



## May Newsletter 2017

Dear All,

I have been really keen to write a newsletter for some time, the summer has arrived and things have quietened down a little. I have been busy teaching around the country as well gathering ideas for new courses and working on a cabinet of objects which will be displayed at The Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford in October, but more on that in a later newsletter.

Work continues on the [felt hangings](#) for the Great Western Park, Didcot community centre, I have found muscles that I had long lost from rolling felt and had forgotten what a physically demanding job it is! There will be 5 hangings in total, the longest of which is 2.8 metres, although as you can see they are quite narrow.

If you are interested in felting, knitting or anything else wool related, [Woolfest](#) is running 23<sup>rd</sup>–24<sup>th</sup> June in Cumbria. I have always wanted to visit but never made it and I am afraid this year will be the same but hopefully someone will get there and let me know what I have missed!

The other project still to complete is the '[Stitch Wantage](#)' sampler, which is just waiting for some of the panels to be finished off by volunteers. I see the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, one of my favourite museums, has an exhibition [Sampled Lives: Samplers from the Fitzwilliam Museum](#) on at the moment. If that is a bit far, I was recently at the [Wells and Mendip museum](#) who have a lovely collection of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century exhibits.



The residential course in Cornwall was a great success as always and we actually managed two weeks this year, a pleasure for me to be staying with great pals in such a beautiful part of Cornwall for a bit longer, and to catch up with old friends and meet new ones.

The subject for this year was “Beach” one that we had covered several times before but never seems to be exhausted. This year as well as indigo dyeing, we also dyed and discharged with potassium permanganate and lemon juice and laughed at the severity of the health and safety advice of a chemical we had all used in the past as an antiseptic, especially when we found this [news article](#) on the BBC website.



There were just so many great samples created on the course in such a wide variety of styles and techniques, but I did just want to pick one that was a bit different, and this seemed to fit the bill, one of Clare Heaton's extraordinary, fantastic birds, a sculpture from all sorts of found objects. For other images of work created during the week, have a look on the [facebook page](#).

I am really happy to announce that there will be a brand new course at Bodrugan next year. By popular request the subject will be Architecture!

Although the content is far from finalised, this is a subject which lends itself to be interpreted in so many different ways. If you are generally a “nature” person, why not research a particular flower, bird, animal and how it has been used as





decoration in decoration on stained glass, carving or perhaps on floor tiles or mosaics. You could look at Church architecture, the shapes of doors or windows, the patterns in old locks or hinges. Perhaps you have some images from holidays, of Mediterranean streets and balconies, above is an image of a quilted piece I made some years ago which was printed with various emulsion paints. At the other end of the scale perhaps the Gaudi buildings in Barcelona, Islamic minarets, or Art Deco, think about the Hoover building or the Rockefeller plaza in New York.



The dates will be 23rd Feb - 2nd March and if you are interested do give me a ring and let me know what you might be interested in covering. I have put a very tentative synopsis on the website, especially the day looking at 'experimental' patchwork, for anyone that knows me I am the world's worst person at measuring anything but we will look at some techniques from an embroiderers point of view. Here is some cathedral window patchwork where I have used spray painted hessian and stitched pieces of coiled wire, tiny bolts and beads inside the "window frames".

I will be putting these and lots more images into a [facebook](#) album in the next few weeks.

If you are looking for something which is running over the summer, I will be back at the wonderful Oxford Summer School from 24<sup>th</sup> -28<sup>th</sup> July after missing it last year due to the New Zealand trip. I will be teaching a week entitled All that Glitters ... on design, mixed media and stitch (hand or machine) based on the theme of Illuminated Manuscripts.

We will use old wooden printing blocks to emboss tomato puree tubes, experiment with acrylic paint, ormaline and bronzing powders together with fimo clay, to create letters, tiles and perhaps a stumpwork creature or piece of fruit to decorate your personal letter or text. These backgrounds can be stitched using either using hand or machine embroidery (if you bring your machine I happy to review free machine embroidery). Finished pieces have been popular to mark births, birthdays and special anniversaries. They can also be made into small ring cushions for weddings.



As I mentioned in the last newsletter, there was an inspiring exhibition on the subject in Cambridge last year and whilst doing some further research I came

across this article about [doodles in the margins of manuscripts](#), which I found quite amusing.

For those people who are not aware of it, [Workshop on the Web](#) is an online publication which features tutors from all over the world, giving step-by-step details of textile techniques and ideas for using those techniques creatively. Machine embroidery, hand stitching, mixed media work together with a review books, products and exhibitions, it has been running for many years now and is a fantastic resource for those who are unable to get to enough group workshops – I am sure we have all been there!

Its next release will be in June, and I have the instructions on how to create a [miniature kimono](#). I made these for my HNC, more years ago than I care to remember, but they are still proving popular, and as I had taught how to make them in New Zealand last year the method was relatively fresh in my mind. Of course I had to make a new one to check the instructions and so I decided to combine it with some indigo dyeing I was doing at the time.



There have been lots of exhibition visits as you can imagine over the last few months, but the one that stands out for me was the work of William Kentridge at [“Thick Time”](#) the Whitechapel Gallery.

Kentridge is a South African artist who came to international prominence in the mid 1990's, commenting on the political, social and psychological consequences of the apartheid regime.



He is probably best known for his animated films which are made from series' of charcoal drawings. By shooting a couple of frames on a film camera before returning to the drawing to make tiny alterations and erasures, re-photographing and repeating the process, each film charts the evolution of a single drawing. In contrast to a traditional animation in which the content of the film is known before shooting commences, this is a process Kentridge has called

Fortuna, as ideas develop and transform, nothing is planned in advance.



If you are interested in reading further about the Kentridge's animations and ways in which our conception of drawing is reconfigured by the arrival of digital media, once again Tate have come up with a fascinating essay in [Tate Papers no 14](#).

I am sure some of you who are interested in altered books or sketchbooks remember, or will have purchased the wonderful book 'A Humument' by Tom Phillips. I have a copy of the fourth edition and it has certainly influenced how I keep sketchbooks and particularly the work I did for the [Alice in Wonderland exhibition](#). Now on its sixth and final edition and following his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday a retrospective [Connected Work](#) is on at the Flowers Gallery in London.

The exhibition will continue until 1<sup>st</sup> July so not much time to get up and see it but I am sure it will be worth the trip.



Finally, for anyone who is free on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> in the evening and in London, I will be at the [Star of Kings](#) with the ['Taxonomy of the Cornflake'](#) and also the ['Preservation of Sound'](#) pieces. Nothing to do with textiles, but should be a fun night! Let me know if you are able to come.

Enjoy the sunny weather, lets hope it lasts!

Best wishes,

Anne