



NEWS AND VIEWS

September - December 2017

Guildford Arts - Annual Exhibition The Mill Studio Theatre, 5-20 July

Guildford Arts, in conjunction with the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, closed its 2017 Summer Art Exhibition at the Mill Studio with a record number of more than 2,000 visitors and a corresponding record number of sales.

Dr. Nicholas Tromans, Brice Curator of Watts Gallery, launched the show in style at the Private View on 4 July and commented

"Art doesn't get better in London spaces - the prices merely get bigger! 'Local' should never be thought of as derogatory because art and art movements frequently spring from localised gatherings; Watts in Compton could be given as one such example".



This year, Guildford Arts again offered an eclectic range of styles, materials and concepts from the twenty-five contributors, and I joined an informed crowd circulating among works that represent national, regional and local names.

Although the selection is gender-neutral, one can detect this year that many of the exhibitors are women, but the five men represented are by no means 'token' - offering a resonance and, in my judgement, a measure of anchorage to an exciting and fluid Show.



There were a number of works that had a magnetic quality about them as well as some stunning abstract paintings. This year's exhibition continues to astonish and certainly exceeds some earlier shows; oils, acrylics, photographs on aluminium, sculpting and ceramics. I can only echo Nicholas Tromans' observation that - *"Local does not mean lesser".....* How very true!

Jeff Thomson - Art Critic

Guildford Arts is a voluntary organisation to support and promote the arts

GA's 2017 Summer Exhibition Thanks To...



for their support of the exhibition



for its generous assistance with the storage of equipment

and our Patrons



Hilary Leigh Retires

Guildford Arts owes a huge debt of gratitude to Hilary Leigh who, for fifteen years, has been GA's Membership Secretary. As such, Hilary has been the cheerful and



dedicated face of Guildford Arts in sustaining and supporting our membership. In retiring from this lead role, Hilary has said that she will continue to contribute to Guildford Arts' continuing success.

Bill Ward, Guildford Arts Chairman

GA's Small Grants

One of the primary objectives of Guildford Arts is to nurture, promote and support any art projects within the Borough. To this end, an important GA initiative is to award small grants of £250-£500 to help aspiring artists.

Our next round of applications is planned for October, with the grant money available in November.

Ideas or projects must be '*not for profit*', and are usually of a one-off nature.

For more information see our web-site or send an outline of your project for consideration to:

gagrants@guildfordarts.com

Mike Beckwith, GA Grants

Guildford Arts - Annual General Meeting



At the Guildford Arts AGM, the Chairman, Bill Ward, thanked all the people that made GA's contribution to the local arts scene so successful and paid a particular tribute to the retiring membership secretary, Hilary Leigh.

Commenting more extensively on the state of the arts in Guildford and the surrounding areas, he suggested that....

"Increasingly Guildford can be seen by citizens and visitors alike as the South East's leading cultural centre outside London. I base this view on the way the arts in so many different and diverse ways are flourishing throughout the area".

He illustrated his view by referring to two of the major out-of-town arts developments in the last few years. A major birth was the arrival of a new opera house at West Horsley Place, which was built from scratch in a year, with first class acoustics and produced

performances of top international quality. A sculpture, purchased last year at GA's Summer Exhibition by the inheritor of West Horsley Place, Bamber Gascoigne, is installed in the orchard.

His second example was Watts Gallery which is now a respected major arts centre. If Grange Park Opera's new house is an example of a remarkable new birth, Watts Gallery is an example of an astonishing resurrection. In the last decade it has gone from a gallery, which had been shamefully neglected, to today's experience which is not only a fitting tribute to a great British artist but is also a beacon for the arts.

Guildford Arts has been pleased to make a contribution to placing a new casting of **'Physical Energy'** alongside the A3. This five-metre high sculpture will be a highly visible part of Guildford's



identity. *"Guildford, the 'New Florence', would be too extravagant a claim" he said, "but are we getting there?"*



ArtsEGG.uk - One Year On!

It doesn't seem so very long ago that we were talking to our Organisation and Practitioner Members about the concept of a *single 'Information Point' for Arts events in Guildford* that would be shared and promoted by all for the benefit of Guildford's cultural scene.

The idea was well received. The *'Arts Events in Guildford Gateway' (ArtsEGG.uk)* was published in June, publicly released last November.

Successful? Most certainly! Over 120 contributors have registered, and some 300 (rough guess) events posted to the site. During the period November 2016 - June 2017, typically over 200 visitors accessed the site per day. (No - these were not from Eastern Europe. They were local. We can tell!)

Twitter feeds are working well. Special thanks are due to Nick Wyschna who took this on....social media is becoming a major ingredient for passing on information.



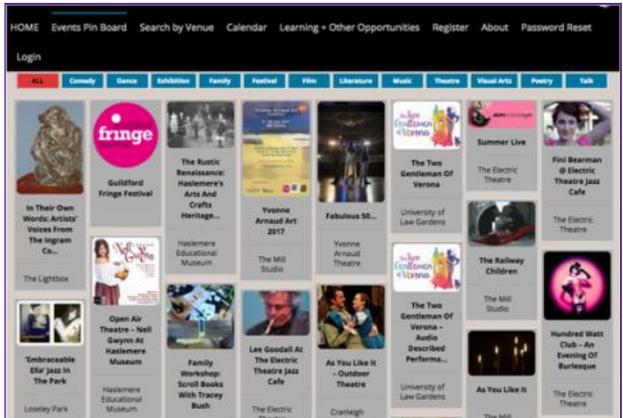
If the number and variety of events presented on the site are any indication, then things have quietened down somewhat during the summer period. However, it won't be long before another round of arts events are to be publicised. Last autumn, the volume and variety of arts offerings was quite stunning. Our challenge now is to make sure that ArtsEGG.uk continues to grow its audience and ensure that ALL arts providers contribute their activities to the site.

As for the articles featured on ArtsEGG.uk, there is clearly a need for a place to promote offerings of all things 'learning'. A talk or a one-day workshop, for example, work well in an 'events' format, but lengthy courses or extended workshops are better served by an 'article' format.

So, for the foreseeable future, the *'articles'* component of ArtsEGG.uk will focus on 'Courses and Classes'. 'Opportunities' will remain, but 'Press Releases' will now be located on www.GuildfordArts.com. The site has been redeveloped and brings with it an established reputation for publishing Press Releases.

Looking forward to another exciting year actively involving Guildford Arts in Guildford's much underestimated cultural offering.

John O'Keefe, Web Sites Admin.



Your New Web Site Needs...YOU!

Once ArtsEGG.uk was launched a year ago, work began in earnest to design and build a new version of the Guildford Arts web site. The old one had provided sterling service but was out-dated and vulnerable to malicious attack.

www.GuildfordARTS.com is very much a web site for its members and those who wish to know more about who we are, what we do and where our interests lie. It provides membership management, information about our members activities and offers a general view of Guildford's cultural scene.

We hope that using the site for membership registration and renewals will become the norm and that we can increasingly use emails to manage these processes.

However, right now the site is **INCOMPLETE!** It requires contributions from **YOU ...OUR MEMBERS!**

Every member of Guildford Arts who has provided an email address when they joined can access and manage the details that we hold on your behalf. If you are a Practitioner Member, a Young Member or represent an Organisation Member you can also add information and images via your 'profile' to be included in the Practitioner and Organisation directories - a feature of the old website that was very successful.

And.... it is now possible for members to add articles, press releases and details of exhibitions that may be of interest to our membership.

And.... an innovation: *ARTS EVENTS REVIEWS*. Members are invited to add brief comments on such performances, exhibitions and other arts related occurrences that they have experienced and pass on the good news (!) so that others may benefit. In effect this is a simple form of Social Media - and should be fun!

Instructions on how to go about these tasks are included on the home page and, once logged in, further guidance is provided. The first essential is to obtain a password, which requires that you use your email address.

If you are denied a password by the site or are uncertain about the email address you provided when you registered please email me at gapublicity@guildfordarts.com with your name and post code. I will then edit your profile and reply accordingly.

Please visit <https://www.guildfordarts.com> and enjoy the experience!

John O'Keefe, Web Sites Admin.



Patricia Grayburn - Champion of the Arts



For almost sixty-five years, Patricia Grayburn MBE MA (Oxon) M.Univ (Surrey) FRSA DL has been involved with the arts in one form or another.

Born on the Isle of Wight, she was educated at Sherborne School for Girls and went on to graduate from St. Anne's College Oxford with Honours.

Pat's first professional involvement with the arts was in 1953 when she was appointed *Administrative Officer* for *London County Council's Architects Department* where she was responsible, inter alia, for commissioning sculpture and murals for LCC Housing.

In 1959 she was appointed *Head of Press & Public Relations* for the *Royal Festival Hall* and, as a member of the senior management team, was responsible for the promotion of concerts, ballet, films and exhibitions.

Marriage in 1963, a move to Kenya for a year and a growing family interrupted her professional career path, but she pursued her interest in the arts in a voluntary capacity back in England.

In 1983 Pat was appointed as the Arts Administrator for the University of Surrey

where she continues to this day. Her demanding role included being appointed as the Appeal Director for a new Music & Dance Building at the University, as well as the establishment of the *Lewis Elton Gallery*, which, over many years, organised exhibitions by a huge range of artists, international, national and local. All of this whilst overseeing the selection and installation of the University's highly rated sculpture collection!

Leave alone Patricia's 100% professional work ethic, her insatiable appetite and ability to be involved in all things art related have resulted in her being a very sought after community volunteer, both locally and nationally:

- For 26 years the Chair of Guildford Book Festival, she is now its President.
- Trustee and Vice-Chair of the Royal Ballet Benevolent Fund (past).
- Co-Producer of *Son et Lumière* Albury 2000 and Guildford 2004.
- Council Member of the Friends of the Royal Academy of Arts (past)
- Patron, Watts Gallery.
- Member of the Arts Fund, Surrey Community Foundation.
- Committee Member, Guildford Arts.
- Chair of Arts & Business S.E. (past).
- Joint Executive Director, Guildford International Music Festival (past).
- Member of Guildford Society's Design and Heritage Group.
- GBC's Public Arts Advisory Group.

To name some...but not all!!

In 2004, she was awarded the MBE for her Services to the Arts.

Patricia Grayburn is a true Patron and Champion of the Arts.

Adam Aaronson - Master of the Glass Arts



Adam Aaronson is one of the UK's leading glass artists. His love affair with glass began almost forty years ago and his passion for this most unpredictable and seductive of artistic mediums remains undimmed today.

His work has been exhibited all over the world and can be found in numerous private collections from royalty to rock stars.

A specialist in free blown glass, Adam's vessels and sculptures are a celebration of the simplicity of pure form. His coloured patinas draw on painterly techniques and are predominately inspired by the love of nature, especially the play of light on water and the landscape. He is a consummate colourist, and the Impressionist painters - Turner, Whistler, Monet and others - have been a significant inspiration for his work.



"I think of my work as a story of surface and form. Each blown glass artwork is a canvas, depicting landscape in a variety of abstracted ways; a shimmering moment of reflection, capturing river and sea, coastline and forest, as light passes over and through...."

"Glass contains its own dynamic of reflection and refraction, and balancing the relationship between form and surface is often challenging. I explore the organic form of each sculpture, celebrating the natural flow and force of molten glass, sometimes leaving behind traditional requirements for functionality."

"Sometimes I start with a defined idea, but the intuitive way in which I work means that, on occasions, I'll notice unexpected aspects of the developing form and how they relate to the palette I am using...it's almost as if the evolving piece influences the way it turns out"



Adam constantly experiments with new techniques and different ideas, including the potential of large sculptural works designed for the outdoors.

He has certainly made his mark on Surrey's art scene since he moved his studio from London to West Horsley four years ago.

A visit to Adam's light and spacious studio gives a fascinating glimpse into his contemporary twist on this ancient and traditional craft, with its glowing furnaces full of molten glass reheating ovens and annealing kilns. The on-site gallery and shop are a treasure trove full of beautiful and original glass artwork.

www.adamaaronson.com



Southern Pro Musica

Musical Excellence for the South



Southern Pro Musica is the leading freelance professional chamber orchestra in the South of England that has been established for the past 26 years.

For the last four years it has been Guildford Borough Council's *principal provider for classical music*. As such, SPM is continuing to develop its programme of exciting concerts, recitals, workshops and other educational initiatives for the Guildford community.

SPM's Artistic and Musical Director is Jonathan Willcocks, whose international career as a conductor and composer has taken him to many parts of the world in addition to his extensive work in the UK.

An important feature of all SPM's public concerts is that they are free to all those aged 18 or under, to inspire and nurture the next generation of music lovers.

'Mozart and Muffins'

Classical Music for Babies and Toddlers

Southern Pro Musica is delighted to announce the launch of a brand new initiative - '*Mozart and Muffins*' - as part of its 'Music for Guildford' provision. The Tuesday morning sessions will be held in Guildford's iconic Guildhall and offer the chance for parents and carers of babies and pre-school children to bring classical music into their lives, while enjoying tea, coffee and a muffin. Each short session will feature classical music in bite-sized chunks delivered by top-flight musicians.



The powerful benefits of introducing children early to classical music are well documented: according to researchers at King's College University of London these include the boosting of concentration and listening skills and the ability to discriminate between sounds. In addition, children who become familiar with classical music when young develop an ability to appreciate a wider range of music later in life.

For full details contact: Charlotte Beck, marketingspm7@gmail.com



The Miracle of the New Opera House!

Nestled in the dappled shade of the woods in West Horsley Place, sits the new four-tier opera house which opened its summer season on 8 June.

The seemingly impossible schedule, from the original union with Bamber Gascoigne, through to the GBC planning approval last June, has been overseen and orchestrated by Wasfi Kani OBE. Her prodigious talent has also been responsible for raising the funding necessary to allow the *Theatre in the Woods*, in its somewhat utilitarian state of completion, to open for business in a time frame that was truly ambitious.



More than 14,000 patrons came along and relaxed with a picnic in the orchard or, more formally, a splendid meal in the restaurant after which they watched and enjoyed one of the three magnificent productions of *Tosca*, *Jenufa* or *Die Walküre*.

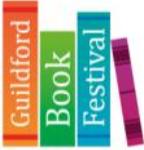
At every performance Wasfi mentioned:

“The Williams family were offering to match donations given during the season. Finally this has resulted in an incredible £1.65m in gifts! They believe that culture makes the world a better place - and their generosity will live on for generations to come.

“But don’t think that we are resting on our laurels. Oh no, there’s still much to be done; so far this is a fairy tale come true, but it is only the start of the story!”



For further information: www.grangeparkopera.co.uk



Guildford Book Festival 2017

8 - 15 October

Established in 1989, the Guildford Book Festival is the premier literary festival in the South-East and has a thriving and widespread support throughout the town and the surrounding area, reaching an audience of thousands over the eight days.

The Festival sets out to celebrate great writing skills and to share the love of books to a wide and varied community. This year it returns with another star-studded line-up of speakers from bestselling authors and bright new talent, to top names from the world of entertainment, media and sport.

An important element of the Festival is its *Schools & Children Programme* in which authors and illustrators are invited to visit schools in the area to engage and inspire young readers. Home-schooled children are welcome to join these sessions, please contact: schools@guildfordbookfestival.co.uk

This year's exciting news.....a new venue! The *Festival Marquee* at Guildford Cricket Ground will play host to some of the biggest names, as well as

a pop-up Waterstones Bookshop and cafe/bar area providing the perfect **Festival Hub**.

There is plenty of space to expand in years to come and is going to be an important step in the Festival's history.

With more than 50 speakers throughout the week this year's Festival promises to be another feast for book lovers!

For full details of authors & programme:

www.guildfordbookfestival.co.uk

Twitter: @gfordbookfest

Facebook: [facebook.com/guildfordbookfestival](https://www.facebook.com/guildfordbookfestival)



GA Festival Sponsor

For this year's Book Festival Guildford Arts is sponsoring:

- **Tolkein's 'Beren and Luthien'** by illustrator Alex Lee: Festival Marquee, Sunday 8 October. <http://alan-lee.narod.ru/Bio.htm>
- **Renoir's Dancer: 'The Secret Life of Valadon'** by Catherine Drewitt: Guildhall, Tuesday 10 October. www.andrewlownie.co.uk/authors/catherine-hewitt/books/renois-dancer

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ArtsEGG.uk



'Art Happens' at the Watts Gallery

The Watts Gallery Trust is celebrating the overwhelming public support that it has received in raising the funding required for the "final push" in its campaign to site a new bronze cast of **Physical Energy** - the monumental equestrian sculpture by the great Victorian artist **George Frederick Watts OM RA** (1817-1904).



Through the 'Art Happens' platform, hosted by the **Art Fund**, and thanks to the extraordinary public support, together with the generosity of an anonymous donor who kindly offered to match £1 for £1 once the Trust had reached its initial target of £25,000, thus an extra £12,500, which raised the total to in excess of £55,000, making this the most successful 'Art Happens' campaign to date.

This funding will enable the Watts Gallery Trust to site a new cast of the colossal bronze sculpture, recognised as G F Watts' most famous work, in a prominent location near the Artists' Village in Compton, to stand as a beacon of creativity in the region.

This new, '**Watts 200**' cast has been commissioned as part of a programme of special exhibitions and events to celebrate the bicentenary of the artist's birth.

Commenting, Perdita Hunt, Director of Watts Gallery Trust, said:

*"We are so very grateful for the overwhelming public support that we have received to site **Physical Energy** so that it can be on display for all those visiting, living or passing through Surrey. Our hope is that this monumental sculpture, with the rider seeking the future, will become an emblem for the South-East and represent the rich cultural heritage of the area. This ambitious proposal could not have happened without the great fillip provided by 'Art Happens' and the generous donations of friends, volunteers, donors, local residents, local staff and Trustees. Thank you from the bottom of my heart."*

Between 25 April and 30 May, members of the public were invited to donate to the "**YayNotNeigh**" campaign through 'Art Happens', Art Fund's crowd-funding platform, to support the installation of **Physical Energy** into the public realm.

For further information: www.wattsgallery.org.uk

Tamsin Williams - tamsin@wigwampr.com 01483 563562 or 07939 651252

News and Views Next Edition January 2018

GA members and other arts organisations may send suitable copy or articles at any time before **10 December** for publication on or about **3 January 2018**. Please send your contributions to the editor by e-mail.

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 promotion of arts endeavours through our regular **News & Views** and 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 - 2017

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