

The North's *Original* Free Arts Newspaper + www.artwork.co.uk

artWORK

Number 222 Pick up your own FREE copy and find out what's really happening in the arts July/August 2022



With a major retrospective on in Kirkcaldy, Jack Vettriano breaks a long radio silence to speak to *ArtWork*. Inside: p. 6

**INSIDE :: The Endless Sea :: Art Fund UK/
UKR Edinburgh's Tron Reborn**

MEET THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART OPEN

JOIN US ONLINE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR
WWW.GSA.AC.UK/OPEN

CHECK OUT OUR OTHER TITLES
www.artwork.co.uk
www.westhighlandwayfarer.co.uk
www.whiskytrailer.co.uk

GRAPHIC DESIGNER
anneMAC kay
anne.mac@mac.com

Tessa Williams
 THE SCENTS WE MISSED FROM LOCKDOWN



New Eau de Parfum
 The Scents we Missed from Lockdown New Range from Tessa Williams X4160 Tuesdays
 20% off with code ARTWORK20
WWW.TESSAWILLIAMS.CO.UK

it's BRAW!
 1st - 31st August
 ARTS CRAFTS MUSIC DRAMA
 Blairgowrie & Rattray Arts for Wellbeing

Including Rattray Arts Festival
 27th & 28th August

Featured Artists
 Jonathan Sainsbury & Suzanne Clement plus
 Graham Wands | Janet McCrorie
 Annie McLean | Tina Gliddon
 and many other professional & amateur artists



rattrayartsfestival.co.uk

Chris Brook
Signature
 02 09 22 - 08 09 22

Dundas street gallery
 6 Dundas street
 Edinburgh EH3 6HZ

Preview Friday 2nd
 6.00 pm - 8.30 pm
 Open daily 11.00 am - 6.00 pm
www.chrisbrookartist.com
 @chrisbrookartist



TRADE COUNTER

Kiln Services Scotland Ltd

We supply, maintain and repair kilns and wheels.
 Scottish agents for Potclays & Potterycrafts supplying clay, glazes and tools.



Kiln Services Scotland Ltd
 8/11 Whistleberry Park Industrial Estate, Burnbank, Hamilton, ML3 0ED
 Tel: 01698 822032
www.kiln-services.co.uk



Stirling Smith Art Gallery & Museum
 museum · café · gardens · free parking



Dumbarton Road,
 Stirling FK8 2RQ
 01786 471 917
www.smithartgalleryandmuseum.co.uk

The North's Original Free Arts Newspaper + www.artwork.co.uk

artWORK

£12.00 (6 issues) £18.00 (12 issues)

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

PLEASE SEND ME REGULAR COPIES OF

artWORK

to this address:
 Send (with cheque/PO/postage stamps)
 to: Famedram Publishers Ltd.,
 PO Box 3, Ellon AB41 9EA, Scotland

Editorial Comment

ArtWork PO Box 3 AB41 9EA :: artwork@famedram.com

Who can run the sweetie stall?

THE LABOUR leader, Sir Keir Starmer, is, alas, taking a typically timid approach to the problems Brexit is causing to the country. It might be unrealistic to expect him to have the panache of the Ryanair boss, Michael O'Leary, who, in a typically outspoken comment on the subject, declared that the present Tory government could not run a sweetie stall.

But, having hidden behind the smokescreen of Covid for so long, defenders of the crazy scheme to leave the EU are being forced to confront some very unpleasant truths.

Farmers and growers are being forced to dump millions of £'s worth of produce for want of labour prepared to do jobs Brits are simply not prepared to take on.

Willing workers from Europe are being denied entry – save in pathetically small numbers and subject to typical Tory red tape.

The government's solution to the labour problem? Pay higher wages (!) and invent overnight some fiendishly clever robots that can pick strawberries and raspberries, cut lettuce in the field and of course be instantly affordable to hard pressed growers.

How, you might ask, do they get away with it?

Blame in no small part must lie with the moronic 'popular press' which must bear heavy responsibility for getting us in this mess in the first place with their

blind backing of the Vote Leave campaign and subsequent refusal to countenance the glaring failings of the policy.

More worrying, perhaps, has been the silence of the BBC faced with covert threats from Ms Dorries et al to axe the licence fee, so that they are, laughingly "free to compete with Netflix."

At this year's Hay Festival one notably sane critic of the madcap Brexit policy, the eminent philosopher AC Grayling, revealed how his voice was no longer to be heard on the BBC.

He said: "I said something critical about Brexit and the contribution was spiked. It's not just me; people I know on my side of the divide about Brexit have been shut up, marginalised, sidelined and just haven't been invited to talk about what is happening with Brexit.

"I'm disappointed with that," he said. He said he felt the BBC was treating Brexit as the "new normal" rather than critically examining its consequences.

Interestingly, not much is being heard either from those vocal cheer leaders for our departure – people like Sir James Dyson. Why so silent, Sir James?

Meanwhile sterling is falling against the dollar. Ditching the Northern Ireland protocol is doing desperate damage to Britain's standing in the world. Time to be a bit braver, Sir Keir!

Strike up the orchestra!

ITS PROBABLY been a problem from the start: there can be few, if any, cultural enterprises that have not had to struggle to survive.

Edinburgh's many festivals are certainly no exception. The hammer blow of Covid, coming after years of tight budgeting, could have proved fatal, but the International Festival and the many accompanying culture fests that have grown up alongside it over the years seemed to have weathered the storm – so far,

Between them, Festivals Edinburgh and the Edinburgh Festival Forum have come up with a 'vision' to get them through to the end of the decade.

The main concern expressed centred on "the refitting of historic city venues to modern standards, and the planning of new cultural

infrastructure aligned with sustainability targets."

All very laudable aims, but not too easily satisfied.

Also targeted is "the need to tackle longstanding concerns over working conditions, the concentration of events in the city, and the "over-commercialisation" of public spaces."

As well not to lose sight, amid these lofty aims, of the quality of the product too.

These columns keep up a monotonous drone about the over cautious music programming of the Festival proper. Little if any remotely challenging, contemporary music; very limited public access to prime movers.

Maybe this shortcoming will be addressed by the new director Ms Benedetti. Roll on October!

Golden age of Scottish crafts

THE RECENT death of one of the key players in what can be seen as the Golden Age of crafts in Scotland, the co-founder of the Malin Workshop, Ronnie Hedderwick, is a poignant reminder of the end of an era. Perhaps the high point of this time was the Highland Trade Fairs which took place annually on ice,

as it were, at the Aviemore Ice Rink.

The era is being marked in the forthcoming publication of a book on the subject by Alan Keegan, who played a key role both as retailer and active supporter of some of the finest work then being turned out.

It truly was a Golden Age.

An all-encompassing mural

Maxwell Macleod is moved to tears – almost – at the unveiling of a long lost mural* discovered years after the closure of Glasgow's Community House. It reflected, he recalls, the many good deeds performed for the lonely and the hungry in its presence.

I DON'T OFTEN cry in church, in fact I don't often cry, or indeed don't often go to church. My trouble is not so much that I don't believe, it's that I don't understand what they are asking me to believe, and when I ask them to explain they are always so irritatingly evasive, though I am much drawn to St Paul's line that faith is the substance of things hoped for. So I just go to church on the off chance of something sticking, usually sigh and smile and long for it to be over.

This is hugely embarrassing as I am the son of one of the leading priests of our time and I loved the man. I wish it were different. But a few weeks ago I did indeed cry in church, not the full blown meltdown but certainly I became misty eyed.

It was in Govan Old, a phenomenal church in a phenomenal part of Glasgow. It's worth going there just to see the Viking hogbacks, huge gravestones that can best be described as being car sized grazing pigs in stone. They ooze ambience. I would have them in my garden in a blink. Govan Old is a cathedral for the people. The hog backs are typical of its excellence.

But it wasn't the hogs that made me weep but a thirty foot long mural. Back in the days after the war when so much was awful, the Iona Community ran this extraordinary social work centre in Glasgow's city centre. Now this wasn't some kind of creepy religious place with strange people asking you to pocket your logic, but a sort of multi storey department store of fun and good works.

There was a busy restaurant, meeting rooms, a publishing house, chapel, theatre – and the whole thing was made possible by a band of efficient women who worked long hours for low wages and never seemed too stressed to have a gentle ruffle of the hair of a small boy who loved the place.

It was called Community House. Now some of the people who worked, grew up, or were just frequent visitors went on to rightful fame. Douglas Alexander both senior and junior, Wendy Alexander, John Smith, Kathy Galloway, Ralph and Jenny Morton (parents of Lord Shuggie and George M.P.), Jimmy Reid, Alastair Gray, Harry and Pat Wallace, Donald Dewar, Billy Connolly, Gordon Jackson, John and Molly Harvey.

Some people went there to worship, some to debate, some to learn theatre, some because they were lonely, or hungry. Some for the whole lot all in a muddle. For many it was a second home. A sort of public club with cheap sausages and mash that became a sort of extra room in the heads of thousands. You went there to do good or to have good done to you. Most people have a need for both at some time in their lives. Community House saved the sanity of many. No one was ever turned away.

I still miss the place just as you might miss a much loved uncle whose company you adored and who now is long dead.

Now surrounding the restaurant in this extravaganza was a massive mural, thirty foot by eight, commissioned in 1951 and painted by an art student called Fyffe Christie. It was like a huge reflection of what was going on in the centre below it. There were folk in that mural having their tea, folk blethering, weans, lovers, chancers, those who prayed, those who would never – and in the midst of the whole shebang a figure of Christ feeding the people.

Not a miserable Christ wearing a nightie and an accusing frown, but a golden sort of nice guy that you might well like to have a pint with as he would tell good tales and pay his round.

That mural encompassed us all. And we loved it. Now when the centre

closed down in the eighties the mural was initially stored in a cupboard and then lost and in 1985 John and Molly Harvey, legendary workers in the Gorbals, started to look for it. It was a long, long project that took them thirty seven years and caused them to chase leads across Europe and America.

Recently they found it, and bought it and found it a home and they felt hugely happy that they had done so. And rightly so. They are both now in their eighties. In some ways they have given almost half their lives to the project.

And so a few weeks ago we gathered in Govan Old for its unveiling. We who loved it, not so much as a piece of art, though it stands alone as a fine piece, but because of all that it reminds us of.

I imagine the average age of the hundred or so gathered there for the unveiling was over seventy. They included folk who had worked with down-and-outs under its shelter, folk who had lectured near its presence, washed up dirty plates, stayed an extra hour to get a job done, swept up, sung hymns, listened to the depressed, hugged the howling, comforted those who mourned. And all under the encompassing arms of that mural.

I have never felt more Christian in my life than when they unveiled that mural, felt some who sat with me in the pews shudder with emotion, saw the painted figures that had once been my childhood pals brought back from the dead to comfort me in my old age. Good against evil. I found myself thinking: If this is what Christianity is all about sign me up and I'll ignore the silly bits.

And that's when I cried, just as I damn near cry now.

* View the mural at artwork.co.uk



KELSO POTTERY

100 metres behind the Kelso Abbey in The Knowes Car Park.

Porridge and Soup Bowls, Piggy Banks and Goblets, Ovenproof Gratin Dishes, also Pit Fired Pieces.

Open Tues - Sat 10 to 1 - 2 to 5

Telephone: (01573) 224027



Pottery Courses in Arbroath Weekly, Weekends & 5 Day



www.franmarquis.com

SUMMER SELECTION
9TH JULY to
3RD SEPT



Gallery Q
Dundee
www.galleryq.co.uk



email: artwork@famedram.com

ArtWork



A SECTION from one of the striking images in an exhibition of prints on show at the Bowhouse complex just outside St Monans in Fife during July.

The show, accompanied by a Photography Symposium, is the work of Fife based photographer Alex Lindsay, who has travelled the world in search of material for his mega size prints – some as much as eight metres wide. Lindsay will introduce a new body of work *The Abandoned Edge: Storytelling Through the Eyes*, created in the Outer Hebrides and St Kilda in the spring of 2022.

The symposium will cover subjects ranging from astronomical photography, drone shots, the wreck of the Titanic to, yes, Richard Demarco! The Bowhouse complex, which describes itself as “A food hub for small business to collaborate and call home” forms part of the Balcaskie Estate between Elie and St Monans. Their main hall provides suitable setting for Lindsay’s king size prints. The exhibition runs from July 15 to August 7. www.alexander-lindsay.com/bowhouse2022exhibition; www.bowhousefife.com