



Eastern Region Textile Forum
taking textiles forward

ERTF SPRING BULLETIN – May 2019

CHAIR'S LETTER

Dear Colleagues

Our AGM and Conference on April 13 was a tremendous success. The new constitution was passed unanimously. Thanks go to Deb Richardson for all her work on this. Our new website is in production. This will take a little time but should be very exciting. We thanked Catherina Petit Van Hoey and Hilary Belchak who retire from our committee. We welcomed Eva Cantin as the new Hertfordshire Rep. We are healthy financially which gives us the flexibility to update the website and proceed with future exhibitions.

Our committee meeting on April 30 was productive as we continue to work towards our future.

We are a thriving group with a dedicated committee who work very hard. As such, we are trying to put in place procedures and paperwork both for exhibitions and conferences that will make it easier to prepare for these in the future. Our region is large and we do need volunteers, especially from the middle and east of the region, to help, perhaps on a one-off basis if they do not have time to join the committee. If less is falling on a few, it means that ERTF is more sustainable and it facilitates succession planning.

Liz Holliday has kindly offered to run the October conference in 2021 and a volunteer for April of that year would be appreciated. We have contacts for the venues and caterers or you can choose your own, but good speakers get booked up a couple of years ahead, which is why we need to work in advance.

We are looking forward to our exhibition in St Albans. If you wish to exhibit in this exciting venue with a considerable footfall but have not yet contacted Flea, please do so as soon as you can. It is not easy finding venues and a lot of time is spent on this, often to no avail. Galleries seem less keen on textile exhibitions as they say they do not bring in much income. We are following up some ideas and help with this will be much appreciated.

We are a warm, friendly and interesting group. Textile art is such a fun and worthwhile activity.

Happy creating

Sue

Saffron Walden Conference Report, April 2019

From Flea Cooke

Michele Carragher gave a fascinating talk about her history and development as a hand embroiderer for film and TV. Starting from childhood dressing up Barbies, encouraged by her mum, she went on to the London College of Fashion, where she started to develop embroidery creatively, based on history, literature and theatre. Increasingly this was sculptural in form.

This led on to a period working in textile conservation, where she developed skills in mending and reconstruction, as well as developing her sources.

Mike O'Neill gave her first TV opportunity, 'Our Mutual Friend', starring Anna Friel. His mentoring enabled her to take on increasingly demanding work, including 'Game of Thrones', 'Elizabeth 1', 'Peaky Blinders' and 'The Crown'.

The experience of working on film stretched her, both technically and creatively, and she gave many examples of short deadlines, short cuts and long working days (and nights).

Her greatest selling point has always been her exquisite hand embroidery skills, honed through years of demanding projects and a strong passion for history and fantasy.



From Marian Murphy

In the morning we were treated to an array of exquisite samples of embroidery designed and beautifully hand stitched by Michele Carragher for the Game of Thrones. She went on to describe her work in the film industry showing us images from the productions she has worked on: Queen Elizabeth 1 with Helen Mirren and The Crown as well as the Game of Thrones. It was fascinating to have an insight into her way of working alongside producers and costume designers and to hear of the research that goes into achieving the correct historical context. She talked about the materials used and some of the problems encountered and told us about the 'doubles' - the necessity of sometimes making multiples of a costume in order to cope with things like blood in battles!

We had lunch and then the afternoon was a complete contrast with Vanda Campbell who got us making brushes from sticks, grasses, found objects, wires and string and then using them to paint with ink. It was fun as well as being productive and delivered with Vanda's inimitable style. A mess was made but a jolly time was had by all.



From Carole Nicholls:

Wow! What a great afternoon: "A Brush with Nature" and an opportunity, in Flea Cooke's words, to explore "gestural mark making"! Vanda had brought a variety of mainly natural items from her allotment and resource store. We had to create five brushes consisting of a handle, bristles and a ferrule. It was interesting to see that members' personalities really reflected in their brushes. There were colour co-ordinated sets, tiny sets, large sets, vibrant, muted... you name it, they appeared!

The next task whilst having a quick cup of tea/coffee and a piece of gluten-free carrot cake was to paint. The first task was just to dry out each brush on kitchen paper, the second to try to paint each brush with another brush on the paper. The culmination was to interpret your favourite brush with another brush in a detailed manner.



All in all, it was highly enjoyable. Vanda was an amazing spirit, very encouraging and supportive. Thank you, Vanda!!

www.michelecarragherembroidery.com

www.vandacampbell.com

ST ALBANS MUSEUM & GALLERY EXHIBITION

"The Making of a Market Town": 7 September to 3 November 2019



Research/Viewing Archives

Sarah Keeling, curator of galleries at St Albans Museum hosted a Handling Day on 24th January 2019, and Claire Willets, curator of Braintree Museum gave a presentation and showed photos and collections from

their stores on Tuesday February 12, 2019. The St Albans viewing was reported in the Winter Bulletin but the Braintree one follows here.

From Kirsten Yeates

This was a very informative and enjoyable day in Braintree for our group of 8 members clad in our winter coats. Most of us added to the day a visit to the 1920's Town Hall and refreshments at a local café. Snippets of information I recorded include:

The visit illustrated that a market town is in need of buyers and sellers as well as good transport links.

The Market Charter is from 1199 and granted by King John. The present market is smaller but still going Saturdays and Wednesdays.

Trade has changed over the years from wool exported to the continent via the port of Maldon, silk weaving when the Huguenots moved from Spitalfields as well as other cloth manufacture, Courtauld and Warner are famous textile names, to farm produce, straw plaiting, ironmongery and engineering. Crittall windows are well known.

Many old buildings still exist including small alleyways called Gants – a name that has Flemish origins. An example in the museum of an old Boneshaker bicycle reminded me of how this would have made getting to and from the market easier as opposed to by foot, cart or horseback.



Exhibition submission forms and publicity images should now be in.

Submission of completed work must be by 31 July for selection in August. Delivery details will be emailed nearer the time.

Group Challenge

To enhance our forthcoming St Albans exhibition, we would like to give all members the opportunity to take part in a group challenge, whether they are already committed to taking part or just want to do a smaller piece.

On a 20cm x 20cm piece of fabric, please create a central 15cm x 15cm design linked to market stall produce. We will then join these together to form a larger piece.

As they will be joined, it is important that we all keep to the 15cm x 15cm size and leave plenty of material for them to be joined. Any techniques.

We will require these by 31 July but at least they can easily be posted if you do not live near a committee member.

Setting up, Hanging and PV

The exhibition will open on 7th September 2019 and run until 3rd November 2019. Packaging can be stored at the gallery under the display cases. The space allocated to us includes the East and West Wing and the connecting corridor. The rooms have both walls and display cases so can include both 2D and 3D artworks.

The Private View will be on Friday 13th September 2019.

ERTF CONFERENCES AHEAD:

19 October 2019: Boxmoor Trust Centre, London Road, Hemel Hempstead, HP1 2RE

Speaker: Cas Holmes - 'Painting with Cloth'

www.casholmestextiles.co.uk



Cas trained in fine arts and works between the disciplines of painting, drawing and textiles. Salvaged materials are torn, cut and re-assembled to create mixed media pieces, which draw their inspiration from 'hidden' or 'overlooked' observations of daily life. She likes to use the remnants of domestic life, rags and cloths, pieces of old clothing that are handled and worn, evidencing 'human contact'. She makes reference to the views from windows, the weeds and flora on the roadside verges and field edges, and the places where gardens meet the 'greater landscape'. She describes her process as 'stitch-sketching' and 'painting with cloth', as she seeks to capture a moment or thing before it is gone. This talk will

focus on this approach to creating works in cloth and references other artists in connection to the landscape. This is also the focus for her fourth book with Batford, now, out, *Landscape: Painting with Cloth*.

Workshop – 'Using the Found, Extreme Stitching'

Explore the character and qualities of paper and found material as a surface for working. A focus on hand stitching as an extension of mark making and various means of manipulating, attaching and joining surfaces. We use different threads to build up a range of distressed, torn, manipulated and collage surfaces to create new elements of interest in your work. Some of the methods are adapted from Japanese paper techniques such as Origami and rub-crikkled paper techniques. The pieces resulting from this creative exploration could be used as a starting point for collage, stitching, 3D or sculptural work.

Participants are provided with a basic workshop list specific to the course, which is largely centred on the creative re-use of the materials you may have available: old domestic (not valuable) fabrics or scraps that can be recycled as well as copies of paper items, maps, photos and items gathered on your day-to-day journeys are useful things to collect... and they should all fit in one bag. This can reflect your theme, a place special to you, be colour-inspired and/or poems or words that express the feeling of your ideas. A fragment of textile, a handkerchief, napkin or a piece of embroidery can be used as both a base and a starting point.

25 April 2020: AGM and Conference: St Mark's College, Audley End, Saffron Walden, CB11 4JT

Speaker: Julia Triston: 'Intimacy and Identity'

www.juliatriston.com



Julia Triston is a professional artist, maker, educator and author in stitched textiles, and contemporary art and design techniques. She is fascinated with the journey textiles take and intrigued by the wear and tear of her raw materials, and the memories they hold. Her raw materials include vintage lace, reclaimed household linen, discarded embroideries, second-hand clothing and previously worn underwear. She is interested in detail, and combines fastenings and straps with raw edges and seams to become features in her pieces. Julia teaches and exhibits internationally and is an active member of the Textile Study Group. She also runs StitchBusiness, an independent, international stitch school. Julia is also co-author of two popular Batsford titles: *How to be Creative in Textile Art* and *Contemporary Appliqué*.

Workshop: Julia Triston: 'Rip It Up and Start Again'

17 October 2020: Boxmoor Trust Centre, London Road, Hemel Hempstead, HP1 2RE

Speaker: Kathleen Sage Thompson

Theme: to be arranged

www.kathleenlaurelsage.co.uk

WEBSITE

Many thanks to Karen Jinx for creating our website and helping to manage it over the years. Karen now feels that it needs updating and a new one created, however she has other commitments and prefers that the process be given to someone else. As a result, by committee decision, Bev Loczy of Peace of Mind has been given this job. The current website cannot have anything new added to it at present but hopefully the new one will be a great success and should be ready by June 2019.

Please email Carole Nicholls with any current events you want to share with other members while the website is being reconstructed.

www.easternregiontextileforum.co.uk

BULLETIN

This bulletin is to be circulated a week or two later than usual so that all the latest member news can be delivered from the AGM, the recent conference and the committee meeting which took place two weeks after that.

The next bulletin will be circulated in August 2019, with a deadline of items to be included of 5 August 2019. Text should be sent as a word document or as an email and ideally less than 100 words in length. All photographs should be emailed separately (not embedded in text) and in high quality resolution. Please note that only website addresses can be published. No personal phone numbers, email or postal addresses can be given in this newsletter as it is put on the public access area on our website.

Committee and other linked contact details are available separately.

Liz Holliday