

ARTEFACTS

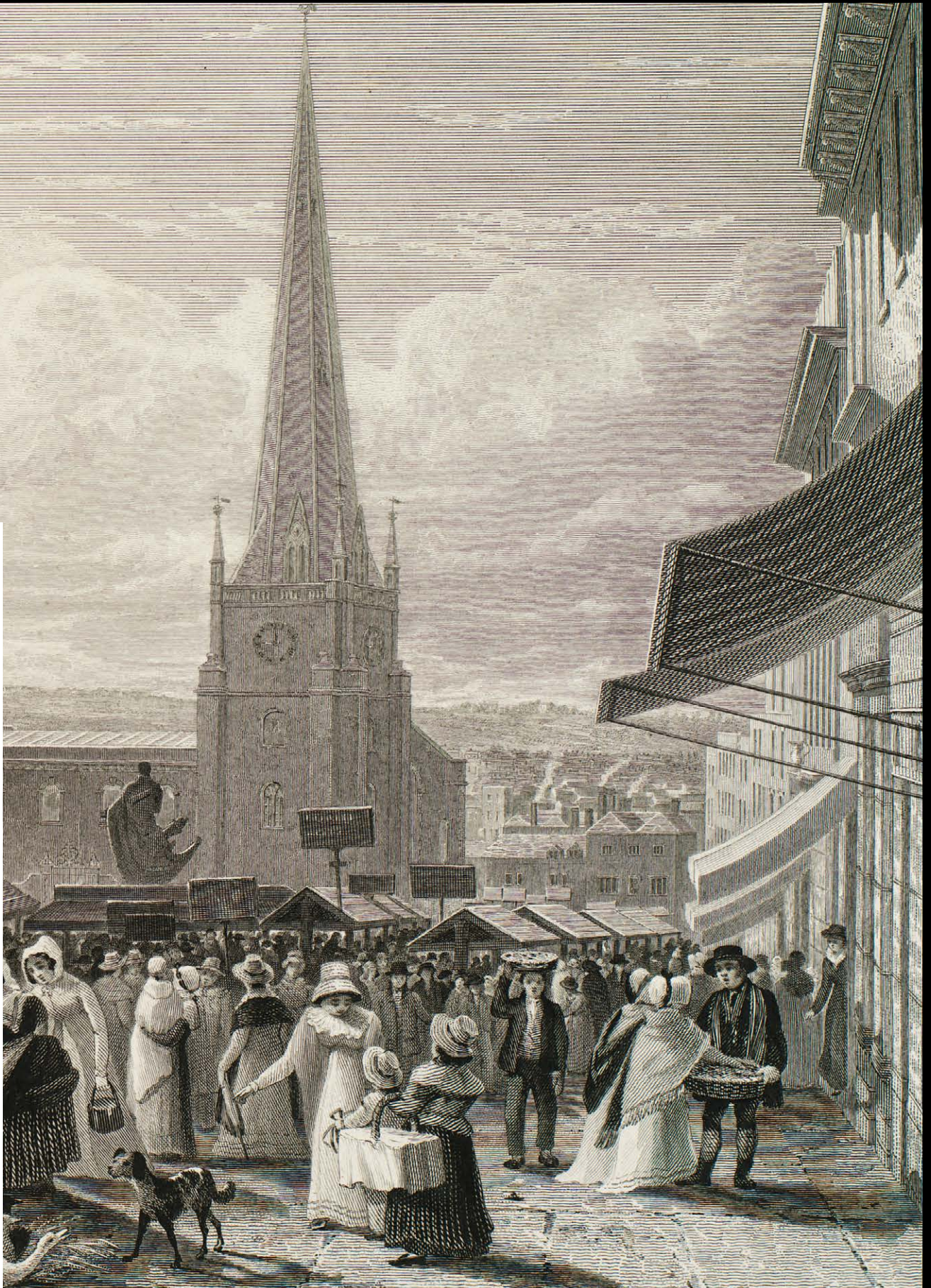


Friends of
Birmingham
Museums

SUMMER 2023 • ISSUE 73

BAFM

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FRIENDS OF BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS MAGAZINE

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EDITOR'S NOTE

BY MELISSA HUGHES

Welcome to the Summer edition of 'Artefacts', the second edition produced by PB&J Publishing. We do hope that you were as pleased with their first edition - the Spring 2023 issue - as we were, and that you enjoyed reading it. It appears to have been a particularly successful edition (no doubt assisted by the fact that it had a William Morris on the front cover!) and we were delighted that Birmingham Library ran out of copies and requested more!

This is the first edition of the magazine which is 40 pages instead of the usual 36 pages, so we hope you enjoy the additional content. And we are absolutely delighted that Derek Street has returned to produce a Crossword for this edition, based on the theme 'Entrepreneurs'.

This edition's 'Hello from Birmingham Museums' is the last one which will be written by Rachel Cockett, BMT's Director of Development. She has written this feature for 18 editions of

'Artefacts', since May 2017, but after 22 years working for Birmingham Museums she has resigned to take a career break. She has been the Friends' primary point of contact with BMT since 2014, attending all our Committee Meetings and delivering BMT's Annual Report at our AGMs and she will be greatly missed by the Friends' Committee and by me. We wish her all the best for the future! We are delighted that Toby Watley, BMT's Director of Collections, who has worked alongside the Friends for many years, will be taking over from her in this role.

It is now possible to purchase customisable art prints of many of the works within Birmingham's collection. And we are working alongside BMT to ensure that every image which appears on the front cover of 'Artefacts' will be added to this continually growing selection. For more information about how to browse and order your print see page 5. ■

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'The High Street Market, Birmingham' by David Cox, engraved by William Radclyffe, 1827; 1996 V146.52; Transferred from Birmingham Reference Library. Photo by Birmingham Museums Trust, licensed under CC0





CHAIR'S OBSERVATIONS

BY PETER MILES

At our last AGM, one of our Members asked me for how long I had been a Friend.



'Madonna of the Clouds' by Donatello (Italian, 1386–1466), about 1425–35; 17.1470.
Gift of Quincy Adams Shaw through Quincy Adams Shaw, Jr. and Mrs. Marian Shaw Haughton.
Photograph © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

I told her that I joined in 1970 and so I have now been a Member for fifty three years. At the time Dennis Farr, the recently appointed Director, sent me a letter welcoming me to the ranks of the Friends.

I was still relatively young(!) and had joined following an initiative by the Friends to recruit younger members.

Throughout this half a century of being a Member of the Friends I can honestly say that I have had a great time. This is my second stint on the Committee and I am really pleased to be back. During my time on the Friends Committee there have been some memorable occasions including organising Bellini parties with Glennys Wild (one time Keeper of Fine

Art), helping to raise funds for the Bellini; organising holidays abroad such as Venice, Amsterdam, Bruges; and taking a coach party to the south of France.

As we move out of the pandemic, the Friends events programme is now up and running again so please do check the programme and come along to some of our events. It will be an opportunity to meet other Members as well as to enjoy the visit or the talk!

At the moment Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery is closed and so this is a time when Birmingham Museums really needs its Friends more than ever before. Please can I urge all of our Members to renew their Memberships at this crucial time. It is so important. And if you are reading this and you aren't a Member, please do join us – more details on page 8.

If you are in London and have the time then do visit 'Donatello: Sculpting the Renaissance' at the Victoria & Albert Museum. This is the first major UK exhibition to explore the work of this Renaissance master.

One of the joys of the exhibition is Boston Museum of Fine Art's marble relief 'The Madonna of the Clouds' which shows a mother cuddling her son – an amazing departure from the cold formulaic Madonna and child of the previous centuries.

You will recollect that I mentioned the Vermeer exhibition in the Spring 2023 edition of 'Artefacts', which is on show at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam until June. Unsurprisingly all the tickets have now been sold – a real sell out. ■



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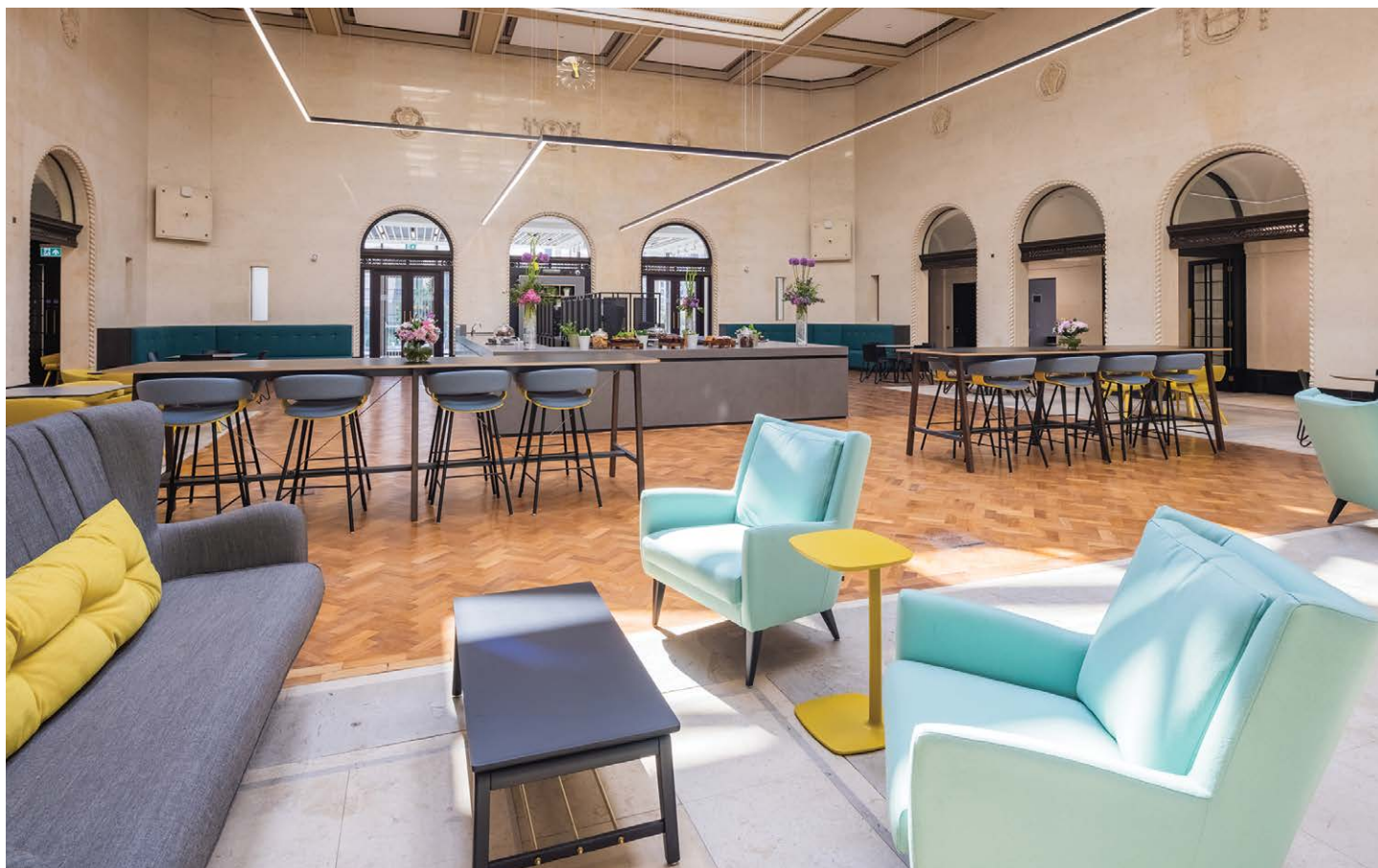
print type. It has never been easier to bring a piece of Birmingham's culture and creativity into your home!

And, if you can't find a work from the collection that you'd like as an art print, please contact Birmingham Museums' retail team via email at shop@birminghammuseums.org.uk and they will endeavour to get the work added to the collection.

The images which appear on the front cover of 'Artefacts' will be uploaded before publication. So, if you spot a front cover which you particularly like, do visit the online shop and buy yourself a print!

shop.birminghammuseums.org.uk/collections/art

FRIENDS' EVENTS



Above: The Exchange

HOW TO BOOK EVENTS - EITHER BY EMAIL OR BY POST

BY EMAIL

Send an email to friendsofbmag@gmail.com listing: all the events you would like to go to, how many tickets you would like for each event, and whether the tickets are for members or non-members. Please include your membership number if applicable.

You will be sent an email reply and information about how to pay for the events by bank transfer. Once the bank transfer has been received you will receive a further email confirming your booking.

BY POST

Write to us including: all the events you would like to go to, how many tickets you would like for each event, and whether the tickets are for members or non-members. Please include your membership number if applicable.

Please work out the total amount due and send a cheque, made payable to 'FBMAG', to: Friends of Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, Soho House Museum, Soho Avenue, Birmingham,

B18 5LB. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope so we can issue you with your ticket(s) and confirm your booking(s).



VISIT TO WALSALL LEATHER MUSEUM

Date: Wednesday 7 June 2023, 1.45pm for a 2pm start
Venue: Walsall Leather Museum, Littleton Street, Walsall, WS2 8EW
Cost: £10 members / £14 non-members
Directions: visit their website - go.walsall.gov.uk/museums-libraries-and-galleries/walsall-leather-museum
By train: frequent trains from Birmingham New Street.
Walking directions from the station: Exit the station on to Park Street – the main shopping street. Turn LEFT towards a large Poundland shop. Go along the RIGHT hand side of the building and cross the road to a large Tesco store. Walk down the side of Tesco keeping it on your RIGHT until you reach the main road – Littleton Street West (A4148). Cross at the pedestrian crossing and you are at the museum. The walk from the station will take approximately 10 minutes.
By car: Use Bate Street Car Park - WS2 8EL.
 A chance to find out about Walsall's world famous leather trade. We will have a guided tour and talk with demonstrations

EVENT KEY



ANNUAL EVENT



DAYTIME TALK



EVENING EVENT



GUIDED TOUR



OUTING

of various machinery and the chance to make a personalised leather key ring and fob. After the tour there will be refreshments and time to make a purchase in the excellent gift shop. The tour will last about 2 hours.



ASTON HALL VISIT AND TOUR

*Date: Sunday 16 July 2023, Time: 1.30pm for a 1.45pm start
Cost: £7 members / £10 non-members (Includes entry, tour guide, tea and cake to finish)*

Special offer for Members: Bring one non-member for free and introduce them to the Friends!

*Venue: Aston Hall, Trinity Road, Aston, Birmingham B6 6JD
By car: For Sat Nav use the postcode B6 6JD. There is a free car park at Aston Hall.*

By bus: Numbers 65, 11 and 7 stop nearby. By train: Aston Station and Witton Station are a short walk away.

Join us for a tour and afternoon tea at this magnificent Grade 1 listed Jacobean mansion, sitting in its own attractive gardens and park in the heart of the city. A nationally significant site with the building largely unchanged, full of history dating back to the Civil War, home to James Watt Junior and the first historic building to be preserved by a municipality. The restored stable block provides a delightful spot for refreshments to be enjoyed after the tour, with its café and garden seating area. If you have visited Aston Hall before then there is always more to discover - especially with a tour Guide. If you have not visited before then come and find out what you have been missing!



BIRMINGHAM VOLUNTEERS AND THEIR MEDALS: 1797 TO 1802

*Date: Monday 21 August 2023, 10.30am for an 11am start.
Coffee will be available on arrival*

Venue: Soho House Museum, Soho Avenue, off Soho Road, Birmingham, B18 5LB

Speaker: Dr David Symons, former Curator at Birmingham Museums Trust

Cost: £10 members / £14 non-members

By car: Take the A41 out of the city centre towards Handsworth. There is a small car park at Soho House and there is also on-street parking.

By bus: 74 from Snow Hill Ringway. Get off at the second stop after the Hockley Flyover and Soho Avenue is on the left.

In the mid-1790s the threat of French invasion saw local units of volunteers raised across the country - a kind of Napoleonic Wars 'Dad's Army'. The citizens of Birmingham were rather slow to act, but in 1797 they raised a regiment of infantry and a force of cavalry. Both were disbanded in 1802 when peace was concluded with the French by the Treaty of Amiens. This talk will look at what we know about these units, at the medals associated with them, and at what we can say about the men who served in their ranks.



FRIENDS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

*Date: Tuesday 12 September 2023, 10.15am for an 11am start
Venue: Lyttelton Theatre, Birmingham and Midland Institute, 9 Margaret Street, Birmingham, B3 3BS*

The Friends AGM will be held at the Birmingham and Midland Institute on Tuesday 12 September at 11am. We would like to invite you to join us for tea and coffee from 10.15am. The AGM will be held in the Lyttelton Theatre. Please make sure

to put this important date in your diary. It will give you the opportunity to hear the latest news from the Friends and to ask any questions you might have. After the AGM Zak Mensah, Birmingham Museums Trust's Co-CEO, will talk about the redevelopment of BMAG (see daytime talk for details).

We do not charge for the AGM and so if you wish to make a donation towards the costs of the meeting prior to the event please do send these to us. Donation plates will also be available on the day. It is important that we know numbers for catering and quorum purposes so please email friendsofbmag@gmail.com or write to us at the address above to RSVP or if you have any questions. We very much hope to see you there.

NB. More details about the AGM will be appearing in the Friends Committee Report and Financial Statements, which will be sent to you by post in the Summer.



THE REDEVELOPMENT OF BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY AND PLANS FOR REOPENING

Date: Tuesday 12 September 2023, 12noon - following on from the Friends AGM (see details above)

Venue: Lyttelton Theatre, Birmingham and Midland Institute, 9 Margaret Street, Birmingham, B3 3BS

*Speaker: Zak Mensah, Co-CEO, Birmingham Museums Trust
Cost: Free for attendees of the Friends AGM*

Zak Mensah, Birmingham Museums Trust's Co-CEO, will talk about the redevelopment of BMAG, the progress which has been made to date and their current vision for BMAG's reopening.



VISIT TO THE EXCHANGE

Date: Friday 6 October 2023, 2pm for a 2.15pm start

*Venue: The Exchange, 3 Centenary Square, Birmingham, B1 2DR
Cost: £5 members, £8 non-members*

By public transport: The Exchange is very accessible by public transport. There is a metro stop outside along with a bus stop for several routes.

By foot: Walking distance or Metro from New Street and Snow Hill railway stations.

There is no car parking at the venue and it is in Birmingham's Clean Air Zone.

This impressive building was constructed in 1933 as the headquarters for a unique institution - Birmingham Municipal Bank. It has recently been sensitively restored as part of a Birmingham University facility, having survived the fate of many of the city's buildings. This tour will provide a history of the building with a full exploration of all four floors, all of which are fully accessible, including the vaults. The main banking hall is now a delightful café with a full selection of beverages and food and for those who wish we will enjoy its facilities at the end of the tour. Why not treat yourself to a full afternoon tea!

FUTURE VISITS

We are planning return visits with talks to Winterbourne House and Garden and the West Midlands Police Museum later this year. We are also investigating the possibility of tours at Wednesbury Museum & Art Gallery and The Roundhouse and a tour of the Jewellery Quarter. Further details will be published in the Autumn edition of 'Artefacts'.

NEWS FROM THE OFFICE



Since our formation in 1931 (over 90 years ago!), the Friends have enhanced Birmingham's collections by supporting the purchase of over 2,700 acquisitions. In 2022 we launched the Friends' Acquisitions database, a comprehensive list of all these acquisitions, which can be found

on the Publications page of our website: www.fbmt.org.uk. To celebrate this longstanding support, each week one of these works is added to the Friends' Facebook page, to showcase the Friends' contributions to Birmingham's world class collections. Please follow our Facebook page - www.facebook.com/FriendsBMAG - to follow our updates and to find out more!

Please send any correspondence to us at: Friends of Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, Soho House Museum, Soho Avenue, Birmingham, B18 5LB.

Joining the Friends will give you the following benefits (terms and conditions apply):

- Free entry to Birmingham Museums' Historic properties: Soho House, Sarehole Mill, Blakesley Hall, Aston Hall and Museum of the Jewellery Quarter. Please check birminghammuseums.org.uk for up-to-date opening times and prices
- 'Artefacts' magazine, which is published quarterly, and the Friends' E-Newsletter
- The opportunity to join the Friends' social events and outings
- Discounts in the shops and cafés at BMAG, Thinktank and the Historic properties
- 50% entrance discount to Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum at Millennium Point: www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/thinktank
- 10% discount at the Birmingham and Midland Institute's Coffee Lounge on production of a valid Friends membership card
- 10% discount off purchases in both the shop and the café at Potteries Museum & Art Gallery and Gladstone Pottery Museum: www.stokemuseums.org.uk

FRIENDS OF BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS APPLICATION FORM

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(Please tick)

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

CONCESSIONARY RATES (60+/unwaged)

SINGLE £21

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A/C NO 00248432

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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

50 YEARS OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF MUSEUMS

BAFM exists to support and encourage friends of museums and so the Conference to be held in Doncaster is the perfect opportunity to be inspired by the work going on in our sector and take away practical advice.

This year, BAFM celebrates fifty years since the organisation was formed. It was in response to an invitation to attend a meeting of Friends' groups from across the world to meet in Barcelona to discuss issues common to voluntary groups wherever they operated. The following year, it was decided to form a British Association which would represent British friends of museums and eventually BAFM, as it is called, enrolled



The magnificent 18th Century Mansion House in Doncaster

as a member of the World Federation of Friends of Museums. All these national federations are volunteer led, as is the World Federation. It means that groups can share expertise with other groups

who, whilst they may be operating in very different circumstances, still face many of the same kinds of challenges.

In this special year, as we look forward to the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III, BAFM are proud to acknowledge the support of HRH The Duke of Gloucester, our Royal Patron. So join BAFM on Saturday 1 October 2023 for an exciting celebration of 50 years of BAFM in the magnificent surroundings of Doncaster Mansion House, with a host of renowned speakers. ■

The Conference will be followed by a Banquet in the Mansion House. For more details, contact daveadgar@gmail.com.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to our new Members: Ms Eileen McKen, Mrs Shirley Green, Mrs Usha Khosla, Ms Christine Hart and Mrs Rachel Cockett.

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.

FOLLOW THE FRIENDS ON FACEBOOK

The Friends have a Facebook page, which is regularly updated with news and events. Every week, an item which the Friends have contributed to Birmingham's world class collections is added to the page. So please follow our Facebook page - FriendsBMAG - to follow our updates and to find out more!

A TOUR OF BIRMINGHAM CATHEDRAL - ST PHILLIP'S ON 9 FEBRUARY 2023

A sunny February afternoon enabled a group of Friends to see the Burne-Jones windows in Birmingham Cathedral at their best. After giving some background information about the building, knowledgeable guide Andrew Packer pointed out some of the fascinating details in the windows themselves. Who would have noticed that in the Crucifixion window, Christ is wearing a loin cloth made of fabric

in William Morris's 'willow' design? Who knew that the donor of the Nativity window stipulated 'no cattle'? How lovely that Burne-Jones wanted the earthly figures in his Last Judgment scene to look curious rather than terrified. All came away feeling they had learned something new about such a well-known building in the centre of our city. ■

By Liz Baker





Staffordshire Hoard Replica Helmet.
CC BY-NC-ND Photo © Birmingham Museums Trust

HELLO FROM BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS

This will be my last article for 'Artefacts'

After over 22 years at Birmingham Museums I have handed in my resignation to take a career break for about a year. Whilst I am excited for the future, I will be sad to leave the organisation and the numerous colleagues I have worked with over more than two decades. I started working at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery in 2000, initially on documenting the applied art collections, moving into documentation management, then other management roles, including my last role as Director of Development.

I have many years of great memories from working for Birmingham Museums. The experience that still stands out the most was getting to see the Staffordshire Hoard before the rest of the world knew about it. I was lucky enough to share an office with the colleague it was reported to and he said 'you might want to come and see this...'. He was right! My relationship with the Hoard has shifted as my roles have changed, but as someone who graduated from Birmingham's School of Jewellery, these extraordinary pieces of metalwork hold a special place for me.

My relationship with the Friends and its many volunteers has also changed over time. In recent years my colleagues and I have approached the Friends Committee with requests to support collection acquisitions, conservation work, and new exhibitions. Whilst the Friends have always been generous with their support, I remain particularly proud of the three year partnership that bought the Arts Council Collection National Partners exhibitions to Birmingham. The Friends contribution to match-funding over three years made eight exhibitions including 'Coming Out: Sexuality, Gender & Identity' and 'Women Power Protest' possible.

Another stand-out Friends moment came in the form of Jane Howell, who is no doubt known to many of you. During the pandemic, Jane (aged 76, I know she won't mind me saying...!) undertook a staged 30 mile sponsored walk between our nine museums and heritage sites, raising over £6,000 to support Birmingham Museums.

So a big thank you to the Friends and the members who have helped make my job of fundraising a little easier!

Moving onto other news: The Museum of the Jewellery Quarter will remain closed whilst roof works continue. See our website and the 'Birmingham Museums - What's On' pages in 'Artefacts' for details of special events across our museums and historic properties including family storytelling, arts and crafts, nature explorers, and specialist talks and tours. I'd like to highlight our 'Planetarium Late: The Origin of Gin' on 18 May at which you can join Dan Upton, with a gin made for the evening, for very broad history condensed into an hour of limited rambling (!) (see page 29) or join historian Chris Rice on 10 June for an 'Introduction to the life of James Watt Junior' followed by a guided tour of Aston Hall (see page 27).

Keep an eye out here in 'Artefacts' and online at birminghammuseums.org.uk for the latest news. ■

**Au revoir,
Rachel Cockett,
Director of Development**

JAMES WATT JUNIOR

For almost 30 years, Aston Hall was the home of James Watt Junior (1769-1848).
Now a new display at the Hall explores the life of this fascinating individual.



James was the son of the renowned engineer James Watt and his first wife Peggy. Born in Scotland, James's mother died when he was young, and he and his older sister Margaret were left in the care of relatives for a couple of years when his grieving father first moved down to Birmingham in 1774 to form a partnership with local manufacturer Matthew Boulton for the production of steam engines, a technology to which Watt had made significant improvements. Having decided to settle in Birmingham, Watt then brought his children down from Greenock to live with him. He remarried, but his new wife Ann had a difficult relationship with her stepchildren, greatly favouring her own offspring with Watt, Gregory and Jessy.

James's education was orientated towards his becoming a manufacturer or an engineer, with its emphasis on mathematics, science, drawing and bookkeeping. He began his schooling in Birmingham, but in his late teens he was sent to study with private tutors on the continent, first in Geneva and then in Germany. Despite living so far away from his parents, James could not escape his father's influence and disapproval. Watt's letters to his young son are full of criticisms of James's conduct and character, and complaints that James was spending too much money and wasn't expending enough energy on his studies. Even James's handwriting was a cause for concern. In a letter from July 1784 Watt wrote that James had 'lately written in too large a character and your lines too far distant for Letter writing'. A year later, he claimed that James's handwriting was getting worse, and that '[t]he height of your Letters is very well but they are too wide and too far apart'.

When James returned to England his relationship with parents remained fractious, and in 1788 matters came to a head. Watt declared to James that he had 'given up every thought of employing you in my own business' while James retaliated that his future happiness was dependent upon his 'quitting Birmingham'. Consequently James moved to Manchester, embarking on an apprenticeship with a firm that specialised in dyeing and printing cotton textiles. James had selected this trade as he hoped that working in the dyeing industry would improve his understanding of chemistry, illustrating the close links between science and manufacturing in this period.



At the end of his apprenticeship, James secured a job with another textile manufacturer as their foreign agent, conducting business in Europe on their behalf. In 1792 he left for Paris, which was then in the midst of the French Revolution. Like many of the men he had befriended in Manchester, James was supportive of the original ideals behind the Revolution and was opposed to the system of monarchy. He even presented a message of support to the Jacobins from the Manchester Constitutional Society, of which he was a member. However, this move was received very badly in Britain. Not only was it denounced in parliament, but James's stepmother wrote that she thought 'no man can have good moral principles that can take part with the Jacobins'.

The opposition in Britain to the French Revolution and those who sympathised with its philosophy and aims was so great that James feared he would not be able to return home. He considered emigrating to America, as many of his friends with similar political views had done, but eventually it was deemed safe for him to come back to Birmingham. Despite his father's earlier reservations about James working for him, in the mid-1790s James joined the firm of Boulton and Watt, alongside Boulton's son, Matthew Robinson Boulton. These two men later took over the company when their fathers retired and ran it for around forty years.

At the very end of 1818, James took out a lease on Aston Hall. He had spent the previous decade living at Thornhill, a small house in Handsworth belonging to the Boultons which boasted just three reception rooms and three bedrooms. Aston Hall was therefore a significant step up for this confirmed bachelor. After struggling to find a suitable new home for a couple of years, James seems to have alighted on Aston as it appealed to his antiquarian interests. He retained and repaired the seventeenth-century features of the Hall's interiors and bought numerous old paintings and pieces of antique furniture to decorate the Hall. He also employed the designer Richard Bridgens to create new furniture and

furnishings. Whilst James had favoured a more neoclassical aesthetic at Thornhill, the items Bridgens designed for Aston were deliberately Jacobean in style, echoing the Hall's history and appearance. James even encouraged the rumours that Aston Hall was haunted. One of his friends wrote in 1819 when staying at Aston Hall that: 'It was diverting one day as We were driving out of the Park Gate, to be asked at the Lodge by three respectable young men, if they might be permitted to see the Castle. Watt told them it was impossible, as it was haunted'.

For the most part we don't know very much about James's life while he was living at Aston, as very little of his personal correspondence survives from that period. However he had a wide social circle, and several friends came to visit and stay with him at Aston. His father had been part of the Lunar Society, a group of writers, scientists, manufacturers and thinkers mostly based in the West Midlands. James was not only introduced to luminaries such as Josiah Wedgwood and Joseph Priestley by his father, he was also friends with their children. Others of his acquaintance included the poet William Wordsworth, whom he had met in Paris during the French Revolution and with whom he once climbed Helvellyn in the Lake District.

Whilst James Watt is a now relatively famous historical figure, celebrated for his contribution to science and technology – largely thanks to James Watt Junior's role in cementing his father's legacy and promoting his achievements, his son is not very well known. The new display at Aston Hall seeks to shine a spotlight on James Watt Junior, a man whose life intersected with so many of the key events and individuals of his age. As part of the 'Aston Retold' project to redisplay and reinterpret the Hall, the story of this key player in the Hall's history is now told through a selection of objects, many of which have a direct provenance to James and were purchased with the support of the Friends. From some of the furniture he commissioned to some of the contents of his pockets, this display introduces visitors to this interesting man and the turbulent times in which he lived. ■

**By Dr Rebecca Unsworth,
Research Assistant (Decorative Art),
Birmingham Museums Trust**

LEFT: 'Portrait of James Watt Junior', 1792, housed inside his watch; 2003.0007.15; Purchased with the assistance of the Friends of Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery, The National Lottery Heritage Fund, and Birmingham City Council, 2003. **TOP:** Room dedicated to James Watt Jr



CHANGING BIRMINGHAM ~ ITS PEOPLE AND PLACES

VIEWS AND VISTAS

‘I CAN SEE CLEARLY NOW THE RAIN HAS GONE’

With the weather warming up and as the days get longer and lighter it seems like an appropriate time to go into ‘flaneur’ mode and appreciate the views and vistas of our city. Using Birmingham’s collection, we can begin to see how the layout of the city has changed over the centuries and, in the inevitable Birmingham style, continues to rapidly evolve.



There is one vista with a long history, recently restored by the Bull Ring development of 2003, looking down from the top of the High Street to St Martin's Parish church, now beautifully restored and taking centre stage. In the 1960s, with the priority for cars dominant, that historic view was buried under an urban motorway and, for those of us who were pedestrians, access to the markets was via a number of delightfully fragrant subways. The restoration of this classic Birmingham aspect in 2003 was not inevitable, but the result of a hard-fought campaign initiated by a 'People's Plan' in the 1990s. The initial plan by developers was for a huge shopping mall called The Galleries, covering the entire space, but the determination of campaigners and senior councillors for a more human scale and pedestrian-orientated built environment resulted in the historic perspective of the Bull Ring being restored but with the unavoidable compromise of the markets being pushed somewhat to the fringes.

This leads us to an interesting question: from where did the various elements of this urban space originate and why are they so important to understanding Birmingham's history? The earliest aspect for which we have documentary evidence is from 1154, with the granting of the right to hold a market by Henry II to the Lord of the Manor, Peter de Birmingham. It is generally thought that the market, upper and lower, developed around the space occupied by St Martin's. Most opinion views the market as a highly significant factor in Birmingham's development as a trading and a manufacturing centre. Hence the importance of protecting the market in modern times, which is now

located behind St Martin's and serves a diverse community.

The earliest record for St Martin's is 1263. As the town developed St Martin's became the Parish Church, although some evidence points to St Thomas's at the Priory in Bull Street as being the earlier Parish church. As a building it has gone through many changes from that original medieval church but the current layout and position still largely reflects that ancient setting. There are two major changes to note: the first in 1690 when, in their wisdom, the churchwardens decided to encase the original building in brick. This finish can be seen in some of the illustrations in Birmingham's collection. The Victorians regarded this major, possibly tasteless, alteration with horror but William Hutton, writing earlier in the latter half of the 18 Century, had this to say: 'the bricks are excellent and the workmanship are excellent'.

The most significant and even more fundamental change was in 1873, which provides us with the building we now see at the centre of the new Bull Ring, when local architect J. A. Chatwin was commissioned to completely rebuild the church, excluding the tower. Despite the fact that the programme largely demolished the existing building, it was generally seen as a tactful approach, largely following the footprint of the medieval church and well presented, using hard wearing rockfaced Grinshill stone on the exterior. There are still some remaining medieval elements inside the tower and effigies to the de Birmingham family c1325 to 1390 are still present. Now fully cleaned and restored to its commanding position, Chatwin's design can be fully

appreciated, and it has stood the test of time.

That view, restored in 2003, had originally been created by some ruthless town planning in true Birmingham style in the early 1800s by the Street Commissioners who cleared the buildings surrounding St Martin's and the Shambles, a row of butcher's shops, creating the space for a large open market and building a market hall in 1835. The space quickly became a centre for religious and political speakers surrounded by market traders including ice cream sellers from the Italian community in the nearby St Bartholomew area. Whilst welcoming relatively new landmarks such as Selfridges and the Rotunda from the sixties, both now very much part of Birmingham's identity, it is important that we can still appreciate the historical landscape going back to medieval times. Interestingly, Historic England have recently asked the Developers of the Smithfield site, behind St Martin's, to revise their plans for precisely not respecting that history. Let's hope they are as successful in challenging the approach as the campaigners were in the 1990s. ■

By Jim Wells, Friends Trustee

For sources and further background reading please visit our website: fbmt.org.uk/publications.

LEFT: 'St Martin's Church Birmingham, By Night' by Elijah Walton, 1850-1888; 1920P448.

TOP LEFT: 'The Bull Ring & Nelson Statue, Birmingham', 1845, attributed to Thomas Allom (Previously attributed to David Cox); 1940P901.

TOP RIGHT: 'The High Street Market, Birmingham' by David Cox, engraved by William Radclyffe, 1827; 1996 V146.52; Transferred from Birmingham Reference Library.

BOTTOM RIGHT: 'Benny's Babbies' by Cold War Steve (Christopher Spencer), 2020; 1937F394. Commissioned by Birmingham Museums Trust; © Cold War Steve/ Christopher Spencer.

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FRIENDS' ACQUISITIONS

'STUDY OF TWO GONDOLAS AND FIGURES'

BY LUCA CARLEVARIJS

'Study of two Gondolas and Figures', an oil sketch produced by Luca Carlevarijs or Carlevaris (20 January 1663 - 12 February 1730) between 1700-10, was presented to Birmingham by the Friends in 1948.



Carlevarijs was an Italian painter, an engraver and an architect. Little is known of Carlevarijs' life or work before he reached forty but it is believed that he visited Rome where he would have seen the paintings of Gaspare van Wittel (1652/3-1736), one of the first masters of topographical views known as 'vedute', which sold well with tourists making them a popular and a lucrative genre.

Perhaps inspired by van Wittel, Carlevarijs produced vistas of Venice, creating a volume of printed views entitled 'Le fabbriche e vedute di Venetia: diseguate, poste in prospettiva et intagliate da Luca Carlevarijs con privilegi' ('The Buildings and Views of Venice Designed in Perspective and Engraved by Luca Carlevarijs'). Published in 1703, this set of 104 etchings was a comprehensive

survey of the fabric of the city and had an enormous influence on the art world at the time, serving as a model for Venetian view painters throughout the 18th century. 'Le fabbriche' was published in five editions during the 18th century and prints were also published after the original work for other books. In producing this comprehensive 'catalogue' of possible views of the city, Carlevarijs created an album for commissions – a commercially astute move which elevated these 'vedute' within the academic discourse.

Carlevarijs was Canaletto's principal predecessor in the genre of Venetian 'view' paintings, and his work pioneered and established this genre, which became known as 'vedutisti'. Many of the later 'vedutisti' or 'view' painters based their works on the compositions

which they found in 'Le fabbriche'. All 'vedute' include gondola scenes, such as the ones which Carlevarijs sketched in this study.

In the dedication to 'Le fabbriche', Carlevarijs stated that he intended his paintings to 'rendere più facile alla notizia de Paesi stranieri le Venete Magnificenze' (to 'render more clearly the magnificence of Venice to foreign countries'). 'Le fabbriche' was viewed by many as patriotic, emphasising the importance and grandeur of Venice and depicting the city as a centre of international activity. This was particularly poignant at a time when Venice was in a period of long and slow decline. The pomp and ceremony of such occasions was a visual façade, concealing the reality of the city's deterioration and, as a result, Carlevarijs won the favour and

patronage of many Venetian families. Other contemporary Venetian ‘view’ painters such as Guardi and Canaletto painted mainly for the export market, making Carlevarijs’ role in Venetian society unusual.

When he was not producing ‘Le fabbriche’, Carlevarijs was commissioned to do other work, including documenting state visits and diplomatic scenes such as the elaborate celebrations to honour the arrival of dignitaries in Venice. Birmingham has an example of this in their collection as in 1949, the year after the Friends funded the purchase of the gondola study, Birmingham acquired Carlevarijs’ ‘The Arrival of the Earl of Manchester in Venice’, painted in 1707-10. Such large pageant paintings were Carlevarijs’ most notable commissions. These rich, colourful and dramatic compositions combined groups of figures against Venetian backdrops.

Alongside and in preparation for his large paintings, Carlevarijs made dynamic drawings on paper of everyday Venetian life, conveying the vivacity of a busy city and capturing the individuals who lived within it. Carlevarijs’ figure studies are known as ‘macchiette’, sketches made with daubs of colour to indicate animated Venetian figures and he produced many such studies for his ‘vedute’. Carlevarijs began by drawing the characters on paper, basing them on people he passed in the streets. He would then transform them into oil sketches such as this one. These studies demonstrate a crucial part of Carlevarijs’ artistic process as they would ultimately become integrated into the formal composition of a Venetian ‘veduta’. The Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A) have an album of fifty-three sketches by Carlevarijs which includes figures and objects he appears to have painted in the open air in preparation for insertion into formal compositions. ‘The figures and objects appear frequently and virtually without variations in his paintings between 1707 and 1726 and are closely related to his etchings of 1703 in *Le fabbriche e vedute di Venetia*.’

Carlevarijs was known to have carefully studied his figures prior to placing them on the canvas and this is demonstrated in our canvas which shows studies of men aboard gondolas. In our oil study both the gondolas are viewed from the side. The upper gondola is more elaborate in design, painted with a band of white, blue and orange. Two gondoliers – one



positioned at the front and the other at the back – are propelling the boat along whilst two men drape a red cloth over the ‘felze’, a removable cabin, used for sheltering passengers. The man with his back to us stretching his arms out to spread the fabric is wearing blue breeches and a green top. The red of the fabric matches his hat and waistband, and also the hats of the gondoliers. The wealthy nobleman can be spotted, seated under the ‘felze’. The lower gondola is in stark contrast to the one above – a simpler design of boat with the blackened, pitch-stained hull which would have been left behind after waterproofing. The dress of the men is simple and monochrome in contrast with the bright colours of the figures above, with one gondolier in a cream outfit and two bearded men seated in the boat, both dressed in a brown Franciscan religious habit. This provides a contrast between the purpose of the two boats: the nobleman on his pursuit of pleasure and the humility of the friars, presumably on an earnest errand.

Carlevarijs’ sketches reveal a particular attention to costume, highlighting the Venetian style of dress which was highly regarded in fashionable circles throughout Europe at the time. Venice was a Maritime Republic which imported raw materials from the Far East and exported finished products including highly desirable velvets and brocades. As a major trading centre for textiles, Carlevarijs demonstrates his patriotism by showcasing the best that Venice has to offer. This taste for Venetian textiles persisted into the 18th century. During this period, Venice’s power as a Maritime Republic was declining and the government was corrupt. Paintings such

as Birmingham’s ‘The Arrival of the Earl of Manchester in Venice’, a rich, colourful and dramatic composition which combines groups of figures against a Venetian backdrop, demonstrate the Venetian patron’s attempt to present a wealthy city engaged in pleasurable pursuits. Carlevarijs filled his ‘vedute’ with elegantly posed and well-dressed figures who served to conceal the decline of the Republic using the splendour of the events he represented.

Carlevarijs’ sketches also demonstrate his great influence on Canaletto, whose figures and their arrangement often show a marked debt to the older Master. This is evident in Canaletto’s ‘Venice: The Feast Day of Saint Roch’, which is in the collection of the National Gallery, London and shows a crowd watching as richly dressed state dignitaries and foreign ambassadors emerge from the church of San Rocco. By 1728, progressive paralysis had put an end to Carlevarijs’ career, but his successor had already appeared – the young Canaletto (1697-1768).

Carlevarijs’ paintings are held by many museums and art galleries including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Royal Collection Trust, the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg, the Jean Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam.. ■

**By Melissa Hughes,
Artefacts’ Editor and
Friends’ Administrator**

TOP RIGHT: ‘Study of two Gondolas and Figures’ by Luca Carlevarijs, 1700-10; 1948P50; Presented by the Friends of Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery, 1948.

LEFT: ‘The Arrival of the Earl of Manchester in Venice’ by Luca Carlevarijs, 1707-1710; 1949P36; Presented by the Trustees of the John Feeney Charitable Trust, 1949.

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BACK TO NATURE

LANDSCAPES FROM THE RBSA COLLECTION 1800 - PRESENT

This exhibition, drawn from the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists' Collection explores approaches to landscape from the early 19th century to the present.

In the early 1800s the market for views of British landscape was slow to develop being restricted mainly to topographical images for engraving and the backgrounds for portraits. Native artists bemoaned the fact that the gentry avidly acquired landscape works by European painters but were loath to support their countrymen.

There were no painters in Birmingham in 1800 making a living purely from landscape. The teacher, Joseph Barber (1757 - 1811), catering for artisans in the japanning trade, typified an approach to nature studied second-hand from chap books with pictures composed to time

honoured formulae of the "picturesque". The next generation, including his son, Joseph Vincent Barber (1788 - 1838) and fellow drawing master, Samuel Lines (1778 - 1863), founder members of the RBSA, were the first artists in this region to set off in earnest into the surrounding countryside with their sketch books to work direct from nature. They established a style of observational drawing that stood out for its no-nonsense clarity and vitality. The exhibition has some fine examples of this including the delightful view by Samuel Lines of "The Larches," the house and garden of Samuel Galton at Sparkbrook, where the young Charles

Darwin discovered his interest in nature. A sketch of "Worcester Beacon with Colwall Oaks" by his son Henry Harris Lines (1801 - 1889) is precisely drawn and dated April 28th, 1877, and inscribed with the measurements of those great trees to calculate their age at that moment in time as a note for posterity.

The success of Turner and Constable gave a tremendous boost to the market for British and European landscape which many regional artists were keen to exploit. As Birmingham grew in size and prosperity, the livelihood of local artists became more secure with



FAR LEFT: 'Umbria' by Silvia Bowman, c.1995 RBSA Collection
ABOVE: 'The Swanpool Tavern, Aston' by George Busby, c.1985 RBSA Collection
LEFT: 'Stephenson Street Eye' by Wayne Attwood, 2014 RBSA Collection
OPPOSITE: 'Travellers on a Country Path' by Joseph Barber, c.1800 RBSA Collection

the RBSA exhibitions being the main showcase for their work. The show includes the sketchbooks of Frederick Henry Henshaw (1807 - 1891) and work by the prolific Samuel Henry Baker (1824 - 1909), who showed over 500 works at the RBSA from 1848 onwards. Joseph Barber's pupil, David Cox (1783 - 1859), having established a national reputation, returned to his native city in 1841. A faithful supporter of the RBSA and contributor to its exhibitions, he became a member in 1842 adding great prestige to the institution. His drawing style is seen in the vibrant little charcoal sketch, "A Lane at Harborne", a village then separated from Birmingham by fields, farms, and skylarks.

Unsurprisingly, trees loom large in this exhibition. The Solihull solicitor turned artist Richard Chattock (1825 - 1906), renowned for his brutally realistic Black Country scenes, also produced some stunningly detailed and elegiac views of the countryside. One such example is shown alongside expressive images of

storm-felled willows by Harold Holden (1885 - 1977) and the stark "Tree" by Norma Rhys Davies (1926 - 2012). And the sea of course plays a central role in the history of British art. Having its first showing, the exhibition features the recently donated painting, "Harbour Scene with Capstan" by Kate Fryer (1910 - 2017). The rugged coastal scenery of the Southwest has attracted generations of artists and "Rooftops at Brixham" by Malcolm Brooks (b.1943), "Gurnards Head" by John Scott Martin (b.1943) and "Mousehole" by David White (b. 1939) bring a breath of salt air to the exhibition.

Landscape as a place of magic and mystery is central to the English Romantic tradition and is reflected in some outstanding works. "The Wild Beauty of Clee" by Claire Spencer (b.1937) shows the old hill seen through a screen of wildflowers. A touch of magic too in "Nightfall Over the Black Country," by Robert Perry (b. 1944), a shimmering vision of sodium lighting against a twilight sky. Equally atmospheric

is "Motorway near Oldbury" by Roger Forbes (b. 1948) with the cathedral-like underbelly of the M6 reflected in shadowed waters of the canal.

Quite unlike anything else in the show is "The New Babylon" by Frederick Francis Evans, painted, we think, in the 1930s. It is an extraordinary panorama of a teeming, fantasy cityscape incorporating ancient and modern architectural landmarks from around the world presided over by a gigantic airborne dragon. Once seen, never forgotten! ■

By Brendan Flynn,
RBSA Professor of Art History

The exhibition is on display at the RBSA Gallery from 27 July – 26 August 2023. Opening hours: Tues-Sat 10.30am-5pm, admission free. Exhibition talk from Brendan Flynn, RBSA Professor of Art History and Nigel Priddey, RBSA Archive Officer: Saturday 5 August, 2pm-3pm.

www.rbsa.org.uk



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1. Rose patterns on an enamelled silver clock, HM 1927, Birmingham - not in Birmingham's collection.
2. Brush backs with enamelled rose pattern and with overlaid painted decoration - these are examples which are not from Birmingham's collection.
3. Straight line patterning machine by Plant of Birmingham (Harborne), set up for long work pieces, which can be found in Birmingham's collection.
4. Two examples of ornamental rose work turning on African black wood, which can be found in Birmingham's collection.
5. Brocade engine for copying from a cylindrical master by Lienhard of Switzerland, which can be found in Birmingham's collection.
6. Operator's workbooks for engine turned patterns, in the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter.
7. Fine nineteenth-century Rose engine, probably by Lecroix, from Birmingham's collection

BIRMINGHAM'S PREMIER COLLECTION OF PATTERNING MACHINES

With Birmingham's diverse industrial history, it is not surprising that many industrial machines have been given to or acquired by the city of Birmingham's museum collection. This is particularly true of the jewellery and silverware industry and Birmingham has a fine collection of patterning machines.

The early type of these machines were ornamental lathes which allowed a work piece of hard wood or ivory to be turned to a circular form and then, by precise indexing of the work or using the profiled circular rosettes on the machine, a series of deep facets can be created to create superb 3-dimensional multi-faceted objects. Not surprisingly these early lathes were highly decorative and were often the plaything of the rich. These machines can also be used for shallow surface patterning on metals such as gold and silver, by copying the rosette profile many times, to create attractive patterned surfaces. There are other techniques for surface patterning, such as chasing and hand engraving, but these are very slow processes. As the jewellery industry expanded, patterning machines were improved and developed to speed up this patterning process.

A special type of machine, the 'straight

line engine turning machine' was developed to be able to accurately copy a straight master pattern bar. By precisely copying the master many times it is possible to create an array of accurately spaced lines. The result was a highly attractive and reflective surface.

It was to provide the machines for this type of patterning that George Plant moved his business, which was originally established in 1857, from Alsager in Cheshire to Birmingham. The 1921 and 1922 Bennett's Business Directory for Birmingham and South Staffs states that G. Plant and Son was a maker of lathes, rose engines and glass etching machines at Springfield Road, formerly Ashley Street, Kings Heath. He subsequently moved his business to Harborne where it operated into the 1960s.

The Birmingham Kelly's business postal directory shows that in 1930 there were 30 businesses registered as engine turners with their workshops in the

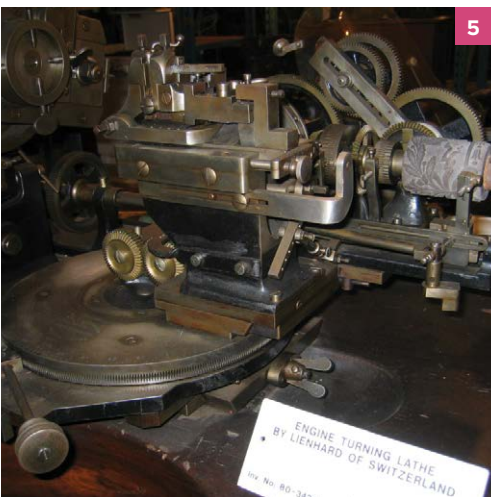
central area of the Jewellery Quarter. Together with engine turning being done within manufacturing companies, this indicates the high level of activity using these machines.

The technique, which was able to produce work of consistent quality, found application as part of the manufacturing process in a wide variety of work, primarily on silverware, such as cigarette boxes, pens, picture frames, dressing table sets, ladies powder compacts, jewellery, and buttons, as well as on gunstocks and metalwork. Being a manual process, it was generally used on higher quality wares. Originally all machines were manually operated but later some were motorised and various accessories were designed to speed up production for cheaper wares.

For bulk production, engine-turned dies were made to allow stamping out from sheet material. Some of these items were covered in transparent enamel creating



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distinctive high quality items, some with the addition of fired-on painted decoration. These techniques were also used with great success by Fabergé and some engine turned work in Birmingham was sent to manufacturers in Europe.

Fashions and techniques have now changed and this type of patterning is much less common. A quicker technique, diamond milling, using a fast spinning diamond replaced some engine turning. It enabled the cutting of a series of facets giving a deeper and very highly reflective cut surface; common on cigarette lighters, rings and bangles. Computer controlled machines are now able to carry out patterning work.

The Museum Collection

As its popularity declined, local companies gave machines to Birmingham's Museum of Science and Industry. That collection, now sitting within the wider Birmingham Museums Trust, is the largest and best collection of such patterning machines in the UK. Based on the accession numbers, about half of the collection was acquired between 1953 and 1965 and most of the other half between 1980 and 1990.

The machines in Birmingham's collection are now normally housed at three locations: the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter (4 machines), Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery (1 machine) and

the Museum Collection Centre in Dollman Street (where the majority are stored). The Science Museum in London has a good collection of 13 ornamental lathes and accessories, but no machines specifically for surface patterning on metals.

In summary, the collection comprises:

- 10 ornamental lathes/rose engines
- 3 straight line engine turning machines
- 2 brocade machines
- 1 diamond milling machine
- 1 wood block engraving machine
- 3 special chucks for ornamental work on rose engines
- 6 samples of ornamental and engine turned work
- Numerous small accessories such as pattern bars and work holding chucks with the patterning machines at the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter.

Within the Birmingham collection there are a few specialised machines such as the brocade machine for copying from a cylindrical master onto a flat surface, and a copying machine for medal production for copying from a large master onto a steel die.

Of particular note at the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter is that the collection includes two of the operators' work books showing the various machine settings for the wide variety of work on items such as cuff links and tie pins.

Some engine turned work is still done today in the Jewellery Quarter on cuff links, tie pins, picture frames, pens and pencils to create highly attractive products.

Being so well constructed, many machines have survived; some were exported and some are in the hands of enthusiasts, such as members of the Society of Ornamental Turners. The BCU School of Jewellery is fortunate to have a rose engine and a straight line machine for teaching purposes.

Many of the machines can be seen during a visit to the Museum Collection Centre, which is open to visitors during annual Open Day events or on one of its regular Friday Open Afternoons. See the website for details on how to book: www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/museum-collection-centre/visit. ■

By John Moorhouse

About the Author: John Moorhouse was born in 1946 and grew up within a family of engineers in West Yorkshire. After a degree in fuel science and a doctorate in an aspect of aircraft fuel tank safety, his first career was in the UK gas industry doing research into the potential hazards in the transport and storage of LNG. In later years he graduated as a watchmaker and subsequently taught horology theory at The School of Jewellery at BCU, and then served on the examinations board of the British Horological Institute. His background in horology and watch dial patterning led him to research and explore the techniques and machinery involved. Cataloguing Birmingham's collection formed a part of this exploration. He is currently researching the level of activity in engine turning within the Birmingham Jewellery trades.

THE ASSOCIATION OF ANIMAL ARTISTS

The Association of Animal Artists is excited to present yet another stunning collection of animal artwork that is as diverse as nature itself.



With members depicting a plethora of animals in an array of mediums and styles - from realistic big cats in coloured pencils to gestural elephants in oils as well as amazing 3D artwork - there is something for the whole family to enjoy in this exhibition. Set in the grounds of Shifnal's Weston Park, the Rose Paterson Gallery is a venue which the Association of Animal Artists (AAA) are thrilled to be returning to. The Association hopes to inspire all visitors to reconnect with nature and realise the unique beauty of the animals we share the planet with through the artwork of its members. All of the stunning artworks are available for sale and artists will also have a number of limited edition fine art prints available.

AAA are proud to be supporting The Big Cat Sanctuary in 2023 to support their work with big cat welfare, breeding, education and conservation. They will be raising funds for The Big Cat Sanctuary throughout the year at their Spring & Autumn Exhibitions, as well as their mid-year art auction. All of the funds they raise will be going towards a really exciting project with the arrival of The Big Cat Sanctuary's first Asiatic Lions, Sonika and Sahee. The Big Cat Sanctuary said:

"We are ecstatic to have the Association of Animal Artists supporting one of our biggest projects of 2023! There are so many amazing artists out there, and we're looking forward to seeing what the AAA members produce this year while fundraising for us!"

AAA is also pleased to announce a series of 'Meet the Artists' days throughout the exhibition's run, where featured artists will be at the gallery to demonstrate their artwork and techniques as well as answer questions and talk about the wonderful work on display.

On 29th and 30th April AAA will be hosting award winning artists Amber Tyldesley and Daniel Wilson – known for their statement wildlife pieces. On 7th May the Association will welcome Simon Tew and Urvashi Patel, two artists with incredibly different painting styles. On 13th May, artists Alison Stafford and Karen Sillar will be at the gallery to show their collection of beautiful artworks featuring birds. Sarah Perry joins the Association on 14th May, known for her beautiful, realistic pet portraits. On 20th and 21st May AAA welcomes Liselle-Fae and Kai Cannon, both known for their bright and colourful painting styles depicting a variety of wildlife subjects. Finally, on 27th

May, artists Laura Smith and Brooke Zee round off the 'Meet the Artist' days with their selection of wildlife artworks.

The Association of Animal Artists is always looking for animal artists to join and become members. They offer members various benefits including exhibition opportunities, weekly socials and a supportive and helpful community. The ethos of AAA is that all the artists are encouraged to create and exhibit artwork of absolutely any animal; in the air, on the land or in water, in any medium and style. Artists are positively encouraged to explore and enjoy their creativity which leads to varied and dynamic exhibitions. In addition, AAA is committed to supporting its animal charity partners and actively works to promote them. You can find out more about the Association by visiting their website (www.associationofanimalartists.com). ■

The Spring Exhibition will run from Saturday 29th April until Wednesday 31st May - is free to enter and is open daily from 11am until 4pm. You can view the exhibition at the Rose Paterson Gallery, Weston Park, Shifnal, TF11 8LE.

TOP LEFT: 'Staredown' by Daniel Wilson
TOP RIGHT: 'Spring is on the Way' by Valerie Briggs
BOTTOM LEFT: 'From Tiny to Tall' by Laura Carter
BOTTOM RIGHT: 'Hope' by Jean Pritchard

Proudly supporting



THE BIG CAT
SANCTUARY

ASSOCIATION OF  ANIMAL ARTISTS

Spring Exhibition

29th April - 31st May
Open 11am - 4pm Daily • Free Entry

Rose Paterson Gallery, Weston Park, Weston-under-Lizard, Shifnal, TF11 8LE

'Out of Time' by Daniel Wilson and Amber Tyldesley

THE FIRST HISTORY FESTIVAL

This July an impressive line-up of top historians, authors, broadcasters and singers will descend on Harvington Hall for the first ever History Festival in this unique moated Elizabethan Manor House.

From out of their mouths will come extraordinary stories of love and betrayal, envy, deceit and survival as they examine some of the most fascinating characters and issues of the Elizabethan period, plus the periods shouldering it.

They include famous historians and authors, such as: Jessie Childs, Tracy Borman, Alison Weir, Ruth Goodman, and Lesley Smith. Each will hold the floor for 45 – 60 mins on their subject of expertise, take questions, and sign their latest books.

Harvington History Festival also features a programme of sublime Elizabethan music: motets and madrigals of deceit performed by the Birmingham Oratory Consort, an octet of singers led by Director of Music Adam Wills Begley. It features the music of clandestine Catholic composers during this period of persecution including some of the country's greatest: William Byrd and Thomas Tallis.

Why Harvington Hall? Nestling in lovely countryside between Kidderminster and Chaddesley Corbett just 30 minutes from the centre of Birmingham, this Elizabethan manor house has a unique place in our history. It was built by a Catholic, Humphrey Pakington, in the late 16th century, determined that he and his community could continue to practice their Catholic faith despite the dangers of persecution.

Pakington built his manor house on the site of an earlier medieval one,



FROM TOP L-R: Jessie Childs, Tracey Borman, Alison Weir, Nicola Tallis, Matt Lewis and Lesley Smith

ingeniously incorporating 'priests' hides' – places where Catholic priests could be hidden during raids to hunt them out. One hundred years ago, after a long period of neglect, the Hall was donated to the Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham (1923). Restoration work discovered no less than seven priests' hides disguised in the fabric of its walls, floors, chimneys and loft, untouched since the 17th century.

The Hall, open to the public from Wednesday to Sunday, is lovingly looked after by teams of volunteers, a Hall Manager and his deputy.

Harvington History Festival celebrates the Hall's 100th anniversary since its rescue from ruin, and is intended to become a unique annual event.

Hall Manager Phil Downing says: "This is a hugely exciting event for us which will firmly establish Harvington Hall's place in history."

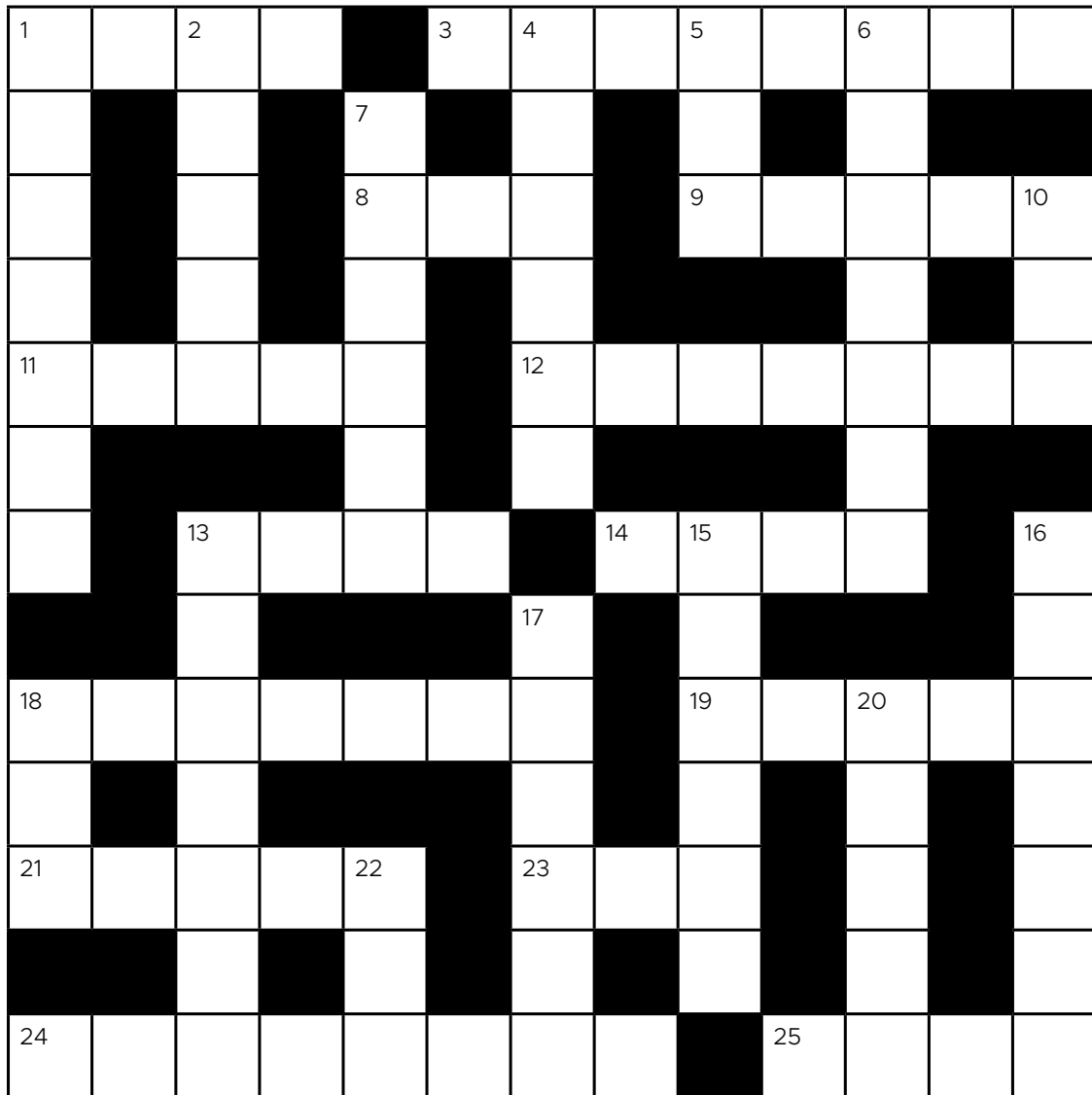
The festival also aims to raise funds for much needed preservation work, including to the Elizabethan wall paintings, considered to be one of the most interesting and diverse collection of Tudor wall paintings to have survived to our time. ■

By Hilary Boszko

Harvington History Festival, July 25 - 31. Tickets on sale now from £10 - £20, available by scanning the QR code, visiting www.harvingtonhall.co.uk or calling 01562 777846.


HARVINGTON
HISTORY
Festival





FRIENDS' CROSSWORD

BY DEREK STREET

The theme of this Crossword is Entrepreneurs – nothing new here as they have been around for ages; thank goodness.

ACROSS

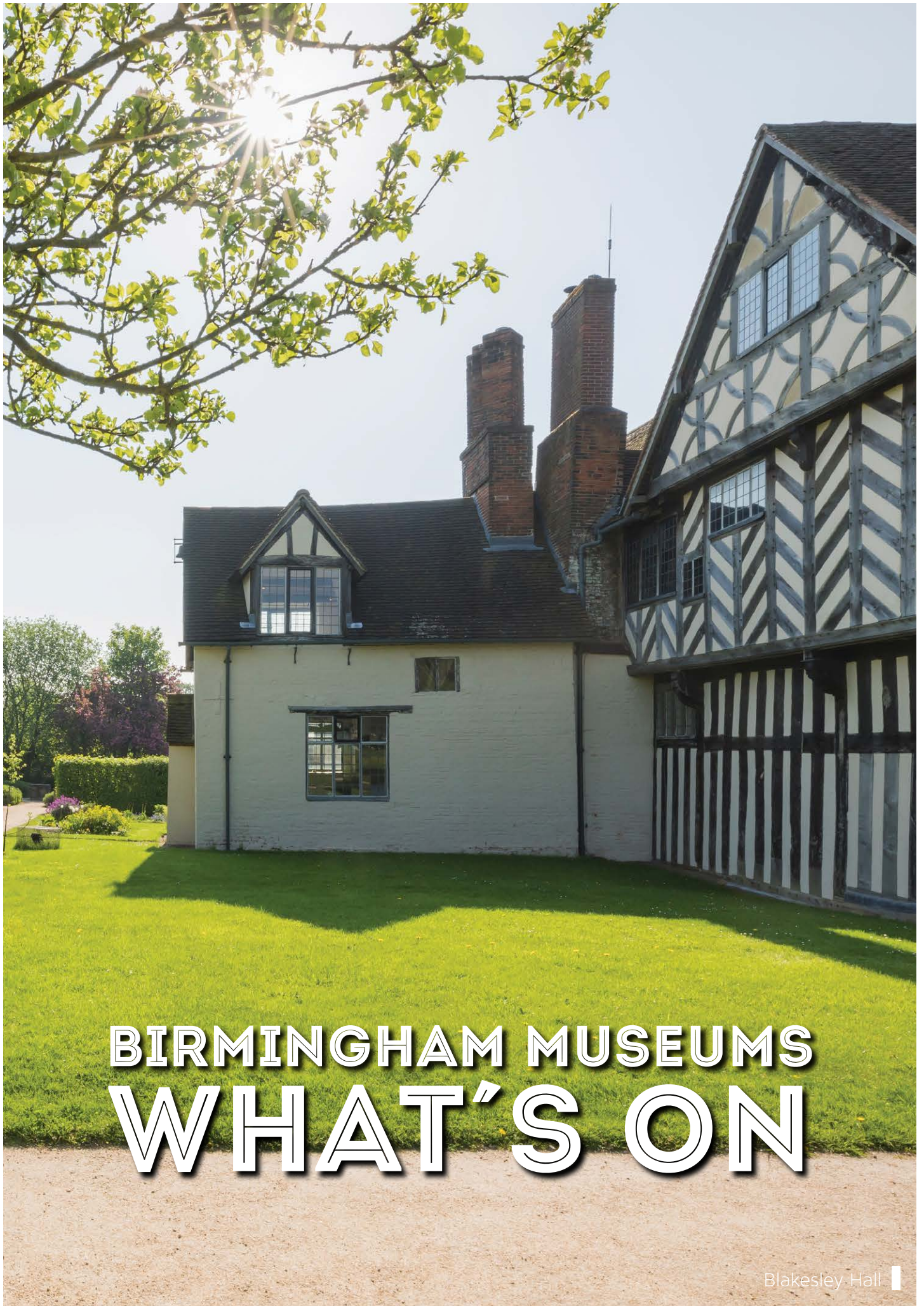
1. Digbeth chemist/pharmacist who developed and manufactured an egg-free "custard" powder (4)
3. Quaker chocolate maker based in York (8)
8. Entrepreneurs lead teams; one of Santa's workers (3)
9. Birmingham-based distributor of light, sparks and power in vehicles (5)
11. Drama set to music (5)
12. A specialised subclass of spectacle lens (7)
13. One of the main ways of working metal goes back to ancient times (4)
14. A link word between cause and effect (4)
18. A tin and copper mining town/area in Cornwall which played an important role in the development of Boulton and Watt steam power technology (7)
19. This family selected its own name to leave no doubt that it was British/English (5)
21. The entrepreneur in 13 down bought land and founded a famous village, naming it partly after a local trout stream (5)
23. Vital component of a pen; a product for which Birmingham dominated world supply (3)
24. Trout fisherman's delight (8)
25. Fixing device on a shirt or a large headed nail (4)

DOWN

1. Unearth JCB's surname (7)
2. Partnered by Rolls (5)
4. Car model named after the city that was Morris' car manufacturing location (6)
5. & 22dn Nothing to show from the first half – or the second. Drawn a blank! (3, 3)
6. The big ones get shot into space. Entrepreneurial? Perhaps (7)
7. A main group of raw materials used by Black Country manufacturers (6)
10. Acronym for an army airborne strike unit for covert and rescue operations (3)
13. Quaker chocolate maker based in Birmingham (7)
15. Liverpool toy maker whose "toys" introduced countless children to quality engineering (6)
16. Famous Scottish road and canal engineer, firstly in Shropshire, later in Scotland (7)
17. Manufacturer worldwide of lighthouse lanterns, originally based in Smethwick (6)
18. Steal from (3)
20. Raising agent (5)
22. See 5dn.

We are delighted that Derek has returned to produce a Crossword for this Summer 2023 edition of 'Artefacts'!

ACROSS: 1. Bird 3. Rowntree 4. Oxford 5. Nill 6. Lucas 7. Rockets 8. Eif 9. Lucas 10. SAS 11. Opera 12. Rimmless 13. Cast 14. Thus 15. Hornby 16. Telford 17. Chance 18. Rob 20. Yeast 22. Nill
DOWN: 1. Bamford 2. Royce 3. Rowntree 4. Oxford 5. Nill 6. Lucas 7. Rockets 8. Eif 9. Lucas 10. SAS 11. Opera 12. Rimmless 13. Cast 14. Thus 15. Hornby 16. Telford 17. Chance 18. Rob 20. Yeast 22. Nill



BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS WHAT'S ON

Blakestey Hall |

Please note: Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery is now closed for essential maintenance works until 2024 – date tbc. Please visit www.birminghammuseums.org.uk for up-to-date information about opening hours.



ASTON HALL

Trinity Road, Aston, Birmingham, B6 6JD.

See birminghammuseums.org.uk for up-to-date opening times and prices. Please note: Aston Hall is open Wednesday-Sunday, 12pm-4pm (with exceptions due to Aston Villa FC matches and private hires).

Rusticus presents Wacky Wildlife

Saturday 27 May 2023. Take part in some seriously silly activities featuring an array of wildlife determined to get their moment in the spotlight! Audiences might find themselves setting up the perfect photo opportunity with a wily woodpecker, a ditzzy dragonfly or barmy badger whilst taking part in some seriously silly activities!

James Watt Jnr. at Aston Hall (Talk and Tour)

Saturday 10 June 2023. James Watt Junior lived at Aston Hall for nearly 30 years and made it a comfortable home. Join Historian Chris Rice for an introduction to the life of James Watt Junior followed by a guided tour of the Hall.

Wildlife Walk at Aston Hall

Saturday 17 June 2023. The Wildlife Walk will lead you through the grounds as they are now and explore their history and changes through time. Join our Natural Sciences Curator to get hands-on with some of the plants in the gardens and look for (and hopefully find!) the creatures which make their home in our spectacular grounds.

Aston Alive: Time Travellers' Toys and Games

Saturday 8 July 2023. Enjoy a slice of the past as Aston Hall hosts time travelling gamesters and larger-than-life sports personalities, who have toys, games, and activities you can have a go with! Step back to the 1800s with tabletop toys and games of the Victorians, take horse and try your hand at medieval jousting, or go all the way back to ancient Greece and see how you do at the Aston Hall Olympics!

The Six Sundays of Summer: Adventures Through Time

Sundays between July and September (30 July, 6 August, 13 August, 20 August, 27 August, 3 September). Every Sunday through the summer holidays enjoy these free, drop-in activities inspired by times gone by. Each week a different activity to take part in!

Please note all events are subject to change of dates due to Aston Villa FC.



MUSEUM &
ART GALLERY
BIRMINGHAM

Chamberlain Square, Birmingham, B3 3DH.

Please note: Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery is now closed for essential maintenance works until 2024 – date tbc



BLAKESLEY
HALL

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. Please note: Blakesley Hall is currently closed except for special events but will re-open three days a week for the summer season from 1 June 2023.

Blakesley Hall is a picture-perfect timber-framed Tudor house with beautiful gardens, situated just a few miles from the centre of Birmingham. It was built in 1590 by Richard Smalbroke, a member of one of Birmingham's leading merchant families.

Crafty Thursday – Rainbow Plates and Dip Dyed Sticks

Thursday 1 June 2023, 11.30am-3.30pm. £2 per child. Family friendly drop-in craft activity.

ZooLabs at Blakesley Hall!

Friday 2 June 2023, 11am-4pm. £4 per ticket. Timeslots from 11am onwards. Join the ZooLabs team to get up close and hands-on with some real live animals! Learn about the animals the Tudors would have had in their homes, farms and gardens. We'll also have a range of activities in the Blakesley Gardens to discover more about Urban Nature and what you can do to protect it!

Floral Painting Workshop with Claire Leggett

Saturday 17 June 2023, 11am-4pm. £30 per person. Join artist Claire Leggett in the gardens at Blakesley Hall for this creative workshop where you will create your very own floral painting. All materials included in the session.

Crescent Theatre Presents: Taming of the Shrew

Saturday 8 July and Sunday 9 July 2023, 5pm-8pm. Adult: £13; Child and Concession: £9. The Crescent Theatre visit Blakesley Hall to perform William Shakespeare's 'Taming of the Shrew'. Performances will take place outdoors in the peaceful Blakesley gardens on a (hopefully) warm July summer's evening.

Shiver Me Timbers! Pirate Day

Thursday 27 July 2023, 11.30am, 1pm, 2.30pm. £4 per person. Join our Pirate Captain for an exciting one hour pirate show in the Gallery at Blakesley Hall. Learn all about pirate ships, the jobs and tasks on board, and you will even get a chance to walk the plank! Whoever finds the treasure on the island will win a special prize! Why not come along dressed as a Pirate too?! A fun interactive show suitable for all the family. Please pre-book your ticket to avoid disappointment as tickets will not be available on the door. Blakesley Hall gardens, Herb Garden Café and Shop will all be open from 11am to 4pm so you can enjoy yourselves before or after the show.



MUSEUM OF THE
JEWELLERY QTR

75-80 Vyse Street, Hockley, Birmingham, B18 6HA.

See birminghammuseums.org.uk for up-to-date opening times and prices. Please note: Museum of the Jewellery Quarter is currently closed except for special events.

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SAREHOLE MILL

Cole Bank Road, Hall Green, B13 0BD.

See birminghamsmuseums.org.uk for up-to-date opening times and prices. The Shop and Pizza in the Courtyard are open Wednesday - Sunday. Sarehole Mill is open on Friday, Saturday and Sunday for guided tours only, and on the first Saturday of the month, 11am - 4pm. Free entry for Friends. Charges apply to non-members.

Discover the mill that has connections with Matthew Boulton and inspired famous author JRR Tolkien.



SOHO HOUSE

Soho Avenue, Handsworth, Birmingham, B18 5LB

See birminghamsmuseums.org.uk for up-to-date opening times and prices. Free entry for Friends. Charges apply to non-members. Please note: Soho House is currently closed except for special events but will re-open three days a week for the summer season from 1 June 2023.

Discover Soho House which was the elegant home of the industrialist and entrepreneur Matthew Boulton from 1766 to 1809.

Blood & Fire: Our Journey Through Vanley Burke's History

1 June - 4 November 2023, Thursday - Saturday, 11am-4pm. Free. Back by popular demand, the photographic exhibition 'Blood and Fire: Our Journey Through Vanley Burke's History' will re-open at Soho House from 1 June. First shown as part of the Birmingham 2022 Festival, images taken by renowned photographer Vanley Burke join archival material from his personal collection, taking visitors on a journey through the artist's history and the Black British experience.



WEOLEY CASTLE

Alwold Road, Birmingham, B29 5RX

Weoley Castle ruins can be seen from a viewing platform throughout the year in daylight hours. Access to the ruins and visitor centre takes place on event days.

The ruins of an exquisite fortified manor house built 750 years ago.

Saturday Guided Tour

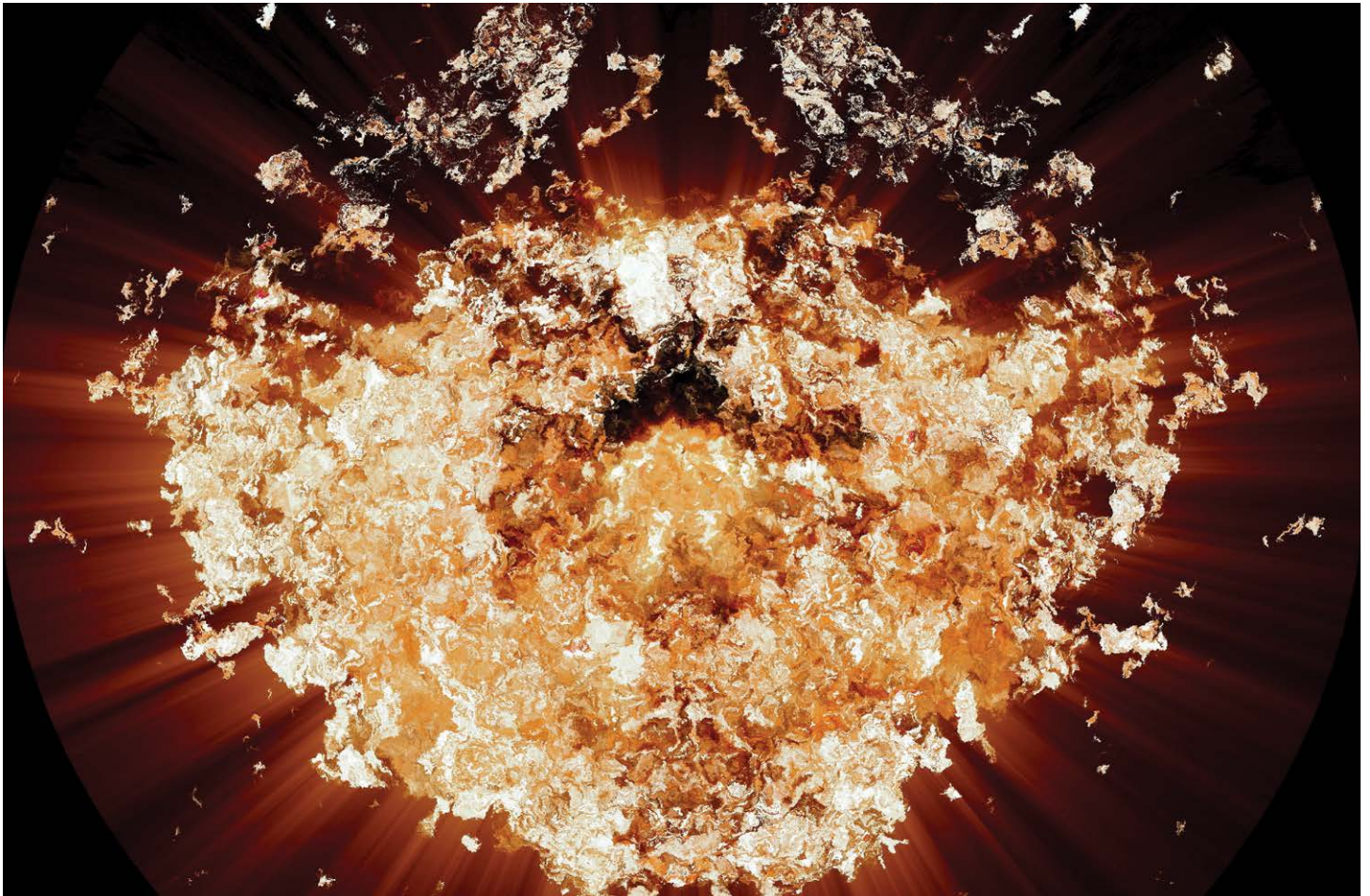
Saturday 6 May 2023. £5 per person. Explore Weoley Castle with our experienced guides and see real finds from the site back on display for the first time in over 10 years!

Saturday Guided Tour

Saturday 3 June 2023. £5 per person. Explore Weoley Castle with our experienced guides and see real finds from the site back on display for the first time in over 10 years!

Below: Weoley Castle ruins





Above: Thinktank's Planetarium Lates: Particle/Wave

Medieval Open Day

Saturday 1 July 2023. £3 per person. Join us for a special event where you learn what life was like in medieval Birmingham with re-enactors, battle displays, storytelling, guided tours, craft activities and much more!

Festival of Archaeology Open Day

Friday 28 July 2023. £2 per person. Join us for a special open day as part of the Council for British Archaeology's Festival of Archaeology 2023. Learn about the archaeology of Weoley Castle and see some of the archaeological finds discovered at Weoley. Expect guided tours of the Ruins throughout the day and more fun activities!



Millennium Point, Birmingham, B4 7XG.

Birmingham term time: Open Wednesday – Sunday, 10am - 5pm. Birmingham school holidays: Open Monday – Sunday, 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.

Thinktank's Planetarium Lates: The Origin of Gin

Thursday 18 May 2023, 7pm. Price: £10. Come and hear tales

of the origins of gin, its often dark history, finishing up with the modern renaissance. Join Dan Upton, with a gin made for the evening, as he gives us a very broad history condensed into an hour of limited rambling! Event is suitable for ages 18+.

Entry is via the Level 3 Event Suite, accessible from level 3 of Millennium Point. Note: due to the layout of the building, no late entry will be permitted after the doors have closed. Doors will open at 6.45, and close 7.05pm. Pre-booking is essential.

Thinktank's Planetarium Lates: Particle/Wave

Thursday 15 June 2023, 7pm. Price: £10. Gravity Wave are the ripples in spacetime, travelling away from their original source: exploding stars, collisions between neutron stars, merging black holes or a single star rotating briskly and irregularly. Until recently, scientific instruments were not sensitive enough to detect them. Come and experience this creative glimpse of the incredible story of gravitational waves, through the collaboration of poets, musicians, sound and video artists - alongside renowned scientists. Particle/Wave has been directed and produced by Alicia Sometimes, writer and broadcaster based in Australia, with a passion for exploring science and art collaborations. Event is suitable for adults.

Entry is via the Level 3 Event Suite, accessible from level 3 of Millennium Point. Note: due to the layout of the building, no late entry will be permitted after the doors have closed. Doors will open at 6.45, and close 7.05pm. Pre-booking is essential.

For all events visit

**www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/whats-on
for further information and to book.**



'Visiting Masterpieces' at Barber Institute until December 2023

IN THE AREA

BARBER INSTITUTE

University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, B15 2TS.
www.barber.org.uk

Paying Respects: Money and Mortality

Until Spring 2024. Money has always been a matter of life and death. Coins are struck in tribute to emperors, monarchs and leaders recently deceased, and have honoured illustrious ancestors through the portraits they can carry. They have been used in many of the rituals that mark the passage from life to afterlife and often portray the trappings and ceremonies of death on their surfaces. This compelling new exhibition features highlights from the Barber superlative collections of Roman, Byzantine and Medieval coins – one of the finest in the world.

Visiting Masterpieces: Treasures from Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

Until December 2023. Three spectacular loans from Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery are now on display at the Barber – including one of the nation's most iconic paintings. 'The Last of England', created in 1855 by leading Pre-Raphaelite artist Ford Madox Brown, is one of Birmingham's most famous art treasures. It is joined by the monumental 'Erminia and the Shepherd', painted by the eminent Italian Baroque painter Guercino in around 1620 and 'The Man of Sorrows', of around 1450, by Flemish painter Petrus Christus. Generously lent by Birmingham Museums Trust, these dazzling and diverse masterpieces hang among the Barber's own outstanding collection until the end of the year whilst the city art gallery is closed for essential rewiring work.

BIRMINGHAM BACH CHOIR

For tickets and more information visit:
www.birmingham.bachchoir.com

Beautiful Brahms

Saturday 1 July 2023, 7pm at The CBSO Centre, Birmingham. Conductor: Paul Spicer; Pianist: John Thwaites. A glorious selection of Brahms' sacred and secular choral music. Tickets and more details available from www.birmingham.bachchoir.com or BMus/THSH Box Office. Tickets: £20/£17. This programme will also be performed Saturday 24 June 2023, 7pm at St Mary Magdalen, Bridgnorth.

BIRMINGHAM AND MIDLAND INSTITUTE

9 Margaret Street, Birmingham B3 3BS. www.bmi.org.uk

Please note: All events need to be pre-booked using the Eventbrite link which can be found on the BMI's website or social media pages.

Monday Lunchtime talk with Ladywood Community Project
 Monday 22 May 2023, 1pm. Ladywood Community Project will be talking about some of the projects they do for local families, and how we can all help. Free for BMI Members and £5 for any non-members. Pre-booking is required using Eventbrite.

Monday Lunchtime talk with the Institute's Head Librarian Samina Ansari and Liverpool University on the 18th Century Libraries Project
 Monday 12 June 2023, 1pm. Showcasing some of the Treasures which have been found so far, and the importance

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DIDO & AENEAS | PURCELL & STABAT MATER | PERGOLESI

14th May, 3:30pm - Malvern Theatres, Worcestershire

The incredible voices of William Towers countertenor; and Eloise Irving, soprano, bring to life Pergolesi's masterpiece, Stabat Mater. Demonstrating Baroque music at its finest, this provides a fitting partner to the excitement of Henry Purcell's Dido & Aeneas. Dido & Aeneas has become a work at the heart of the British musical heritage. In a highly emotionally charged and entertaining performance, the epic tragedy of a queen, a soldier and an illicit love is told through a rich array of music. Performed with minimal staging, Armonico Consort's beautifully tender and entertaining rendition of this incredible opera has delighted audiences across Europe, earning spectacular five star reviews from the national press.



MONTEVERDI VESPERS

22nd June, 7.30pm - Collegiate Church of St Mary, Warwick

13th July, 7.30pm - Malvern Theatres, Worcestershire

A towering masterpiece of the early Baroque and one of the greatest pillars of music history, Monteverdi's Vespers of 1610 offer a stunning array of brilliant instrumental writing, opulent choruses and moving arias. Over 400 years ago this astounding work marked the end of the Renaissance and the beginning of the Baroque. The publication in 1610 almost certainly helped Monteverdi gain the prestigious post of maestro di cappella at St Mark's in Venice, which he would keep until his death in 1643. What better way to experience this incredible work than in this performance by Armonico Consort, led by its director Christopher Monks – the period instrument ensemble that's built a reputation for the freshness and drama of its interpretations. Featuring the English Cornett & Sackbut Ensemble.

ARMONICO CONSORT
YEARS
A Singing Legacy

TICKETS:
www.armonico.org.uk

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ARMONICO

"Pure Pleasure"
THE GUARDIAN

☆☆☆☆☆
THE TIMES

☆☆☆☆☆
THE INDEPENDENT

☆☆☆☆☆
BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE

ARTISAN ALCHEMY GALLERY

Artisan Alchemy is a unique Gallery in the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham, displaying exciting, individual bespoke jewellery and furniture of the highest quality. We occupy a renovated 19th century building which also features workshops for local creative businesses.



- <https://artisan-alchemy.co.uk/>
- artisans@artisan-alchemy.co.uk
- 0121 233 1186
- @artisan.alchemy.gallery
- @artisanalchemy
- @artisanalchemygallery

84 Caroline Street, Birmingham, B3 1UP Open Tues-Sat | 11am-5pm

24 June
Bridgnorth, St Mary Magdalene

1 July
Birmingham, CBSO Centre

Beautiful Brahms



A glorious selection of Brahms' sacred and secular choral music

Paul Spicer: conductor
John Thwaites: pianist



www.birmingham.bachchoir.com



Melati Suryodarmo: *Passionate Pilgrim* at Ikon Gallery from 17 May – 3 September 2023
 Melati Suryodarmo - *I'm a Ghost In My Own House*. Performed at Lawangwangi Foundation Bandung (2012). Photo courtesy of the artist

of the international project. Free for BMI Members and £5 for any non-members. Pre-booking is required using Eventbrite.

Monday lunchtime talk with Simon Perry on the art of Bookbinding

Monday 26 June 2023, 1pm. Free for BMI Members and £5 for any non-members. Pre-booking is required using Eventbrite.

Monday lunchtime talk with Birmingham People's History Archive on Censorship of films in the 1930s

Monday 10 July 2023, 1pm. Free for BMI Members and £5 for any non-members. Pre-booking is required using Eventbrite.

Summer Classical Concert

Wednesday 12 July 2023, 4pm. Showcasing local Birmingham singers, many of whom have been trained at the BMI. Free for BMI Members and £10 for any non-members. Pre-booking is required using Eventbrite.

Birmingham & Midland Institute Presidential Address with Sir David Cannadine

Saturday 22 July 2023, 3pm. Free for BMI Members and £10 for any non-members. Pre-booking is required using Eventbrite.

HARVINGTON HALL

Harvington Hall Lane, Harvington, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, DY10 4LR. Tel: 01562 777846 www.harvingtonhall.co.uk

Harvington History Festival

25-31 July 2023. 16 top historians, broadcasters and authors will cover topics including the lives of Tudor women, Priestly disguise, Anne Boleyn and Elizabeth I's relationship, turbulent times of war and peace and terror and faith and the nitty-gritty everyday life of the Tudors and Jacobean at this beautiful moated manor in Worcestershire. See page 24 for more information. Tickets from £10-£20.

Birmingham Oratory Consort Sing 'The Caged Byrd' - A concert of motets and madrigals of defiance

Friday 28 July 2023, 6.30pm. St Mary's Church, Harvington, DY10 4LR. Director of Music Adam Wills Begley will lead an octet of singers for this special concert of beautiful music by clandestine Catholic composers of the Elizabethan period including by Byrd, Tallis, During, White and Downland and more. Tickets: £20 from the History Festival.

IKON

1 Oozells Square, Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HS.

www.ikon-gallery.org

Free entry. Open Wednesday until Sunday, 11am-5pm

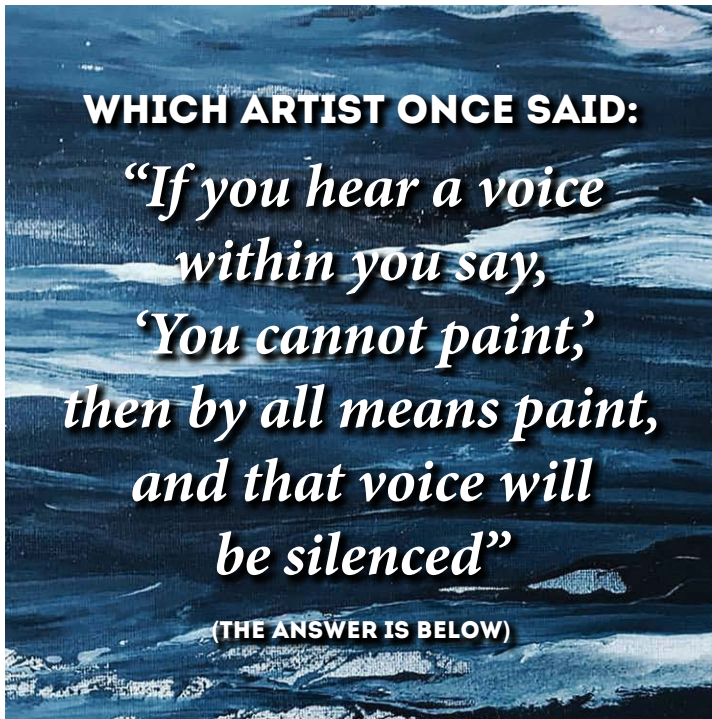
Melati Suryodarmo: Passionate Pilgrim

17 May – 3 September 2023. In summer 2023, Ikon transforms its galleries into a platform for performance art, with the first UK exhibition by acclaimed Indonesian performance artist Melati Suryodarmo.

Melati Suryodarmo is one of Indonesia's most important living artists, known for her strenuous durational performances that last several hours, testing the limits of the human mind and body. Through live performances from the artist and "delegated works" performed by over 50 associated artists and community activists, the exhibition celebrates her dedication to pushing the boundaries of her own practice and building performance art networks.

Mentored by renowned Butoh dancer and choreographer Anzu Furukawa and performance artist Marina Abramović in the early 1990s, Suryodarmo has, for four decades, created durational performances, installations and films that merge live art with sculpture, drawing and time-based media.


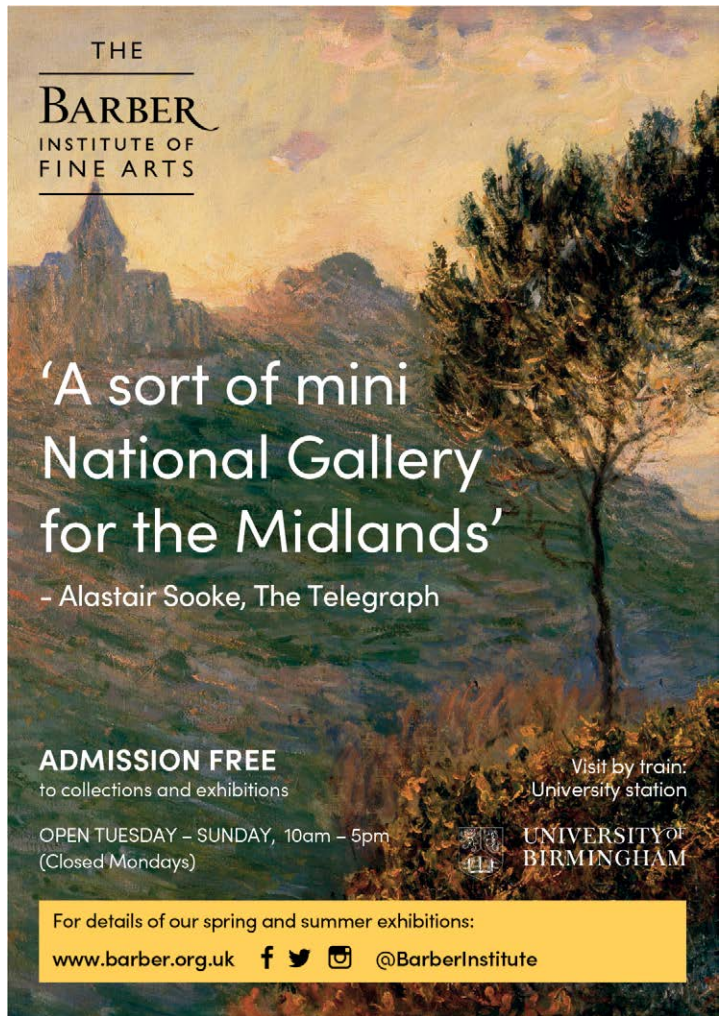
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WHICH ARTIST ONCE SAID:
*“If you hear a voice
 within you say,
 ‘You cannot paint,’
 then by all means paint,
 and that voice will
 be silenced”*
 (THE ANSWER IS BELOW)

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADVERTISE IN
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**‘A sort of mini
 National Gallery
 for the Midlands’**
 - Alastair Sooke, The Telegraph




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 (Closed Mondays)

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 University station



UNIVERSITY OF
 BIRMINGHAM

For details of our spring and summer exhibitions:
www.barber.org.uk    @BarberInstitute

Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum



Image: Chadding on Mounts Bay, 1902. ©Worcester City Museum Collection

From the Cornish
 Coast to the
 Malvern Hills
 British
 Impressionism
 from the 19th
 and 20th century

4th March - 1st July 2023

Open Mon - Sat 10.30am - 4.30pm

FREE ENTRY

Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum, Foregate Street, Worcester WR1 1DT

For more information visit

www.museumsworcestershire.org.uk

MUSEUMS 
 WORCESTERSHIRE



'Belonging to Us: Nurturing women through making' at Vittoria Street Gallery until 28 April 2023

Visually spectacular, Suryodarmo's performances are feats of endurance that interrogate notions of time, labour and identity.

MIDLANDS ARTS CENTRE - MAC

Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham B12 9QH
macbirmingham.co.uk

Karl Blossfeldt: Art Forms in Nature

Saturday 8 July – Sunday 20 August 2023. 'Karl Blossfeldt: Art Forms in Nature' is a Hayward Touring exhibition which presents an original portfolio of 40 photogravures from 1932, entitled 'Wundergarten der Natur', edited by the artist and published in the year of his death. The exhibition presents an opportunity to witness an exemplary set of Blossfeldt's signature close-up images of plants and flora.

Blossfeldt (1865-1932) is regarded as one of the defining photographers of the twentieth century for his exceptional contribution to the art through his intricate botanical photographs. During his career, which spanned over three decades and included 6,000 photographs, Blossfeldt developed homemade cameras and lenses which enabled him to magnify his subjects by up to 30 times. In doing so he captured the microcosmic aesthetic of his specimens and revealed the underlying structures of nature, which until then remained unexplored.

His photographs became highly celebrated amongst early modernists and Surrealists during the late 1920s.

THE VICTORIAN SOCIETY BIRMINGHAM & WEST MIDLANDS

www.victoriansociety.org.uk/west-midlands
 All email enquiries to nina.hatch@btinternet.com or
brumvictorian@gmail.com

Visit to churches in the Forest of Arden area of Warwickshire
 Thursday 25 May 2023, 10am-4pm. Led by Tim Bridges:
 Hampton in Arden, Barston, Temple Balsall and Berkswell.
 Emphasis on Victorian restoration work. 10.00: Meet at Number
 6 café in Hampton in Arden. £23.50 includes donations to the

churches and a buffet lunch at the Bull's Head in Barston. Own transport required, but we may be able to arrange some lifts.

Coach Trip to Burslem, Hanley & Stoke on Trent

Wednesday 12 July 2023. Visiting Middleport Pottery, Wedgwood Institute, Bethesda Chapel which featured in the BBC Restoration Programme and Stoke Railway Station and adjacent listed buildings. 8.30am: 1st pick up at St Augustine's, Edgbaston. 7.30pm: likely return time in Birmingham. £53 including coach fare, admission to Middleport Pottery with morning refreshments & lunch plus all gratuities.

Visit to Grade II* Moseley Road Baths, Library & School of Art, Birmingham

Saturday 5 August 2023. Led by Joe Holyoak, Chair of our Casework Sub-Committee. Exact timings and cost still to be finalised but likely to be 2pm meet. A chance to see the latest tranche of repairs to the Baths, the adjacent Library and the interior of Bidlake's School of Art across the street which has been very well repaired and converted.

Visit to Malvern & Malvern College

Tuesday 24 October 2023. Arranged in association with Malvern Civic Society. Meeting at Malvern's Victorian railway station. Exact timings and price to be confirmed but will include lunch.

Day School at BMI on Victorian Architects working in Birmingham and the West Midlands

Saturday 28 October 2023. Bookings will open very soon!

VITTORIA STREET GALLERY

School of Jewellery, Birmingham City University, Vittoria Street, Birmingham, B1 3PA. www.craftspace.co.uk/shelanu

Belonging to Us: Nurturing women through making

Until 28 April 2023, 8am-7pm (not open on weekends). A new, free, exhibition – 'Belonging to Us: Nurturing women through making' – opens at the School of Jewellery. Curated

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MELATI SURYODARMO

PASSIONATE PILGRIM

17 MAY–3 SEPTEMBER 2023

Ikon Gallery
1 Oozells Square, Brindleyplace
Birmingham, B1 2HS
0121 248 0708 / ikon-gallery.org

Open Wednesday–Sunday
and Bank Holiday Mondays
11am–5pm
Free entry, donations welcome

Exhibition supported by the Bagri Foundation, the British Council and the Melati Suryodarmo Exhibition Circle. Ikon is supported using public funding by Arts Council England and Birmingham City Council. Ikon Gallery Limited trading as Ikon. Registered Charity no. 528892.



IKON

Exhibitions at MAC

Explore world-class exhibitions this summer

Grayson's Art Club:

The Exhibition

Open until Sun 25 June
Advance booking essential

Explore over 100 artworks from season three of Grayson's Art Club, by Sir Grayson and Philippa Perry, celebrities and the public.



© Tegen Kimbley



© Kate Green, Watershed Line, 2021, photograph

Watershed

Thu 29 June - Sun 5 November
Community Gallery | Free

This group exhibition explores the relationship between Birmingham and Elan Valley, Wales, two communities inextricably linked by water since 1904.



Karl Blossfeldt:

Art Forms in Nature

Sat 8 July - Sun 20 August
Arena Gallery | Free

Explore an exemplary set of Blossfeldt's signature close-up images of plants and flora, in an original portfolio of photogravures from 1932.

'Wundergarten der Natur', 1932, © Estate of Karl Blossfeldt, Courtesy Hayward Gallery, Touring

macbirmingham.co.uk | 0121 446 3232

Midlands Arts Centre, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham, B12 9QH



'The Reason For Painting' at Warwick Arts Centre – Mead Gallery for 4 May – 25 June 2023

Betsy Bradley – 'Sweet Whispers'

by Craftspace, the exhibition celebrates 10 years of Shelanu, a Craft Collective that supports refugee and migrant women to make and sell contemporary jewellery.

The exhibition tells the story of Shelanu which means 'belonging to us', whose current members come from across the global diaspora: Pakistan, Venezuela, Hong Kong, Israel, India and Kurdistan. The exhibition features socially impactful craft projects that create safe spaces which support women's development, sense of purpose, agency and creative enterprise. As well as learning new making skills and creating high-quality craft, the women are supported to improve their English, learn business skills and run workshops for the community.

For the 'Belonging to Us' exhibition Shelanu launches 'Nurture', a new range of jewellery made more sustainably, produced with guidance from internationally renowned jeweller Rachael Colley. This will be displayed alongside the Collective's previous collections and examples of their community work. Including Shelanu the exhibition highlights 9 socially engaged projects from Birmingham, nationally and internationally.

WARWICK ARTS CENTRE - MEAD GALLERY

Warwick Arts Centre, University of Warwick,
Coventry CV4 7AL. www.warwickartscentre.co.uk
Free entry. Open Tuesday until Sunday, 11am to 8pm.

The Reason For Painting

4 May - 25 June 2023. This exhibition brings together a diverse group of younger artists who share their experiences of experimenting with colour, mark and form, to create moments of joy. Entitled 'The Reason For Painting', the exhibition aims to offer visitors a moment of escape from the outside world. Each artist combines colour, mark-making and form with lived experience to elicit joy and celebrate the power of artistic expression.

Varied in scale, style and influence, some of the works on display are characterised by intense emotional expression and intuitive execution, while others are more contemplative and logical. Each artist also draws inspiration from a range of sources, including spiritual practices, cultural rituals, and historic art movements.

Among the artists featured are Oscar Murillo, joint-winner of 2019's Turner Prize; experimental Scottish painter Ruairadh O'Connell; Harminder Judge, whose work references both traditional Indian painting and 20th century Western abstract movements; Rachel Jones, who uses abstraction as a way of expressing the intangible; and Coventry disabled and neurodivergent community, Art Riot Collective. Also on display are paintings by Mary Ramsden and Jadé Fadojutimi, whose individual works combine elements of both figuration and abstraction, and Rugby-based Betsy Bradley, who paints onto translucent materials using tools she's created. Sam Windett, James Collins, Pam Evelyn, Rob Lyon, and Rwandan artist Francis Offman, as well as the Kurdish-inspired motifs of Melike Kara, are also represented.

The exhibition challenges conventional notions of abstraction and invites the viewer to engage in a two-way conversation with the displayed artworks. Each artist showcased has defied traditional artistic boundaries to push the limits of abstraction, unleashing a new-found confidence in their work.

Accompanying the show is a programme of free activities that includes yoga and mindfulness sessions, as well as a dedicated art studio space for visitors to find their own reason for painting.

WORCESTERSHIRE OPEN STUDIOS

www.worcestershireopenstudios.org

Worcestershire Open Studios, the well-loved free annual art event where artists and creators across the county throw open their doors to the public, returns this year from 19-28 August.

Like previous years, the event will showcase the diverse range of creative talent there is across the county – painting, sculpture, printmaking, jewellery, ceramics, photography, textiles, furniture making and lots more. Artists and makers will welcome you into their homes or studios, giving you behind the scenes access into how they make their work. All studios are free to visit. While the event runs over ten days, please check the website or printed guide for an artist's opening times as these vary, and not all artists are open every day. For more information please visit the website.

The Reason for Painting

Mead Gallery

Thu 4 May – Sun 25 Jun

Tue – Sun 11am – 8pm

FREE ENTRY

Warwick Arts Centre, The University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL

@warwickarts  @warwickarts  warwick arts centre

WARWICK

ARTS

CENTRE



FRIENDS' QUIZ

BY JIM WELLS


1. Two nineteenth century citizens of Birmingham were recently recognised by two blue plaques unveiled at the Shakespeare Library. Who were they?
2. Winterbourne House was the home of which famous Birmingham manufacturing family?
3. The 'Exchange' on Broad Street, originally Birmingham Municipal Bank, is associated with which Chamberlain?
a) Joseph b) Austen c) Neville
4. 'Iron Man', who has been restored to its rightful place in Victoria Square, is by which sculptor?
5. Better known for her stained glass and embroidery, who is the artist that produced this painting?
6. Who was the philanthropist whose donation of land and finance allowed for this park to be developed?
7. Painted in 1847 by Katherine Muirhead when staying with James Watt Junior, in which building would you find this room?
8. This painting, produced by Allan Everitt in the nineteenth century, is of which Birmingham suburb, often known as Birmingham's left bank?
9. This portrayal of St Tropez is by which famous Impressionist painter?
a) Claude Monet b) Pierre Auguste Renoir c) Berthe Morisot
10. In whose fabric collection was this eighteenth century Turkish bedspread, bequeathed by his daughter May in 1939?

5. 'Coastal Landscape', 1911; 2019.18.4, Purchased from the collection of Remo and Mary Granelli and presented by the Public Picture Gallery Fund, 2018; 6. 'Postcard - Birmingham, Cannon Hill Park, 1908'; 1995V632.1242; Topographical Views - Kesterton Collection; Purchased from Roger Kesterton; 7. By Katherine Muirhead, 1847; 1979P137.4; 8. Allen Edward Everitt, undated; 1977V44; Transferred from Birmingham Reference Library; 9. 'St Tropez, France', 1898-1900; 1980P121; Accepted by HM Government in lieu of tax and allocated to Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1980; 10. 'Bed Cover'; 1939M748.

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1. George Dawson and Samuel Timmins 2. Nettiefolds 3. Neville
4. Antony Gormley 5. Mary Newill 6. Louisa Ryland 7. Aston Hall
8. Moseley 9. Pierre Auguste Renoir 10. William Morris


MAY

 Saturday 20 # Guided Tour of Blakesley Hall


JUNE

 Wednesday 7 * Visit to Walsall Leather Museum

JULY


 Sunday 16 * Aston Hall Visit and Tour

AUGUST

 Monday 21 * 'Birmingham Volunteers and their Medals: 1797 to 1802' - Dr David Symons

SEPTEMBER

 Tuesday 12 * Friends Annual General Meeting

 Tuesday 12 * 'The Redevelopment of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery and plans for reopening' - Zak Mensah

OCTOBER

 Friday 6 * Visit to The Exchange

- * Details are enclosed with this mailing (see pages 6-7)
- # Included in the previous mailing, but places are still available. Please contact us to book a place (see page 6)
- ** Included in the previous mailing and fully booked - sorry!
- + Date for your Diary - information will be included in a future edition of 'Artefacts'

EVENT KEY

ANNUAL EVENT



DAYTIME TALK



EVENING EVENT



GUIDED TOUR



OUTING

THE NEXT ISSUE OF ARTEFACTS WILL BE PUBLISHED IN JULY 2023

