

PROMOTING

THE ARTS

GUILDFORD
ARTS

News & Views

September - December 2020

Registered Charity Number: 1089777

Art in Times of Enforced Constraint

Where they can, all arts organisations have done their best to keep the torch of culture alive. Guildford Arts' contribution has been two very enjoyable on-line exhibitions. All arts organisations need our continuing support to sustain their current activities and their vital service to our community in the future. In these constrained conditions, when much of our cultural life has withered, holding fast to the place of the arts in our fuller life is even more important.

In this bleak summer for the arts, two controversial statues in Bristol have claimed more unconstrained media coverage than the rest of the arts put together. That drama raised huge questions about the role of art in the public space - Is lawlessness ever justified? Does attacking tangential symbols facilitate or divert attention from key social issues? Should art be judged by current or historic moral standards? Who should decide what is placed in public? What weighting should be given to aesthetic, historic, political, social cohesion or moral questions in deciding the appropriateness of any item of public art? Should art only be comfortable or also disturb? In pursuit of the wholly pure and admirable, where do you draw the line? (e.g. Is the United States going to rename its capital?)



The original toppling and drowning of a Grade II listed monument of Edward Colson was clearly illegal but the follow-up guerrilla placing of Marc Quinn's sculpture of the protestor Jen Reid was not illegal, but certainly it was controversial and a spectacular *coup de Théâtre*. Not surprisingly, the Mayor had it swiftly removed before it acquired any patina of age. Was this the third and final act? Perhaps not, if both sculptures were removed to the same museum, for a while they may have shared the same space - is irony a valid artistic experience?



Fortunately, in Guildford, our public art, apart from some probably misplaced comments about Lewis Carroll, is morally neutral. Perhaps it should be more challenging?

Bill Ward, GA Chairman

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

GA's Summer Exhibition - the show went on!



The team made the difficult decision back in March to cancel the live summer exhibition as we felt that the circumstances would be unlikely to be back to normal by July and we were disappointed to be proved right.

The prospect of not having our **25th Summer Exhibition** was a bleak one and, whilst we couldn't gather to mark the occasion, it was nonetheless important to promote the arts and share with our audience work by new artists so we mounted a virtual exhibition instead.

We reached out to all the artists who had been intending to exhibit with us in the Mill Studio at the Yvonne Arnaud and asked them if they would be keen to share their work digitally. It was thrilling to get their responses and enthusiasm for the project! And the icing on the cake was the opening speech delivered by **Paul Jones** who was an enthusiastic and generous supporter of the project.

Over the period of 1 - 18 July we shared images across our social media platforms – *Twitter, Facebook and Instagram* ([@GuildfordArts](https://www.instagram.com/GuildfordArts)) and we were delighted with the response! Every day we featured a new Artist and explored examples of their creativity, and it was wonderful that artists got direct feedback and appreciation for their work through the comments of the audience then and there.



Although it's not the same without the opportunity to wander and see things from different angles, the advantage of the virtual exhibition is that you can visit it anytime! Do go back to our social media and have a look at the marvellous range of work - it is a treat to behold.

We hope that you enjoy the exhibition and we really look forward to welcoming you in person next year!

Philippa Sampson-Bancroft

GASummerEx@guildfordarts.com

Help Shape Next Year's Exhibition

The Summer Exhibition team is looking for two eager new members!

The friendly team meet about four times throughout the year to discuss artist nominations and exhibition arrangements. You don't need to be an artist or have any particular experience of exhibition co-ordination – we would rather you were interested and enthusiastic!

We are specifically hoping to find someone to take over the role of **marketing co-ordinator**, working with local and national arts publications to promote the Summer Exhibition in a range of locations. In addition to the marketing role, we are also looking for a **sponsorship co-ordinator** to contact existing and potential sponsors to raise funds to support the exhibition.

As well as taking a specific responsibility for these areas, you will also have the opportunity to nominate artists for inclusion in the exhibition and help put on a great show! If you are interested, have questions or are simply keen to volunteer please do contact **Philippa Sampson-Bancroft** GASummerEx@guildfordarts.com

Get involved!

Join Guildford Arts'
Summer Exhibition
committee



Susie's Splash of Colour!

Let's face it, face masks are a little bit dull. So Farnham based artist **Susie Lidstone** has jazzed them up a bit! It is now possible to buy them with her designs emblazoned over them, making them far more colourful and fashionable.

"It's something nice to wear on your face apart from the important role of protecting others and reducing the spread of coronavirus" said Susie, whose first batch sold out so quickly she has had to make many more and has increased the range of designs.

Each hand-made mask, which is made to order, has elasticated straps and fits to the contours of the face, ensuring it will stay in place. They are made from non-irritable, sweat-preventative Olympia Airflow material.



For more details: www.artintheheart.co.uk

What's so important about Our Website?



In this summer of reduced opportunities, **Guildford Arts** is using the time to review its approach to supporting the arts in Guildford and the surrounding areas. In order to better promote all the arts while meeting the needs of our individual artists and arts organisation members, we have decided to reinforce our internet presence by combining our two current websites, **ArtsEgg.uk** and **GuildfordArts.com**, into one to be known as **GuildfordARTs.org**.

This will improve our marketing impact by offering a single, comprehensive information point as well as catering for the interests of our membership. Developing a significant internet presence and other on-line sources of information is very much the norm nowadays for any progressive organisation – especially in a period when people have been forced into lockdown!

Guildford Arts is not just an arts organisation in its own right – we do provide our own arts events - but our mission is to promote the resources and experiences offered by others. In short, we see it as our aim to assemble, maintain and make readily available information about all the arts in Guildford – particularly information about those who actively generate arts experiences, where and when.

Indeed, the more comprehensive, reliable and easily accessible that information can be, the more we will attract the attention of the arts interested and arts supporting public! That, combined with an effective use of social media, will ensure that people will be able to recognise and take advantage of the contribution that Guildford Arts can make to the local cultural scene.

www.guildfordarts.com John O'Keefe GA Web-Development



ArtsEGG.uk

www.guildfordarts.com



Guildford's Town Centre (Revisited)

Before any of us was aware of the devastating effects of COVID-19, at the beginning of this year in *'News & Views'*, an article drew attention to the widespread concern about the sustainability of all of Britain's High Streets, particularly if they continued to over-rely on traditional retail opportunities to make those High Streets a regular go-to place for residents and a destination town for their more widespread target supporters.

The article quoted the local government's own handbook on *'Town Centre Revitalisation'* and its call for each local authority to make a distinction between the daytime, evening and night time economy.

Since that article appeared, one of the effects of the virus in Guildford, as elsewhere, is to exacerbate existing fears about the viability of many of our town centre retail outlets, whether or not as a country we get a reliable solution to the health risks involved in COVID-19. As many more people have turned to on-line shopping, traditional retail is predicted to go on being weaker for the foreseeable future.



This threat means taking the possibility of a centrally placed 'Cultural Centre' even more seriously to counteract the dwindling retail opportunities. At the same time, with those outlets closing, making imaginative uses of the vacated spaces becomes more urgent and more necessary. The Debenhams building for example could be turned into a multi-purpose building with part of it as a 'Cultural Centre'.

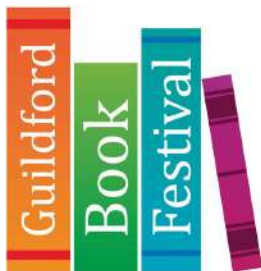
The original article concluded with the following questions which have much more force today! - **“Can Guildford afford a Cultural Centre?...or is the more vital question, Can Guildford afford not to have a Cultural Centre?”**

N.B. Guildford Society has produced an interesting case for multiple use of the Debenhams site, including the arts - see: www.guildfordsociety.org/sitecritical.html

Bill Ward - Chairman, Guildford Arts

www.guildfordarts.com

ArtsEGG.uk



31st Guildford Book Festival

It's been a difficult year for Literary Festivals as it has for all art forms. Many have embraced technology and taken their Festivals online, offering free events to anyone who wants to listen. This was wonderful during lockdown but I'm sure we are not alone in longing for the return of the live experience. There is also the small problem of how to make money out of online events. It's by no means easy, and the future of the

Guildford Book Festival could well be at stake!

As we write in the middle of August, we are still uncertain what form this year's Festival will take. Will it be live, or will it be virtual? If live what venues will be open, what rules will be in place, and will anyone turn up? For now it's taken out of our hands as it is dependent on government restrictions being lifted.

One thing we are certain about is that we have a wonderful line-up of speakers this year. Writer and broadcaster **Gyles Brandreth** will present an evening, (*sponsored by Guildford Arts*), of theatrical anecdotes taken from his new anthology; **Richard Osman** from *Pointless* will talk about his debut crime novel; while *Countdown's* wordsmith **Susie Dent** will give us an etymological story for every day of the year. Amongst the line-up for fiction lovers are **Joanna Trollope** and **Fern Britton**, and leading crime writers **Peter James** and **Ann Cleeves**, while historians **Alison Weir** and **Charles Spencer** make welcome returns to Guildford.



We are also hosting **Kadiatu Kanneh-Mason**, mother of Britain's most celebrated family of talented musicians, who has promised to bring along one of her children to play for us, too! Broadcaster **James Naughtie** and journalist **Catherine Belton** will be taking an eye-opening look at American and Russian politics respectively.

Whether the **31st Guildford Book Festival** can go ahead in a theatre as planned, socially-distanced and masked if required, or we must meet online, we, **Jane Beaton** and **Alex Andrews**, Co-Festival Directors, hope to see you there this October (4th to 11th). Please keep up-to-date with the latest news on our website, or sign up for our newsletter for regular emails.

Become a Friend of the
Guildford Book Festival

And enjoy a range of benefits that membership brings, while helping to support your local Festival.

For just

£30

per year

RESERVED SEATING

REDUCED PRICE TICKETS

ADVANCED EVENT INFORMATION

Keep up-to-date: www.guildfordbookfestival.co.uk

SAOS

surrey artists' open studios

20th Anniversary! 19 Sept - 4 Oct 2020

This year sees SAOS's 20th Anniversary in the most unusual circumstances; usually the Open Studios event takes place over two weeks in June, however, in this special year normality has been turned on its head!

The decision that the committee faced was to either cancel or postpone. The Coronavirus has virtually decimated the arts industry and it was felt that SAOS should try, in every way possible, to help re-generate as much interest and stimulus as possible. Therefore, the dates have been moved and each of the studios that are involved have undertaken all of the necessary steps to make sure they comply totally with the government's advice and protocol for everyone's safety.

More than 174 artists in 114 studios are taking part across the county and it is a real celebration of all of the artists and makers working across many different disciplines. Surrey Artists' Open Studios is a fantastic opportunity to meet Surrey based artists and makers, to find out more about their work, and buy directly from talented artists, continuing to support them during these challenging times.

This year SAOS has awarded two bursaries to artists who have had a career break and/or recently re-trained, to take part for the first time in Open Studios. They are: **Thomas Cooke**, a painter who has been using this opportunity to return to painting and create a new body of work, and **Vicky O'Leary**, a textiles artist who creates machine embroidery and textiles whilst juggling family life...all the more challenging right now.

The artists have created a series of '**Artists Trails**' where studios are nearby or are linked by genre - these can help you plan a day out; some can be walked or cycled, combining culture and being out doors! Use the '**Interactive Map**' to plan your day.

In addition, you can also organise 1 to 1 appointments outside of the advertised opening times with individual artists and makers...ENJOY and STAY SAFE!



For more information: www.surreyopenstudios.org.uk

Editorial

Champion of the Arts - Ben Pearce



Ben Pearce has been appointed as the new Director for the **West Horsley Place Trust**, the heritage and arts organisation that is restoring the manor house, gardens and the out-buildings as a cultural centre for the performing and visual arts.

West Horsley Place Trust is a spin-off from the **Mary Roxburghe Trust** that was originally created by **Bamber Gascoigne** when in 2014 he inherited the estate from his great aunt Mary, Duchess of Roxburghe.

In 2017, as part of Bamber's artistic vision, West Horsley Place became the home of Grange Park Opera and their splendid and renowned *'Theatre in the Woods'* with its five-tiered seating for 750 and interior *'Piccolo Theatre'*.



Ben Pearce was previously the Project Director at the Royal Academy of Arts (RA) developing and leading a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), and later he became Executive Director of the national charity 'Paintings for Hospitals'. Also on his CV is when he led a London 2012 Olympics host-boroughs project 'High Street 2012', which saw the conservation or re-development of 120 historic commercial buildings. This included heritage, culture and community grants and a summer festival. In addition, he is a non-executive director of *Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance*, and a member of the Advocacy Committee for the *Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)*.



Ben Pearce comments: *"I am thrilled to be joining the West Horsley Place Trust. I am passionate about heritage and the arts and know how important they can be for our wellbeing. From the moment I heard about what was being planned here, I wanted to play a part in seeing the exciting vision for this beautiful estate realised.*



"At this unprecedented time there will be many different challenges, but I'm convinced that West Horsley Place can be part of this recovery".

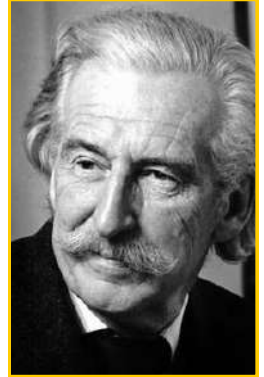
For more information: www.westhorsleytrust.org

Editorial

Public Art Visionary - Frederick Gibberd

(Sir Frederick Ernest Gibberd CBE, RA, FRIBA, FILA 1908 - 1984)

One of England's visionary Architects, a Town Planner and Landscape Designer was **Sir Frederick Ernest Gibberd**. He was responsible for the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, Terminals 1, 2 & 3 at Heathrow Airport, the Central Mosque in Regents Park and the buildings for three power stations, Hinkley Point, Didcot and Sizewell A. He also landscaped three reservoirs, including Kielder. In 1946 he was appointed Master-Planner for **Harlow New Town** and his original plan for the town is regarded as his greatest achievement.



He was always passionate about art and in his Master Plan for Harlow he was uncompromising in his vision that the town should be home not only to high quality housing, public amenities and expansive green spaces, but also to the finest works of **Public Art!** He established **Harlow Art Trust** in 1953 with a mission to beautify Harlow by commissioning, siting, installing and maintaining public art, and it has been in operation ever since.

Harlow Sculpture Town has a collection of more than 100 public sculptures sited throughout the town; the collection includes works by major international sculptors such as **August Rodin, Henry Moore, Elizabeth Frink** and **Barbara Hepworth** amongst many others. The sculptures have grown to be part of Harlow town's social fabric and are now repositories of the personal histories and collective memory of successive generations. This collection, of national importance, remains a focal point and legacy of the visionary genius of Frederick Gibberd!



For more information: sculpturetown.uk

Editorial

Swift Tower for Shalford Common

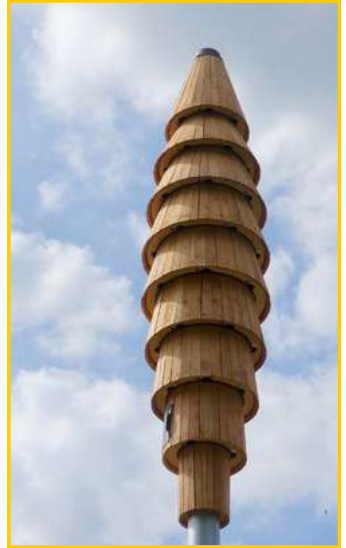
This stunning and very special piece of public art is the result of a good collaboration between Guildford Borough Council, Shalford Parish Council, the Guildford Environmental Forum and the Surrey Hills Trust Fund. It has been partly funded by 'Section 106' contribution, a grant made by local developers to help provide amenities for the local community.



The ten-metre tower, constructed in steel and local timber, was designed by award winning sculptor **Will Nash**. He modelled the idea on the 'Endless Column', one of the great works of the Romanian sculptor Constantin Brancusi.

The Shalford Tower is sustainably clad with UK grown cedar shingles in consultation with Edward Mayer, founder of the Swift Conservation Trust. It features forty-five individually numbered nest boxes, which can accommodate up to ninety swifts and their chicks to replace lost nesting sites in an area where swifts have nested for decades. A solar-powered audio system is installed to play pre-recorded swift calls in a bid to attract birds to it.

Will Nash says *"I was attracted to this project by the challenge of creating an artwork that is a viable habitat for a particular bird. Swifts ideally need a drop of at least six metres from their nest, so the tower had to be tall, needed multiple eaves, and an aerodynamic shape so that it doesn't catch the wind. This finally resulted in a shape drawn from nature, like a seed head, pine cone or cocoon"*.



Swifts are the world's fastest birds in level flight, reaching over 69 miles per hour. They fly continuously day and night, and only land to breed. They eat, drink and even sleep on the wing by resting each half of their brain in turn. Swifts can fly almost 500 miles in one day, and 1.25 million miles in their lifetime! After leaving their nest for the first time, they fly non-stop for three years but will always return to their birthplace to mate.



For more information: [google search - Shalford Swift Tower](#)

Editorial



Surrey
Sculpture
Society

Virtually Unlocking Art 2020

Earlier in the year the **Surrey Sculpture Society (SSS)** was busy preparing for their usual full programme of outdoor exhibitions, but due to the current circumstances their proposed schedule of events for the spring and summer have been decimated! Hopefully the Society will be able to recommence its outdoor programme in the autumn, but until then it will be presenting the work of many of its members in its first ever Virtual Exhibition entitled '**Unlocking Art**', which will be available throughout August, September and into the autumn months.

Henriette Van de Does, SSS Chair comments: *"It is with great pride that the Society introduces the public to the latest branch on the SSS tree: 'Virtual Exhibitions'. After months of lockdown and cancellations of live exhibitions we are ready to show the public that it is impossible to lock down creativity. Our first VE 'Unlocking Art 2020' represents 48 artists and 71 of their latest 3D creations. As usual, a wide variety of subject matter, media and sizes, suitable for indoor and outdoor, is on offer. Although we are not able to show the wonderful work in the usual perfect outdoor setting of a beautiful garden, a sweeping lawn or a classy gallery, we are determined and excited to present our art in this new and exciting format. We hope this proves enjoyable and tantalising viewing for all visitors on our website: www.surreysculpture.org.uk/ua2020."*

All the art is for sale and any information you may need for a successful purchase is given at the end of the video.

With over 250 members, the SSS encompasses both professional and talented emerging sculptors. It aims to promote interaction between sculptors, to organise exhibitions and to encourage a general appreciation of sculpture for all.

At the time of going to press the **SSS Autumn Sculpture Exhibition** at the **Savill Garden, Englefield Green** is still planned to go ahead to open on **23 September and run until 3 November**. There will be 66 works of art by 42 sculptors, with everything in place for an exciting and stimulating exhibition, put together to keep everyone in a safe and comfortable environment.

For more information: www.surreysculpturesociety.org.uk



News & Views

Next Edition January 2021

GA members and other arts organisations may send suitable copy or articles for our next edition at any time before **30 November** for publication on or about **5 January**. Please send your contributions to the editor by e-mail:
gaeditor@guildfordarts.com

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

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

Guildford Arts Contacts - 2020

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</i>	01483 202636	gaeditor@guildfordarts.com