

PROMOTING

THE ARTS

GUILDFORD
ARTS

News & Views

May - August 2020

Registered Charity Number: 1089777

The Arts and the Health Crisis

We are all too aware that, along with others, as a country we are living through one of the worst collective crisis that most of us have faced in our lifetime. It has been compared to privations of the Second World War, but then the threat was more obvious, immediate and enduring. However, in the 1940s, though restricted, social and cultural life could continue. Now, of course, all the arts along with sport and all social gatherings have had to be put on hold.

Some will want to interpret this necessary clampdown on the arts as proof of just how peripheral the place of the arts is in human affairs. For all of us who are lovers of the arts, the conclusion has to be the opposite. As Maslow pointed out, when human affairs are entirely concerned with survival, then that need is all-consuming – but that primal need is the most primitive of human concerns and so similar to the needs of any other animal.



I can feel obsessed at the moment with the simple need to secure provisions: will I continue to be able to get hold of flour and yeast to make bread for example? But even as I am obsessing, I know, that in more normal times, neither I nor anyone else 'lives by bread alone'.

While inevitably frustrated and feeling enfeebled by the present restrictions, we in Guildford Arts and I am sure all the other arts organisations in Guildford and elsewhere are looking forward to the day when they can once again start to address our higher needs and desires – the things in life which enrich us and make us more fully human.

In the meantime, arts organisations need to survive to fulfil their long-term destiny. Please do all you can to support the providers of the arts locally so that when more normal times return, our rich local arts heritage can once again flourish.

Pablo Picasso once wrote *"art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life"*, an incisive thought that particularly resonates with life today!

Bill Ward, GA Chairman

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

Ghost Light

In the theatre there is a tradition – whenever the theatre is empty, they are always sure to leave one light on. Typically, on a stand in the centre of the stage, this light is known as the **ghost light**. There are many stories about its origin – but its meaning is unmistakable.



It means, though the theatre is empty, “**WE WILL RETURN**”. So here’s to them, the actors, the technicians, the directors, the carpenters, the designers, the dancers, the teachers, the students, the freelancers, those on tour, those at sea, the electricians, the stitchers, the makers, the stage managers...**THE ARTISTS**. Many have taken big hits during this pandemic.

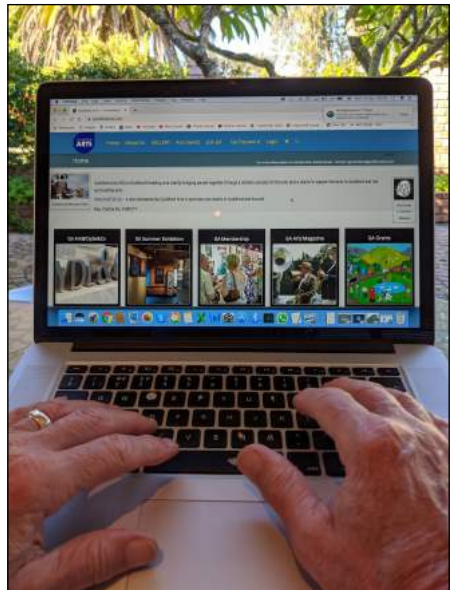
Financial and emotional weights have come crashing down as the entire industry is reduced to nothing but a bunch of ghost lights. But those ghost lights are temporary place holders. They are a sign. Everyone might be down now – but their passion, their creativity, and their drive is still centre stage. They’ll be unplugging those ghost lights in no time. Until then – here’s **Yvonne Arnaud’s ghost light** – to let the world know they will be back!

Editorial

The Internet Lifeline

During this extraordinary ‘lock-down’, the **Internet** offers a lifeline for keeping in-touch with family and friends. Apart from the very useful fountain of world-wide information, you and your computer have the ability to interact and take part in many social activities that have now been designed.

Certainly, the best way to keep up-to-date with what is happening on the ART SCENE in and around Guildford is to log onto the Guildford Arts website! It contains a wealth of interesting information and, with its revised layout, it is a delight and easy to navigate your way around. The Internet is definitely the way forward for communication, **so if GA doesn’t have your e-mail address then you can add it online, without a problem!**



www.guildfordarts.com

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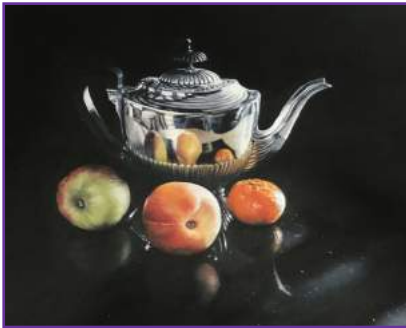
GA's Philosophy for Selling Art

I thought you might like to know a little about sales made at Clyde & Co *Art@Work* exhibitions and how the money raised is put to good use.

As a registered charity it's important that Guildford Arts make sales from the four *Art@Work* exhibitions staged at Clyde & Co. each year as well as the Arnaud Art annual exhibition. This enables us to award grants to Community Workshops, as well as contributing to the Guildford Book Festival, Music Festival and other deserving local groups.



Our buyers are both members and non-members of Guildford Arts. Clyde & Co employees and visiting clients have also bought works, as have some of the exhibiting artists. As the exhibitions are staged in working offices and not accessible to the general public, the great majority of sales are made at the private views.



Sales are difficult to predict, both in numbers and what will sell. That being so, with each exhibition my main objective is to present a variety of work in different disciplines, mediums and styles. I try to include 3D pieces, prints, paintings, textiles and photographs, all of which have sold over the

years. If sales are forthcoming, that's wonderful, if not it can be disappointing for the artists and myself, but we understand when it comes to art, that's how it can be.

When a work is sold, usually in the hurly-burly of a private view (not complaining, it's great to see a good crowd), I rarely have the opportunity to ask buyers what attracted them to their choices. But recently I had the chance to ask a buyer his reasons for having bought three stylistically contrasting works, in medium, technique, subject and size. They proved to be as varied as his purchases, testament to the fact that choices can be made for a variety of personal reasons that cannot easily be guessed at or assumed. For me, that's what makes curating exhibitions and selling artworks so exciting.



Sue Dragon - Exhibition Curator

'art @ clyde & co' also in Lockdown!

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There is no way that the latest 'art @ clyde & co' exhibition can be viewed. Social distancing would be a joke especially in those narrow corridors... and as for a Private Viewing! Well we all know just how crowded they can be.

Such a pity for the artists who have provided their work and looked forward to talking about and hearing opinions about their art. The exhibition is still there of course. Everything about this pandemic has happened so quickly. Sue Dragon and her team

had barely completed the hanging before the Clyde & Co management made the correct decision to close their offices. And that was that!

So what could we do? Well, if you take a look at the Guildford Arts website www.guildfordarts.com just click on the **Gallery** to see this feature. You will see that we have posted a selection of the exhibits and, should you wish to buy one, they are set up with an electronic shopping basket as well!

To include every piece on show would be difficult given there are 70+ pieces – especially as we don't have photos of them all and cannot go to the offices to take them.



Unfortunately, the one thing that we cannot replicate is the wonderful hospitality that Clyde & Co honour us with - their sublime canapés and refreshments!

Apart from this...we hope that we can develop this approach in future to provide everyone, especially those who cannot make private viewings, with an insight into the content of these exhibitions – and a chance to buy some art!

www.guildfordarts.com

John O'Keefe GA Web-Development



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Guildford Arts Supports **NewSPAL**

For those who use the **Performing Arts Library** - drama groups, choirs, orchestras, bands, opera societies, youth, folk and children's groups - the story about its transition from the ownership of *Surrey County Council* to the charity - **NewSPAL** - will be well known. Indeed, groups and individuals have raised and given the Charity over £88,000 towards the costs of rehoming the Library in Woking, where the Borough Council made the generous offer of a renovated building rent-free as the new home of the Collection. A date for the opening of the Library is not finalised as of writing, but is anticipated for the end of this year.

With a funding target of £217k to reach a sound financial position for the transition and launch of the new Library, about half has already been raised. Hooray! And in January, Guildford Arts were delighted to add to the funds raised, after an application was made by *Project Manager, Victoria Taylor* to the **GA Small Grant Scheme** ..HOORAY again!

Funds raised by NewSPAL

Small trusts and foundations	£8,018
Gifts from individuals	£55,753
Gifts from groups	£32,515
Gift Aid	£12,254
Foyle foundation	£10,000
Total to date	£118,540

Funds still needed

To be raised via large groups	£75,000
To be raised by groups	323,460
Total =	
Optimal position for opening	£217,000

Meanwhile, more than forty-five volunteers have given about 2,300 hours to the mammoth task of checking and re-cataloguing the collection of 206,000+ items, a job that is roughly 70% complete. A new IT system has been purchased so that, together with the new catalogue, the more than 1,000 individual users, 394 music groups and 178 drama groups of the library will be able to access the collection on-line and at their ease. Hip, hip HOORAY.

We wish **NewSPAL** good luck in their fantastic efforts to complete

the rescue and future running of this very special resource for arts lovers.

For more information:

www.newsportal.org.uk

Julie Verity GA Comms.

Contents of collection: 206,000+ items



GASPIng for Tea and Sympathy

An accomplished friend invited me to a 'coffee morning for local artists' three years ago when she was setting up a small artists' group. *Shauna Stanton* began ***Guildford Artists Support Platform (GASP)*** on a hunch that, being an artist is such a



solitary occupation, artists would benefit from a regular gathering to exchange ideas, discuss events in the artistic calendar and she invited local painters, printmakers, illustrators, jewellers, ceramicists, sculptors, photographers, glass, textile and mixed-media artists who she knew well and who she felt would benefit from such a meeting.

It soon transpired that we all found it very interesting to visit each other's studios so they became alternative venues for our meetings. When Shauna sadly moved back to her 'native' Cornwall, I offered to take over running the group.

We are a mix of approximately forty creatives (but cannot absorb any more), some long established, some who have only been working in the field for a few years. Most of us are professional, and some are professional in fields closely aligned to our work: for example framing and exhibition curation. We have visited exhibitions in Woking's Lightbox and Guildford House, amongst others, the Private Views at Clyde & Co., as well as one of our artists at Watt's Gallery as Artist in Residence.



It has been hugely beneficial for all of us: learning about the work of each other, discussing processes, progress and insights, local and national exhibitions and developments in the Arts. To anyone thinking of setting up a similar group we would all thoroughly recommend it as a great way to spend a Monday morning once a month!

Sadly, like many others, GASP are not meeting at the moment. We may be able to resume using some sort of video link, but it's not quite the same as standing in someone's studio!

Becca Clegg BA Artist



Welcome to the Nation's Art

ART UK believes in democratising access to art. It is a cultural education charity that enables global audiences to learn about the UK's national art collection, including sculptures, that are in the public realm. Their web-site is a showcase for art from every UK public collection and is a collaboration between more than 3,200 British institutions.

ART UK's research library contains more than 230,000 images from over 40,000 artists, and the art you see on-line is free for everyone's enjoyment, learning and research.

ART UK's unique initiative *'Masterpieces in Schools'* in association with *BBC Learning*, is an outstanding success by taking artworks out of the nation's museums and galleries and into direct contact with children and young people, as they loan a sculpture to a school for the day.



Under the banner of *Art Matters* there is a whole host of interesting *'podcasts'* from international experts in their field that are freely available for anyone to access.

ART UK's *'Being.....'* series, takes a look at a day in the life of a professional working in the arts, heritage or museum sector and provides an interesting and comprehensive introduction to their skill base and working environment.



ART UK's *'Art Detective'* is set up to improve knowledge of the UK's public art collection. It is an award-winning, free-to-use online forum for specialists and others who are interested in resolving questions about the artworks.

ART UK's **Shop** is a direct way in which they support public collections - all the profits from sales are sent back to the original source to support the vital work that they do.

All-in-all ART UK's extensive coverage of the nation's art in all of its forms, together with its vast range of back-up stories and analysis makes it one of the UK's Masterpieces in

itself!



For more information: www.artuk.org

Editorial



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A Cultural Landmark for the Community: the HOVE Plinth

Public sculpture brings the joy of great art to everyone and is a vital part of a city's identity and heritage. Hove has an impressive legacy of Victorian sculptures, but had seen little added in the last 100 years, so in 2012 Hove Civic Society decided that it was high time to bring some significant contemporary sculpture to the area. Inspired by the 'Fourth Plinth' in London, the '**Hove Plinth Project**' was born with the aim of installing a new sculpture plinth on the seafront promenade to showcase a changing programme of contemporary sculpture to delight and inspire residents and visitors.



Little did we realise the enormous task in front of us. It took six years of relentless determination to bring this ambitious project to fruition, starting with getting council agreement for a licence for a prime seafront site and planning permission for a high-quality sculpture plinth meeting conservation area standards. It required engaging hearts and minds and support from local groups, residents and businesses as well as patrons and partnerships. We managed a national call for sculpture proposals and captured people's imagination with exhibitions of shortlisted proposals and extensive public involvement in selecting the first sculptures. We raised £120K, broadly in equal parts through grants, crowd funding and pro-bono contributions, a major effort requiring stamina, optimism and patience.



The Plinth's arrival has created a buzz of excitement. It is already referred to as a 'marker' for Hove and is attracting residents and visitors alike to the Hove end of the seafront. The second sculpture, "Flight of the Langoustine" by Pierre Diamantopoulou, is now in the process of being created, with fundraising, yet again a challenge.

We want the Hove Plinth sculptures to remain in the city once they have been on the plinth and are now promoting the gradual development of a new sculpture trail - or 'open air art gallery' - partly generated by these sculptures but also potentially by other initiatives and sources. We believe this will have significant benefits for the city, open up access to great art and add a major feel-good factor.

For more information: www.hoveplinth.org.uk

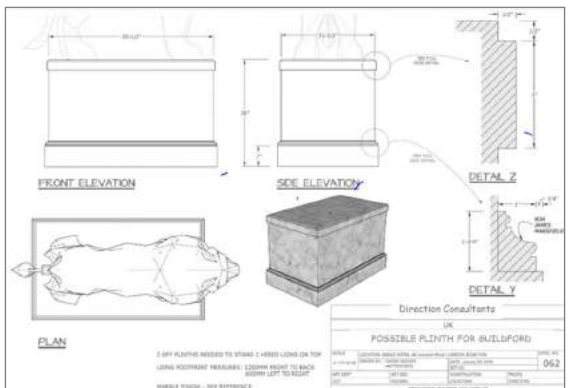
Karin Janzon, Project Director

What About a Guildford Plinth?

Guildford's contribution to Public Art over the past couple of decades has been continually thwarted by the lack of municipal funding and perhaps some lack of positive desire by the leaders of the Council. When money is tight Public Art is somehow thought to be less important than ensuring utility functions are serviced. Changes to Planning Application Rules from S106 monies to CIL have not helped the situation, but this monetary pressure is a national problem facing all local authorities.

It has been proven, beyond any doubt, that investment in art in the Public Realm is vitally important from every view-point, but in general terms there are five key ways that public art can boost local economies: *It inspires pride. It marks special places and adds grace to ordinary places. It offers residents and visitors a source of enjoyment that is always open. It attracts and retains businesses. It defines a sense of place and identity.*

The idea of a **Guildford Plinth** has been around for a while, but has never received a clear and positive hearing, and with very little, or no municipal money available for the arts, it is obvious that in order to move forward with this idea some sort of partnership arrangement needs to be put into place. Of course, GBC must remain an integral part of any arrangement but should not have any financial responsibility. All funding and governance should be provided by an independent charitable trust, the Trustees drawn from local enthusiasts with a professional ability to fulfil everything that is necessary for a successful end result.



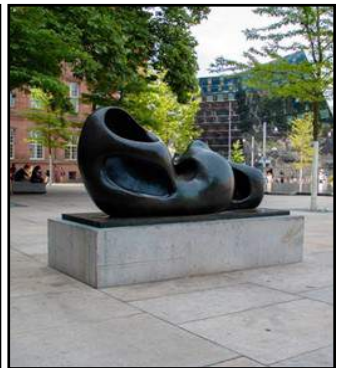
Based on the Hove Plinth the size needs to be around 2mts x 1.5mts x 2mts high. Certainly, Guildford has a number of possible sites that would be ideal for such a permanent plinth, with the possibility of having various high quality sculptures, procured on an annual loan basis, to be mounted securely onto it.

All it needs is for a small group of passionate and enthusiastic volunteers, with very good sculptural contacts, to incorporate themselves! (Perhaps this is an opportunity to again see "The Dancers"?) **Editorial**

Public Art in Freiburg - Guildford's Twin



For more than 40 years Guildford has been twinned with **Freiburg** in southern Germany. More than 900 years old, the city suffered a vast amount of devastation during the last war and when it came to reconstruction the city fathers demonstrated a masterpiece of skill, determination and vision of how Freiburg must be re-built. Most certainly, they gave a great deal of care and attention to their historic built environment, but by no means did they overlook the necessity of integrating their historic art and culture into today's vision to make Freiburg one of Germany's tourist hot spots. Their love and appreciation of Public Art is more than evident throughout the city and environs - which all helps to make Freiburg the perfect destination.



Guildford is situated in one of England's wealthiest regions and yet it's a great pity that the enthusiasm of Freiburg's positive vision as regards the necessity of Public Art has not rubbed off onto Guildford's thinking?!

For more information:

www.visitfreiburg.de

Editorial



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The Knife Angel is coming to Guildford...

The Knife Angel, created by Alfie Bradley, is a nine-metre high sculpture made up of more than 100,000 knives and other weapons confiscated or handed in to 43 police forces across the country.



Originally commissioned and sponsored by the **British Ironwork Centre** in Oswestry, Shropshire, this brilliant idea started life in 2014 as a national programme to **"Save A Life, Surrender Your Knife"** to remove as many knives as possible out of the public realm.

Once the knives and weapons were delivered to their workshop, artist Alfie Bradley got to work. He created a steel structure and formed the basic shape with steel sheeting forming the external, organic shape which the knives could be welded onto. He then disinfected every blade of the thousands of weapons, some arriving in evidence tubes with bodily fluids on their surface! He blunted every knife before welding it onto the structure. The wings were then created using the blades only, creating a feather like appearance.

Since late 2018 *The Knife Angel* has been on a national tour and is expected to be installed at the Guildford Cathedral during September 2020.



For more information:

www.britishironworkcentre.co.uk

Editorial



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News & Views

Next Edition September 2020

GA members and other arts organisations may send suitable copy or articles for our next edition at any time before **20 July** for publication on or about **15 August**

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

Members' Flyers in our Mailbag

This is an exclusive service for GA Members to advertise their arts events 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, dependent on weight at a nominal cost of £45.

gaflyers@guildfordarts.com

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