

ARTEFACTS



Friends of
Birmingham
Museums

FEBRUARY - APRIL 2019

BAFM

MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATION
OF FRIENDS OF MUSEUMS

The head of an old bearded man - 912499 - Leonardo Da Vinci, Royal Collection Trust/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2019

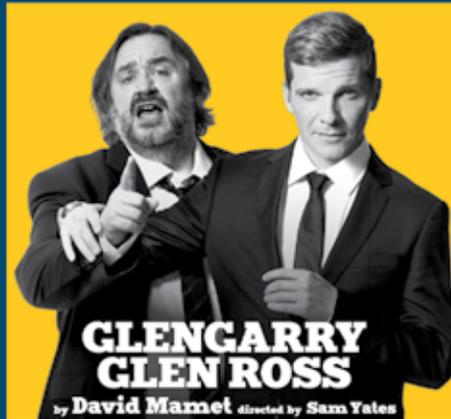
FRIENDS OF BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS MAGAZINE

COMING SOON TO THE ALEXANDRA



TUE 12 – SAT 16 FEB

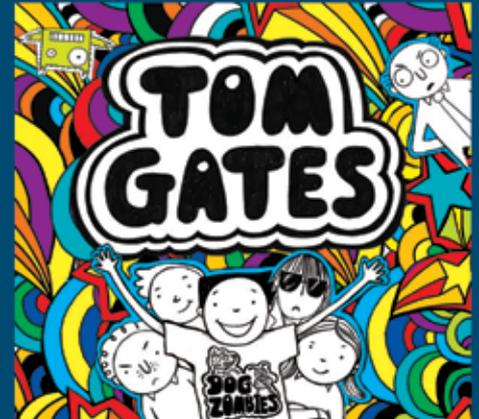
Ⓛg Thu 14 Feb 7.30pm



**GLENGARRY
GLEN ROSS**

by David Mamet directed by Sam Yates

MON 18 – SAT 23 FEB



WED 13 – SAT 16 MAR



**american
IDIOT**

TUES 9 – SAT 13 APR



MON 29 APR – SAT 4 MAY

Ⓛg Wed 1 May 7.30pm



**PETER JAMES'
THE HOUSE
ON COLD HILL**

MON 6 – SAT 11 MAY

Ⓛg Wed 8 May 2.30pm



MON 13 – SAT 25 MAY



**THRILLER
Live**

MON 3 – SAT 8 JUN



TUES 11 – SAT 15 JUN

THE
ALEXANDRA
EST. SINCE 1901

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ATG TICKETS BOX OFFICE 0844 871 3011* | [ATGTICKETS.COM/Birmingham](https://www.atgtickets.com/Birmingham)

*Calls cost up to 7p per minute, plus your phone company's access charge.

CONTENTS

HELP GET THE
WATERWHEEL
TURNING AT
SAREHOLE MILL

PAGE 16



CHAIR'S OBSERVATIONS	04
FRIENDS' EVENTS	06
NEWS FROM THE OFFICE	10
NEWS FROM THE VOLUNTEERS	11
REPORT FROM BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS	12
FEATURE: ART THROUGH THE AGES	14
FEATURE: HELP GET THE WATERWHEEL TURNING AT SAREHOLE MILL	16
FEATURE: REVIEW OF THE FRIENDS' CURATOR TOUR OF ASTON HALL'S 'WALLS HAVE EARS'	18
FEATURE: RBSA GALLERY PHOTOGRAPHIC PRIZE EXHIBITION	20
BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS - WHAT'S ON	22
IN THE AREA	28
EXHIBITIONS FOCUS: LEONARDO DA VINCI: A LIFE IN DRAWING	34
FOCUS ON LOCAL CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS: THE COFFIN WORKS	36
FRIENDS' DIARY	38
FRIENDS' CROSSWORD	39

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ON THE COVER

The head of an old bearded man - 912499 - Leonardo Da Vinci, Royal Collection Trust/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2019 from *Leonardo Da Vinci: A Life in Drawing*. See page 34 for more information.





SOURCES OF PRIDE

BY DAVID FOSTER



Staffordshire Hoard helmet reconstruction
© Birmingham Museums Trust

As well as postponing the redevelopment of BMAG, the forthcoming Birmingham City Council budget threatens drastic cuts to its cultural spending. The major Birmingham cultural icons – the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Birmingham Rep, Birmingham Royal Ballet, Town Hall Symphony Hall, etc – are facing drastic cuts to their already reduced council grants for the forthcoming year. The threatened organisations are all seeking public support in the budget consultation process. No doubt many of you will have found your own way to make your own views known.

Birmingham Museums Trust has one more year of an agreed grant schedule to run, so is probably being spared this time around. But the threat is clear for future years. As Friends, and supporters of the Birmingham Museums, we will be ready with sharpened arguments to support BMT if it has to face a similar challenge in future years. We can feel great sympathy for the council as it looks for ways in which to cope with large reductions in its grants from central government. And deciding amongst the competing priorities for council spending is a huge challenge. But the Council has a legal, as well as a moral duty, to protect its Museum

collections, which it holds on behalf of its citizens. In any case, impoverishing the city culturally will make Birmingham a much poorer place, both socially and economically; and reduce its tourism appeal.

Now that we know that BMAG will remain open for the next few years, we can look more positively on the prospects for forthcoming exhibitions. The programme of Arts Council Collection partnership exhibitions, which the Friends has been proud to have supported since 2016, is reaching a climax. The current Gas Hall show - *'Women, Power, Protest'* - is very challenging but also hugely rewarding. We have been privileged to see some truly outstanding modern art in the course of this three-year programme. One of the items in the *'Coming Out'* show in early 2018 was part of the 2018 Turner Prize-winning entry by Charlotte Prodger. For me, her video work *'BRIDGET'*, which featured in our show, was a particularly memorable, captivating and impressionist experience.

I am also proud of the contribution which the Friends made to the Dippy show. The comprehensive display of taxidermy birds from Birmingham's collections, which was the result of much needed conservation work supported by the Friends, resulted in the largest display of taxidermy since the opening of Thinktank. Did the other Dippy hosts have as comprehensive a display of birds (aka dinosaur successors)?

And, as a final flourish in the year of Dippy, the Staffordshire Hoard has presented us with a major surprise. There was always a suspicion of a helmet somewhere in amongst the 4000+ fragments. If nothing else, the cheek pieces were a tantalising pointer. Now Birmingham Museum Trust's conservation and research teams have excelled themselves. The resulting Saxon helmet recreations (one in the Hoard gallery at BMAG, the other at the Potteries Museum) are a stunning sight. Naturally a good deal of the recreation - particularly the plume! - is conjecture, but so much of the elements were there to be seen amongst the fragments. What outstanding jigsaw players our teams must be!

With our contributions to many of these successes, we Friends can be satisfied that we have fulfilled our role in 2018. We shall be as successful in the coming years, too. ■



2019/20 SEASON

Find out details of our exciting new season, including Peter Wright's spectacular *Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker*.

Details at brb.org.uk/2019-20season

BRB FRIENDS

Join BRB Friends for priority booking in Birmingham and a host of other benefits. Only £4* per month!

Details at brb.org.uk/friends

*Correct at time of going to press

Photos © Bella Kotak

CURATOR'S TOUR OF 'WOMEN POWER PROTEST'

Date: Friday 8 February 2019

Speaker: Emalee Beddoes-Davis, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art

Cost: £9

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

NB. This event was advertised in the November 2018 - January 2019 edition of Artefacts. If you have already applied to attend this event, please do not reapply.

NB. Guided tours are for members only.

Marking a century since the first women won the right to vote, Women Power Protest brings together modern and contemporary artworks from the Arts Council Collection and Birmingham's collection to celebrate female artists who have explored protest, social commentary and identity in their work.

Showcasing pieces by celebrated artists including Susan Hiller, Lubaina Himid, and Mary Kelly, as well as sometimes controversial artists such as Sam Taylor-Johnson, Sonia Boyce, and Margaret Harrison, the exhibition will not shy away from difficult subjects, nor underplay the genius behind these artworks. Inspired by the bold work of feminist artists and activists, *Women Power Protest* will raise awareness, provoke debate and ask just how much has changed for women?

Join curator Emalee Beddoes-Davis for a tour of key-pieces in the exhibition, as well as behind the scenes information about the research, collaborative curatorial process and the technical work that went into developing the exhibition.

MAKING 'WOMEN POWER PROTEST'

Date: Tuesday 12 February 2019, 6:30-8:30pm

Speaker: Emalee Beddoes-Davis, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art

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

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

NB. This event was advertised in the November 2018 - January 2019 edition of Artefacts. If you have already applied to attend this event, please do not reapply.

Women Power Protest brings together modern and contemporary artworks from both Birmingham's collection and the Arts Council Collection to mark a century since the first women won the right to vote; and to celebrate female artists who have explored

protest, social commentary and identity in their work. Find out how this exhibition came together, the history of key pieces and how the people of Birmingham contributed to the curatorial process. *Women Power Protest* is part of the Arts Council Collection National Partnership Programme, supported by the Friends.

THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD

Date: Friday 1 March 2019, 11am

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 wondered what children are thinking about the works of art they see on the walls, or are they simply hoping that the adults will get a move on so that they can get to the tea room? I have studied children's reactions to our collections over the many years I have been involved with BMAG and eventually decided both to ask children what they think and which works they like, whilst at the same time gathering together my observations of the reactions I have spotted. This tour is made up of selections and opinions of art made by children whose ages range from 3 to 13 years. It's an eclectic range of works and has some surprises. I hope you will be as fascinated as I have been.

A SENSORY TOUR OF 'MAKING TOGETHER'

Date: Saturday 9 March 2019, 11am-1pm

Cost: £9/£12 non-members (includes refreshments)

Venue: Royal Birmingham Society of Artists, 4 Brook St, Birmingham, B3 1SA; www.rbsa.org.uk

The RBSA has worked with Sense to create a multisensory exhibition of work made by RBSA artists and Sense participants. Sense is a national charity (Charity No. 289868) that supports people living with complex disabilities. This guided tour and handling session will explore and discuss the different ways in which we can make art and exhibitions more multisensory and accessible to a wider range of art lovers.

CURATOR'S TOUR OF 'LEONARDO DA VINCI: A LIFE IN DRAWING'

Date: Tuesday 12 March 2019, 9:30am-10am

Speaker: Katie Morton, Exhibitions Curator, Birmingham Museums Trust.

Cost: £9

EVENT KEY



Meeting point: Use the lift by the Gas Hall entrance on Edmund Street to access level 2 and meet in the Round Room. Please arrive at 9:15am for a 9:30am start, which is earlier than usual for Friends Guided Tours. This will be a private tour, taking place before the gallery officially opens to the public; and will end at 10am. NB. Guided tours are for members only

Join Katie Morton (Exhibitions Curator) for a closer look at Leonardo da Vinci's drawings which reflect the full range of his diverse interests, from anatomical studies to map-making.



BIRMINGHAM'S COMPUTER COLLECTION

Date: Tuesday 19 March 2019, 6-7pm

Speaker: Phillip Roberts, Researcher for the Science and Industry collections, Birmingham Museums Trust

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

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

Our museum cares for a small but hugely significant collection of machines and components from the earliest days of computing in Britain. Our collection includes some of the oldest computers in the world, the earliest digital storage devices, and rare survivors from a now-lost era.

We will follow the stories of four great computers: LEO, the first business computer; the Harwell Dekatron WITCH, the oldest still-working computer; the HEC, the first global commercial computer; and Andrew Wright's home-modified ZX81, the machine behind the mildly-successful one-man software developer BetaSoft.

These machines, and the people who built and worked with them, changed the world and everything in it. They were the first glimmers of an entirely new way of life. That they survive in Birmingham's collection today is nothing short of miraculous.



STORIES FROM A SMALL MUSEUM

Date: Thursday 21 March 2019

Speaker: Henrietta Lockhart

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

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

Museums are all about 'stuff' – the things people make and use, preserve or throw away. Objects provide a particularly vivid link with the past. Winterbourne



Above: 'Wire in the Blood' – Illustrated London News 1864 – Webster & Horsfall Limited, Hay Mills Birmingham

House in Edgbaston has a collection of some 4,000 objects and archival documents, and continues to collect items that relate to the history of the house. In this talk, Henrietta will explore some of the stories that objects can tell about the people who have lived in and used the house since it was built in 1904.



FROM THE LYCEUM TO THE ALEXANDRA: A TOUR OF THE ALEXANDRA THEATRE

Date: Thursday 11 April 2019, 11am

Speaker: Julia Kirby, Tour Guide at the Alex

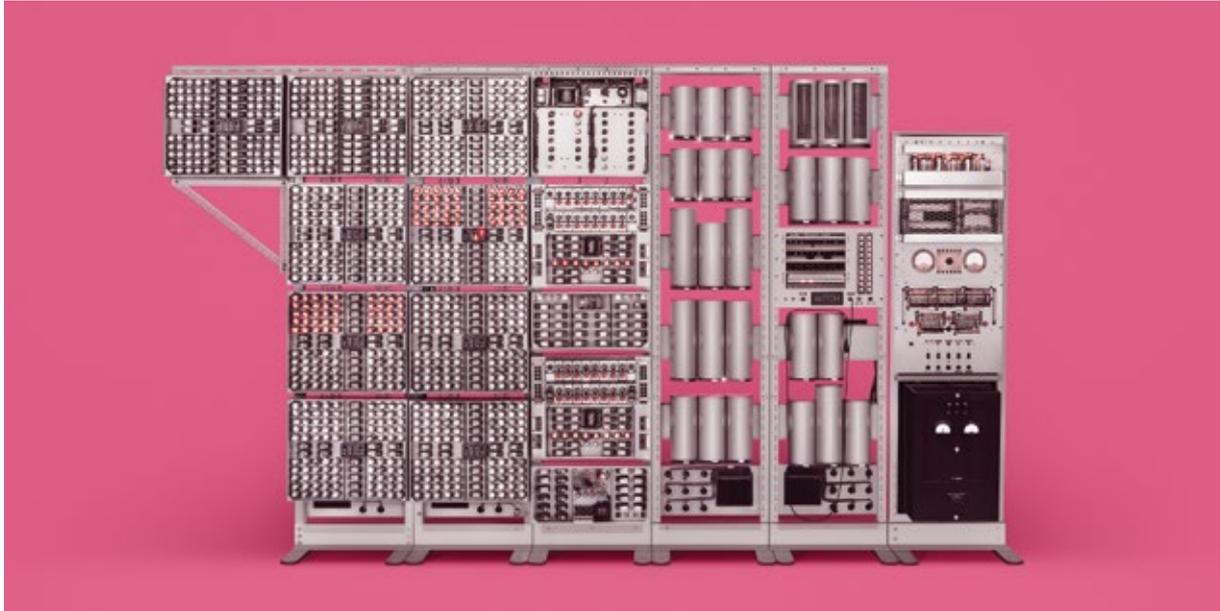
Cost: £10/£13 non-members (includes refreshments)

Venue: The Alexandra Theatre, Sussex Street, Queensway, B5 4DS.

Meeting point: In the foyer of the Alexandra Theatre at 10:45am for an 11am start

NB: there are lots of stairs on this tour and no lifts so a good level of mobility is required.

Known briefly as the Lyceum when it was built in 1901, the Alexandra Theatre holds a special place in the memories of the people of Birmingham. Join the theatre's historian and archivist, Julia Kirby, on this tour and hear about the Alex's place in the history of Birmingham theatre. Find out about the recent refurbishments and how they have kept the spirit of the old theatre intact as we visit both front and back of house areas. On this tour you'll learn not only about the theatre's rich history but also sense a little of how the magic of a night at the theatre is made. The tour will last around an hour and a half and we finish with teas, coffees and biscuits in the Piano Bar and a chance to ask any questions.



Above: The Harwell Dekatron – the world’s oldest working computer.
Printed with the permission of photographer James Ball



‘LEONARDO DA VINCI: A LIFE IN DRAWING’

Date: Tuesday 30 April 2019, 6:30-8:30pm

*Speaker: Katie Morton, Exhibitions Curator,
Birmingham Museums Trust*

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

*Venue: John Peek Room at the Birmingham & Midland
Institute (BMI)*

In February 2019, to mark the 500th anniversary of the death of Leonardo da Vinci, 12 of the Renaissance master’s drawings from the Royal Collection will go on display at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, as part of 12 simultaneous exhibitions across the UK. The drawings reflect the full range of Leonardo’s diverse interests - painting, sculpture, architecture, music, anatomy, engineering, cartography, geology and botany - and his different drawing techniques. As so much of his life’s work was unrealised or destroyed, Leonardo’s greatest achievements are to be found on sheets of paper.

In this talk, Katie Morton (Exhibitions Curator) will discuss the drawings on display at Birmingham and also the wider context of Leonardo’s life and his many interests.



‘WIRE IN THE BLOOD’

Date: Tuesday 11 June 2019, 6-7pm

*Speaker: Sandy Robertson, Archivist for Webster &
Horsfall Limited*

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

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

Webster & Horsfall is famous for the development and manufacture of steel wire and steel wire rope. Founded in Birmingham nearly 300 years ago it continues to produce steel wire today. The company has influenced world history in subtle but remarkable ways. It was founded before the age of steam and was amongst the first to use steam as a source of power. Its products have been central to the developments of the Industrial Revolution. In transport from the horse to the aeroplane, in armaments from the sword to the missile. It has served the mining, food, surgical, construction and telecommunications industries.

The talk will cover the history and development of its products which includes the manufacture of the wire for the first successful Trans Atlantic Telegraph Cable in 1866 and the invention of Locked Coil winding ropes which revolutionised deep cast mining world wide.

Today the Company is also leading the Midlands commercial development in alternative energies and low carbon emission technologies at its Tyseley Energy Park site adjacent to its works.

EVENT KEY



VIENNA FESTIVAL BALLET

Coppélia

www.viennafestivalballet.com

"A truly spellbinding performance"
Burnley Express

★★★★
WhatsOnStage

Thursday 28 March, 7.30pm
Brierley Hill Civic Hall, Dudley
Box Office 01382 573381

Monday 22 April, 5pm
Evesham Arts Centre, Evesham
Box Office 01386 446944

Wednesday 17 April, 6.30pm
Benn Hall, Rugby
Box Office 01788 533719

Thursday 9 May, 7.30pm
Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-Upon-Trent
Box Office 01283 508100

VIENNA FESTIVAL BALLET

GISELLE

★★★★
WhatsOnStage

"A truly spellbinding performance"
Burnley Express

Tuesday 26 March, 7.30pm
The Royal Spa Centre, Royal Leamington Spa
Box Office 01926 334418

Wednesday 29 May, 7pm
Oakengates Theatre @ The Place, Telford
Box Office 01952 382382

Sunday 2 June, 5pm
Artrix, Bromsgrove
Box Office 01527 577330

For further dates and venues please visit
www.viennafestivalballet.com

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NEWS FROM THE OFFICE

The Friends Office is staffed on a part-time basis - usually Monday and Tuesday. When the office is unattended, please leave a brief voicemail message, or email us.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

- Free entry to special exhibitions in the 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, near the Museum) 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
- Shakespeare Birthplace Trust shops (excluding admission prices): www.shakespeare.org.uk
- 25% discount on Annual Passport Tickets at Ironbridge Gorge Trust: www.ironbridge.org.uk

- Potteries Museums & Art Gallery shops/cafés: www.stokemuseums.org.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/. Alternatively, you can use the standard application form in this magazine. Complete the form with the recipient's details and send it with a covering note giving your own name and contact details.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to our new members: Mrs SM McAllister, Mrs A Hawkins, Mrs JM Whittington, and Ms JF Stone. ■

FRIENDS OF BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS APPLICATION FORM

Title:	
Full Name:	
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Tel:	Mobile:
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:

DATA PROTECTION Your details are held securely by the Friends Office for administrative purposes only. Your email address will only be used for occasional contact. If you are willing to be contacted by post or email about appeals for donations, please give your permission I can be contacted about donations for Birmingham Museums: Yes No



ABOVE: Some of the Aston Hall team celebrating at the Thank You Party

As I write this we are still in January, it has suddenly got pretty cold outside and it is the start of 2019. Happy New Year! It is, of course, a perfect time to review all the amazing things which have been achieved by Birmingham Museums and the Friends volunteer teams over 2018.

Over the course of 2018, volunteers gave over 25,000 hours of their precious time to Birmingham Museums Trust. Volunteers welcomed visitors at the Friends Desk at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery (BMAG), conserved and cleaned our heritage sites, gardened at Blakesley Hall, supported the incredibly successful Birmingham Heritage Week in September and engaged visitors who came to see Dippy on Tour over the summer. As always though this list could go on and on as we are so lucky to have such a brilliant team who get involved with so many things.

As I am sure you can imagine, December was a particularly busy month across the sites with lots of festive events for visitors – and our volunteer team got stuck in to bringing festive stories to life, helped Santa to greet families and ensured that everyone who visited had a good time. December also saw Birmingham

Museums' annual Thank You Party, and this year over 170 volunteers and staff from across the organisation gathered together to celebrate all their hard work and achievements in 2018. It was lovely to see so many people attend, and the event also provided a brilliant opportunity to award our Volunteer Long Service Awards to those volunteers who have supported us for over 3 years and for 10 years.

So we are now working our way into 2019 and I know that it will be another brilliant year for all things volunteering. We have lots of exciting projects on the cards including a Leonardo da Vinci exhibition, the return of 'Inspire' - our youth art competition, and interesting outdoors opportunities too.

If you would like to join the team, either by volunteering for the Friends or for other projects for the Trust, then take a look at our website for more information: www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/volunteering. In particular, the Friends would love to hear from you if you would have any interest in volunteering to deliver Friends events. If you would like to find out more please email: volunteer@birminghammuseums.org.uk. ■

NEWS FROM THE VOLUNTEERS

BY BECKY FLETCHER
BMT VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT TEAM LEADER



REPORT FROM BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS

BY RACHEL COCKETT, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

A slightly belated Happy New Year to our Friends.

As we move into 2019 we reach the finale of our three year Arts Council Collection National Partners Programme exhibitions. In Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery's Gas Hall *'Women Power Protest'* remains open until the end of March. The exhibition showcases female artists whose work highlights their personal experiences and continued push for women's rights over the last seven decades. It includes artists from the Arts Council and Birmingham Collections, such as Turner Prize winner Lubaina Himid MBE's piece *'Cotton.com'*, inspired by the solidarity between Manchester mill workers' unions and enslaved plantation workers during the American Civil War, and *'An Ode to Christian Joy'* by Birmingham School of Art postgraduate Emily Sparkes, purchased for Birmingham's collection by the Friends.

For our final Arts Council Collection exhibition we are delighted to welcome artist and filmmaker Rachel Maclean to the Museum & Art Gallery. *'Too Cute! Sweet is about to get Sinister'* opens on the 26 January. Many of you will be familiar with MacLean's work. She spent a month as artist-in-residence in Birmingham's Bullring Shopping Centre producing a film that was broadcast on Channel 4 in August 2018, and her piece *'Feed Me'* appeared in our Arts Council Collection exhibition *'I Want! I Want!: Art & Technology'* in 2017. MacLean will examine cuteness by curating works from the Arts Council Collection and Birmingham's collection to reveal how objects and images can have the unique ability to be both sweet and sinister. The works on display will range from 19th-century oil paintings to internet-inspired installations. Artists include John Isaacs, Gillian Wearing, Ana Maria Pacheco, Helen

Chadwick, Paula Rego, and Peter Blake. Be prepared for sweetness, surprises, and shocks!

On 1 February 2019, to mark the 500th anniversary of the death of Leonardo da Vinci, 12 of the Renaissance master's drawings from the Royal Collection will go on display at the Museum & Art Gallery, as part of 12 simultaneous exhibitions across the UK. The exhibition is supported by private bank, Coutts. As long-standing supporters of Birmingham Museums, the wealth manager sponsored the previous display of Leonardo's drawings in the museum in 2012. Those of you who saw the previous exhibition will remember how popular it was. There will be queues, so wear your most comfortable shoes!

You may have seen in the press that Birmingham City Council are proposing to reschedule their modernisation works on the Council House complex until after the Commonwealth Games in 2022. This means that the Museum & Art Gallery will no longer be closing as planned in late 2019. This does not change our ambitions to redevelop the Museum. We will continue to plan new displays and public facilities so that work can begin onsite sometime after 2022. Watch this space to hear more about our programming plans from late 2019 to 2022.

And finally, there's trouble at t'Mill. Sorry... and yes, I know, it is the wrong type of Mill. Since Sarehole Mill was flooded last May, the waterwheel has stopped turning. Sadly, this means that the Mill is no longer a working watermill. We need your help to restore the Mill to working order. Find out more in my article on page 20. I hope that, by the time I write to you again, the Mill will be grinding flour once more. ■

Herbert

Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

16 February – 2 June 2019

The acclaimed wildlife photography exhibition from the Natural History Museum is back with 100 stunning images.

FREE ADMISSION

Theherbert.org

Detail: Isak Pretorius



WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

N NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM



PALACE THEATRE

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS FOR THE SPRING SEASON 2019

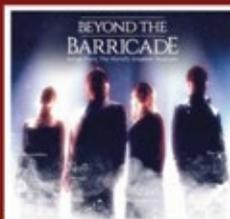
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01527 65203

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SAT 9 FEB 7.30
BEYOND THE BARRICADE



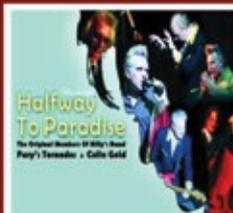
FRI 15 FEB 7.30
TAKE THAT GREATEST HITS



WED 20 FEB 1.30 & 4.30
THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF PINOCCHIO



THUR 21 FEB 7.30
FAST LOVE A TRIBUTE TO GEORGE MICHAEL



FRI 22 FEB 7.30
THE BILLY FURY STORY HALFWAY TO PARADISE



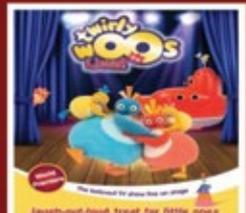
FRI 1 MARCH 7.30
SUPREME QUEEN



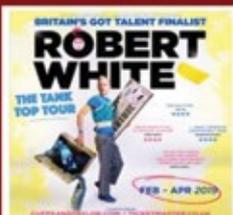
WED 13 MARCH 7.30
GAELFORCE DANCE



FRI 15 MARCH 7.30
NATHAN CARTER AND HIS BAND BORN FOR THE ROAD



SAT 16th MARCH 1.30 & 4.00
TWIRLYWOOS LIVE!



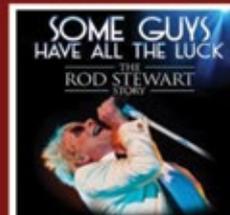
FRI 22 MARCH 7.30
ROBERT WHITE THE TANK TOP TOUR



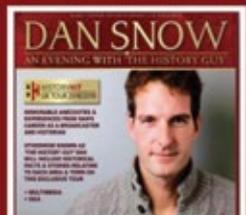
SAT 23 MARCH 7.30
HE WRITES THE SONGS THE MANILOW SONGBOOK



THUR 28 MARCH 7.30
BBC BIG BAND THE MUSIC OF GREAT SWING BANDS



FRI 29 MARCH 7.30
SOME GUYS HAVE ALL THE LUCK



SAT 30 MARCH 7.30
DAN SNOW AN EVENING WITH THE HISTORY GUY



The Music Lesson, 1670-72, Jacob Ochtervelt. Photo by Birmingham Museums Trust

ART THROUGH THE AGES

BY JANE HOWELL

Continuing the series of Art through the Ages articles as illustrated by works from the Birmingham Museums collection, in this edition of *Artefacts* we are looking at a painting from the 17th century.

The Seventeenth Century

'The Music Lesson' by Jacob Ochtervelt (c.1635-1682), painted between 1670-1672 (Accession number 1955P113).

After three centuries which were mainly devoted to religious art, in the 17th century, especially in northern Europe, art had become far more secular. The reformation had been taking place for some time and in the north, following the preaching of Martin Luther, much more emphasis was put on the word of God - the Bible - than on religious imagery. In the south, the Catholic Church launched what became known as the counter reformation, hoping to combat the use of 'the word' with large, colourful paintings such as those by Caravaggio and Orazio Gentileschi.

'The Music Lesson' shows a quiet domestic scene with a young lady having her music lesson. The theme of portraying music lessons became very common in mid 17th century Netherlandish art, first appearing around 1650.

The young lady is sitting at her spinet with her music to one side. This technique allowed Ochtervelt to give a three-quarter view of her face instead of a simple profile. The fabric of her dress is what catches our eye first. It is exquisitely shown and is clearly a satin of some kind. We are convinced that, if the glass was removed from the frame, we could feel the dress's soft sheen. It is hard to believe that what we are looking at is oil paint on canvas - nothing more, nothing less. The influence of Ochtervelt's contemporary, the more famous Johannes Vermeer, is clear in this portrayal of fabric.

But behind the young lady in her magnificent dress something else is taking place. The music teacher is only dimly seen. The light is shining on the maid, the chaperone. She is clearly flirting with him and he is responding. Flirtatious scenes were another common feature in 17th century art and Ochtervelt painted many of them. The maid is holding a jug which is still upright. According to some accounts of artistic symbolism the fact that no liquid is coming out is a sign that the 'romance' has progressed no

further than flirting. Had liquid been issuing forth the artist would be telling us that the music teacher had succeeded in getting the maid to lose her virginity!

Ochtervelt also uses another artistic symbol in this work. On the floor is the faithful family dog, gazing up at the jug, hoping for a drink. The dog is a springer spaniel, an unusual choice for a family pet being noisy, boisterous and having a love of rolling in muddy puddles! He looks scruffy as they are hard to groom. According to artistic convention, the state of the dog tells us how well the household is run. If the dog is beautifully groomed, with a sleek and shiny coat (such as with the black Labrador in *The Long Engagement* by Arthur Hughes) we can assume the household is well run, with everything in its place and with a well disciplined staff. On the other hand, if the dog is ill kempt and scruffy, as this dog is, it suggests that the household is not well run. It will be untidy with many things out of place. Furthermore, the staff would be able to 'get away' with much misbehaviour and so the flirting goes on!

It is hard to know whether or not the wealthy man who commissioned the work, possibly a merchant or trader, had any idea of what Ochtervelt was telling the wider audience. Did he just look at the image of his beautiful daughter and feel proud of her; knowing that having her portrait painted demonstrated how wealthy he was. I suspect not. It is possible that only members of the artistic community knew what the symbolism meant.

Jacob Ochtervelt was born in Rotterdam and probably moved to Haarlem to become a pupil of Nicholas Berchem. He was mainly active in Rotterdam and then moved to Amsterdam where he died in 1682.

Rotterdam was always on the edge of the artistic life in 17th century Holland with the centre being around Delft to the north. This may be why, although prolific and very skilled, Ochtervelt is not as famous as Vermeer, who lived and worked in Delft. Even so, *The Music Lesson* is a beautiful and - once one knows the symbolism - an entertaining work. ■

HELP GET THE WATERWHEEL TURNING AT SAREHOLE MILL

Sarehole Mill is an important part of the heritage of Birmingham and Hall Green and has inspired the work of prominent local historical figures such as Matthew Boulton and J.R.R Tolkien. Birmingham Museums has been proud to promote the 250 year-old grade 2 listed Mill as a working watermill thanks to our wonderful volunteers, the Sarehole Millers.

In the past Sarehole Mill's stoneground flour has been sold to local restaurants and to visitors. Birmingham Museums has grand plans to restore the 18th Century Bakehouse; allowing bread to be baked on site and bringing Sarehole Mill to life for local people and visitors to enjoy.

However, in 2018 the Mill was flooded causing significant damage to the site. After the floods the waterwheel was no longer able to operate the machinery to grind wheat. Sadly, Birmingham Museums can no longer claim that Sarehole Mill is a working water mill. The Mill is not meeting expectations and standards and is disappointing visitors.

The Good News

Birmingham Museums has been awarded a generous grant by The H B Allen Charitable Trust to restore the Bakehouse to full working order. The grant will reinstate the 1840s bread oven, purchase milling and baking equipment for the volunteers, update the Bakehouse building to modern safety standards using heritage materials, and provide new interpretation and signage.

This will bring heritage to life for the Mill's visitors, teaching them about milling and baking, Birmingham's role in the industrial revolution and Sarehole Mill's connections to manufacturing innovations and literary history. The practical element of baking bread will make the Mill's educational school sessions even more fun and engaging for children. Finally, it will support Sarehole Mill financially with sales of freshly baked produce in the shop and Miller's Tearoom.

The Bad News

The flooding has caused unexpected extra costs! Birmingham Museums needs to undertake work to make the wheel operational and restore the flour store. To make the wheel operational again,



ABOVE: View from the grinding floor of the north waterwheel

Birmingham Museums needs to dismantle the waterwheel, dredge the wheel pit, clear the tail race, repair the sluice gate, and finally, inspect the reassembled waterwheel ready for operation. This work needs to be overseen by a specialist heritage consultant. Without this vital work there will be no authentic Sarehole Mill flour to supply the planned Bakehouse restoration.

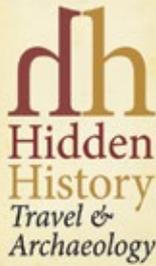
Birmingham Museums need your Help

Please donate today to help Birmingham Museums raise the £6,500 it needs to restore Sarehole Mill, a treasured local landmark, to full working order. Your donation will mean:

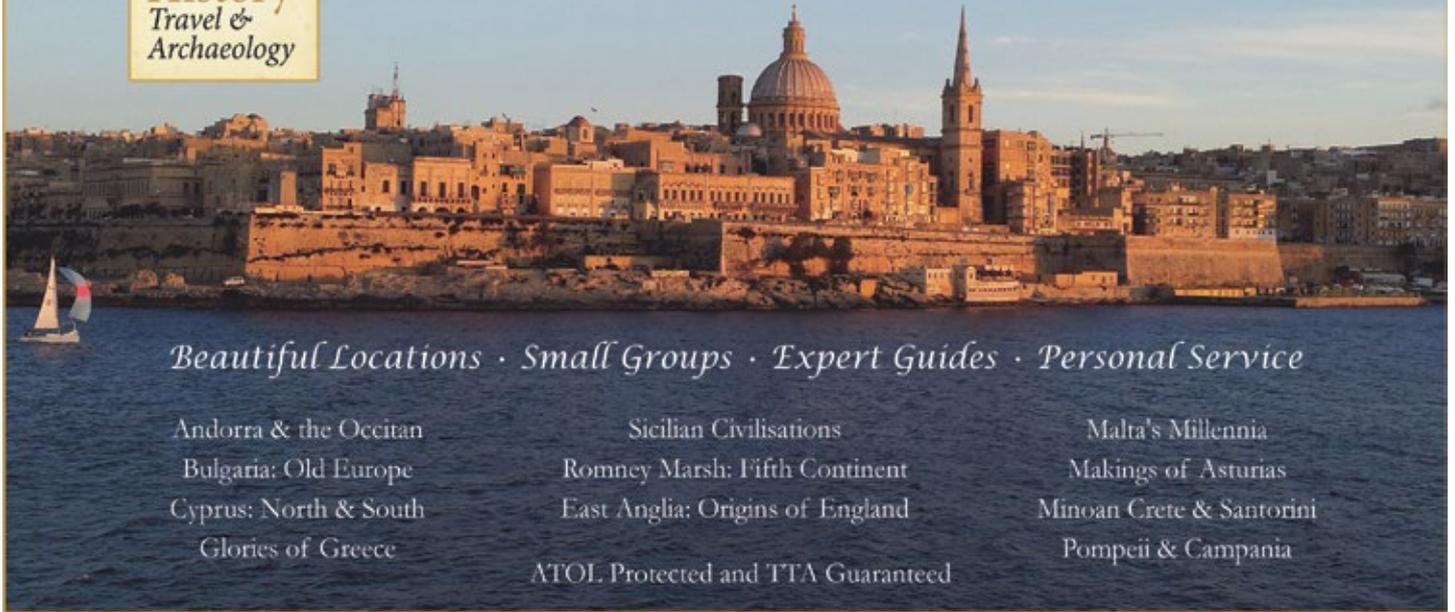
- the flood damage to the waterwheel and wheel pit can be repaired;
- the restored Bakehouse will be able to sell fresh bread made from Sarehole's own milled flour; and
- a more immersive and engaging experience for all visitors to Sarehole Mill.

Donate

Please post your cheque made out to Birmingham Museums Trust to: Development Office, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, Chamberlain Square, Birmingham, B3 3DH or donate online at crowdfunder.co.uk/sareholemill. Thank you from the staff and volunteers at Sarehole Mill. ■



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Frans Xaver Winterhalter, King Edward VII when Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, 1846. Royal Collection Trust © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2018

Childhood Now

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Mark Fairington



Mark Fairington, Lee and Jason, 2011 © Mark Fairington, Courtesy of the artist. Photographer: Peter White, FXP Photography



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REVIEW OF THE FRIENDS' CURATOR TOUR OF ASTON HALL'S 'WALLS HAVE EARS: 400 YEARS OF CHANGE'

By Ann Ford, Friends Volunteer



ABOVE: Stephen Earl Rogers talking about Aston Murals

Last Summer, Aston Hall hosted *'Walls Have Ears: 400 Years of Change, Portraits from the Arts Council Collection'*, as part of the Arts Council Collection National Partners Programme. In July 2018, Members of the Friends were invited to attend a tour of the exhibition led by Deborah Smith, Birmingham Museums Trust's Curator for the Arts Council Collection National Partners Programme. Ann Ford, one of the Friends Desk Volunteers, tells us what she thought of the exhibition and of the opportunity she had to experience it through the curator's eyes.

I was not only impressed with the stimulating exhibition *'Walls Have Ears'*, but I was particularly impressed with the exhibition's curator, Deborah Smith, who was highly professional, relaxed and approachable, and not the least bit 'stuffy'! Deborah led us through the exhibition, guiding us as we looked at the artworks and giving us an insight to help us appreciate the importance of this emotionally challenging exhibition. We were also fortunate enough to meet two of the artists whose works were on display – Stephen Earl Rogers and Barbara Walker – which made the artworks come alive. In addition to this, Kimberley Biddle, the Manager at Aston Hall, contributed significantly to the tour, talking about the Hall and enthusing us with her passion for the place.

I was struck by the way in which the contemporary works of art had been placed within this historically important building and alongside its contents, resulting in a dramatic effect and stimulating a conversation which could not be ignored. You could

argue that the contemporary art which was on display had no place in a building of this age and historical importance. However, I believe that the reverse is true as the art clearly demonstrated dynamic cultural and social energy; a sense of immediacy, hope, relevance and sensitivity; and breathed new life into the building and its contents.

What struck me was how the exhibition challenged my thoughts and feelings of art and humanity and the central importance that curatorial integrity played in this. *'Walls Have Ears'* was a highly important exhibition which left me wanting more.

The Friends generously contributed £45,000 to the Arts Council Collection National Partners Programme between 2016 and 2019. ■



ABOVE: Friends Tour of *'Walls Have Ears'*



Derek Bishton, Brian Homer and John Reardon
Handsworth Self Portrait: 40 Years On
Sat 23 March - Sun 2 June

In 1979, a pop-up photography studio set up on a street in Handsworth invited local people to take their own self-portraits. Now, 40 years on, this exhibition presents the original photographic prints, kindly on loan from Birmingham Museums Trust on behalf of Birmingham City Council, along with images never before seen in public.

The striking collection of images presents a unique snapshot of a vibrant, multicultural community at the moment it first became visible.

Image: Stephen aka 'Steppers' from Handsworth Self Portrait (1979) © Bishton, Homer & Reardon

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RBSA GALLERY AND ARGENTEA GALLERY COLLABORATE FOR THIRD RBSA PHOTOGRAPHIC PRIZE EXHIBITION

Visit this showcase of contemporary photography, on display at RBSA Gallery and Argentea Gallery from 14 February until 9 March 2019.



ABOVE: *Man In The Box*, Kris Askey

The third RBSA Photographic Prize exhibition is in partnership with Argentea Gallery and will be displayed across both venues. Entries are welcomed from professional and emerging photographers from across the region and beyond. There are 4 prizes for this exhibition including a £1,000 First Prize and a portfolio review by GRAIN, supported by GRAIN Projects.

First launched in 2015, this exhibition celebrates photographic artwork by emerging and established photographers. This year the RBSA are working with Argentea Gallery to host the show. Argentea Gallery is Birmingham's only independent commercial gallery dedicated to contemporary photography. Owned by Jennie Anderson and located in St Paul's Square, it promotes an awareness and appreciation of contemporary photography by presenting a programme of stimulating and thoughtful exhibitions supported by a variety of artist talks and events. Argentea is dedicated to showing the very best contemporary photography from both British and international artists. The exhibition will be displayed across RBSA Gallery floor 2 and Argentea Gallery's ground floor.

Robert Neil, the President of the RBSA said 'The RBSA is keen to exhibit the best in contemporary art and our photography exhibition is one of the highlights in this year's packed programme.'

All RBSA prize exhibitions are selected by a guest panel of judges who have relevant experience and expertise. This year, the selection panel was Camilla Brown, Associate Curator at GRAIN Photography Hub and freelance writer at Photomonitor; Maria Falconer (Panel Chair), Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society, Lecturer at De Montfort University, and dance photography specialist; and John Hodgett, Professional Photographer with clients including Vogue and the British Journal of Photography. Having a range of judges provides a variety of perspectives on each artwork and always makes for interesting discussions regarding which artworks should be selected for exhibition.

All RBSA prize exhibitions also provide the opportunity for selected artists to be awarded for their talents through prizes. Nicola Shipley, Director of GRAIN Projects, will award the prizes at the Closing Party on Friday 8 March which will include the £1,000 GMC First Prize; the £500 Purchase Prize donated by the Norstrom Family; The People's Prize Exhibition Prize (a ground floor solo show exhibition in 2020 awarded to the artist selected by votes placed by visitors to the exhibition); and the GRAIN Portfolio Review. The RBSA thanks each donor for their generous support, which is greatly appreciated.

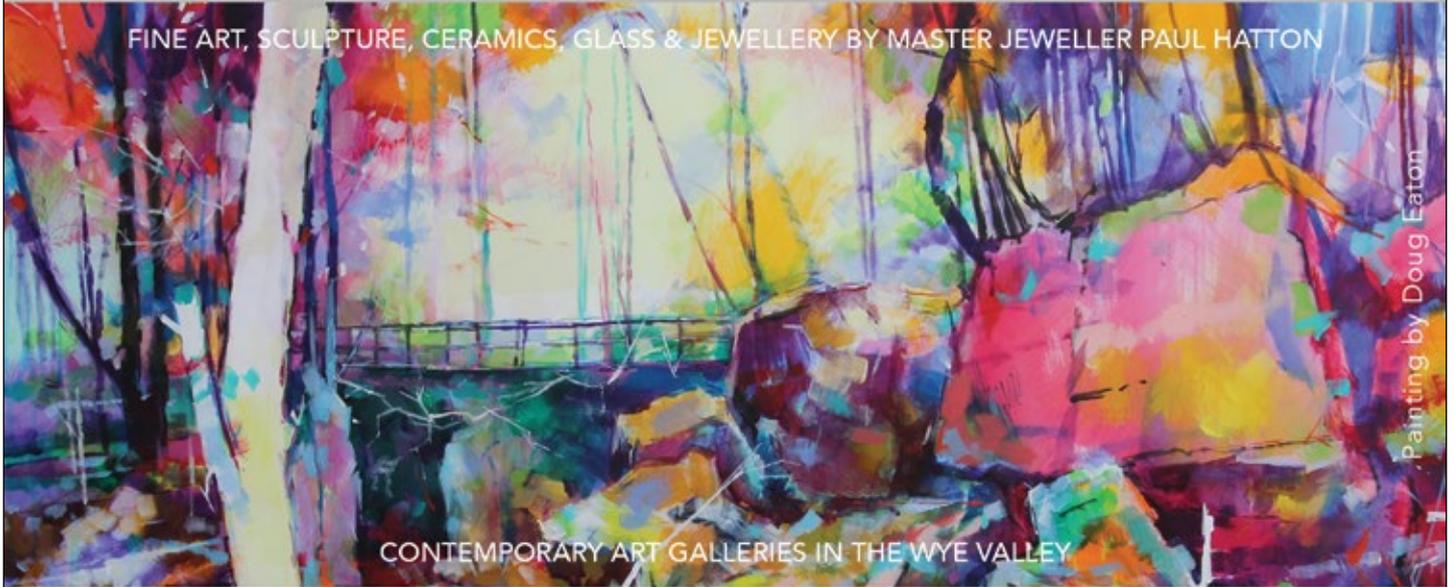
At the time of going to press the selection and prize-winners have yet to be confirmed. So, be sure to visit and cast your vote on the People's Choice Prize! ■



ABOVE: *Rebuild 2*, Natalie Seymour

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Call 01564 783294 for details
nationaltrust.org.uk

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Photography © National Trust Images.



For events which need to be pre-booked, bookings can be made by calling 0121 348 8263 or via the website – 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 unless otherwise stated

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.

Women Power Protest

Until 31 March 2019. Marking a century since the first women won the right to vote, *Women Power Protest* brings together modern and contemporary artworks

from the Arts Council Collection and Birmingham's collection to celebrate female artists who have explored protest, social commentary and identity in their work.

Leonardo da Vinci: A Life in Drawing

1 February – 6 May 2019. To mark the 500th anniversary of Leonardo da Vinci's death, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery will display 12 drawings by the Renaissance genius. This is the first-time visitors can see these works on display in Birmingham. *Leonardo da Vinci: A Life in Drawing*, a nationwide event, will give the widest-ever UK audience the opportunity to see the work of this extraordinary artist, with 144 of his greatest drawings from the Royal Collection forming the 12 exhibitions.

Too Cute! Sweet is about to get Sinister

Until 12 May 2019. *Too Cute! Sweet is about to get Sinister* is artist Rachel Maclean's exploration of why we should be taking cuteness more seriously. Curated by this Glasgow-based artist, the exhibition uses pieces from the Arts Council Collection and Birmingham's collection to investigate the ability of these objects to be simultaneously cute and sinister. Ranging from 19th century oil paintings to internet-inspired videos, the works featured will display multiple manifestations of cuteness.

Intimate Tour of Breasts: A City Walking Tour

16 February 2019, 1pm – 4pm. £5 per person. Claire Collison, artist, writer and breast cancer survivor, is

Below: Aston Hall



your tour guide on this three-hour walk exploring multicultural mythologies surrounding breasts. You will be exploring their commodification throughout history to the present day, from religious martyrs to political activists, fine art to Page 3 and nipple slip to slippery nipple. The tour will end with a whistle-stop visit to *Women Power Protest*.

Edwardian Tearooms Late: Valentine's Day

14 February 2019. £47.50 per person. For a Valentine's Day reservation with a difference, the Industrial Gallery at BMAG will be open late for you and your other half to enjoy a romantic 5 course meal in the company of stunning architecture, live music and the gallery's surroundings. Pre-booking is essential.

Subversive Stitching:

Feminist Cross Stitch Arts Session

23 February 2019, 1pm – 4pm. Free drop in session. Subversive stitch takes traditional cross stitching techniques and applies it to feminist activism. Embroider the most powerful (and the rudest) slogans you can think of, subverting the perception of a traditionally gentle and feminine art medium. Open to all genders and abilities, artist Andrea Bonnell will be on hand to welcome you and support your artwork. Andrea will firstly guide you around the exhibition *Women Power Protest* for inspiration before the relaxed drop-in session. Materials and good company are provided!

Truth is Beauty: A Life Modelling Performance

23 March 2019, 1pm – 4pm. Free but pre-booking is essential. Adults and women only space. *Truth is Beauty* is a life modelling performance by Claire Collison, who is a writer, artist and breast cancer survivor. Since deciding not to have reconstructive surgery following her mastectomy in 2014, she has been asking: 'Why are the thousands of women like me so hidden? What anxieties do we share as a society, where disguise is regarded as important as treatment? And how can women make informed treatment choices when there is so little representation of us within mainstream culture?' Please note: there will be model nudity.

Food Carving Sculpture Special

30 March 2019, 1pm – 4pm. Free. Inspired by *Women Power Protest*, this adult carving session is a perfect Saturday afternoon to explore being creative with food, carving directly onto fruit, vegetables, chocolate and cheese! All materials and tools provided - please advise the session leader in advance of any allergies you have.



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, a gallery dedicated to the iconic Spitfire as well as a number of natural history displays. With an ever-changing programme of demonstrations, workshops and events, there is always something new to discover.

Café Scientifique: Exploring Park Street Ceremony

5 February 2019, 7pm – 9pm. Purecraft Bar, Birmingham B2 5TJ. Free. *Café Scientifique 2019* begins with an exploration of the archaeology of Park Street graveyard, a cemetery in the heart of Birmingham, joined by Andy and Claire from MOLA Headland Infrastructure. The archaeological excavation at Park Street for the HS2 rail line is presenting archaeologists with an unprecedented opportunity to study the population of Birmingham during the Victorian period.

Café Scientifique: Keeping an eye on the gut

5 March 2019, 7pm – 9pm. Purecraft Bar, Birmingham B2 5TJ. Free. Join Dr Liying Low and discover the fascinating role of the microbiome in eye health and how it may impact on eye disease. Dr Low, a leading researcher at Birmingham University, currently studies the link between the gut and a serious eye condition for which the cause is presently unknown.



Trinity Road, Aston, Birmingham, B6 6JD

See birminghammuseums.org.uk for up to date opening times and prices. 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.

Open Aston

3 February, 17 – 24 February 2019, 3 March, 7 April 11am – 4pm. Entry included in ticket price. Wander around this spectacular grand old mansion with your loved ones in February - pick up a clipboard and pencil and enjoy the children's trail to help families explore the mansion! The tearooms and gift shop are open from 11 am, with entrance to the Hall beginning at 11:45am. Last entry is 3pm.

Whodunnit? A Family Friendly Mystery Trail

23 February 2019, 11am – 4pm. Entry included in ticket price. A drop dead fun time travelling mystery trail aimed at families and those young at heart. Visit the Hall, interview the suspects and try to solve the perplexing mystery set in the magnificent surroundings of Aston Hall. Pre-booking is advisable.

Aston Hall Late: Jacobean Music at the Mansion

29 March 2019, 6pm, 7pm, 8pm. £12.50 per person. This is a rare opportunity to see the grand mansion at night. Wander around this magnificent building, making your way up to the Long Gallery where a Jacobean musical banquet for your ears is served up in the most spectacular setting. Students from Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, directed by William Lyons, present music performed on instruments of the time, recreating music typically heard in important houses in early Seventeenth Century England. Pre-booking is essential. Practical footwear and warm clothes are recommended.

Mythical Beasts & Fantastic Creatures

14 April 2019, 11am – 4pm. Entry included in ticket price. A magical fun-filled event taking inspiration from the mythical beasts and fantastic creatures depicted around this grand old mansion. This event is suitable for all ages. Fun for families and those young at heart. Aston Hall is open from 11 am-4pm with last entrance to the Hall at 3pm. Pre-booking is not essential but highly recommended.

Aston in Wonderland: Celebrating National Tea Day

21 April 2019, 11am – 4pm. Entry included in ticket price. Looking for something curious this Easter? Join the magical Wonderland takeover and meet lots of your favourite story book characters including Alice, the Hatter, and the angry Queen as you explore this spectacular building. This event is aimed at families and those young at heart with a

curious disposition. Aston Hall is open from 11am-4pm with last entrance to the Hall at 3pm. Pre-booking is highly recommended.



Blakesley Road, Yardley, Birmingham, B25 8RN

See birminghammuseums.org.uk for up to date opening times and prices. 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, family trails and activities programme, Blakesley Hall is the ideal location for a family day out.

Sunday Local History Talk

3 February & 7 April 2019, 2pm – 3pm. Adult: £5, Child: £3. On 3 February local archaeologist Mike Hodder will be discussing 'Medieval Moats in the Metropolis, Past and Present'; and on 7 April you can join Mike for his talk on 'Fired Clay: Pottery, Brick and Tile Manufacture in Birmingham'. Tea or coffee included in ticket price. Booking is essential for both talks.

Animal Mania at Blakesley Hall

20 Feb 2019. £3. Meet animal friends at Blakesley Hall! The animals can include lizards, snakes, chinchillas, hedgehogs, giant bunnies, tortoises and creepy crawlies.

Tudor Women Guided Tour

3 March 2019, 11:15am, 12:15pm, 1:15pm & 2:15pm. Adult (includes over 60s): £7, Concession: £5, Child (3-15): £3. To mark International Women's Day, learn about Tudor Women on a specialist guided tour of Blakesley Hall.



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



Above: Workshop in the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter

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.

Adult Jewellery Workshops - Make a silver ring

9 February 2019, 10am - 4pm. £60. Learn a variety of jewellery making techniques under the careful guidance of contemporary jeweller Grace Page in this exciting workshop. Make a silver ring alongside a loved one or as a well-deserved treat for yourself.

Adult Jewellery Workshops - Make a pair of silver earrings

23 March 2019, 10am - 4pm. £60. Grace will also run a workshop where you will make a pair of silver earrings to take home for yourself or for someone special!

Whisky & Twilight Tours

29 March 2019, 5pm - 7pm. £20. This time in collaboration with The Whisky Club, the popular

twilight guided tours return with a whisky twist! Your first stop will be at The Whisky Club to enjoy a guided tasting of two Whiskies. Then, you will explore the Smith & Pepper Factory at Museum of the Jewellery Quarter through an after-hours guided tour in the atmospheric factory and offices, seeing first-hand how the jewellery was made in the traditional workshop. Directly next door, return to The Whisky Club to sample another complimentary dram of whisky.

Women's Work in the Jewellery Quarter

30 March 2019, 12:15pm - 1:15pm. Adult: £7, Concession: £5, Child: £3. Discover the work undertaken by women from the late 1800s to the 1980s, from working in the office to manual work such as press work, polishing and enamelling. These women were instrumental in making the quarter the world's largest jewellery manufacturing area and also making Birmingham the workshop of the world. These women are the often neglected heroines of the metal working trade, with this tour celebrating their hard work and fortitude. Pre-booking is advised.





SAREHOLE MILL

Cole Bank Road, Hall Green, Birmingham, B13 0BD
See birminghammuseums.org.uk for up to date opening times and prices. 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. Unfortunately Sarehole Mill was flooded in 2018. Please see page 16 for more information about the damage this caused to the site and to find out how you might be able to help.

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.

Family Baking Day: Pancake Day!

22 February 2019, 11:30am - 3pm. £2 (child). Enjoy a day of family fun making pancakes! Pre-booking is essential - time slots are as follows: 11:30am-12:15pm, 12:30-1:15pm, 1:45-2:30pm & 2:45-3pm.

There and Back Again:

J.R.R. Tolkien and Sarehole Guided Walk

24 February 2019, 1pm - 2pm. £10.

Visit Sarehole Mill for a guided introduction to Tolkien, the area of Sarehole and its influence on *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. Starting at the Mill in the courtyard at 1pm, the tour guides you around some of the highlights of the key areas around Sarehole that influenced Tolkien in his work including Moseley Bog, and back again to Sarehole. The tour lasts around 1 hour and you will be guided back to the Mill. Warm and waterproof clothing and sensible shoes advised as this tour is outdoors.



SOHO HOUSE

Soho Avenue, off Soho Road, Handsworth, Birmingham, B18 5LB. See birminghammuseums.org.uk for up to date opening times and prices. 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.

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

Women of Excellent Understanding: The Wives and Daughters of the Eighteenth Century Lunar Society

19 February 2019, 6:30pm - 8:45pm. £15. The men of the eighteenth-century Lunar Society are well known, but what about the Lunar women? Who were they and how important were they in the histories of their husbands and fathers? This talk will look at some of the Lunar wives and daughters, including Mary Priestley, Sally Wedgwood and Peggy and Anne Watt, to consider the role the Lunar women played in their husbands' businesses as well as their scientific investigations and philosophical thought.

Café Scientifique Soho Special

21 March 2019, 7pm - 9pm. £6. As a special one-off our *Café Scientifique* programme of informal science talks comes to Soho House. Hear a short talk from local researcher Dr Andrew Morris from the School of Metallurgy and Materials at the University of Birmingham, entitled '*Alchemy in the Information Age: The Batteries of the Future*'. Matthew Boulton and James Watt were concerned with powering the 19th century, and for this talk we explore cutting edge research into ways researchers are using computers to revolutionise how to gain power from batteries. The talk will be followed by a tour of the house.



WEOLEY CASTLE

Alwold Road, Weoley Castle, Birmingham, B29 5RJ

See birminghammuseums.org.uk for up to date opening times and prices

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.



25 Dollman Street, Birmingham, B7 4RQ

The Museum Collections Centre is where 80% of Birmingham's collections are stored. There are free open afternoons from 1:30pm-3:30pm on the last Friday of every month. These must be booked in advance. Guided tours are also available by

arrangement on other days. Please call 0121 348 8231 for more information or to book.

Open Afternoons at the Museum Collections Centre
22 February 2019 & 26 April 2019, 1:30pm-3:30pm.
Free entry - places must be booked. The Museum Collections Centre is a 1.5 hectare site that holds 80 per cent of Birmingham Museums' stored collections under one roof. Among the thousands of objects stored here are steam engines, sculptures, and an entire collection of Austin, Rover and MG motor cars and even a red phone box. It is not open to the public except by arrangement.

The tour will allow you to see a vast range of objects, often with a real focus on Birmingham and the West Midlands. The contrasting mix of objects and the behind-the-scenes atmosphere at the collection centre make it an intriguing place to explore and discover more about museum stores. Pre-booking is essential.

Below: Museum Collections Centre



IN THE AREA

BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS

Westbourne Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 3TR.
www.birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk

Poetry Appreciation Course

Saturday 2 March. Visitors to the Botanical Gardens may have noticed that areas of our American Bank are waiting to be replanted with North American herbaceous shrubs and seeds.

To welcome this replanting, we are offering a poetry appreciation course (run on two consecutive Saturdays), which explores the work of twentieth century North American poets. Featured poets may include Adrienne Rich, Mary Oliver, William Carlos Williams, Robert Lowell, Robert Creeley and Langston Hughes.

Tutor: Laura Vincent (qualified English teacher, with City & Guilds Level 5 Additional Diploma in Literacy). Please note: this course takes place in an upstairs room and is for ages 18 and over.

For all course enquiries please contact:
Email: education@birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk
Tel: 0121 450 5093

DSLR For Beginners

Saturday 2 March. A concise beginners introduction to your DSLR camera, run over four consecutive Saturdays. Starting with the absolute basics, you'll soon be avoiding Auto, managing your menus and composing with confidence. You'll be shown the settings you need and the settings you should avoid, how to focus on what you want to focus on, how to work with light (ambient and flash), white balance, adjusting your exposure, choosing the right file type and size and how to easily improve your composition.

The course will end with an overview of how to make the most of your photographs with widely available photo-editing software.

This course is suitable for DSLR cameras only (and not bridge/hybrid cameras).

Please note: this course takes place in an upstairs room, accessible only via a spiral staircase and is for ages 18 and over.

For all course enquiries please contact:

Email: education@birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk
Tel: 0121 450 5093

THE HERBERT

Jordan Well, Coventry, CV1 5QP
www.theherbert.org

Wildlife Photographer of the Year

Saturday 16 February to Sunday 2 June. An internationally renowned photography exhibition is returning to Coventry to showcase the most extraordinary images from the natural world – and will be free to see.

Awarded images from the Natural History Museum's *Wildlife Photographer of the Year* will be displayed at the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum as part of an international tour.

One hundred spectacular images from the 2018 competition will feature at the free exhibition.

The acclaimed competition, first held in 1965, showcases the most impressive images of the natural world, from breath-taking animal portraits and dramatic landscapes, to bizarre species and endangered habitats.

The 2018 edition of *Wildlife Photographer of the Year* celebrates biodiversity, promotes conservation, and champions ethical photography, with winning photographs chosen from over 45,000 submissions by expert judges for their creativity, originality and technical excellence.

Wildlife Photographer of the Year is developed and produced by the Natural History Museum, London, with the award-winning images seen by millions across the globe each year, and the Herbert is the first West Midlands gallery to host the exhibition.



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**BIRMINGHAM
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Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

2nd February – 27th April

Matisse: Drawing with Scissors
with Diaghilev's Ballets Russes



Henri Matisse, Nu bleu II (Blue Nude II), 1902. Lithographic reproduction © Succession H. Matisse, 1945-2019

Open Monday – Saturday 10.30am – 4.30pm **FREE Entry**

Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum
Foregate Street, Worcester, WR1 1DT. Tel: 01905 25371

For more information visit
www.museumsworcestershireshire.org.uk

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ARTISAN ALCHEMY GALLERY

Artisan Alchemy is a unique Gallery in the Jewellery Quarter displaying exciting, individual bespoke jewellery and furniture of the highest quality.

Join us for a drink and to listen to a presentation from furniture maker Thomas Whittingham on Thursday 11th April 6pm - 8pm to celebrate our 3rd anniversary.

RSVP

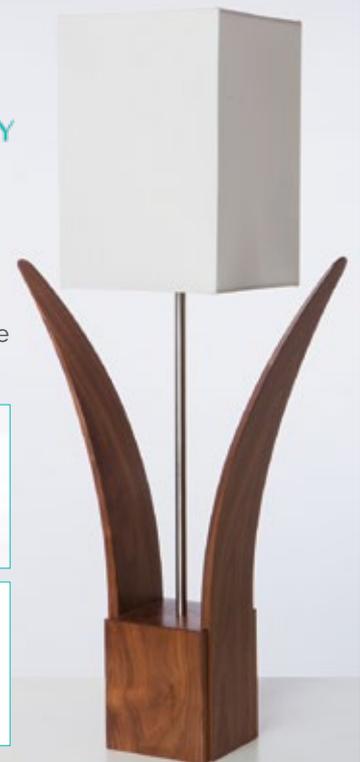
Email: artisans@artisan-alchemy.co.uk or
telephone 0121 233 1186 by Monday 1st April
to book your free place.

Artisan Alchemy Gallery
84 Caroline St, Hockley, Birmingham B3 1UP
website: www.artisan-alchemy.co.uk
Instagram: @artisan.alchemy.gallery
Facebook: @artisanalchemygallery
Twitter: @artisanalchemy



ARTISAN ALCHEMY GALLERY

A Contemporary Gallery
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Historic Jewellery Quarter
Exhibiting Bespoke Furniture
and Fine Jewellery



Please enquire regarding availability of workshops &
meeting room to rent & space at our communal jewellers
bench with optional mentoring programme

84 Caroline Street - Birmingham - B3 1UP | Open Tues-Sat
Tel: 0121 233 186 - www.artisan-alchemy.co.uk | 10am-4pm

IKON GALLERY

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

Forward: New Art from Birmingham

Until Sunday 24 March. Now, more than ever, Birmingham's artistic community is thriving. *Forward: New Art from Birmingham* is a group exhibition, including work by approximately twenty five artists, living and working in this city, to highlight the depth and vitality of a wide range of practices. Taking place in Medicine on New Street, the old gallery space of the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists from which sprang the young generation that founded Ikon more than 50 years ago, it couldn't be more in keeping with their progressive ethos, still informing our artistic programme to this day.

Hew Locke: Here's the Thing

Friday 8 March - Sunday 2 June. This will be the most comprehensive exhibition to date of work by Hew Locke, involving a wide range of media – painting, drawing, photography, sculpture and installation – making extensive use of collage and found objects. Since his emergence as an artist in the 1980s, Hew Locke has been remarkably consistent in his preoccupation with the languages of colonial and post-colonial power, and the symbols through which different cultures assume and assert identity. He appropriates coats-of-arms and trophies, weaponry, naval warships and the costumes and regalia of state in a subtle critique of governmental authority, its iconographies and legacies. His ability to fuse historical sources with his own political concerns, either through juxtaposition or the modification of existing artefacts, leads to smart amalgamations of history and modernity. This layering of time corresponds to a distinct merging of influences from Guyana and the UK – Locke is now based in London – so that the aesthetic result is richly textured, compelling both in terms of visual impact and intrigue.

MAC BIRMINGHAM

Midlands Art Centre, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham,
B12 9QH. www.macbirmingham.co.uk

Matthew Krishanu: The Sun Never Sets

Until Sunday 10 March. London-based painter Matthew Krishanu takes inspiration from his childhood spent in Bangladesh's capital Dhaka to produce his dream-like, reflective paintings.

Matthew's British father and Indian mother completed theological training in Birmingham, then relocated their family to Dhaka in the early 1980s, working for the Church of Bangladesh. His work explores his eleven years living in Bangladesh, while capturing his distinctive bond with his brother. His paintings explore the childhood gaze of the boys, depicting experiences of an atmospheric yet complex world of expatriates, missionaries and expansive landscapes. Matthew Krishanu says: "I want the viewer to sense the complications: that the scenes depicted are not always ones of innocence, that there are historical and cultural currents at play, and that the childhood world is easily punctured by adult constructions and beliefs."

Jenni Lomax (former director of Camden Arts Centre) writes in her introduction to the exhibition catalogue: "Autobiography plays some part in all Krishanu's work, whether populated by figures or uninhabited like his landscapes. However, his paintings are given a deliberate edge of uncertainty that folds reality in with the collapsing of time."

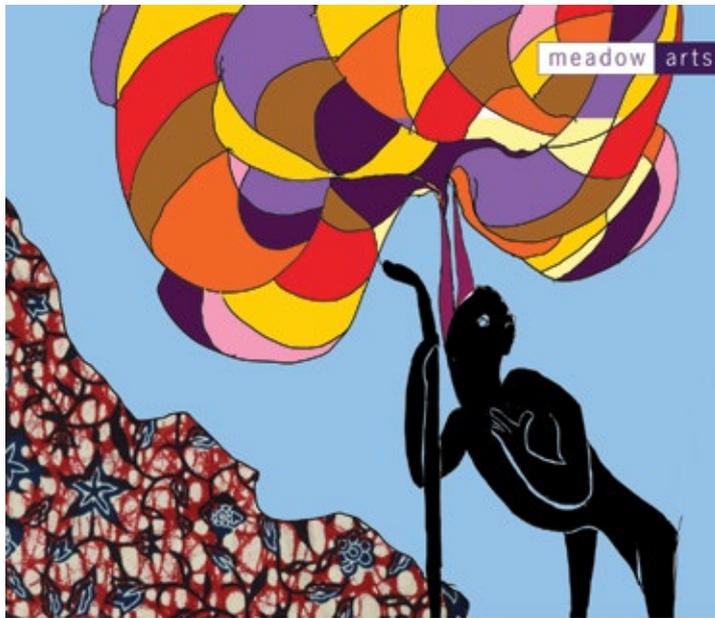
The show includes two paintings recently acquired by the Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London. An associated exhibition of his work 'A Murder of Crows' is showing throughout the Ikon Gallery building during the run of 'The Sun Never Sets'. A catalogue is available to buy featuring texts by Jenni Lomax and Ruxmini Choudhury (assistant curator at Dhaka Art Summit).

Handsworth Self Portrait: 40 Years On

Saturday 23 March – Sunday 26 May. In 1979 Derek Bishton, Brian Homer and John Reardon created a pop up photography studio on the street outside the community design and photography office they had established in a terraced house in Grove Lane, Handsworth, Birmingham.

Instead of taking the photos themselves, they invited passers by to take their own photograph, passing them the shutter release so they could control the decisive moment of how to present themselves and when they were ready for the picture to be taken.

More than 500 people stopped by to take part in this ground-breaking 'Selfie' project – some alone, some with friends or family, some striking formal poses, others being more playful. Everyone involved was offered the opportunity of receiving a free print to keep, and the project – which ran at weekends from August to October – generated a unique archive of images providing a snap shot of who was living and working in Handsworth at that time. >



meadow arts

Yinka Shonibare, 'Creatures of the Mappa Mundi - Cocone Gentes' - (sketch), 2018

YINKA SHONIBARE CREATURES OF THE MAPPA MUNDI

A newly commissioned contemporary artwork

Hereford Cathedral
Mappa Mundi & Chained Library

24 January - 1 June 2019

Normal admission charges apply

www.meadowarts.org



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DIRECTOR | CHRISTOPHER MONKS

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Warwick Arts Centre
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Including booking fee
024 7652 4524
www.warwickartscentre.co.uk

Young people from our AC Academies Choirs will join Armonico Consort's professional singers and orchestra to perform this extraordinary work, made famous most recently by The X Factor, to create a spectacular event which will set their hearts on fire.

Inspired by a large collection of secular poems of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the German composer Carl Orff completed Carmina Burana in 1937 and described it as a "scenic cantata" made of "secular songs for soloists and choruses, accompanied by instruments and magic images".



BRAVE: The girls of South Sudan

Photography exhibition by Plan International UK and Kate Holt

Saturday 6 April – Sunday 19 May. Admission free.



Photo credit: Kate Holt / Plan International

The girls of South Sudan have faced it all. Conflict, violence and hunger. And they are still just teenagers. See BRAVE: The girls of South Sudan and experience girls' everyday lives as they survive in the world's youngest country. To find out more about Plan International UK visit: www.plan-uk.org

macbirmingham.co.uk

0121 446 3232



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Now, 40 years on, this exhibition presents a selection of photographic prints, some of which have never been exhibited before, and offers an opportunity to look back at our local communities and see what has changed.

We would love to meet the people who took part in the Handsworth Self Portrait - so we want as many people as possible to come to see the show and let us know: is it you in the picture? Do you recognise a family member or friend? Have you kept your original print? Keep an eye on our social media channels as we will be sharing images regularly - and please share as widely as possible.

VITTORIA STREET GALLERY

School of Jewellery, Birmingham City University, 82-86

Vittoria Street, Birmingham, B1 3PA.

Tel: 0121 331 5940 • blogs.bcu.ac.uk/vittoriastreetgallery

vittoriastreetgallery

A Waste Land

Monday 4 February - Friday 1 March. This exhibition sets out to question and challenge the illegal dumping of consumer waste. These jewellery artists have united together to raise awareness of this environmental concern and in response have created jewellery from the things that everyone else pretends not to see: the detritus of the Anthropocene.

Litter, fly-tipping, discards, waste, garbage, rubbish. Collecting this unpromising material, they have produced a thought-provoking collection of jewellery and wearable objects which will be displayed in an uncompromising environment, entirely built from the illegal discards of others.

Hailing from either end of the country, Davit Alexander and Dan Russell aim to criticize the habits of a nation examining why this isn't a localized problem contained within their individual surroundings, but instead a global dilemma with catastrophe-leading potential.

Working from the concept of future archaeologists mining the accumulated waste as the planet slowly recovers from anthropogenic activity, they have created objects which challenge the idea of what is precious, recontextualising materials and diminishing the attitudes of apathy towards waste.

Davit Alexander is a jeweller and educator, based in Birmingham at the world renowned School of Jewellery. For nearly two decades, he has been working

with found objects and scrap materials to create jewellery with a political, historical and social narrative, often taking his practice out into the community and working with marginalised groups such as refugees, young offenders and victims of violence.

Dan Russell is a jeweller/maker and gallery assistant based in Kent. A recent Alumnus of UCA Rochester, he is known for working primarily with wood and other found objects gathered from his local surroundings to create wearable adornments with a social and environmental narrative. His most recent collection, 'Waste-Full World', a project about the impact of plastic waste and its effects on sea-bird and marine life worldwide has since gone on to be exhibited throughout Europe and Asia.

WOLVERHAMPTON ART GALLERY

Lichfield St, Wolverhampton WV1 1DU

www.wolverhamptonart.org.uk

Lisa Henderson Landscapes

Saturday 9 March - Sunday 9 June. Lisa Henderson is originally from Cardiff but her art and practice is closely linked to the West Midlands and Staffordshire, where she has lived since the 1970s. Her work is inspired by the shapes, colours and textures found in nature. Henderson's paintings use collaged, recycled and pre-prepared papers alongside printmaking techniques such as wiping, scratching and breaking in to the picture's surface to achieve rich texture and colour in an abstract and fluid creative process. This new exhibition features paintings, drawings and collagraphs inspired by wild and natural landscapes and includes a new Cannock Chase series, inspired by the seasons. The landscapes of Wales, Scotland, New Zealand and imagined 'other worlds' are also represented in the show.

Making an Impression: Prints by Manet, Pissarro and their Contemporaries

Thursday 28 March - Sunday 9 June. This stunning new exhibition showcases the work of masters of 19th century French Impressionism including Manet, Pissarro, Cézanne, Renoir and more. The exhibition explores the ways in which Impressionist artists embraced advances in artistic technology to experiment with etching, lithograph and drypoint printing techniques to capture fleeting moments; blurring the boundaries between drawing, photography and printing. More than 30 works feature in the show and explore themes including The City and Modern Life, Portraits and Landscape

and Labour. Wolverhampton Art Gallery is one of the first venues to host this new and prestigious touring exhibition from the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. Many of the pieces in the exhibition are being displayed for the first time.

THE WORCESTER CITY ART GALLERY & MUSEUM

Foregate Street, Worcester, WR1 1DT.

Tel: 01905 25371 • www.museumsworcestershire.org.uk

Diaghilev's Ballets Russes

Matisse: Drawing with Scissors

2 February - 27 April. Stories from the Diaghilev's Ballets Russes told through costumes, programmes and objects will be shown together for the first time in the UK at Worcester City Art Gallery and Museums alongside a Hayward Gallery Touring exhibition *Matisse: Drawing with Scissors*.

Diaghilev's Ballets Russes features a unique collection of costume and ephemera telling the stories of the Ballets Russes, the most spectacular and scandalous ballet company of the early 1900s. Matisse was one of many artists commissioned to create costumes and scenery for the company, the exhibition also includes work by other great artists of the period including Dame Laura Knight.

Henri Matisse was one of the 20th century's most influential artists. His vibrant works are celebrated for their extraordinary richness and luminosity of colour and his spectacular paper cut-outs were his final triumph. This exhibition features 35 lithographic reproductions of the famous cut-outs that he produced in the last years of his life. It includes iconic images such as *The Snail* and the *Blue Nudes*.

Philippa Tinsley, Curator Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum said: "We are very excited to bring these two fabulous exhibitions to Worcester. We are very proud to be the first venue in the UK to show the Ballets Russes collection, it is an extraordinary collection of objects illustrating just how spectacular the Ballets Russes was in the early 1900s. *Matisse: Drawing with Scissors* will be a visual delight for all visitors; spring will be an exciting time to visit Worcester Art Gallery & Museum."

Hear more about *Diaghilev's Ballet Russes* from the exhibition's curator on Tuesday 12 March, 1pm, £3 per person. Tickets can be booked in advance - call 01905 25371. *Matisse: Drawing with Scissors* is a Hayward Gallery Touring exhibition from Southbank Centre, London.

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Tess Jaray, Gimpoe, 2017 © Tess Jaray, 2019.
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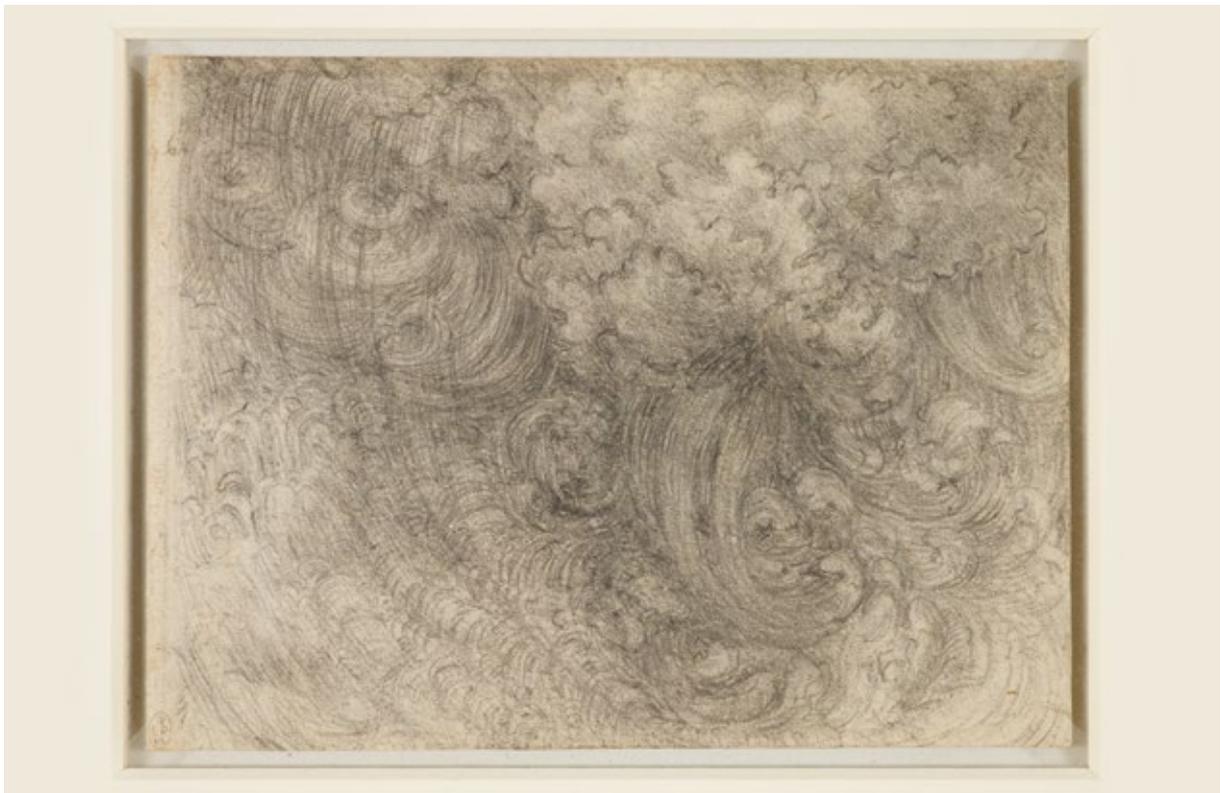
LEONARDO DA VINCI: A LIFE IN DRAWING

In 2019, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery is delighted to be part of Royal Collection Trust's nationwide celebration of Leonardo da Vinci, as seen through his diverse, beautiful and fascinating drawings.

This year marks the 500th anniversary of Leonardo's death. The Royal Collection holds the finest surviving group of Leonardo's drawings – more than 550 sheets that have been together since Leonardo's death, acquired by King Charles II around 1670. As paper is damaged by light, these drawings cannot be on permanent display. So to mark this anniversary, Royal Collection Trust is collaborating with twelve museums and galleries to stage simultaneous exhibitions of Leonardo's drawings across the UK. In the summer of 2019 all these drawings will be brought together in a single exhibition at The Queen's Gallery in London, followed by a selection of these works at The Queen's Gallery in Edinburgh in the winter of 2019-20.

Leonardo was born in 1452 near the town of Vinci, close to Florence, and we know that he was a painter

in Florence by 1472. It seems probable that he worked for the studio of the sculptor and painter Andrea del Verrocchio for a time, as well as undertaking independent commissions. Leonardo moved to Milan around 1482 and expanded his areas of interest, particularly in the scientific subjects that would be useful to an artist, such as anatomy, and the nature of light and colour. He painted the Last Supper for Ludovico Sforza, the ruler of Milan, and worked on a project for a huge equestrian monument which was abandoned when Sforza was overthrown in 1499. Leonardo returned to Florence where he began several paintings including the Mona Lisa, but travelled back to Milan soon after. It was there that he carried out his greatest scientific studies. He had intended to publish several treatises but never completed any of them. Leonardo spent the





end of his life as court artist to King Francis I in France and died at Amboise on 2 May 1519 at the age of 67.

Drawing was at the core of all Leonardo's work. He drew to prepare his artistic projects, to record the world around him, to pursue his scientific speculations, and to make visible the workings of his imagination. Many of his investigations, particularly his explorations in human anatomy, were ground-breaking at the time and not surpassed for centuries. However, the majority of these drawings and manuscripts remained in Leonardo's private notebooks and were little known. The importance of his work was not fully recognised until his surviving manuscripts were finally published in the late nineteenth century.

As he completed very few paintings and the majority of his great projects were never completed, it is primarily through Leonardo's drawings that we can understand the artist. They reveal his interests, investigations and the inner workings of his mind. The selection of 12 drawings that will be shown in Birmingham present works from across Leonardo's life. They include scientific studies, a study for St James in the Last Supper, a study of trees and the light falling on leaves, anatomical drawings of the hand, the head of an old bearded man and a storm overwhelming a landscape. Together they give an insight into the range of interests that Leonardo pursued throughout his lifetime, both

for projects he was commissioned to carry out and for the development of his own knowledge.

This is a rare opportunity to see drawings by Leonardo da Vinci up close and get a glimpse into the mind of the archetypal 'Renaissance Man'. Leonardo's genius is truly visible through his drawings. Leonardo da Vinci: A Life in Drawing will be on show in Gallery 16 at BMAG from 1 February to 6 May 2019, and another 200 drawings will be on view at the same time in 11 other museums and galleries across the UK. A fully illustrated catalogue featuring all 200 drawings will be available for £9.95 from BMAG's shop. ■

By Katie Morton, Exhibitions Curator

The nationwide event is sponsored by Constantine and the Birmingham exhibition is sponsored by Coutts Bank.

Katie Moulton will be discussing the Leonardo drawings at a Friends' Evening Event on Tuesday 30 April and leading a private guided tour for the Friends on Tuesday 12 March at 9:30am (please see pages 6 and 8 for more information).

LEFT: *A Deluge*, Royal Collection Trust/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2019 **TOP LEFT:** *The head of St James in the Last Supper and Architectural Sketches*, Royal Collection Trust/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2019 **TOP RIGHT:** *The leg muscles and bones of man and horse*, Royal Collection Trust/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2019

THE COFFIN WORKS

The Coffin Works was Birmingham's newest museum when it opened in October 2014. Four years on, this award-winning site has carved out its own identity in Birmingham's historic backdrop of industrial heritage attractions. It was a 15-year campaign from 1999 until 2014 to transform the Coffin Works from a mercantile 'Mary-Celeste' into a thriving history museum, and at times during that period it looked as though the project would not happen.

The recession of 2008 was potentially the biggest 'game changer' as this put the project on the backfoot. In the wake of the recession, the government cut almost all funding to the regional development agencies; and Advantage West Midlands, the main funder at that point, had to withdraw its offer to the Coffin Works.

But the project team did not despair; they went back to the drawing board, scaled down the ambitions and

with new sources of funding secured from English Heritage and Heritage Lottery Fund, a £4m project became a £2m project.

From the beginning the Coffin Works was an ambitious project for multiple reasons. Using the word 'coffin' in the name of a visitor attraction was a bold step, some might say crazy. But the name was honest. The Newman Brothers Manufactory, now transformed into the Coffin Works Museum, is the



ABOVE: The Quarter Workshop is a designer silversmith's studio (where you can make your own wedding rings amongst other things!) which has been based at the Coffin Works since 2014 © Jack Spicer Adams.

LEFT: In October 2018, the Coffin Works' Museum turned four, and staff and volunteers marked the occasion with the annual confetti cannon photo shoot.

TOP RIGHT: The former Newman Brothers' Manufactory on Fleet Street, now home to the Coffin Works' Museum.



last of its kind. It is the last surviving purpose-built Victorian coffin furniture manufactory and it doesn't merely survive: it survives in a city which was home to the trade; bequeathing an impressive history as the site where kings, queens and prime ministers' coffin fittings were made.

From the very beginning, the museum had to be self-sufficient. The project was also ambitious because, with just three members of staff (one full-time and two part-time), employing volunteers was vital. A minimum of 24 volunteers a week was needed to enable the Coffin Works to function and open to the public, and this only accounted for the public-facing aspects of running the museum. So far, volunteers have given just over 20,000 hours to the project since 2014, worth in excess of £400,000.

In addition, renting half of the Coffin Works' site to local businesses was integral to the business plan. Five working spaces were refurbished with the intention of attracting local creatives to rent the units. These units have been a resounding success and virtually 100% fully occupied over the last four years, generating over half of the income required to sustain the museum.

The Coffin Works has successfully established itself with other likeminded local institutions working

on new initiatives, working with the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter and the Pen Museum on the 'Explorer Pass'. This Pass is the first joint admission ticket for the Jewellery Quarter heritage attractions. Working together and making it easier for tourists to visit the Jewellery Quarter as a whole has always been central to the Coffin Works' business plan.

The four-year landmark is a crucial time for any business - these are the survival years. Whilst the Coffin Works still has a way to go, the Museum is confident that the goodwill and passion of their staff, volunteers and trustees, all of whom have so much invested in the project, will continue to drive it forward. ■

By Sarah Hayes, Museum Manager

The Coffin Works is open Wednesday to Sunday, 10:45am to 4pm. Tours are on the hour from 11am to 3pm and take 1 hour 15 minutes. Prices are as follows: Adult: £7; Concession: £6; Child: £4. Family tickets are also available. Private tours can also be arranged for out-of-hours visits. Contact newmanbrothers@coffinworks.org or call 0121 233 4790 for more information.

FEBRUARY

-  Wednesday 6 ** St Mary's College, Oscott
-  Friday 8 # Curator's Tour of 'Women Power Protest' - Emalee Beddoes-Davis
-  Tuesday 12 # Making 'Women Power Protest' - Emalee Beddoes-Davis

MARCH

-  Friday 1 * *Through the Eyes of a Child* - Jane Howell
-  Saturday 9 * A sensory tour of 'Making Together' at the RBSA
-  Tuesday 12 * Curator's Tour of 'Leonardo da Vinci: A Life in Drawing' - Katie Morton
-  Tuesday 19 * 'Birmingham's Computer Collection' - Phillip Roberts
-  Thursday 21 * 'Stories from a Small Museum' - Henrietta Lockhart

APRIL

-  Monday 1 - Monday 8 ** Friends International Holiday to Sicily
-  Thursday 11 * 'From the Lyceum to the Alexandra: A Tour of the Alexandra Theatre' - Julia Kirby
-  Tuesday 30 * 'Leonardo da Vinci: A Life in Drawing' - Katie Morton

JUNE

-  Tuesday 11 * 'Wire in the Blood' - Sandy Robertson

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

EVENT KEY



FRIENDS' CROSSWORD BY DEREK STREET

CLUES ACROSS

2. The day immediately preceding (3)
4. Nursery rhyme tradesman who declined a customer who failed a solvency test (6)
8. Auditory organ (3)
9. Unit of electrical potential (4)
11. Birmingham office which stamps an anchor to signify quality approval (5)
14. The new water highway in 18th century England?
15. What's the matter? It was predicted in 1933. It is all over the space, invisible to us and massively influential (4)
16. Mythical beast reported as abominable in the Himalayas (4)
17. Woodblock print by Hokusai. The Great ___ (4)
19. Ballet skirt (4)
22. Home of luxury long distance travel at sea (5)
23. Added to Birmingham Conservatoire's title in 2018 (5)
26. Can be near and shine, can be far and twinkle (4)
27. One of the electronic communication domain categories (abbr.) (3)
28. Scotch. Spelt without an 'e' and certain to be a 'round' at Hogmanay (6)
29. Conclusion (3)

3. Italian who created 18th century sound pictures of summer, winter, autumn and spring (7)
4. Down to earth description of a ceramic vessel (3)
5. Scotch. Spelt with an 'e', these are nearly round and may be around at Hogmanay (4)
6. Of, or related to, water (4)
7. Western sauce with an affinity for turkey (9)
10. Perhaps the best known of Shakespeare's tragic kings (4)
12. Scot. Famous 19th century novelist/writer. Spelt with a 'v', he did not build a steam locomotive (9)
13. Japanese currency (3)
17. Saxon noble Lady awarded a 'heatun' (farmstead) by King Ethelred in AD 985. Here, eventually, Wolverhampton developed (7)
18. For manual propulsion in water (3)
20. A distinct entity or group; part of a larger whole (4)
21. Town that was a major centre of Netherlands art in the 15th century (6)
24. Given in witness that a statement is true or a promise shall be kept (4)
25. Sounds almost a sigh. Sadness and sympathy for the court jester (4)
26. Eastern sauce with an affinity for noodles (3)

CLUES DOWN

1. Mural or ceiling painting in which a water based paint

1			2	3			4		5		6	
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28								29				

ANSWERS ACROSS: 2.Eve 4.Piemman 8.Far 9.Volt 11.Assay 14.Canal 15.Dark 16.Yeti 17.Wave 19.Tutu 22.Liner 23.Royal 26.Star 27.Org 28.Whisky 29.Void
 DOWN: 1.Fresco 3.Vivaldi 4.Pot 5.Eggs 6.Aqua 7.Cranberry 10.Leaf 12.Stevenson 13.Yen 17.Wulfrun 18.Oar 20.Unit 21.Bruges 24.Oath 25.Alias 26.Soy



Camille Pissarro, Rue de Voisins, 1871 (Detail)
Courtesy of Manchester Art Gallery, © Manchester Art Gallery/Bridgeman Images

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