

eNEWSLETTER

Women's Arts Association / Cymdeithas Celfyddydau Menywod

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INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY

This year WAA organised exhibitions in Barry, Cardiff and Newport. The celebrations started with the Barry exhibition opening followed by Butetown History and Arts in Cardiff plus the Sunflower and I Cafe and in Newport the Upmarket Galleries, Newport's Indoor Market. Since it was first formed Women's Arts has received dedicated and stalwart support from the women politicians who have been active, some for 30 years, as local authority councillors and as Assembly members in the Welsh Government. Women's Arts has also seen the interest and the regular backing of many academics too.



Top
Sculptor
Gwyn
Price: (in
the hat)
writer Meg
Kingston;
Margaret
Wilkinson,
the Mayor
of the
Vale of
Glamorgan;
Jane Hutt
AM, Wales

Top, Julie Morgan AM, Professor Teresa Rees
Below, artists Sylvia Olley, back of Eve Hart; Shirley Anne Owen.

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Finance Minister;
the Mayor's consort
Jane Norman.
Centre
Gaynor Legall, Chair
of Butetown History
and Arts
Bottom,
Jay Kynch, Chair of
Women's Arts
Cardiff photographer
Jenny Slms

COMMENT

Every year it seems that the celebrations for International Women's Day are greater and more numerous than in previous years. It has become an expected celebration on a truly international scale. Support for the celebrations in Wales comes from many institutions: the BBC, newspapers, the media. Every year the Welsh Government manages to provide some funding for events across Wales. With the restrictions on spending currently in place, this is impressive.

It is strange, however, at a time when there appears an increase in support for women celebrating women's achievements, violence against women could also be on the increase.

At the recent international conference in London hosted by William Hague and Angelina Jolie on sexual violence in military conflict, David Cameron pledged to 'protect victims and punish perpetrators of rape' in countries such as Somalia and the Congo, while William Hague declared that rape as a weapon in war was the 'moral issue for our generation.'



Angelina Jolie at the International Conference in London

That would be a major move in protecting women in countries where the ever increasing incidents of rape, especially of minors, has become a source of worry though how Cameron and Hague aim to fulfil their pledge is unstated. Domestic violence makes up about 10 per cent of the caseload of the Department of Public Prosecution in the UK and it can be argued, outside of war, that these politicians can't achieve protection for women victims of sexual violence here in Britain nor improve the action of the courts to protect women from the perpetrators of such violence.

Women's Arts has always supported women in developing countries by using their talents to fundraise for the protection of women and children.

Thanks to Dame Angelina for helping through her international reputation as an actor, to bring to the attention of the world the appalling circumstances that many women have to live with.

For more information visit - <http://www.womensviewsonnews.org/2014/06/global-summit-undermined-by-hosts/>

Women's Arts depends entirely on the voluntary work of members. They plan, organise and hang the exhibitions; attend meetings in behalf of the organisation: produce the eBulletin: write reviews and research for the the eNewsletter and design it; manage the Twitter account and research and maintain the facebook page to make varied and interesting reading for supporters.

This year is the 30th Anniversary of Women's Arts and a number of the current volunteers were instrumental in establishing the organisation. They were in their 30s and 40s, had lots of energy, ideas and indignation at how women were treated in the arts. Many more volunteers have been involved for the last ten or more years. This time line gives a clue as to the ages of many of the volunteers and it will be of no surprise to anyone when we appeal to a younger element to take up the same challenge. Volunteers are needed to help develop and sustain Women's Arts for the next 30 years.

Women's Arts has moved office and do not as yet have a working telephone. We hope when it is fixed we will have the same number but in the meantime make contact by email, facebook messages or use Twitter.

An exhibition for Associate members is planned for the Autumn and as usual it is the time of the AGM. All members and supporters are welcome to come along.

MEMBERS' EXHIBITIONS

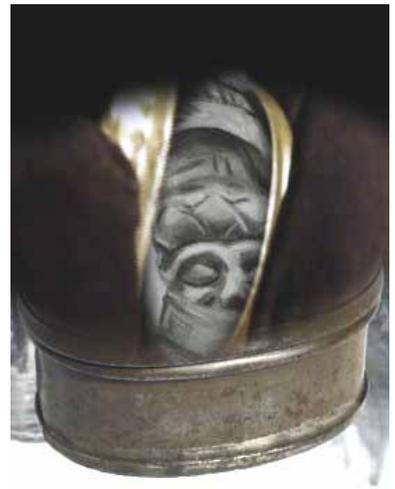
Penny Hallas – Paybox at Newport Museum

This exhibition is part of an ongoing ACW funded research and development project called *Boxing the Chimera*. It explores the real and magical contents of Newport Museum, the Swansea collection and Cyfarthfa Castle Museum. The Paybox title refers to payboxes on display, some hundreds once used at the Rogerstone nail-works.

Penny draws on items in the museum's collection to fantasise wildly around what the pay could have meant to one nameless imaginary worker but also to see what happens when such diverse objects are wrenched from their context and brought together in unexpected combinations. One box had remaining contents, number 700, which comes with a payslip poignantly dated October 24th 1914.

Penny is exhibiting, with other artists from the Elysium Arts Space, in the Clara Hatton Gallery in Colorado in September this year and coming back to Swansea in November.

Jacqueline Alkema



Paybox

Jacquelin Alkema

A visit to Ffin y Parc Gallery on the last Sunday afternoon of Jacqueline's exhibition was a joyous and satisfying experience. A hound sunning itself at the door welcomed us into the grand hallway where a row of Jacqueline's small, bright paintings led into a large and elegant room filled with larger works. A recent preoccupation with Caravaggio's influence on filmmakers led me immediately to four powerful, illuminated portraits set against a fine, deep black background. Alongside these, other dazzling pieces such as the red-dressed woman with a writhing eel and other occupants who inhabit their space in brilliant formations, make you want to jump with joy for their vibrancy and wit.

Jennifer Steele



De hond de jas voorhouden (giving false hope)

3ormore

Kay Keogh, Sue Roberts and Shirley Anne Owen exhibited at the Pierhead Futures Gallery throughout June. Paul Baker invited the three women to show their work alongside his.

They have all recently exhibited paintings in the Senedd, National Assembly for Wales.

Sue is showing with the Welsh Group Dusseldorf Exchange shortly to be in Aberystwyth.

Four Glimpses, Kay Keogh



MEMBERS' PROFILES



Ella Edwards

I first joined the WAA during the early nineties when it was known as Permanent Waves. At that time I was working as a nurse and painting in my spare time so I really appreciated the opportunity to be in the annual exhibition. Later I studied in Newport and graduated in 2010.

Since graduating I have received a number of commissions and exhibition opportunities but it has been a challenging time, one that is recognised by many graduates I believe! It is a journey and I try to take opportunities where they arise, including a commission with Ballet Cymru and being shortlisted for The University Of Glamorgan's Purchase Prize. Another excellent experience

has been the role of minutes secretary for WAA and getting to know some of the wonderful women at the front of the organisation. This has given me an insight into the funding application process and prompted me to organise the IWD exhibition in Newport this year. One consequence of this has been to feel more connected with other women artists in my area, another positive step on my journey!

My practice is developing through a re-engagement with my environment; a kaleidoscopic journey of landscape and abstract themes. Constants within my practice are a commitment to mark-making and the development of a visual language to convey human experience.



Shirley Anne Owen

The common thread underpinning my art practice is transience.

I seek to share the experience of a fleeting moment or a familiar but changing environment through the medium of paint or mixed media drawing.

Recurring themes include coastal erosion and urban landscape, the latter often depicting people in both public and private spaces.

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Dilys Jackson Sculptor

I have recently had the pleasure of viewing the work of the eminent sculptor Dilys Jackson in two different galleries. Her exhibition 'Metal Matters' was showing at Cyfarthfa Castle Museum, Merthyr and 'Pollen: Hidden Sexuality' at Oriel Canfas, Canton Cardiff. I had the honour of opening the Exhibition at Oriel Canfas. Dilys trained at the Slade School of Fine Art, London followed

by a Masters degree in Cardiff. She is an Associate of the Royal British Society of Sculptors, lives in Cardiff and works at the Bute Town Artist Studios. She is a highly respected member of the executive committee of CASW where as everywhere she is a great contributor both in her creative ideas and hard work organizing educational tours.

I'm not going to give biographical details as not only is Dilys well known but also

she is very much a woman of the present, in touch with where she is and responding to the present. However, I would suggest you read her CV. It is an impressive record.

I have attended a number of Dilys's exhibitions but the one in the Cynon Valley Museum in 2003 and the Iron Maidens at the library in Denbigh 2010, which Dilys curated, are particularly memorable.

Returning to the present, can see the extent of Dilys' work and the numerous links she has across South Wales by looking at the number of exhibitions she is a part of at the moment. During the month of February she had work in 6 different exhibitions. In addition to the two solo exhibitions at Cyfarthfa and at Oriel Canfas, she had work at Llantarnam Grange with the 56 group and in Aberystwyth with Sculpture Cymru. Further, as an active member of the Women's Art Association she showed work at Barry Arts Central and at Bute Town History and Arts Centre.

Dilys produces a large amount of work encompassing a variety of both drawings and sculpture, using a variety of media: stone, cast iron steel and bronze with a variety of themes.

However there is an overarching theme, a common denominator in that her work is about her relationship with and to the natural world. Her experience of the world is both visual and what she calls kinaesthetic which I understand as a whole body experience

responding to the energetic forces surrounding her. It is this complete experience that Dilys translates into drawings, sculpture in metal or stone, or, metal within stone.

The shapes she creates are varied and revolve around the craters, cavities and protuberances that occur in the natural world as a result of the forces which are dynamically destroying and creating the world around us. Indeed these craters cavities and protuberances

form the body of her work exhibited at Cyfarthfa and are suggestive of human sexuality. Dilys has called the work exhibited at Oriel Canfas Hidden Sexualities, but one might say that in Cyfarthfa we can see implied sexualities. I consider this theme to run through a lot of Dilys's work; something contained in another, maybe different materials used together or different surfaces, rough and smooth or something emerging



Metal Matters, Cyfarthfa Castle Museum

from another.

Dilys's work is about difference, but also about how differences sit together revealing their individual qualities, their diversity but also their complementarity. In the exhibition at Cyfarthfa Museum and Gallery Dilys's work is in response to the world at large. To quote 'the inspiration comes from the valleys of South Wales to the lava fields and geysers of Iceland'. The movement of the earth creating changes in shape and texture is illustrated on paper, stone and metal.

The new temporary gallery at Cyfarthfa Castle is a bright open space displaying large pieces of different materials very well curated to create an immediate impact. A large metal sculpture, suggesting two hills arising from a valley, provides the central work. One corner is filled with different sized triangles of smooth metal enclosing smaller rough bronze pyramids whilst hanging on the walls there are works on paper where craters are portrayed in 3D fashion filled with different coloured and textured papers. The sculpture 'Spring', where metal emerges from stone, stays in my mind as do the large and small jagged pyramidal shapes displayed alongside one another. The latter form a congregation of shapes of the same material, different in size and in conversation one with the other. Dilys' work demonstrates difference, male and female elements, separateness and togetherness so making a whole which is more than the sum of the parts. Further there

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are large 'pumpkin-like' sculptures where the surface is incomplete so revealing that the rough outside lattice has a smooth shiny lining and an inner hollow centre. The Oriel Canfas Gallery provides an ideal space for the pieces displayed in *Pollen: Hidden Sexuality*. The work is a response to the comparative micro world of plants with drawings of sprouting seedlings and cacti cast in bronze emerging from stone.

Dilys goes further in that the main body of work has been triggered by the experience of viewing pollen under the electron microscope and in so doing she has moved from the macro and micro to the microscopic elements of plants.

The National Botanic Gardens has a Barcode project, headed by Natalie de Vere, where the DNA of all the flowering plants and conifers of Wales are collected in a data base. Wales has led the world in this project and it has multiple research avenues.

The electron microscope has enabled the surface of pollen to be viewed along with the details of the delivery of pollen to the stigma of a plant where after the development of protuberances, fertilization takes place. Under the electron-microscope it is possible to see the sexuality of plants and view the magical, awe-inspiring fabric of our universe with shapes mirroring those of the macro world.

In this exhibition Dilys produces sculptures with different surfaces triggered by the shapes and surface of different pollens. Alternatively, a lattice-like surface allows a view into an inner hollow.

The works on paper are 3D images and the indentations in the surface of the pollen are portrayed as strongly outlined oval spaces. Some are filled with different papers peeping out; others I call cutouts where the indentations are created with layers of paper giving the idea of depth and suggest something inside. Some of the drawings were created at a symposium held at Huddersfield which Dilys attended having been one of 16 selected from a large international group of applicants.



Pollen: Hidden Sexuality, Oriel Canfas, Canton Cardiff.

Dilys is venturing into digital technology and beginning to work with 3D structures on a monitor such that material, seen on screen, can be "carved" with the



Metal Matters, Cyfarthfa Castle Museum

equivalent of the computer mouse. I look forward to seeing more of this venture

To summarise, Dilys' work is about her experience of the world at a macro level, a micro level and at a microscopic level. It is about how she sees the fabric of the world with its overt and hidden structures, the male and female elements which are the basis of life itself.

I am reminded of the following lines from Blake.

To see the world in a grain of sand
And a heaven in a wild flower
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour.

Auguries of Innocence by William Blake
Metal Matters. Cyfarthfa Castle Museum and Gallery. 28th January/February 2014

Pollen: Hidden Sexuality. Oriel Canfas Gallery, Cardiff
February/March 2014

Supported by The Arts Council for Wales

<http://www.dilysjackson.co.uk>

Chris Evans, Chairman CASW

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Sicilia, Chapter Arts Centre

In this piece of intimate theatre we find ourselves seated around a dining table with our hostess, performance artist Clyde Chabot. Chabot brings to her theatre a deep and mysterious presence. I bring to her theatre my own feelings and anxieties about being gathered around a table, in a darkened room, with people I do not yet know. It feels emotionally charged, edgy and exciting. Chabot builds her work around a text by Maurice Blanchot who quotes that;



“The basis of communication is not necessarily speech, or even the silence that is its foundation and punctuation, but the exposure to death, no longer my own exposure, but someone else’s whose living presence is closest and which is already eternal and unbearable absence.”

Chabot brings to her narrative many kinds of deaths; the death of a culture, an identity and the tragic loss of family members. She creates a collective mourning space over bread and wine, reminiscent of a ‘last supper’. She shares with us her delight in the Sicilian land and culture and the pain she now finds in her disconnectedness. She also explores traditional female stereotyping within her personal life and culture. Chabot tackles female oppression head on through her delightful sense of humour and the use of some surprising domestic objects.

It was difficult to know how to review a piece of work so deeply personal to the artist and perhaps being touched by the fragility of Chabot I am filled with a greater sensitivity for her work. The themes of this piece of work are rich and interesting. Chabot is also intellectually engaging. As a piece of theatre I found it at times too cerebral. I felt I was required to store huge amounts of information with very few visual cues in the actual performance. The opening moments of this piece were however, theatrically brilliant. It held the unknown, created discomfort and an experiential understanding of Chabot’s themes. Yet I quickly began

to feel that many dramatic conventions were being left out. I was, I felt, being left with more of a presentation than a performance. I would have appreciated more poetry, suspense, character enactment, live sound, music and perhaps even a greater use of the theatrical space. Chabot’s non-scripted impromptu style allowed for a free flow of ideas although at times these were unclear. I’m not sure how well this style translated to her audience and if not for the lyrical beauty of her French accent, I fear I may have switched off. Interestingly though the lexis of her speech reflects the struggle and confusion of a displaced person. Chabot is nevertheless warm-hearted and generous with her audience. Through the elements of bread, cheese and wine she seeks to provide a flavour of her homeland and creates a community of friends in her wake. In this respect she fulfils her own artistic brief for she desires that “every member is welcomed in his or her fragility and invited to be present in body, in memory in the present.”

I wasn’t quite sure what kind of production this was - perhaps it did not meet all of my expectations. I valued the experience nonetheless.

(c) Sarah Dosomah 2014
Courtesy of femalearts.com

REVIEWS

Of Matrimony, Mosses and Muedon: Andrea Büttner at National Museum Cardiff

Andrea Büttner's installation *Hidden Marriage*, National Museum Cardiff - Amgueddfa Genedlaethol Caerdydd from 22nd February to 2nd June, is a mash up of two very different collections from the museum and her own work. It offers the viewer a bit of everything: bound volumes of archival moss specimens; photographic prints; a monitor displaying stereoscopic images (3D glasses supplied); drawn and painted sketches by Gwen John (1876-1939) some of which have never been on public display; a sound work, and a steel container of living mosses incorporating — according to the label — hidden sex toys.

The installation builds upon key interests and themes in Büttner's work, which is focussed on the small and undervalued, the hidden or shameful and the uncommon in the common-place. For example, her 2012 exhibition *Moss / Moss* at Hollybush Gardens, London featured her collection of photographs of mosses; here twelve photographs recording mosses in their natural environment have been taken by the museum's Biology curator Ray Tangney. *Little Works*, Büttner's 2007 film, is an 11-minute edit from footage taken by a Carmelite nun to whom Büttner had given a camcorder to film within craft-making activities within a convent. Her selection of eleven drawings by John of St. Thérèse of Lisieux and also of numerous sketches John made of locals

attending Mass at Meudon in France suggest an ongoing interest in particular aspects of the Catholic Church. Gwen John famously converted to Catholicism in 1913 following the end of her love affair with the sculptor Rodin.

Büttner's intentions for this exhibition were, according to the museum's blurb, to invite 'links to be made between the reproductive processes of 'lower plants' and the contested sexuality of Gwen John; between the scientific ordering of the Museum and the harmony and beauty that John sought in her work'. For Büttner then, the links have obviously already been made, but for the random visitor, there are hints and pointers around the ideas of accumulation, repetition, sexual repression and specificity. In a display case, a folder used by John to keep her sketches together is positioned alongside a volume of



faded specimens of British mosses painstakingly amassed by an anonymous collector. This suggests thematic associations concerned with enquiry and accumulation, and the determined pursuit of knowledge or perfection by exploring the significance of small or subtle differences in shape, design, tone or colour.

John sketched, drew and painted some of her

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subjects over and over again. The exhibition includes over twenty small sketches of the same two Victorian girls, and she seems to have been testing compositional elements including abstracting the image, blocking colours, outlining in ink and so on. This repetition, with perhaps a slightly darker tone here, a lighter or heavier line there goes beyond the desire to improve draughtsmanship or arrangement, as is most evident with the tiled hang of framed sketches of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, drawn from a prayer card of the nun. The subtle and sometimes minute differences in the drawings appear as a search for ways to express or reveal something intuitively felt and understood but visually hidden (or repressed?) beneath a composed and apparently serene surface. By inserting three of John's naked self-portrait drawings among the portraits of the nun, Büttner disrupts the unity of the display, alluding to John's passionate and obsessive attachment not just to Rodin but to female lovers as well. The container of living mosses (from the museum's herbarium) with hidden sex toys is perhaps intended as a more vital and potentially provocative reiteration of this allusion, but since the sex toys are invisible to the passing viewer, the provocation falls flat — intentionally I imagine. The differences between the massed moss species of the installation's moist indoor garden though, are all the more exquisitely visible without that distraction.

Büttner has quietly managed to breathe new life into the two archive collections, contributing only a modest intervention of her own with a few works on paper and the sound of a dripping tap. By contrasting faded and flattened moss specimens and donated slides in plain cardboard boxes with large, luminous green 3D images of their contents, she has presented long dead materials alongside unexhibited artworks to stimulate new conversations and ways of interrogating the little and the little-seen.

Jan Bennett

Sculptor Phyllida Barlow at the Tate

Artist contradicts and questions power, creating dual identities through size and material. Titled 'dock', very specifically with a lower-case d, the inspiration for Phyllida Barlow's latest work came from the River Thames running outside the Tate Britain.

And what better place to showcase sculptures made out of refuse than the huge, empty, echoing hall of Tate Britain's Duveen Galleries? The space of the hall and its grandiose building style of pillars and arches create an ideal backdrop for Barlow's huge sculptures, made from scaffolding, staples, tape, cardboard, polystyrene, fabric scraps, bin bags and more.

She has a great sense of balance and space, filling the high-ceilinged hall with sculptures made entirely from materials more likely to be found in a dump, on a wharf or in a building site.

Viewed at various angles, the hall can appear to be filled with nonsensical piles of stuff. It is only after walking into the middle of the hall and concentrating on a piece from a distance that viewers are able to see the symmetry and possible references each piece could be making.

One beautifully intricate piece is made entirely from skeletal wooden crates, rearing up reminiscent of the way a huge container ship's prow looms over a dock, the full size and shape only appreciable from a distance, not from directly next to or underneath.

Barlow has often described her work as 'anti-monumental', a direct contrast between the size of her sculptures and the materials she uses to construct them. She has also spoken about her love of the hidden aspects of sculpture, the supports and the undercladding, and she shows that through her use of fluorescent tape, staples and industrial straps.

dock is the 2014 Tate Britain Commission, an annual invitation that asks artists to respond to the Tate's collection and history.

Barlow said her inspiration for dock came when she walked out of the Tate on to the riverbank

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and saw 'this black, shiny coiling surface of water with quasi-industrial riverside stuff on the other side and... the boats and barges with big containers on them.' 'I'm very excited by the opportunity to work in the Duveen Galleries,' she said.



Phyllida Barlow 'dock'

'Considering a new body of work, I was very conscious of two particular contradictory aspects: the tomb-like interior galleries against the ever-present aspect of the river beyond.'

Born in 1944 in Newcastle upon Tyne, Barlow studied at the Chelsea College of Arts from 1960 to 1963 and then the Slade School of Fine Art from 1963 to 1966, where she focused on sculpture and later became Professor of Fine Art. She taught for more than 40 years. Barlow has said that it was her professor at Slade, George Fullard, who introduced her to the possibility of using alternative materials in sculpture.

Her students included a number of future award-winners, including Rachel Whiteread, Douglas Gordon, Tacita Dean, Steven Pippin and Tomoko Takahashi. She retired from teaching in 2009 in order to concentrate more on her own work.

There is an interesting parallel between Barlow's sculpture and the traditional need for women to scavenge time from their all-consuming caring duties to create their own work.

In the 40 years that Barlow taught at art schools and raised five children, she created

beauty out of scavenged items.

Her work is often huge in scale, yet made entirely out of tiny, broken and or found objects. She has said that she is both attracted and repelled by the 'heroic, macho thing' of many of

her artistic peers, a feeling that may be felt within her work.

In the Duveen Galleries, a pillar she made out of taped-together cardboard reaching nearly to the ceiling echoes the size, but not the strength, of the marble pillars that support the hall.

It is also interesting to note that Barlow is an older woman being recognised for her work in the latter half of her life. Last year, the Tate Modern held the world's first major museum exhibition of the work of Saloua Raouda Choucair, a 98 year-old Lebanese artist.

Is being recognised later in life, rather than posthumously, an improvement on previous eras when women artists were, at most, recognised as the muse for whichever male artist(s) they were involved with? It would be great if this is part of a growing movement to better recognise the talents of women artists within their lifetime.

The all-male lists of the most expensive paintings and sculptures and wealthiest artists indicate how much work is needed to help women artists achieve an equal level of success.

Keely Khoury

www.womensviewsonnews.org

REVIEWS

Cwilt Cymru

Quilting is not exactly a hot art form. It drags in its baggage all the issues surrounding undervalued women's work, the stigma of utility and decoration and the whole craft v art argy-bargy.

But it is getting hotter. A recent V&A quilt exhibition tuned in to the crowd-pulling popularity of quilts and so increasingly are white-cube galleries. Footfall rises when quilts go up on the walls. It is getting easier to show art quilts in art galleries. Tracey Emin has done her bit to make this happen and so has Grayson Perry. Notoriety and cross-dressing were attributes the quilting world lacked.

I am a member of the Welsh art quilt group called Cwilt Cymru www.cwiltcymru.wordpress.co.uk

We were formed in a rather ramshackle manner in response to a challenge from Scottish and Northern Irish art quilters to join them for an exhibition called Spirit of the Celts. To my amazement, the quilts we produced for our opening at the Festival of Quilts 2011 at the NEC in Birmingham have just come home to their makers after touring galleries for three years including a trip to France, coverage in Continental magazines that none of us can translate and being featured on TV in the United States.

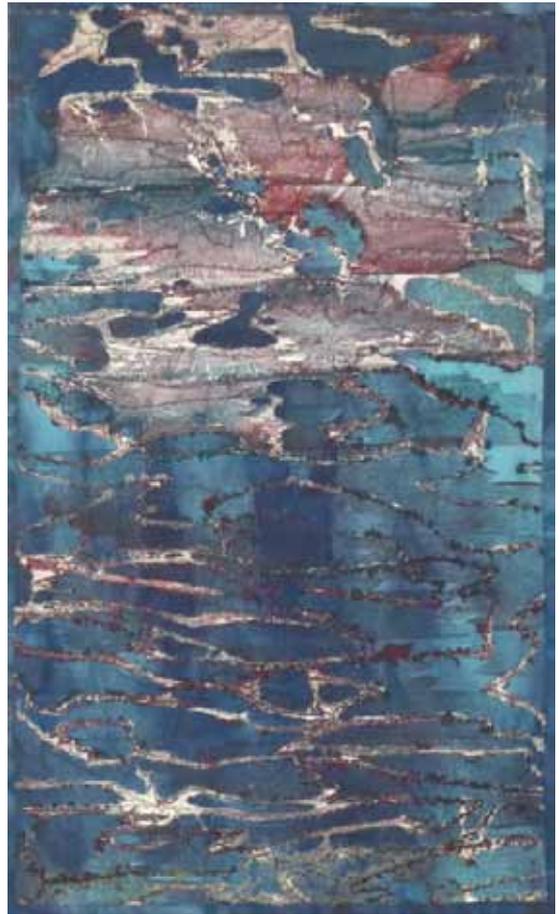
We are a mixed bunch, flung the length and breadth of Wales. We are all members (some of us founder

members ten years ago) of Contemporary Quilt, a subset of the Quilters Guild of the British Isles. CQ was a controversial baby but has developed into the fastest-growing part of the guild. There are currently six of us, dotted from Anglesey to Penarth, with an additional four guest artists who stretch our boundaries as far as London and Leeds.

Getting together is geographically tricky so we communicate on line via a Yahoo group. It works well. Bethan Hughes, a librarian in Ruthin, has set up a Dropbox for large picture files and a blog which does double-duty as a website. She and Gwenda Williams, who runs a sheep farm in Snowdonia with her husband, are Welsh speakers and deal with bi-lingual issues. Bethan and Gwenda both create quilts which reference the Welsh landscape, poetry and mythology. Dot Russell is art-school trained and now a popular teacher of patchwork and quilting based on Anglesey. She too draws on Welsh history for quilts which sometimes feature the nude figure.

Judith Barker, who lives in Aberystwyth, is currently chair of the Guild's quilt judging panel. Her internationally-exhibited quilts are heavily free-machined and often investigate pre-historic marks such as the Celtic spiral.

Millie Thomas, a retired social worker, now runs a small-holding west of Carmarthen with her husband. Her quilts



Millie Thomas, Solitude 1

feature paint and paper as well as fabric and reveal her concerns with the health of the land and the environment.

I am the southerly tip of the enterprise, based in Penarth, near Cardiff. My quilts have a graphic quality which is, I think, related to my working life as a newspaper journalist. Like the other members of the group, I am trying to say something more than "pretty".

We have persuaded a most prestigious group of quilters to join us as guest artists: Jennie Durkin, from Abergavenny, Judy Fairless, a well-known Cheshire-based teacher whose work crosses into embroidery and digital media, Margaret Ramsay a globe-trotting orchid biologist at Kew and keen indigo-dyer, and Sandra Wyman, a WAA member from Leeds, whose quilts feature her expert dyeing.

Our latest exhibition, called Connection, will be on show at the Minerva Arts Centre, Llanidloes, throughout the summer and will be at the Welsh Assembly's Pierhead Gallery, Cardiff Bay, next year.

Judy Stephens 2014

NEWPORT REPORT

Dathlu: Newport's International Women's Day Event 2014

To celebrate International Women's Day in Newport this year, thirty six women exhibited together in Dathlu (to celebrate) in the Upmarket Galleries, Newport Indoor Market. Due to declining footfall in recent years Newport City Council bowed to stallholder pressure and allowed artists to occupy empty units on the mezzanine floor. This lovely light space was the obvious choice for a free exhibition and an opportunity to make a contribution to the cultural life of Newport during my tenth year of living here!

WAA committee members were very encouraging when I suggested it at a meeting late last year. I went away and thought what have I done? It wasn't until late January that I finally plucked up the courage to put the call out to women via the e-bulletin (thanks Jay). I was very heartened when author Meg Kingston responded, are there any more WAA members living in Gwent? Facebook and word of mouth did the rest and by the end of February,

36 of us were all signed up to take part. I was particularly grateful and excited to have the support of a number of friends with special interests.

Florence Martellini revealed her interest in the process of curation and given her strong experience of

project management; I welcomed her in a curatorial role. Florence had been exploring what the visual arts can tell us about human perception by investigating their creation and appreciation. I looked forward to working with Florence as I really needed someone with insight to hang the widely ranging work! Among the submissions was an advent calendar made of sticks, ribbon and fabric by a German woman for her young sons, and an MA student's collection of photographs

exploring her own Romany family history, finely painted portraiture and hand dyed and spun textile. No distinction was made between 'art' and 'craft', and with many women exhibiting for the first time an ethos of openness and inclusivity was vital. When it came to hanging the work it was a team effort; women enjoyed working towards a common goal. This resulted in a sense of life enhancing connectivity and community expressed by many including myself.

The opening was performed by Jessica Morden MP who enjoyed all that was on offer and stayed for the duration of the afternoon, sitting on the floor for the artist talks! Sally Grant Senior Lecturer in textiles at Cardiff Met spoke to contextualize women's art and craft practice. The talented artist and dancer Marega Palser gave a live drawing performance, followed by artist Victoria JE Jones who gave an insight into her participatory artwork, a Milkfloat Projects residency working with a group of Newport women. Meg Kingston rounded off with a reading from her novel *Chrystal Heart* and a question/answer session. Finally, an enlivening

flash mob dance aimed to remind us all of the serious issues faced by women across the globe. In the audience that day were Debbie Wilcox cabinet member for Leisure and Culture and Deborah Davies cabinet member for Skills and Work. Dame Rosemary Butler AM was full of praise



Left to right: Diba Meh, Sally Grant, Ella Edwards, Marion Cheung, Silvia Jones, Dame Rosemary Butler AM and Stephanie Roberts

when she visited the exhibition on its penultimate day and suggested that we apply to the Newport Women's forum for funding. This was enthusiastically received and we all look forward to developing plans for 2015. In the 30th anniversary year of WAA it is very clear that there is still great need for events such as this which allow many women to exhibit in a non-judgmental supportive environment.

Ella Edwards

ON LINE



News Items from the WAA facebook page

<http://www.facebook.com/WomensArtsAssociation>

Non-facebook members can view Women's Arts facebook page too

Could you name more than one female scientist? Preliminary findings from a survey of more than 1,100 people, including scientists, indicate staggering levels of ignorance about female contributions to some of the world's most important discoveries.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/could-you-name-more-than-one-female-scientist-9391307.html>

Achievements of Gwent women celebrated (IWD Newport Exhibition).

http://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/gwent-news/11064486.Achievements_of_Gwent_women_celebrated/?ref=nt

Parliament is sexist, masculine and out of date, say British women

<http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2014/jun/22/women-speak-out-parliament-sexist-masculine-mumsnet>



Not only did she hide Anne and her family in the annex of her father's business in Amsterdam, she retrieved Anne's famous diary following the raid that saw the little girl, and her kin, carried off to Bergen-Belsen.

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=241200689419011&set=a.139669712905443.1073741828.139658286239919&type=1&theater>



The system works like this:

Urine is put into an electrolytic cell, which separates out the hydrogen.

The hydrogen goes into a water filter for purification, which then gets pushed into the gas cylinder.

The gas cylinder pushes hydrogen into a cylinder of liquid borax, which is used to remove the moisture from the hydrogen gas.

This purified hydrogen gas is pushed into the generator. Along the whole way there are one-way valves for security, but let's be honest that this is something of an explosive device...

<http://makerfaireafrica.com/blog/>

Valie Export and Friedl Kubelka, Richard Saltoun

Two women who were associated with the Viennese Actionists and who should be better known

<http://www.theartsdesk.com/visual-arts/valie-export-and-friedl-kubelka-richard-saltoun>

US student is rescued from giant vagina sculpture in Germany. More than 20 firefighters free exchange student from the artwork Chacán-Pi (Making Love) by Fernando de la Jara in Tübingen

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/23/us-student-rescued-giant-vagina-sculpture-germany>

REPORTS

Women's Arts Association Exhibition at Art Central, Barry, 2014

The Annual Women's Arts Open Exhibition was held at Art Central in Barry from 15th February until 22nd March, 2014. The work of 49 women was shown, made in a variety of media from video and painting to sculpture, textiles, jewellery and a hanging carpet. Thanks are due to Tracey Harding, the Manager of the Gallery and her assistant Jo Sowden, for their competent hanging of the work so that it formed a cohesive exhibition.

The opening on Saturday 15th March was preceded by a writing workshop facilitated by Meg Kingston, a published novelist. 9 women attended this. Inspired by their results and the experience, the group are forming a permanent writers group in Barry, which will retain its link with Meg Kingston in the future. Meg also spoke briefly after the opening about her experience as a writer.

The Exhibition was opened by Margaret Wilkinson, the Mayor of the Vale of Glamorgan, together with her consort. The Vale's Assembly Member, Jane Hutt was also present. Over 75 people attended the opening.

Refreshments followed in the form of afternoon tea and cakes, organised by Ann Townson.

An average of 20 people attended the exhibition each day.

Gwyneth Price and Eve Hart
Exhibition co-ordinators.

Butetown History and Arts Centre, Cardiff

On the 16th March 2014 at 2pm the Women's Arts open exhibition held at Butetown History

and Arts Centre was opened formally by Julie Morgan AM who had been the County Councillor encouraging the forming of the Women's Arts Association 30 years previously.

The work of 39 women was shown including painting, textiles and film.

Attendees of this opening event moved to the Sunflower and I cafe at 4pm for the reception of the 'Postcard Exhibition', organised by the Women's Arts Association

On the 22nd March at the closing event there were talks by Lorraine Griffith of B.A.W.S.O, Sian Gale of Cult Cymru and Maggie Hampton of Disability Arts Cymru.

Franky Armstrong sang feminist songs before lunch and the event finished with a Poetry performance by Donna Williams of Disability Arts Cymru.

Attendances

Art Central exhibition and event 420
Butetown History and Arts Centre exhibition and event 489
Sunflower and I cafe postcard exhibition 80

WAA MEMBERSHIP

Associate Members, remember to renew your subscription £10 by cheque or standing order if you haven't done so. Very many thanks. Associate members will have special opportunities including an exhibition in the Autumn and preferential access to participatory events as well as the benefits to free members - the eBulletin, access to open exhibitions, Newsletter, Facebook and networking opportunities.

Women's Arts Association

Women's Arts Membership

Associate membership £10.00
Ordinary membership is free.

To become an Associate Member post a membership form enclosing a cheque for £10.00 made out to Women's Arts Organisation or make a bank transfer (information below).

Download a membership form from www.womensarts.co.uk - membership page which you can print and post back or email to - office@womensarts.co.uk. Please put MEMBERSHIP in the subject field of the email. Remember to tick the box if you wish to become an Associate Member. Enclose a cheque for £10 by post or indicate if you have made a bank transfer or have created a Standing Order

Women's Arts Association
Sort Code: 08-90-03
Account No: 50013461
at
Cooperative Bank PLC
16-17 High Street
Cardiff CF10 1AY

To become an ordinary member, email or post a membership form to Women's Arts Association, 4 Dock Chambers, Bute St, Cardiff Bay, CF10 5AG.

INFORMATION

The office is only staffed by volunteers on occasional Fridays and not necessarily all day. Emails and telephone messages are answered as soon as can be arranged.

www.womensarts.co.uk

The website will carry fixed information. WAA events, members work, general information, the eNewsletter to download and archived old newsletters etc.

The eBulletin is sent to all members on a regular basis when there is art news to circulate.

The eNewsletter will be available when there is enough content to make an interesting publication.

This, in the main, will be dependent on members' contributions. We aim for at least twice a year but ideally we would like it to be quarterly.

Send contributions to the Editorial team:

Di - di@womensarts.co.uk

Jay - eBulletin@womensarts.co.uk.

www.facebook.com/WomensArtsAssociation

Women's Arts facebook page has more immediate information of interest to women. To date the page is not open for contributions direct, members will have to email pertinent material to the page administrators for posting. We have revived the group page where members can share their thoughts and ideas with each other, The Network of Women's Arts Association.

None facebook members can view the page at the above address.

Administrators: Di - di@womensarts.co.uk: Isabelle - Isabelle.a@ntlworld.com

Anyone who would like to volunteer for Women's Arts please contact the Chair.

Jay - office@womensarts.co.uk.