



Anne Griffiths :: Contemporary Textile Art – December 2013 Newsletter

Dear all,

There was some fantastic pieces of [work](#) created on the "[Beachcombing](#)" course in Mevagissy and very different from [last year's](#). We collected shells and some spectacular seaweed, we dyed, printed and stitched from morning till night and were spoiled by the fabulous food. We even escaped the severe storms and only suffered a short power cut on the last evening. This piece by Tina Slipper incorporates some of the shells that we found, some wrapped using the Dorset button technique some couched onto a linen background.



If you are interested in this course, I will be running it from 28th July – 1st August 2014 at the [Oxford Summer School](#). We obviously won't be able to go beachcombing but if you are like me you already have a good collection of shells and pebbles and would like to incorporate them in a piece of work. Perhaps you are going away later in the summer and want to consider how to prepare some kind of diary or sketchbook to use. I find that it is always easier to update a work in progress than start something new and it is a good idea to be prepared before you set off on holiday.

For more details you can either contact me or look on the summer school website.



I also wanted to remind you about the "[Trees](#)" courses in February and March next year. The week 7th–14th March is well subscribed although there are a couple of places. The week 28th Feb – 7th March is not yet viable so I will need to either cancel or confirm the studio booking in the New Year. If you would like to come then do let me know as soon as possible, I am happy to combine this week with any of the "[Gardens](#)" subjects and limit the numbers to 6 if this is of interest to anyone.

If you can't make it to Cornwall or this date is no good, then I will also be running "Gardens" at New Buckingham Summer School 4th – 8th August 2014. If you would like more information or to enrol, then the website will be launched in January and is <http://www.buckinghamsummerschool.co.uk/>

The [Machine Embroidery Distance Learning](#) course which was launched at the beginning of the year is going well. Three people are now working on Unit 5 and have finished their first resolved piece of work, whilst others are working through the units. You can start the course at any time and work at your own pace so if you are interested do have a look at students' work.

Here are images from Unit 4 from [Irene Donovan](#) sample of cords stitched together to form a fabric and [Nicky Villalard's](#) sample of buttonholes woven with strips of embroidered organza and embellished with "buttons" cut from organza with a soldering iron.



I have had a couple of trips up and down the country in the last couple of months and have seen some wonderful exhibitions. My favourite was [Subversive Design](#) at Brighton which is on until 9th March next year.

Aristotle wrote in the 4th century that it was the duty of art to astonish and surprise and the pieces. Some of these pieces are designed to not only to shock but also to convey messages.

I loved this exhibition because most of the items use craft skills which in the last few centuries have been considered inferior to painting and sculpture. The designers and makers have become anonymous especially

when industrial production has removed the trace of their hand on a piece of work. Here this trend is redressed and craftsmen are beginning to gain the recognition that they so well deserve. Objects in disciplines including ceramics, fashion, textiles and furniture design, explore political and social issues. at the time of their creation. There were textile pieces by Julian Walker who unpicks old embroideries and uses the original threads to restitch them with contemporary meanings. Michele Walker had used throwaway materials in her quilt [No Home, No Hope](#) to highlight the problems of poverty and homelessness and [Under Wraps](#) by Susie Freeman and Lizzie Lee. There were also ceramics by Grayson Perry, fashion pieces by Vivienne Westwood and furniture by Sebastian Brajkovic, whose *Lathe v Red*, 2008 chair image is used on the publicity and is stunning. My personal favourite was the one above by [Jonathan Mathew Boyd](#) which is untitled.

At completely the other end of the country, I visited two galleries. The Glasgow Museum of Modern Art was showing an exhibition by [Niki de Saint Phalle](#) a French painter, sculptor and film maker and was married to Jean Tinguely. She was well known for her work around feminist issues and gifted to the museum a mirrored entrance hall to the gallery as well as a triangular mirror mosaic which is installed above the exterior columns.

Inspired by the work of Gaudi she made many public works, one of her most notable installations is the [Tarot Garden](#) in Tuscany. An image of The Empress, from the garden is shown below.

Saint Phalle is also famous for her “Shooting Pictures” series of work, the exhibition in GoMA shows many of her brightly coloured, pictures and sculptures including “Alter to a Dead Cat” from the same period. The exhibition continues until March 2014.

In complete contrast to the GoMA was the [Burrell Collection](#) in the beautiful location of the Pollok Country Park.

William Burrell (1861-1958) was a shipping magnate and philanthropist. He spent his great fortune amassing a huge collection of art, including painting, medieval tapestry, furniture, stained glass and art from ancient civilisations. Only a small part of the collection is on display in the beautiful purpose built gallery but it was like visiting a mini version of the British Museum, great for children and a family day out.



Well that is all my expeditions from the last few weeks, the next newsletter will be in the New Year, so it just remains to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and 2014.

Best wishes,

Anne