



Anne Griffiths – Contemporary Textile Art – January Newsletter

Dear All,

New York, New York! For anyone who hasn't already heard, I spent Christmas in New York. There is nowhere near enough space in this newsletter to mention all the exciting exhibitions, concerts, and architecture that was squeezed into too few days, but here are a few highlights that I hope will be interesting and some links to exhibition websites which are well worth looking at.

The [Metropolitan Museum of Art](#) must be one of the world's largest museums. It encompasses our own British Museum, Victoria and Albert, Design Museum as well as including modern painting, sculpture and photography. Needless to say there was not enough time to see more than a couple of exhibitions.



The two we chose were [Interwoven Globe The Worldwide Textile Trade, 1500–1800](#) and [Balthus: Cats and Girls](#). Follow the Textile Trade link which has a wealth of information about world textiles as well as a short dvd about the application of mordants, dyes and wax resist to create the beautiful and colourful chintz designs exported from India in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There are also plenty of documents on the subject matter if you wish to research textiles from a particular country.

Balthasar Klossowski de Rola (1908 – 2001) better known as Balthus, was an artist I knew nothing about. He grew up as part of the cultural elite in Paris but set himself apart from the abstract

and conceptualist art of the 20th century and is controversially known for his paintings of adolescent girls. For me, the highlight of the exhibition were the forty ink drawings by Balthus aged eleven in which he portrays his adventures with his adopted stray tomcat. As a child he was recognised Rainer Maria Rilke, the German poet, as a prodigy and Rilke published these drawings in 1921 in a book called Mitsou advising him to use his nickname, "Balthus". Cats appear in the paintings of Balthus throughout his life and he often compared himself and his sitters to cats. He kept only one of his paintings to the end of his life, a self-portrait from 1935 which depicts an angular young man with a tawny cat, its title, "A Portrait of HM The King of Cats" painted by Himself.

If anyone is considering visiting the Met or the [Cloisters](#) which is also fantastic, it is worth mentioning that the entry for each, advertised as \$25 is a guideline. Locals, I am told, only pay about \$5 per visit which is perfectly acceptable.

Of course there was also so many other things to see from the fantastic architecture of the Rockefeller Plaza, Chrysler and Woolworth buildings to Ellis Island the immigration centre in use up until 1952, and the 9/11 memorial. I am already planning my next trip!



There are some exciting exhibitions around in London at the moment, and as well as the popular ones at Tate and Royal Academy, on my personal list are [Eduoard Martinet](#), who transforms scrap into exquisite animal and insect sculptures, [Hannah Hoch](#), Dada artist and the photography exhibitions of [David Lynch](#), [William S. Burroughs](#) and [Andy Warhol](#) all at the Photography Gallery, I don't expect I will visit them all but I will certainly do my best for one or two. If you are out of London then [Treasures in MK](#) (Milton Keynes) also looks like it is worth a visit.



Since I have got back I have been working on samples for the "[Trees](#)" course for March. There is a place still available as someone has had to drop out, so do get in touch if you fancy joining us. We will be visiting the Lost Gardens of Heligan, for inspiration and as well as hand and machine stitching, we will be printing, making paper and looking at

book structures. Some of the [samples](#) for the course can be found on my facebook page.

If you are interested in trees as a subject for stitch, I have just received a beautiful book that I will definitely be using as inspiration for a last couple of samples. It is called [“BARK An Intimate Look at the World's Trees”](#) it isn't cheap at £19.50 but it is fabulous and well worth the money.

A reminder that I will be teaching [“Beachcombing”](#) at the [Oxford Summer School](#) on 28th July -2nd August full details of the costs are available on the Summer School website and [“Gardens”](#) on 4th August - 8 August at Buckingham Summer School.

The [Distance Learning Machine Embroidery](#) is a year old this month and two learners have now completed 5 of the 6 units. Their latest work can be seen at [Nicky Villalard Unit 5](#) and [Irene Donovan Unit 5](#). All the work is of a really high standard and it is so exciting when a new parcel arrives so for anyone that hasn't sent anything for a while, make it a New Year resolution to do a few of the exercises!

Finally, many of you who have come on my courses know the work of a very dear friend of mine, Di Wells, and have helped her in her support for the Chernobyl Children's Life Line and [Charity Sewing Projects in Albania](#). You may be interested in hearing more about these two very worthwhile causes either by looking at her [charity page](#) or if you are in Cornwall joining her on her [charity open days, 14th, 15th March](#). A great way to meet other stitchers and contributing to the work of Chernobyl Children Life Line (North Cornwall branch) .

So until my next newsletter, when I hope spring will be on it's way -

Best wishes,

