustrated by the lack of any effective way of mechanically copying letters and drawings. Copy clerks could make mistakes or talk about your business in the pub, so security of business information was a worry. James Watt set out to find a solution.**

He started with earlier attempts, then developed special ink and a moistening liquid to be used with good quality writing paper. Finally he established the best quality of robust tissue paper which could be read through from the back. The process was patented and launched in about 1780 with a new company to sell copying machines and materials. Once dry, the letter and a sheet of moistened tissue would be fed through a roller press, rather like a wringer, on a board. A screw down press did not give enough pressure. The moist tissue did not smudge the original, which would be sent to the client while the tissue copy was filed. This was the basis of the Boulton & Watt Archive of correspondence which is held in Birmingham City Archives. Better copy inks, eighty years later, worked at lower pressure and gave more copies.

Drawings presented a different problem because large sheets of tissue, even mounted, would be too fragile. Just the line drawing was made and copied onto good quality paper using a wider press, then all dimensions, captions and notes would be added to both original and copy. The original went to the customer; and the copy – a reverse drawing – stayed with Boulton & Watt, whose staff soon became adept at reading these reverse drawings. Eventually the original was returned to the firm and thus the Archive often contains both originals and copies with the reverse ones, which were used in the firm's workshops, being the much more soiled ones.

Many hundreds of copy presses were made and sold by the company, with some travelling abroad to distant customers. In the 1790s, James Watt Junior



**ABOVE:** A press in use on a table

designed a portable copy press for the travelling business man: a fine mahogany box which opened to form a writing slope with drawers for paper, waterproof sheets, bottles of ink and pens. One half of the box contained a copy press so copies could be taken at once and despatched while travelling: the original to the customer and the copy to head office. The Birmingham Collections contains one press of the original design and several of the portable presses.

Better copy ink, based on aniline dyes, was developed in the 1860s. This gave better copies and copy books were then produced with up to a thousand pages of tissue, numbered and with marbled edging. A day's letters could be copied each evening, layered between waterproof sheets and used with a screw-down press. The copies remained difficult to alter so, as late as the 1960s, the Law Society still recommended the process for legal documents as the copy book was difficult to alter or fake, which proved important if needed for evidence in legal actions. ■



Sidney Nolan Aboriginal Art (1986)  
Spray paint on canvas. © Sidney Nolan Trust

# Sidney Nolan

10 June – 3 September 2017

Ikon Gallery, Brindleyplace, Birmingham B1 2HS  
www.ikon-gallery.org / 0121 248 0708  
Tuesday – Sunday and Bank Holidays, 11am–5pm  
Free entry. Registered charity no. 528892

**IKON**

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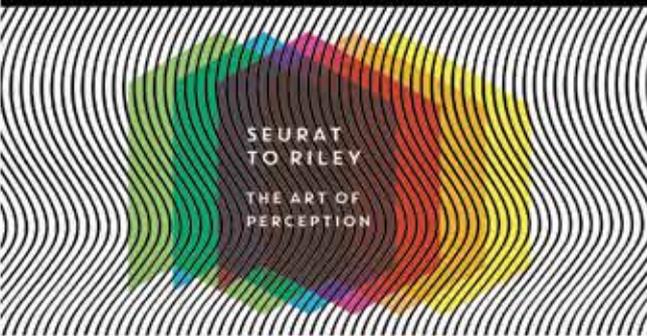
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The Arts, History & Heritage of the Midlands, University of East Anglia, Norwich

SAT 8 JULY – SUN 1 OCTOBER

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# THRESHOLDS

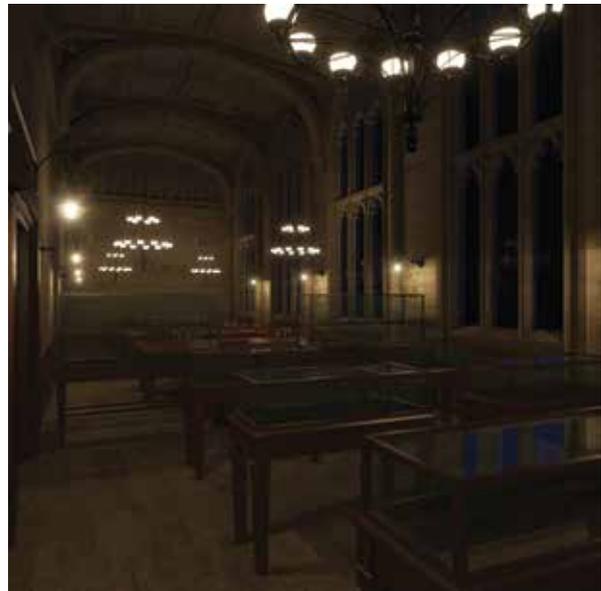
AN EXHIBITION BY MAT COLLISHAW  
WATERHALL, 17 JUNE TO 3 SEPTEMBER 2017

**This summer internationally acclaimed artist, Mat Collishaw brings his pioneering virtual reality artwork *'Thresholds'* to Birmingham. *'Thresholds'* will digitally recreate one of the earliest exhibitions of photography in England, in a fully immersive experience that will include sight, sound and touch.**

The exhibition is a digital evocation of William Henry Fox Talbot's display of Photogenic Drawings in 1839. Presented at King Edward's School in Birmingham, Talbot's images formed part of an extraordinary exhibition of *'Manufactures, Inventions, Models and Philosophical Instruments'* which celebrated cutting edge technological innovation.

Using the latest in virtual reality technology *'Thresholds'* is a portal to the past, transporting visitors back 170 years, and enabling them to walk through a digital reconstruction of the very room in which the 1839 exhibition took place. Wearing Virtual Reality (VR) headsets, visitors will be able to look into a series of vitrines and see examples of Talbot's early photographs drawn from the collections at the National Science and Media Museum, the V&A, and the Bodleian Library. They will be able to touch the vitrines, feel fixtures and mouldings and even sense the heat from a coal fire. The soundscape for *'Thresholds'* includes the sound of demonstrations of the Chartist protesters who rioted in 1839 on the streets of Birmingham, and who will be glimpsed through the digital windows looking out onto New Street. Visitors will share the sense of the wonder, awe and disquiet experienced by those Victorians seeing photographic transcriptions of the world for the very first time.

Collishaw said of the exhibition: *'I have been looking to work with virtual reality for a number of years and it has now become a feasible medium for me to use in an artwork. VR's ability to enable visitors to revisit the birth*



ABOVE: Early stage render of *'Thresholds'*

*of photography – a medium that has come to saturate our lives – is uncanny and compelling.'*

A ticketed exhibition, *'Thresholds'* will also be accompanied by a range of talks and events. Booking information will be posted on the BMAG website.

*'Thresholds'* is supported by Colmore Business District, Birmingham City University, Birmingham Open Media, King Edward's School, The Schools of King Edward's, an Art Fund Jonathan Ruffer Curatorial Grant, Somerset House and Photo London, in collaboration with Blain|Southern and the exhibition's touring partners. ■

**CLUES ACROSS**

- 2. Ancient Greek who got the right angle on his triangle and proved "The square on the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides" (10)
- 7. Help or uphold (7)
- 8. Hungarian composer of 'The Merry Widow' (5)
- 10. Just one hundredth of Winnie the Pooh's wood (4)
- 11. Who concluded that (e = m multiplied by c squared); the basis of nuclear energy?(8)
- 14. Where did Molly Malone wheel her wheelbarrow? (6)
- 16. Unearthed in northern India and transported to Birmingham in the 19th century, this statue of a religious leader is a major BMAG exhibit (6)
- 19. Greenwich \_\_\_\_\_. The time as measured at the meridian (4,4)
- 20. The advice in the old saying was not to put this before the horse (4)
- 23. Sometimes used as the title for a club's junior sports team (5)
- 25. Preliminary study for a work of art (7)
- 26. One who reads the stars to make predictions (10)

- 2. British twentieth century artist whose many works include major examples in Coventry and Chichester cathedrals (5)
- 3. God of thunder (4)
- 4. Present day county where Finn McCool stood to throw stones to build his causeway to Scotland (6)
- 5. Known to some as black gold (3)
- 6. It ripens in October and each one falls individually to the ground on a spinner (3,4)
- 9. One of the units that measure success in cricket (3)
- 12. A good start to a meal but you don't want to be in it (4)
- 13. The place to make money (4)
- 15. They all lived in a yellow submarine (7)
- 17. Is present at (7)
- 18. Describes a friendly Frenchman in his own language (6)
- 19. Principal storage facility for Birmingham Museums Trust (3 initials)
- 21. A very friendly Frenchman may even find his word for love (5)
- 22. Brothers Grimm amphibian changed back to a Prince by a Princess (4)
- 24. Form of address to knights of an order of chivalry (3)

**CLUES DOWN**

- 1. Powder originally formulated, produced and sold by a chemist in Digbeth. It is used to make a pouring sauce for desserts (7)

1		2		3		4		5		6		
7								8				9
10					11			12				
				13								
14		15					16					17
						18						
19									20	21		
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23				24		25						
	26											

**ANSWERS** ACROSS: 2. Pythagoras 7. Support 8. Lehar 10. Acre 11. Einstein 14. Dublin 16. Buddha 19. Mean Time 20. Cart 23. Colts 25. Cartoon 26. Astrologer DOWN: 1. Custard 2. Piper 3. Thor 4. Antrim 5. Oil 6. Ash Seed 9. Run 12. Soup 13. Mint 15. Beatles 17. Attends 18. Amical 19. MCC 21. Amour 22. Frog 24. Sir

For events which need to be pre-booked, bookings can be made by calling 0121 348 8038 or via the website ([www.birminghammuseums.org.uk](http://www.birminghammuseums.org.uk)) unless alternative details are given.



Chamberlain Square, Birmingham, B3 3DH

Open Saturday-Thursday: 10am-5pm and Friday:  
10:30am-5pm. Tel: 0121 348 8000. FREE entry

From Renaissance masterpieces to Egyptian mummies, 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; the Mini Museum, specially designed for little visitors; 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 Art West Midlands 2017

*Until 14 May 2017. Waterhall. Free entry.* Showcasing some of the most exciting emerging artists in the region, 'New Art West Midlands 2017' gives an insight into the latest trends and concerns in contemporary art.

The exhibition provides a vital platform to exhibit the work of artists who have graduated from the region's five university art schools - Birmingham City, Coventry, Staffordshire, Wolverhampton and Worcester, as well as, for the first time, Hereford College for the Arts.

The bright and bold exhibition includes a series of works of another-worldly nature such as Jess Maxfield's psychedelic digital landscape billboard and Lisa Nash's sculptural installation *The Circle of Nature* (2016) which includes a giant rabbit with 'Alice in Wonderland' allusions.

These join Yazmin Boyle's formalist sculpture 'Orbita' (2016) and Rob Hamp's interventions produced on site in response to the interior architecture and pillars of the Waterhall Gallery. Colour and abstraction are explored in sculpture by Bruno Grilo and painting by Pamela Fletcher and Kerry Farrell. Anthropomorphic sculpture by Damian Massey

Below: *I Want! I Want!* - Rachel Maclean, 'Feed Me', 2015. Courtesy the artist.  
Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London



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contrasts with artistic responses to technology by Gemma Ford, Henry Rice and Zecheng Hao whilst Natalie Seymour's photographic collages of an abandoned building resonate with Birmingham's ever-changing landscape. Lorna Brown's pinhole and embroidered photographs and Renata Juroszova's paintings of female spaces fuse with Poppy Twist's large-scale video installation where she explores the uncomfortable implications of the live performance.

'New Art West Midlands 2017' is a multi-site exhibition taking place for the fifth time at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, mac Birmingham, Wolverhampton Art Gallery and new for 2017, Worcester City Art Gallery.

This exhibition has been financially supported by Arts Council England, the six regional art schools and the regional visual arts network New Art West Midlands. Sponsored by CASS Art.

#### **We Built This City**

*Until 28 May 2017. Free entry.* 'We Built This City' tells the story of the contribution of the Irish community to Birmingham. Irish labourers and navies have worked on constructions from Spaghetti Junction to The Rotunda, shaping both the city's built environment and its identity.

Birmingham's Irish Association have been collecting oral histories, objects and images to create an exhibition that brings the Irish contribution to life. Free community exhibition.

#### **I Want! I Want!: Art & Technology**

*Until 1 October 2017. Gas Hall. Free entry.* This exhibition features work by artists made over the last 20 years who have all been influenced by the rapid

development of technology. The approach of each of the 26 artists and collectives to their practice is different, resulting in a rich and contrasting view of the world and the culture that surrounds us.

The artists have used computer animation, video, computer graphics, audio, photography, drawing and gaming technology to create films, moving image, sculptures, paintings, interactive games and small and large scale drawings. The artworks themselves tackle a range of themes such as human relationships and behaviour, surveillance and the habits of modern society.

The title is inspired by 'I Want! I Want!', an etching created by the artist William Blake over two hundred years ago. It depicts a tiny figure standing before a celestial ladder that leads up to the crescent moon. The image acts as a metaphor for humankind's ability to dream and turn ideas into reality.

Works selected date from the mid-1990s to the present day and are drawn from the Arts Council Collection, Birmingham's museum collection and other public and private collections.

'I Want! I Want!' is part of the Arts Council Collection National Partnership Programme which sees four major UK galleries working together to curate, host, and share a series of exciting and innovative new exhibitions with works drawn from the Arts Council Collection. The National Partner venues are Birmingham Museums Trust, Walker Art Gallery, Yorkshire Sculpture Park and Towner Gallery, Eastbourne.



75-80 Vyse Street, Hockley, Birmingham, B18 6HA. Open all year round. Tuesday-Saturday: 10:30am-5pm. Closed Sunday and Monday except Bank Holidays. Free entry for Friends. Tour charges apply to non-members.

Step back in time to a perfectly preserved jewellery >

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Left: *New Art West Midlands 2017*  
Yasmin Boyle, 'Orbita', 2016



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.

#### **Verity Milligan**

*Until 29 July 2017. Free entry.* This exhibition showcases fifteen stunning images of iconic Birmingham locations by renowned photographer Verity Milligan. This is Verity's first solo exhibition in the city of Birmingham. Verity's images aim to showcase the best that Birmingham has to offer and this exhibition gives people the chance to see the city through her lens. Prints of the photographs will be available to purchase in the museum gift shop.

#### **Silver Pendant Jewellery Workshop**

*24 June 2017. Adult: £50.* Join designer maker Grace Page to make a stylish and unique silver pendant using simple techniques and learn new skills in jewellery making. This workshop is suitable for adults only. Tickets: £50 per person, cost includes materials and refreshments. Pre-booking is essential. To book phone 0121 348 8263 or book online.



**ASTON HALL**

*Trinity Road, Aston, Birmingham, B6 6JD. Opening times: Open Tuesday – Sunday (and bank holiday Mondays): 11am – 4pm. Free entry for Friends. Charges apply to non-members. 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.

#### **Picture This - Family Drawing Tour**

*31 May 2017. 11:30am-12:30pm and 1:30pm-2:30pm. Adult: £8.00, Child: £3.00*

Tap into your inner artist and join us for an exciting and interactive drawing exploration of Aston Hall. Find out about some of the people who lived and visited Aston Hall in the past and the secrets hidden in their portraits. Awaken your creativity by having a go at some of our drawing challenges!

An active way to explore the house and portraits inside, this event is suitable for children aged 6-12 and accompanying adults. This experience is not suitable for adults not accompanying children. This event will continue for approximately 45 minutes – 1 hour and we will be venturing upstairs together.

Please arrive in good time to begin your exploration of Aston Hall at either 11:30am or 1:30pm. Our tearoom and gift shop are open from 11am until 4pm. Your ticket includes the event and general entrance into Aston Hall. Spaces are limited, pre-booking is essential. Tickets are non-refundable.



**BLAKESLEY HALL**

*Blakesley Road, Yardley, Birmingham, B25 8RN. Opening times: Open Tuesday – Sunday (and bank holiday Mondays), 11am – 4pm. Free entry for Friends. 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,

## Far Left: Falconry at Blakesley Hall

family trails and activities programme, Blakesley Hall is the ideal location for a family day out.

### Tudor Weekend

28 - 29 May 2017. 11am - 4pm. Adult: £7.00, Child: £3.00.

A weekend of Tudor fun as re-enactors Sir Robert Cecil's Men visit Blakesley Hall delivering talks, drama and demonstrations. Have a go at Tudor games, Feather Quill pen writing, and Tudor dancing. Also listen to traditional Tudor musicians in the Hall and there will be the opportunity to dress up as a Tudor for children. Activities include: Tudor Music & Dancing, Tudor Travelling Camp, Sword Fighting, Costumed Tours of Blakesley Hall, performance of Shakespeare's *'Richard III'* and of the battle scenes from Shakespeare's *'Henry V'*.

### Falconry Day

18 June 2017. 11am - 4pm. Adult: £3.00, Child: £2.00.

Visit Blakesley Hall and take the opportunity to get really close to some seriously impressive Birds of Prey. Buzzards, owls, hawks, kites and even vultures take to the air in spectacular flying displays. Flying displays are at 11:30am, 1pm and 3pm. Also learn about Falconry with some fascinating facts, a quiz and falconry themed trails.

### Sense & Sensibility at Blakesley Hall

8 - 9 July 2017. 5pm - 7pm. Adult £12.00, child/concession: £8.00. The Crescent Theatre visits Blakesley Hall to perform Jane Austen's classic *'Sense and Sensibility'*. Performances will take place out in the peaceful Blakesley gardens on a (hopefully) warm July summer's evening.

The performance will start at 5pm, there will be a short interlude halfway through and the performance will end around 7pm. There is a limited number of tickets for these performances and this event will sell out. You can book tickets by calling us 0121 348 8120 or via the Crescent Theatre website.

Please note: There is very limited outside seating for this performance. The audience area will be on the lawns. We recommend you bring your own picnic blankets/ folding chairs for this performance. This event takes place outside and is therefore weather dependent.



## SAREHOLE MILL

*Cole Bank Road, Hall Green, Birmingham, B13 0BD. Opening times: Wednesday - Sunday: 11am - 4pm. Open bank holiday Mondays and Tuesdays in School Holidays: 11am - 4pm. Free entry for Friends. 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.

### Victorian Day

16 July 2017. Adult: £6.00, Concession: £4.00, Child: £3.00. Join us for a day of good old Victorian fun! See the millers making flour in the water-mill, and join in the crafts for children and outdoor fun and games.



## SOHO HOUSE

*Soho Avenue, off Soho Road, Handsworth, Birmingham, B18 5LB. Opening times: Wednesday - Thursday (and the first Sunday of the month), 11am - 4pm. Open some bank holiday Mondays and for special events see What's On (prices may vary). Free entry for Friends. Charges apply to non-members.*

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.



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

### **Costumed Tour of Soho House**

*29 May 2017. Tours at 11:30am, 1pm and 2:30pm. £10 per person.* Join us for a special costumed guided tour of the house and a unique chance to see the roof. Explore the elegant Georgian home of Birmingham's foremost industrialist Matthew Boulton. Meet our costumed guides, get hands-on with objects from the past, and view part of the museum not normally accessible to visitors.

Tours at 11:30am, 1pm and 2:30pm. Admission: £10.00 per ticket. No concessions available. Book tickets online or phone 0121 348 8263.



### **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.

### **Medieval Open Day**

*30 July 2017. 12pm - 4pm. Free event.* Join us for a day of medieval fun! See knights do battle on the ruins, learn about the medieval history of the castle and medieval remedies, take part in craft activities, and more. Free event.



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

*Open daily: 10am - 5pm. Half price entry for Friends. Charges apply to non-members.*

Thinktank offers an extraordinary, fun-packed day out for all the family. From steam engines to a talking robot, 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.

### **Now Open! Thinktank Ichthyosaur and Marine Worlds 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! Find out about this giant swimming reptile and other creatures who live in the sea in the new Marine Worlds Gallery.



*25 Dollman Street, Birmingham, B7 4RQ*

The Museum Collections Centre is where 80% of Birmingham's collections is 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 please visit: [www.birminghammuseums.org.uk](http://www.birminghammuseums.org.uk). To book for events, please call the Gas Hall reception on 0121 348 8038 or visit the website unless alternative details are given.**

# THE SMETHWICK ENGINE

## THE WORLD'S OLDEST WORKING STEAM ENGINE

**As a leading region during the Industrial Revolution Birmingham's collection houses many artefacts of great importance to industrial heritage. The Smethwick Engine, currently housed at Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum, is the world's oldest working steam engine.**

It was presented to the Birmingham Museum of Science and Industry in 1959 and was housed in a permanent display in the Engineering Hall, the first in Britain that regularly steamed engines for public display. In 2001 the Smethwick Engine was relocated to Thinktank where it can be visited all year round. As well as being the oldest working steam engine in the world, the engine worked for 112 years and still has many of its original parts. The Engine is a Watt Steam Engine that was designed for the Birmingham Canal Navigation Company and was installed at Smethwick Summit in 1779.

In 2014 the Smethwick Engine was awarded the Engineering Heritage Award by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers. It can be seen on level zero of Thinktank amongst other Industrial artefacts in our collection. In the Boulton and Watt display at Thinktank visitors are able to hear and read the story of how the pioneers met, how they built up a world-renowned engineering business, and how this influenced the design of steam engines.

It is wonderful to have such a significant industrial artefact under our care. However, due to restoration works needed, we are no longer able to display the engine in steam operation. We are currently applying to a number of Trusts and Foundations for support towards the costs of making this possible, which are currently estimated at £50,000. We received a generous anonymous donation last year which has significantly helped towards raising the funds required. The work will be carried out by specialist organisations and our award-winning in-house conservation team.

On 5 January 2019 it will be the 250th anniversary of Watt's patent on the separate condenser, and on 25 August 2019 it will be the 200th anniversary of Watt's



**ABOVE:** The cylinder and valve gear at Thinktank. These components date from the second major rebuild about 1850

death in Handsworth in the West Midlands. We intend to steam the engine to celebrate the outstanding contribution James Watt provided to industrial heritage and to the city of Birmingham. Boulton & Watt Steam Engines guided engineering into a new era, making a lasting and significant contribution to the industrial heritage of the city. Once restored, we aim to keep the Smethwick Engine as a working exhibit at Thinktank, demonstrating how the engine operated daily as it would have over 200 years ago, to inspire learning and innovation, and to bring generations together – representing a story of the industrial history of the region. ■

**If you would like any further information about the Smethwick Engine, or if you would like to make a donation towards the project please contact the Development Team on 0121 348 8292 or email: [development@birminghammuseums.org.uk](mailto:development@birminghammuseums.org.uk).**

# A BREATH OF FRESH: AIR

**The inside story on a new Art Fair in Cheltenham from co-founder Anthony Wardle.**

*'If there's one word to describe Fresh: Art Fair it's accessible... from practical, emotional and financial perspectives', says Anthony. 'We want to help newcomers to contemporary art to understand what they see and find what they love, at a price they can afford. We aim to help enthusiasts to expand their boundaries and maybe dip a toe into collecting. And we set out to find fresh galleries and artists so that established collectors can discover new talent.'*

With 45 leading UK galleries and 5,000 prints, paintings and sculptures to browse and buy, there's certainly something for everyone.



And there are some very special artists. As a Picasso muse in the 1950s, Sylvette David famously became the subject of more than 60 of his paintings and sculptures. Today she is a celebrated watercolourist in her own right and her own name, Lydia Corbett. Her work will be shown at *Fresh: by Bath Gallery*, David Simon Contemporary.

Gerald Laing was one of the greats of British Pop Art. Always distinctive, often controversial and now sadly lost to us, Laing offered a unique artistic commentary on 20th and 21st Century society. His work will be shown by his long time agent, Bath art consultant and dealer, Olivia Connelly.

There'll be no shortage of Cotswold Galleries including John Noott of Broadway showing their own Edward Noott, a distinguished and award-winning Member of The Royal Birmingham Society of Artists; and Priory





**ABOVE:** Anthony and Eleanor Wardle, co-founders of Fresh: **BELOW L-R:** *Blodie* by Paul Wright: Thompson's Gallery, London; *Summertime* by Jose Luis Cena Ruiz: Iona House Gallery; *Pink Roses in Glass* by Jonathan Pocock; *Geese & Cherries* by Alan Halliday: Camburn Fine Art, Chinon, France

Gallery Broadway showing the classical still life work of Belgian painter Tony De Wolf.

Bristol's leading Lime Tree Gallery will show the distinctive figurative work of award-winning Scottish artist Steven Lindsay. From further afield - Chinon in France - Camburn Fine Art will bring the work of Alan Halliday, much collected for his impressionist landscapes and widely recognised as the world's leading artist in live ballet, opera and theatre.

There'll be emerging artists too with New Blood Art demonstrating their unerring ability to spot new talent straight out of art school.

*'There really is something for all tastes and budgets'* confirms Anthony. *'A very broad cross section of genres, media and subjects from traditional landscape and classical still life to*

*expressionist, naïve and abstract. There'll be original prints and paintings, glass, ceramics and small sculptures for a few hundred pounds, and Royal Academicians and famously collected artists for a few thousand. Visitors can see and talk to artists at work, understand their techniques and what drives them. They can soak up the expertise of gallery owners and the fascinating stories of their often eccentric suppliers.'*

*Fresh: Art Fair* is in partnership with Bristol's RWA (The Royal Academy in the West), The Royal Birmingham Society of Artists and Cheltenham's Museum and Gallery, The Wilson. The Fair will support homeless people throughout Gloucestershire through Bristol-based charity St Mungo's.

*Fresh: Art Fair* will be in The Centaur at Cheltenham Racecourse from 12 to 14 May. Only 10 minutes off the M5 with unlimited parking, Fresh: is really easy to get to and there's a shuttle to the town centre if you want to make a day of it. There will be no racing... just art. Tickets are £6 on the door or £6 for two online. ■

Visit: [Freshartfair.net](http://Freshartfair.net)



# IN THE AREA

## BARBER INSTITUTE

University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TS. Tel: 0121 414 7333. [www.barber.org.uk](http://www.barber.org.uk)

### Excavating Empire: Gold, Silver & Bronze in Byzantium

Until 18 March 2018. Discover Byzantium, the once-great empire whose glittering capital was the city of Constantinople (today's Istanbul), through this intriguing exploration of its coinage and economy. Constantinople's majesty astounded visitors from across the medieval world. However, the Byzantine empire was eclipsed in popular imagination by its earlier Roman incarnation and the glory of its Ottoman successor – and its significance is even today still re-emerging. This exhibition reveals the artistic beauty of Byzantium's gold coins, the surprising life-cycle of its silver coins and the curiosities of its bronze. There is a coinciding exhibition *Excavating Empire: David Talbot Rice and the Rediscovery of Byzantium* in the Green Gallery's Print Bay until 11 June 2017.

### Tumbleweed

Until 4 June 2017. The intricately ornamented and gilded historic picture frames that surround so many of the paintings in the Barber's galleries are the starting point for this new sculpture by Hannah Honeywill. An emerging London-based artist and recipient of prestigious Wellcome Trust Arts Award funding, Honeywill combines the exploration of the function and form of everyday items with research into queer theory. After exhibiting in *New Art West Midlands 2016*, she was selected to produce a work in response to the Barber's collection - *Tumbleweed* is the exciting result.

## BIRMINGHAM BACH CHOIR

[www.birmingham.bachchoir.com](http://www.birmingham.bachchoir.com)

### A French Affair

Putting Brexit firmly to one side, Birmingham St Philip's Cathedral will host an all-French programme of music this June, sung by Birmingham Bach Choir and directed by Paul Spicer. The French are a nation of romantics at heart. Their language is a sensual one and their music is often a reflection of this. The concert will be a celebration of all things French from the early sixteenth century to modern times with both well-known and virtually unknown pieces.

The great discovery will be the music of Dominique Phinot, a sixteenth century musician executed for being gay in extremely repressive times. His passionate outpourings and soul-searching affect all who hear and perform his works.

Jean Mouton is another Renaissance composer renowned in his time but now relatively unknown. A sometime priest and later employed at the French court he was most famous for his motets, and fascinatingly is thought to have been in charge of the elaborate musical festivities by the French at the meeting between François I and Henry VIII at the Field of the Cloth of Gold. The programme includes his '*Alleluia, confitemini Domino*', sacred music for four voice parts sung a cappella.

Better known to English audiences is the music of Poulenc and Duruflé, although not perhaps these pieces (*Salve Regina* by Poulenc and the organ piece '*Prelude & Fugue on Alain*' played by Martyn Rawles, organist at Lichfield cathedral and Musical Director of their chamber choir). Together with three motets by Pierre Villette they form a collection of works by twentieth century French masters, all with keenly personal idioms.

But the most well-known and best-loved pieces in the programme will be by Fauré: both his '*Cantique de Jean Racine*' and '*Requiem*'. The '*Requiem*' especially is a long time favourite on BBC's Desert Island Discs (chosen recently by Darcey Bussell, Roald Dahl and Kirsty Young amongst others). Composed and first performed in the late nineteenth century, it is generally thought to contain some of Faure's most beautiful melodies. No one knows for sure, but the work is often attributed to being in memory of his father who died a few years earlier. This work for choir, soloists and orchestra differs from many earlier Catholic masses for the dead in that Fauré is often referred to as a 'religious doubter' and perhaps that is why the work is devoid of the drama and frightening consequences of the Last Judgement. Instead it radiates an astonishingly beautiful peace and calm with the famous '*Pie Jesu*' (soprano solo) and final '*In Paradisium*' movements in particular.

The concert will be held at Birmingham Cathedral on 24 June at 7.30pm. For details and tickets, please visit [www.birmingham.bachchoir.com](http://www.birmingham.bachchoir.com).



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Phone: 01527 62509**



**Saturday 17 June 7.30 pm**  
Pershore Abbey

**Saturday 24th June 7.30 pm**  
St Philip's Cathedral  
Birmingham

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**Paul Spicer - conductor**  
**Birmingham Bach Choir**  
**Martyn Rawles - organ**

Tickets: £15 ( £12.50 conc). Also £8 Gallery (St Phillips only) [www.birminghambach.choir.com](http://www.birminghambach.choir.com)  
or Ticket Officer: 07901 798 442 or St Phillips only THSH Box Office\* Tel: 0121 345 0600

\* booking fee charged



## BIRMINGHAM BACH CHOIR

24 June 2017, 7:30pm  
Birmingham Cathedral

### IKON GALLERY

1 Oozells Square, Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HS.  
Tel: 0121 248 0708. [www.ikon-gallery.org](http://www.ikon-gallery.org). Ikon is open Tuesday to Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays 11am – 5pm.

#### Jean Painlevé

Until 4 June 2017. Ikon presents the first UK solo exhibition of work by French filmmaker Jean Painlevé (1902 – 1989). His moving imagery of marine life, in particular, commanded the respect of many renowned avant-garde artists working in 1920s Paris such as Luis Buñuel, Sergei Eisenstein, Man Ray and Alexander Calder. The exhibition includes a number of seminal films alongside a selection of photographs and jewellery, exemplifying Painlevé's passion for making science accessible. Painlevé was especially taken with cinema's ability to transform microscopy into an experience that audiences could share, condensing and expanding duration in order to demystify processes of the natural world.

His pioneering nature films tend to focus on single organisms, capturing crucial moments in their life cycles, and in doing

so he often expressed his free thinking. Audiences will get the opportunity to experience them for themselves through a screening accompanied by music by the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group.

#### Oliver Beer

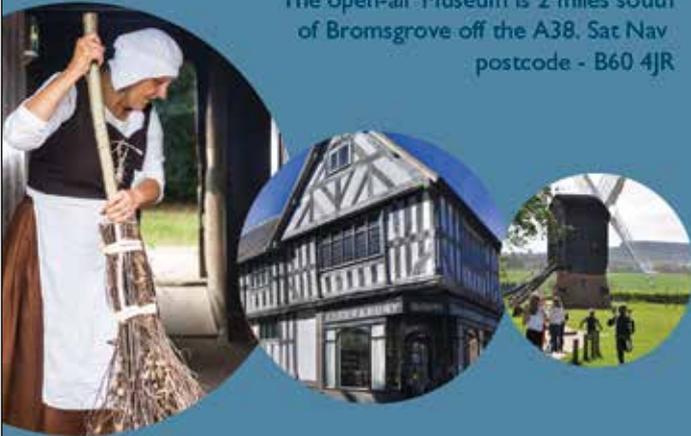
Until 4 June 2017. The second exhibition is the most comprehensive exhibition to date of work by British artist Oliver Beer. Through film and sculpture, with a strong emphasis on sound, it exemplifies Beer's preoccupation with both the physical properties and emotional value of objects. At the heart of this exhibition is a new work, commissioned by Ikon, *Reanimation (I Wanna Be Like You)*, (2017) which is a "re-animation" of a scene from Walt Disney's *Jungle Book*. 2,500 children from Birmingham were involved, from early years until the age of 13, each drawing a single film still put in order of the children's ages, so that the animation becomes increasingly "grown up".

There will be the opportunity to meet Oliver and hear more about his artistic practice on 18 May, 6-7.30pm in a free talk held at Ikon. Tickets must be reserved in advance via Ikon's website or by calling the gallery.



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## WARWICKSHIRE OPEN STUDIOS

17 June - 2 July 2017

*Lucy and Sally Larke Ceramics*

'Follow one of our area Art Trails – Rugby, Stratford, Leamington, Coventry, Warwick and Kenilworth all have excellent trails – or go village-hopping off the beaten track. Pick your favourite type of art and search who's open on a particular day and design your very own itinerary. Our website helps you do this on-the-go via your mobile phone and has lots of great extras such as disabled access details and other facilities for each venue.'

'We also produce a beautiful free brochure which lists all our venues and artists – lots of our visitors hang onto this year on year as it's a great Directory of local artists. Email us direct to receive a free copy: [admin@warwickshireopenstudios.org](mailto:admin@warwickshireopenstudios.org).'

Warwickshire Open Studios is an annual event which has been running since 2002. It is completely run by volunteers who are all artists themselves. ■

### WARWICKSHIRE OPEN STUDIOS

17 June – 2 July 2017. Over 200 Coventry and Warwickshire artists will be opening their doors and inviting you in to enjoy the county's friendliest free visual arts event.

Don Mason, Leader of Warwickshire Open Studios and an exhibiting artist himself said: 'Every summer, hundreds of visitors tell us that Open Studios is a really great day out with art trails to follow, quirky venues to enjoy, cake to eat and a huge variety of excellent art to enjoy from impressive sculptures to fine jewellery, glorious textiles to beautiful functional ceramics.'

'If you've not come across us before, it's a similar idea to Open Gardens, and it's easy to plan a great day out using our friendly website [www.warwickshireopenstudios.org](http://www.warwickshireopenstudios.org) where we list 100s of beautiful homes, studios, historic barns, workmanlike sheds, lovely gardens and other gems for you to visit for free.'

'We've award-winning artists to up-and-coming new faces, artists at work and artists who love to share the way they work. Take a peek behind the scenes, view fascinating 'work in progress' and artists' tools and meet some artists offering you the chance to have a go yourself during the two weeks, or workshops that you can book throughout the year.'

**Make a crafty visit!**

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see website for details

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**Opening Hours:** T: 01432 260694  
Tuesday - Saturday 10am-4pm High Town, Hereford HR1 2AA  
Sunday 11.30am-2.30pm  
E: [herefordmuseums@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:herefordmuseums@herefordshire.gov.uk)  
● [www.facebook.com/herefordmuseums](https://www.facebook.com/herefordmuseums)

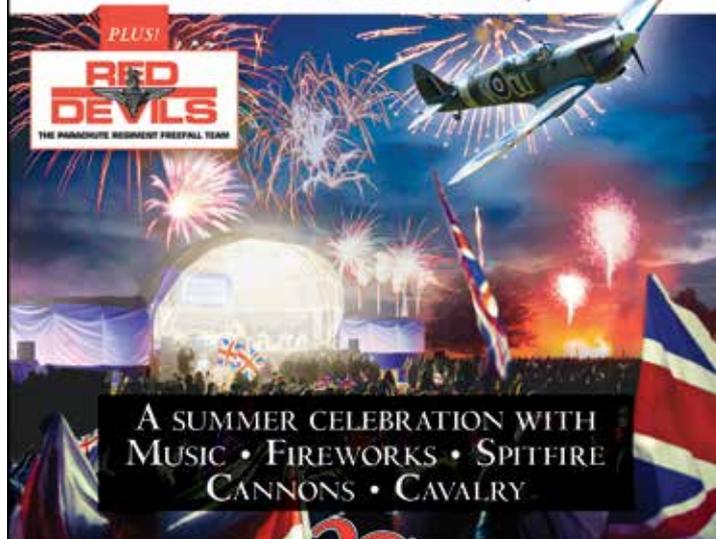
The Black and White House Museum is owned and managed by the Herefordshire Museum Service.



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## ROBERT PERRY: AN ARTIST FROM THE BLACK COUNTRY 20 May - 9 July 2017

A major exhibition by the renowned Black Country painter Robert Perry featuring spectacular views of the West Midlands, and beyond, including a panorama of Wolverhampton specially commissioned for the show.

Robert, a prominent member of the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists, will be at Wolverhampton Art Gallery on **Saturday 3 June** from **2.30pm** as part of a special launch event.

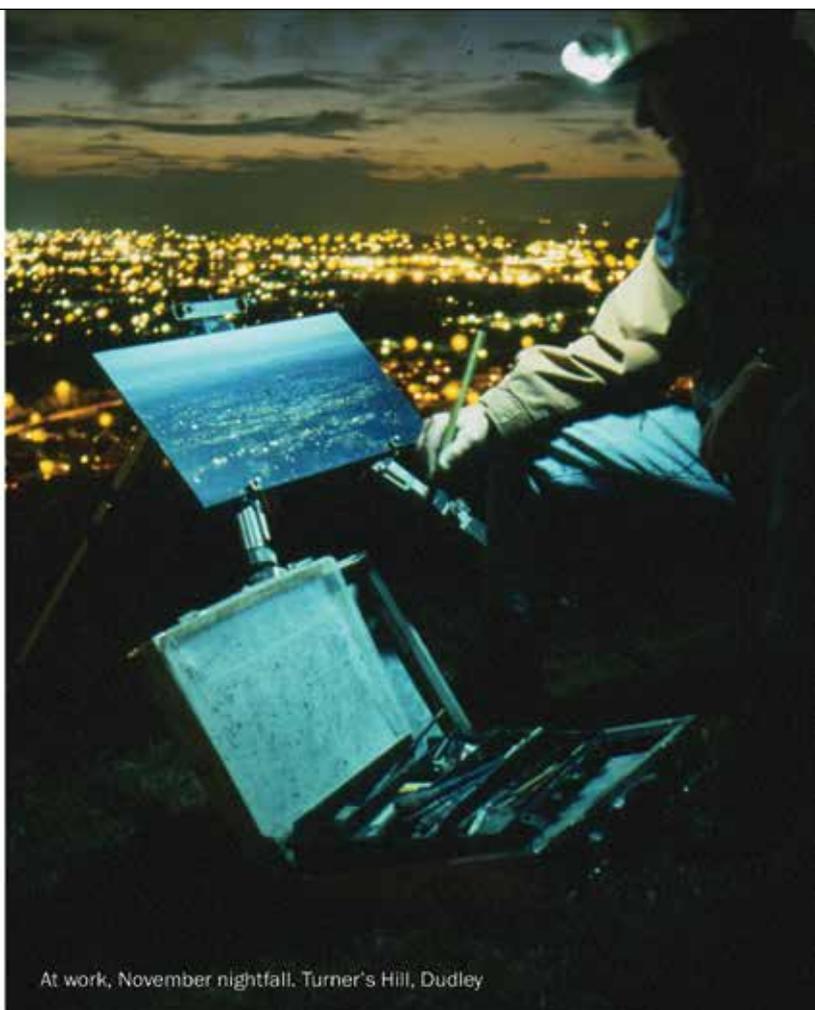
Many of the paintings from the exhibition will be available to purchase through Artifex Gallery, Sutton Coldfield.

### Wolverhampton Art Gallery

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At work, November nightfall. Turner's Hill, Dudley

# THE VERITY MILLIGAN PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION

## AT THE MUSEUM OF THE JEWELLERY QUARTER

BY JILL WARREN

**Iconic images of Birmingham by renowned photographer Verity Milligan are currently on show in the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter. It is Verity's first solo exhibition in Birmingham and the 15 images reflect the local area. Museum Team Manager, Laura Cox discusses the exhibition and the fascinating origins of the Museum.**

Laura has been at the Museum for 9 years and prior to that worked on other Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery Heritage sites. She herself makes jewellery in her spare time and has a background in History of Art so it is for her the perfect job! Her favourite part of the position is meeting the visitors and seeing their genuine enjoyment of the amazing Museum of the Jewellery Quarter and the various exhibitions by local artists. The Museum approached Verity, now a Birmingham local, as part of a new initiative to feature artists from the area in the excellent commercial gallery space available. Laura says many museum visitors are tourists visiting Birmingham and the Jewellery Quarter which is now a 'must see' destination area in the Midlands. A strong Social media platform is being built up to



encourage a younger audience to visit this historic area of the city.

The Museum tells the story of jewellery production in Birmingham over the last 200 years as well as exploring the Jewellery Quarter as it is today. Up until the 1980's it was a wholesale trading area but has now developed into a shopping and tourism venue. The building was originally the Smith and Pepper jewellery manufacturing firm which had been trading since 1899 and when the proprietors retired in 1981 they simply ceased trading and locked the door, unaware they would be leaving a time capsule for future generations. The Museum of the Jewellery Quarter is built around a perfectly preserved jewellery workshop offering a unique glimpse of working life in Birmingham's famous Jewellery Quarter. Visitors can still watch jewellery makers at work today on a guided tour and two of the galleries in the Museum then continue the story. One tells the 'Story of the Jewellery Quarter' which explores the history and development of the area and the other is 'Earth's Riches' which displays jewellery made from natural materials from across the world. Find out why the close-knit trade became established over 200 years ago and how Birmingham got its own Assay Office in these interactive galleries.

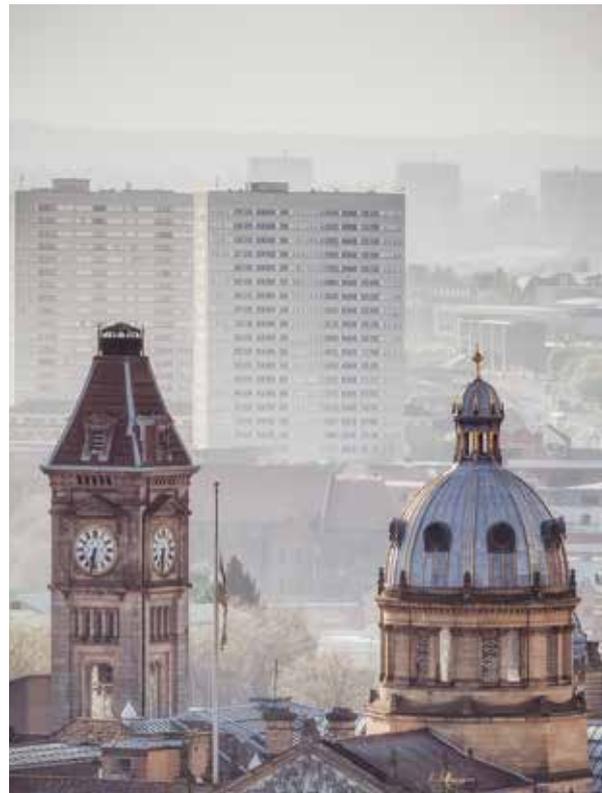
Verity's stunning photographs are displayed in the new commercial gallery opened for the Museum's 25th



Anniversary year (1992- 2017). She already had a strong following in Birmingham and these images of the city centre and the Jewellery Quarter are proving a great attraction to both visitors and locals alike. Laura Cox chose the 'St Paul's In Autumn' image as her favourite; it is the Jewellery Quarter's church where many jewellers are buried and many more still worship there.

Verity's images aim to showcase the best that Birmingham has to offer and this exhibition gives people the chance to see the city through her lens. Prints of Verity's photographs are available to purchase in the museum gift shop priced from just £25 so make an ideal memento of a visit to the Jewellery Quarter. The gift shop and Smith & Pepper Tea Room are open to the public and free; museum entrance is charged for and includes a tour of the factory. The exhibition runs until 29th July 2017. See the website for more details and opening hours [www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/jewellery](http://www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/jewellery). ■

*Museum of the Jewellery Quarter,  
75-80 Vyse Street, Birmingham B18 6HA*



**TOP:** *Cherry Blossom at the Ikon Gallery* © Verity E. Milligan Photography

**ABOVE:** *Birmingham Museum* © Verity E. Milligan Photography

**LEFT:** *St Pauls Cathedral* © Verity E. Milligan Photography

# ERASMUS DARWIN HOUSE

BY JILL WARREN

**Erasmus Darwin House is a stunning Grade I listed Georgian house with a Palladian front within the confines of Lichfield Cathedral Close. As well as being the home and workplace of 18th-century physician, poet and inventor, Erasmus Darwin, it has previously served as a residence for cathedral officials and as a women's shelter. Associate Manager, Marie Giraud, talks about the history of the house, its famous resident and the current role it plays within the city.**

Marie describes the Cathedral Close as a 'village encircling the Cathedral' which is how it must have seemed to Erasmus Darwin when it was the family home from 1756-1781. Doctor, inventor and published poet Erasmus Darwin (1731 - 1802) with his extraordinary scientific insight in physics, chemistry, geology, meteorology and all aspects of biology, may have laid the foundations for his more famous grandson - evolutionary biologist Charles Darwin - to blossom. The house, now a flourishing museum, was a magnet to many leading Midland industrialists and thinkers during the Georgian era where they are thought to have gathered and shared groundbreaking ideas. It was the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution.

The house was subsequently used as an annexe and residential home for cathedral staff and then as a women's refuge but was vandalised and fell into complete disrepair

until 1994 when a concerned group of doctors and cathedral officials started planning renovations. Over the next five years, working with the Cathedral and with the help of funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Europe, this £1.25 million project came to fruition. The original house, upgraded from a timber frame by Erasmus Darwin, opened as a museum with borrowed artefacts, three main exhibition rooms, a library, conference facilities and a herb garden on 9 April 1999.

The museum is independent and a registered charity which relies mainly on donations and income from hiring out function rooms. In addition they receive a small amount of funding from the Local Authorities and support from various historical societies. The museum has around 60 volunteers including students, retired doctors, scientists and local residents who actively undertake many of the tasks involved in the

**TOP RIGHT:**

Erasmus Darwin House

**FAR RIGHT:**

'Portrait of Erasmus Darwin' by Joseph Wright of Derby (1770)



day to day running of the building. The house was home to a volunteer, now 90 years old, whilst her husband was organist at Lichfield Cathedral. Her two sons were born in the house and she has many happy memories of the museum as a family home. The Friends of Erasmus Darwin House is an active group which organises regular events and socials to raise funds for the running of the museum and new projects. The Friends are continually looking for new people and support. If you are interested in joining them, please use the Erasmus Darwin website to find out more.

Current projects include the development of the Herb Garden to showcase Mrs Darwin's culinary herbs and Dr Darwin's medicinal plants, which it is believed were used in treating his patients. It is a beautiful and peaceful space to sit and wonder at the huge variety of plants and herbs on show, all with a history behind them and a credit to the dedicated volunteers who maintain it.

Cellar tours take place on the first and third Saturday of the month, which provide an interesting insight into 13th Century life in Lichfield as the house dates back to medieval times.

Following last year's 250th anniversary celebrations of the Lunar Society, the house returns with another successful programme of talks and events held on the



eve of the full moon exploring the legacy of the Lunar Society. More details can be found on their website.

*10 May – Lunar Event: Full Moon Cheese & Wine*

Join best-selling author Wendy Moore as she returns to Lichfield with her newly-anticipated book, *The Mesmerist*.

*9-11 June – Lunar Talk and Event:*

*18th Century Gardens Weekend*

A talk on the global plant trade in the 18th Century by Elaine Mitchell (University of Birmingham) followed by children's trails, plant stall and garden tours all weekend.

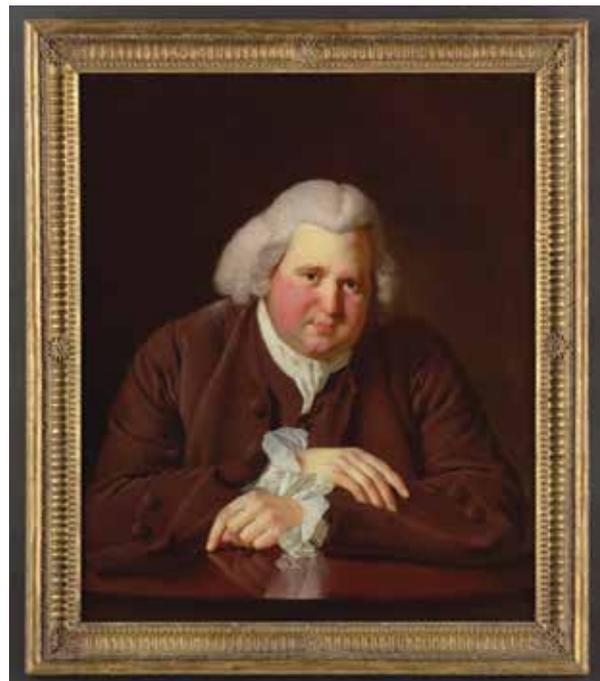
*5 October – Lunar Seminar Day and*

*Withering Celebration Dinner*

Conference on Collectors, Collections and Collaborations in the 18th Century followed by a separate dinner and talk on the life and times of William Withering in his former home at Edgbaston Hall (Edgbaston Golf Club). ■

**Details of all these events can be found on the museum website: [www.erasmusdarwin.org](http://www.erasmusdarwin.org)**

*The museum is free entry, 7 days a week, until the end of October from 11am – 5pm. Regular trains from University, Birmingham New Street and other cross city stations run directly to Lichfield City station. Erasmus Darwin House, Beacon Street, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 7AD. 01543 306260*



## MAY

-  Wednesday 10 # Compton Verney: Art Gallery & Park
-  Tuesday 23 \*\* Burghley House, Lincolnshire

## JUNE

-  Tuesday 6 \* *'Pioneers of Photography in Birmingham'* – Pete James
-  Friday 9 # Bodnant Garden, Conwy
-  Tuesday 20 \* *'Determining the life expectancy of the William Morris Holy Grail Tapestries'* – Jane Thompson Webb
-  Saturday 24 \* *'Michelangelo & Sebastiano'* at the National Gallery
-  Tuesday 27 \* *'Clean Water in the Black Country: A Hidden History'* – David Moore

## JULY

-  Thursday 6 \* *'Odyssey Dramatic Presentation: Lunatic Astronomy'* – Andrew Lound
-  Wednesday 12 \* Friends Annual Lecture: *'Birmingham's True Genius – Francis Eginton'* – Martin Ellis
-  Thursday 13 \* Southwell Minster and The Workhouse
-  Tuesday 18 \* *'I Want! I Want!: Art & Technology'* – Deborah Smith

## AUGUST

-  Friday 11 \* Behind the Scenes Tours in Stratford
-  Tuesday 15 \* *'It's a Dog's Life'* – Jane Howell

## SEPTEMBER

-  Tuesday 5 \* Elton Hall & Gardens
-  Wednesday 13 ++ *'The Festival of Britain 1951 and its Design Legacy'* – Dr Sally Hoban
-  Tuesday 19 \* *'John Cobb's 400 miles per hour on four wheels'* – Jim Andrew
-  Tuesday 19 \* Friends AGM
-  Saturday 23 – + Weekend Away: The Art & Historic Houses of Greenwich & South East London
- Tuesday 26

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

\*\* Fully booked, sorry!

# Included in a previous mailing, but places are still available. Please contact the Friends' office if you would like to book a place.

+ No application forms for this event. Please contact Barbara Preece to book your place.

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

### EVENT KEY



ANNUAL EVENT



DAYTIME TALK



EVENING EVENT



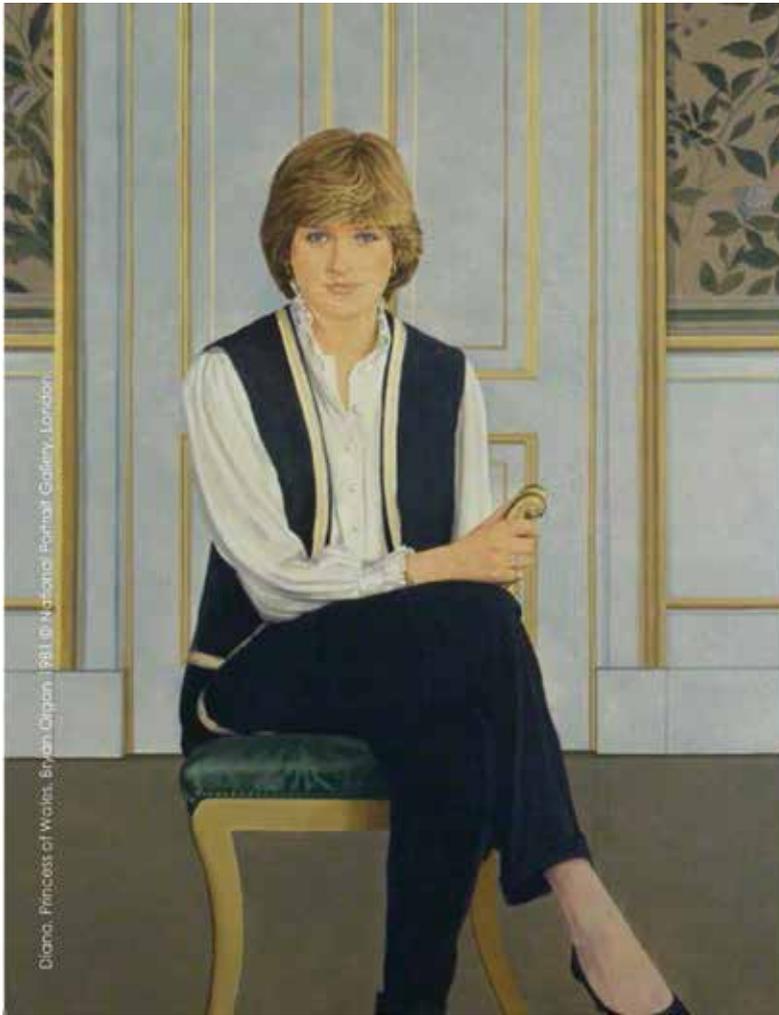
GUIDED TOUR



OUTING



SCIENCE SHORT



Diana, Princess of Wales, Bryan Organ, 1981. © National Portrait Gallery, London.

# Herbert

Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

3 February – 4 June 2017

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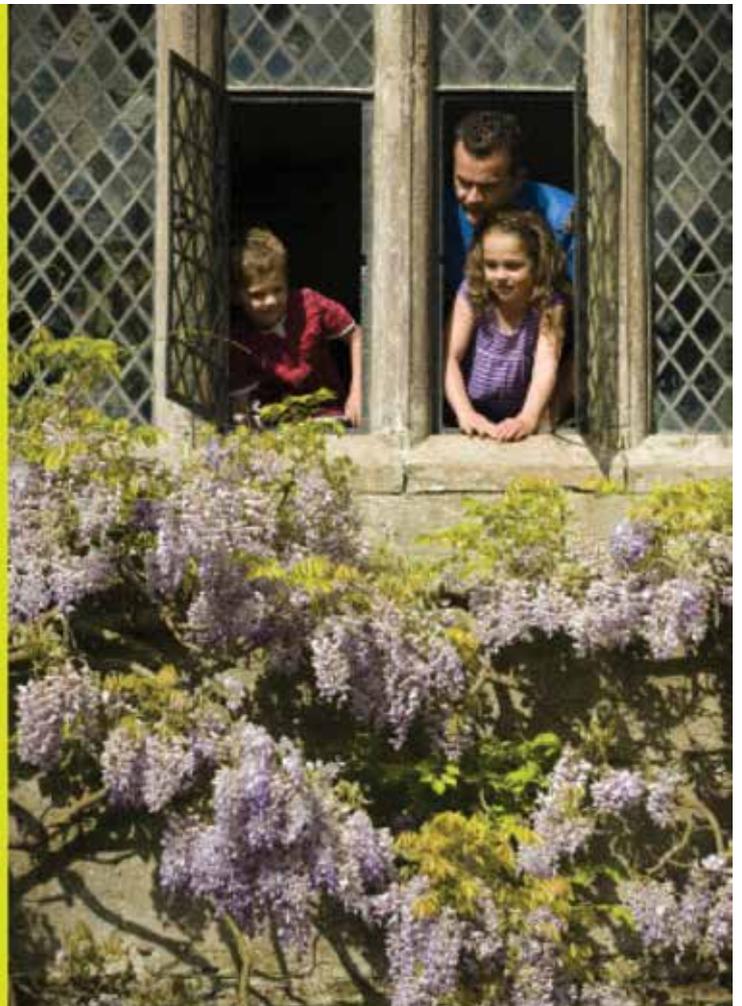
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Located just two minutes' walk from Worcester Cathedral, this wonderful museum will transport you to the start of manufacturing in 1751 where you will learn about the workers, famous customers, a world class industry and meet skilled craftsmen who regularly work in the galleries.



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