

PROMOTING

THE ARTS

GUILDFORD
ARTS

News & Views

September - December 2019

Registered Charity Number: 1089777

GA's 24th Summer Exhibition

This year's *Yvonne Arnaud Art Exhibition* has drawn artists from across the UK from as far apart as Cornwall and the Isle of Skye and, yet again, has been a celebration of creativity and ingenuity. Over the three weeks of the exhibition, we welcomed over 1,700 people through the door, including lots of enthusiastic children who participated in the quiz to win an art-related prize!

Set-up day was a physical challenge to get all the works hung and labelled in time for the official opening, but the Curatorial Team worked hard alongside the Yvonne Arnaud's technical team to ensure a professional finish to the exhibition and the



results were evident! Joanna Read, Director of the Yvonne Arnaud, welcomed everyone and formally opened the exhibition in the presence of the Mayor and Mayoress of Guildford.



The reputation of the exhibition is growing and we had visitors from all over the world including Australia, New Zealand and South Africa! The visitors book brimmed with enthusiasm about the inspirational nature of the collection and welcomed the wide range of styles included. The sales of work were varied with well over half the artists selling at least one piece. Artist feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, particularly from those who haven't exhibited in Guildford before remarking what an enthusiastic audience the exhibition drew and that the *Meet The Artist Saturdays* were a lovely feature to meet visitors and artists alike.



As ever, the Curatorial Team was admirably supported by an army of willing and able stewards who welcomed visitors and provided information and lively discussion. The whole of the exhibition is run by volunteers and without them it would not be possible so they deserve very hearty thanks!

Philippa Sampson-Bancroft

Guildford Arts is a charitable organisation that supports and promotes the arts

Chairman's Comments at GA's AGM

PROMOTING
THE ARTS

GUILDFORD
ARTS

The Chairman, Bill Ward, highlighted all the things which Guildford Arts (GA) are doing that are successful in providing and promoting arts experiences in Guildford and the surrounding areas. These include GA's own excellent *visual arts exhibitions*, *art@work Exhibitions*, the authoritative magazine *News & Views*, the all arts website www.artsegg.uk which gives a comprehensive view of all that is available in the local arts scene, along with the *arts email alert services*, the regular *Mail-Out Flyer Service* and the *Small Grants Scheme* made to other arts events.

Although valued by most of us who are members or supporters of Guildford Arts, more needs to be done to make more people aware of what is available and how the totality of what GA does serves our community in very special ways. This needs more focused marketing and publicity but there is a major obstacle in our way. GA has suffered quite specifically in the past from being confused with the Guildford Arts Society, but the possibility of confusion has got much worse. 'The National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies' (NADFAS) has renamed itself 'The Arts Society' – so there are many local 'Arts Societies' with many and various names including 'The Arts Society – Guildford'.

The Chairman said that to promote more effectively what Guildford Arts provides for the local community, GA needs to find a way of moving away from this escalating confusion. This, he recognised, was not an easy task. Nevertheless, the whole *raison d'être* of Guildford Arts is to find ways of supporting the arts locally and passionately, doing that as effectively as possible. The beauty of Guildford, its architecture, its public space and the rich artistic offerings, is attested to by many. Guildford Arts' role is contributing strongly to that civilising process.

Revamp of Cranleigh Arts Centre



This September, this vibrant community arts venue re-opens its doors following a series of renovations which have taken place over the summer of 2019.

The revamp is part of the organisation's ongoing work to develop their venue and facilities for the benefit of all who visit. Renovations include new toilets to help reduce queueing time during busy periods, and updated pottery facilities, with improved internal access.

Cranleigh Arts is very grateful for the support they have received from the community both through fundraising efforts and planning infrastructure contributions which have helped fund the works. The Arts Centre believes passionately in keeping the arts open to all, and these renovations will help make the venue a comfortable and welcoming space for all who visit. Reopens on Tuesday 10 September. Visit: www.cranleightartscentre.org

On the road again!

Curating the Guildford Arts Summer Exhibition – Yvonne Arnaud Art.



The most exciting and interesting parts of putting together an art exhibition are the search for artists and then curating the experience for our visitors. Every summer as the display boards are safely stowed away for another 12 months the



Yvonne Arnaud Art Curatorial Team head out and begin the search for the next round of talented individuals to exhibit in Guildford Arts' summer show.

The brief is ostensibly simple: to create a mixed but coherent exhibition which both engages and challenges visitors and introduces them to artists that they might not otherwise come across.

Some of the team have regular appointments at events such as the Affordable Art Fair and the Contemporary Art Fair where they look for

**Affordable
Art Fair**



Bluecoat Gallery

inspiring pieces and artists. This year the Chair of the Curatorial Team has road trips planned to the Arundel Festival to look at the Arundel Gallery Trail and to Cambridge Contemporary for their Mixed Winter Exhibition. Others in the team are heading to Liverpool Bluecoat Gallery and Alnmouth Festival. By getting out and about and talking to galleries we find out about emerging talent and potential artists to bring to Guildford. Certainly, the team try to cover every opportunity to visit as many galleries, artists studios and exhibitions, both locally and nationally, as possible to source as much artistic talent that they think the residents of Guildford will respond to and enjoy.

Once the names are in the hat the team then meet to select the artists and consider the exhibition as a whole, making sure a range of styles and media are included and there is a good balance between wall pieces and sculptural work.

But before we start the search we would love to know what you thought of the summer exhibition this year? Anything, in particular, that you would like to see next year? Do you have a favourite gallery we should visit?

E-mail Philippa at : GASummerEx@guildfordarts.com to share your thoughts.

Philippa Sampson-Bancroft, Chair of Yvonne Arnaud Art/Guildford Arts



Go crowd-funding to be part of the next 'Inspiring View' in the Surrey Hills!

A new fund-raising campaign has been launched to restore a lost view-point on the North Downs Way. Just a short walk from Newlands Corner the undergrowth and trees have grown up significantly, closing off views across the Weald to the South Downs. *Surrey Hills Arts* wants to re-create and maintain these views, enhance the habitat for insect and butterfly populations to flourish and to install a sculptural seat for everyone to enjoy the view.

Ali Clarke, *Surrey Hills Arts Project Co-ordinator*, comments: *"This crowd-funding campaign is an opportunity for everyone to get involved with the project. Donations from as little as £5 will greatly help to make the project a reality"*.

The Butterfly Conservation Charity and a team of volunteers will help create habitat areas for butterflies to flourish. Work has been taking place to increase the population of the declining Small Blue Butterfly species and by creating lots of suitable patches of habitat, the butterfly should be able to disperse and spread across the North Downs between Guildford and Dorking.



As well as view-point clearance and conservation work, a special sculptural seat has been commissioned from the artist **Will Nash**. This striking new piece will provide the perfect opportunity to stop and enjoy the view.



Will is going to create a sculptural seat that will be constructed from weathering steel with its individual cells packed with locally sourced green timber to create a solid seat. Concealed within the timber will be three spherical kaleidoscopes, each one orientated to view a different element of the landscape. The artwork will be called **'Optohedron'**- derived from the ancient Greek *optikós* "of seeing" and *hédra* "raised seat".

Artist Will Nash says *"The Optohedron sculpture is inspired by the act of viewing, thinking and seeing as the fundamental interface between the person and the world. Whilst exploring this idea, I investigated optics, the science of light, which took me to an ancient instrument - the kaleidoscope"*.

As well as the planned practical work, a learning programme will engage communities and young people with the therapeutic benefits of art and nature through walks, talks, conservation and creative activities.

None of the work will be able to take place without public support.

Discover more about donating and being part of this exciting project by visiting:

www.inspiringviews.org

Is this a positive sign of things to come? What next for the High Street...

The hot topic of the summer is the devastation of the High Street....with more and more shops and national brands closing. During the first week of June alone, four more outlets closed at the top of Guildford High Street, leaving a gaping emptiness, a pattern which will only be repeated when Debenhams closes next year and Arcadia shops fall under threat. Retail, as we know it, is becoming fundamentally different. Town centres are not the 'centres' for social activity they used to be.

So, where is the good news for the community and life on the High Street? What reason is there to come to the 'centre'? Looking around the top end of town, life seems to be where the flags are flying, and more-often-than-not, that is from the railings of Trinity Church. The invitation is not only about worship, it is about coming: to a concert, to a folk festival, to a play, to an opera or an exhibition. Last week the Guildford Quilters were showing their work. During June the Surrey Mozart Players, Guildford Choral and the University of Surrey were all performing. In May, there was a Folk Festival and Guildford Opera Company staged Henry VIII. Guildford Opera is returning again in September, and in the past Guildford Art Society has held pop-up art and craft shows.



Trinity and St Mary's are popular venues for art events in the town.

Trinity is a large, flexible, beautiful space with good acoustics. Access is good and prices very affordable. Spaces like these are relatively rare and hence their increasing popularity for cultural events. However, they also have their limitations, mainly due to their being multi-purpose.

But, is this a sign of things-to-come? Will the High Street be reinvented and rediscover its mojo by replacing Retail with Culture? Long-term trends have been signalling how our social needs are shifting away from 'stuff' and toward 'experiences'. More and more, we need our spirits lifting with a play, beautiful music, a thoughtful piece of art, rather than a new dress. To keep a heart in the High Street there is more and more need for space for cultural experiences.

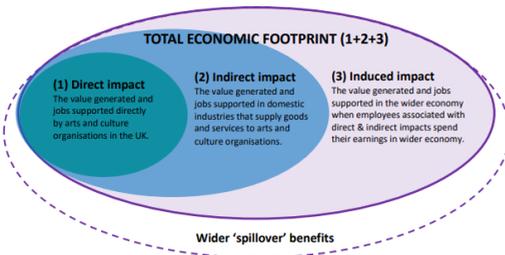
We are looking forward to it!

Julie Verity



The Economics of Art & Culture

There is a growing recognition that the Art and Culture industry plays a vital economic contribution to this nation's prosperity apart from its fundamental ability to psychologically enrich the community.



According to the latest statistics from the *Centre for Economics & Business Research (CEBR)* that was prepared for the *Arts Council England*, the art and

culture sector directly contributed some **£12.2bn turnover**, **£10.8bn labour added value** and includes some **137,250 people working in the industry**.

However, one should take into account the wider economic footprint (as per the graphic illustration), which means that the results are even more impressive: **£48bn turnover**, **£23bn labour added value** with around **363,713 people working in the art & culture sector!**

The report highlights:

- * The arts and culture industry has grown **£390million** in a year and now contributes **£10.8 billion** a year to the UK economy.
- * The sector contributes **£2.8billion** a year to the Treasury via taxation, and generates a further **£23billion** a year and **363,713 jobs**.
- * Productivity in the industry is far greater than the economy as a whole, with a gross value added per worker at £62,000 compared to £48,800 for the wider UK economy.
- * There are £5.2bn exports of arts and culture goods and services, more than three times the UK film sector, with 84% going outside of the EU.
- * Art and Culture pays £2.6bn in taxes, **£5 for every £1 of public funding!**



These figures are specifically dealing with the Art and Culture industry itself, but when one looks at every other item that is manufactured or created, art and design plays a major and integral starting point and underpins their successful production. All-in-all it is an industry that almost forms the backbone of the UK's economic endeavours.

Editorial

ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

Guildford Arts - the early days...



As one of the earlier members of Guildford Arts and former organiser of Yvonne Arnaud Art Exhibitions, I have been asked about the origins of Guildford Arts. 1991 saw its embryo as an informal gathering of like-minded people whose mutual objective was to lobby for a permanent Arts Centre in Guildford. Among these were well-known names locally including Auriol Earle (the first Chairman), Douglas May, Bill Bellerby and Pat Grayburn.

Carol Leighton was in the Chair when Douglas May chaired the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre. In 1996, he offered a month-long selling exhibition in the Harlequin Restaurant (now the Riverside) in the summer when the theatre was dark. It became an annual event until 2001, when following a flood on the ground floor of the theatre, we were offered the Mill Studio for the exhibition. It has remained there annually ever since. A grant from the *Foundation for Sports and the Arts* enabled purchase of display screens and lighting, which helped attract national artists to exhibit, as well as high quality local professional artists. The exhibitions have been opened by such notables as Penelope Keith (twice), Michael Buerk, Mary Quant, Sandi Toksvig, Michael Cochrane, Patti Boulaye, Sarah Miles and Richard Stilgoe.

Sponsorship for these exhibitions was initially provided by Stevens & Bolton and then Baker Tilly for many years, enabling funds for wide-spread advertising. Success of GA's Summer Exhibition at Yvonne Arnaud encouraged Clyde & Co and Baker Tilly to give *Art @ Work* exhibitions in their office buildings, which have continued over the years and have also proved very successful.



Notable one-off activities involving promotion of the arts by Guildford Arts may have been forgotten in the mists of time. Perhaps the most outstanding of these was the Millennium Arts Festival in Stoke Park, when for one day, we welcomed all manner of musicians, poets, actors, artists, sculptors, dancers, performing on their dedicated stages or in their dedicated tents. The finale included the New London Sinfonia with Ann Murray, soprano and Procul Harum, whose band re-grouped for the first time in many years and for whom some fans travelled from other parts of the world to hear!

All these events have been organised with the purpose of demonstrating the still existent need for a multi-purpose Arts Centre in the town of Guildford. Becoming an official Charity in 2001, Guildford Arts' declared objectives are ***"to advance the education of the general public by encouraging its appreciation and knowledge of the arts and by promoting and encouraging excellence in the practice of the arts"***. Its current activities demonstrate its determination to fulfil these objectives.

Neville Lyons

Sidney Herbert Sime (1865-1941)

- Worplesdon Memorial Hall -



Sidney Herbert Sime was born in Manchester in 1865. He was the second of six children of Scottish parents. As soon as he was old enough he went to work in the Yorkshire pits where conditions were very bleak and he spent about five years pushing 'scoops' filled with coal along rails through tunnels about 28 inches high! The miners had their own folklore and 'familiar': goblins, Coblynau, Cutty Soams, Dunters and

Knockers, who were bringers of, or defenders against, the ever-present dangers. Here Sime used to scratch drawings of imps and devils on the walls and snatch a few spare moments for little sketches when possible.

Later, Sime took up sign-writing, at which he became successfully self-employed and eventually joined the Liverpool School of Art. By his early twenties, Sime had managed to educate himself and gained several prizes and medals from the school. In 1889 his first oil painting, a portrait of Henry Peet Esq, was exhibited in the Walker Art Gallery Autumn Exhibition - the northern equivalent of the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition.

His extraordinary imagination and raw talent led to him becoming a renowned illustrator of books and magazines. He inherited money and property from his deceased solicitor uncle, and in 1898 Sime married Mary Susan Pickett, a miniaturist painter. In 1904 they moved to Crown Cottage, Worplesdon until his death in 1941.

Built in 1956 from the proceeds of the sale of the family home, the **Worplesdon Memorial Hall** houses all 800 of Sidney H Sime's artworks, as well as letters, books and personal memorabilia that had been in his wife Mary's possession, as a permanent memorial for future heritage, conservation, enjoyment and interest.

The Trustees of the Memorial Hall have recently been awarded £42,000 from the **Heritage Fund** to renovate and improve the visitor experience to the gallery.

<http://www.sidneysimegallery.org.uk/>



Garden Design as Public Art?

There is a school of thought that feels any artistic endeavour that gives the viewer a feeling of well-being and satisfaction that is in the public realm should be deemed as Public Art. But should this include horticultural endeavours?

Guildford Borough Council with its many parks and gardens puts a lot of effort into creating havens of peace and tranquillity. As a prime example of an urban park, with some fine examples of contemporary horticultural craft, the **Guildford Castle Grounds** take some beating!



The Castle Grounds were created in 1888 following the national trend of opening public parks. This trend started in 1840 when a rich mill owner in Derby made a donation of some land to plant trees. The idea was to create respite from the smog of the industrial town for his mill workers and the citizens of Derby. The key point was that these spaces were free for public use with the purpose of promoting well-being for everyone.

Today, Britain has a third of a million acres given-up to public parks. There are 27,000 of them, many in the centre of increasingly polluted city centres. Their relevance seems just as high today as in the Victorian times of their creation. The issue, of course, in the current climate of austerity, is the cost. Many local councils have outsourced their garden upkeep and/or significantly slashed their parks and gardens budgets.

One estimate put visitor numbers to the Castle Grounds in Guildford at 550,000 per year. Guildford Borough Council's Parks & Landscape Team design, plant and maintain the grounds and, unlike the trend of outsourcing among other councils, GBC have so far resisted this. The Grounds have received seven *Green Flag Awards* over the years and the standard of formal horticultural planting is extremely high (eat your heart out Wisley!). There are two sculptures in the Grounds, as well as a beautiful green for bowls – which is a work of art in itself.

Topical, informative, peaceful and with plenty of benches, the Castle Grounds are a delight of design and horticultural craft – a wonderful place to rest and distract a busy, anxious mind for an hour or just ten minutes. A civilising, refreshing urban space, surely that is Public Art!?

Julie Verity



Joe Dowden - Water Colour Supremo!



Joe Francis Dowden borne in 1958 painted his first landscape in watercolour at the age of six up on Albury Heath with tuition from his father, himself a painter. He trained at Epsom School of Art & Design and Teesside Polytechnic. Early contact with some fantastic painters was a major contributor to his development as an artist. He was brought up in the rural backwoods of Southern England, where he now lives and works.

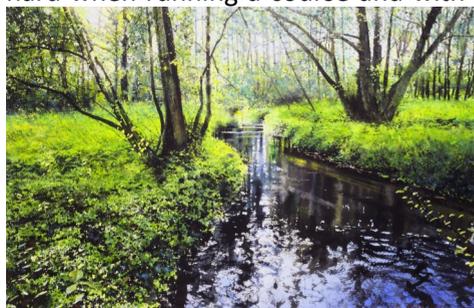
He travels whenever he can to gather source material for his paintings, sketching on site rapidly and prolifically. Joe is an accomplished watercolour painter with an international reputation.

His work has sold in many galleries and is sought by collectors worldwide. He has written and illustrated more than ten specialist water colour art books, that have been translated into many of the world's different languages. Joe is also a Panel member of the SAA, (Society for All Artists) and presents TV programmes and writes regularly for many art magazines.

Joe is a master technician at painting the countryside and internationally renowned for painting water, everything from a muddy puddle in a lane to beautiful reflections on the surface of a lake. He is able to capture light bouncing off different surfaces and uses many different and some very unusual techniques to achieve this.



He also demonstrates painting to groups of artists in Britain and round the world, He works hard when running a course and with his wry sense of humour he makes students

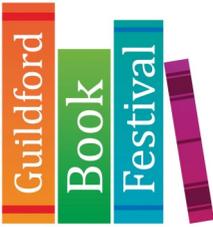


feel comfortable and at ease. Often these paintings are put into international exhibitions.

Joe's paintings are in government, corporate and royal collections, but, despite his unique and expert ability, he has no delusions of grandeur and is still very grounded, maintaining a presence of normality as a local window cleaner! He is a

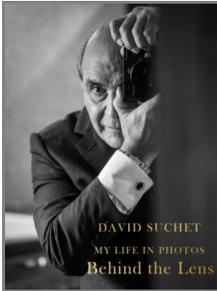
popular figure and well known in Surrey for his one man shows In Albury.

www.joedowden.com



Guildford Book Festival 2019

It's 30 years since the first Guildford Book Festival. Back in 1989 the highlight was a dinner with *Rumpole* creator, **John Mortimer**, and a little-known author called **Sebastian Faulks** took part in a free lunchtime event.

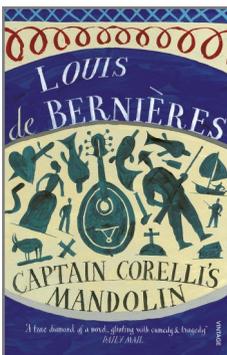


This year's festival takes place between 6th and 13th October at venues across town and will once more feature a star-studded line-up of top writers and celebrity names. Speakers include actor **David Suchet**, celebrating 50 years on stage and screen, comedian **Katy Brand**, and the much-loved *Countryfile* presenter, **John Craven**. There will be poetry from **Pam Ayres**, and a special pre-Christmas event with **Carol Ann Duffy**.



Tracy Chevalier, **Sarah Perry**, **Deborah Moggach**, and *Killing Eve* author, **Luke Jennings**, are among the other leading fiction writers. For history lovers **Max Hastings** will provide a new evaluation of the Dambusters story; **James Holland** takes a fresh look at the D-Day landings; and art historian **Ben Lewis** tracks the extraordinary journey of Leonardo da Vinci's *Salvator Mundi*, the world's most expensive painting.

Virginia Nicholson asks *How Was It For You?* in a session that looks back on the Swinging Sixties and considers how the world changed for women, while Surrey author **Sharon Wright** will speak about *The Mother of the Brontës*, the first biography of Maria Branwell, whose contribution to the success of her literary daughters – Charlotte, Emily and Anne Brontë – has largely been overlooked.



Guildford Arts will be sponsoring the event on closing night with **Louis De Bernières** who will be speaking to author and critic, **Stephanie Merritt**, about his global bestselling novel, *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*, as well as his more recent work.



For further information on this years' festival and to book tickets:

www.guildfordbookfestival.co.uk

Jane Beaton



www.guildfordarts.com

ArtsEGG.uk



News & Views

Next Edition January 2020

GA members and other arts organisations may send suitable copy or articles for our next edition at any time before **20 November** for publication on or about **5 January**. Please send your contributions to the editor by e-mail.

gaeditor@guildfordarts.com

Become a Member

- Are you interested in or involved in the literary, visual or performing arts?
- Would you like to know more about what arts events and activities are available?
- Perhaps you would like to promote your own artistic activities to a wide Guildford based audience?

If your answer to any of the above is 'yes' then **Guildford Arts** should be of interest.

- We are an organisation dedicated to the nurture and promotion of the arts in the Guildford area.
- We are a registered charity that draws its membership from both the providers of artistic experiences and those who delight in and support those offerings.
- We run exhibitions, talks and events organised by ourselves, or in association with others.
- We provide financial support for arts initiatives of all kinds.
- We provide featured promotion of arts endeavours in **News & Views** and events promotion on our two **web-sites**.

Members' Flyers in our Mailbag

MEMBERS: advertise your arts event in our regular mail-outs.

E-mail below for the mailing schedule and confirmation of available space. Flyers should be A5 size or folded A4. We send out 450 copies and are able to include flyers from other groups, dependent on weight at a nominal cost of £45 .

gaflyers@guildfordarts.com

Guildford Arts Contacts - 2019

Chairman:	<i>Bill Ward</i>	01483 502652	gachairman@guildfordarts.com
Deputy Chair:	<i>Jan Wilkinson</i>	01483 575125	gamembers@guildfordarts.com
Web Developer:	<i>John O'Keefe</i>	01483 428560	gawebdev@guildfordarts.com
Administrator:	<i>Sue Dragon</i>	01483 573538	gaadmin@guildfordarts.com
Treasurer:	<i>Richard Bowman</i>	01483 533845	gatreasurer@guildfordarts.com
Membership:	<i>Jan Wilkinson</i>	01483 575125	gamembers@guildfordarts.com
Small Grants:	<i>Mike Beckwith</i>	01483 234567	gagrants@guildfordarts.com
N & V Editor:	<i>Roy Hogben FRSA</i>	01483 202636	gaeditor@guildfordarts.com