



North Devon Arts

"building the arts in north devon"

April '06 newsletter

Next NDA Meeting - April 12th. 8.00pm

Lillian Sum

A young, community and sensory artist talking about her work with communities as far apart in distance as well as lifestyles, from Devon to India.

Lillian's work is about delivering projects on arts and sustainability, using art as the vehicle for delivering environmental awareness.

She has a studio based at Tapely Park, the Instow estate owned and run by Hector Christie.

Non-members are always welcome to come along to meetings - £4 each.

For a Broomhill buffet please pre-book on 01271 850262.

REVIEW

NDA March meeting

Artists were invited to talk about their work and the problems they faced in being asked to create new work for exhibitions, as well as putting themselves forward to selection panels.

The NDA Winter Exhibitions saw many entrants, giving rise to the three NDA shows. Take up was also good for The Open Art Show, a selected exhibition where nine artists were chosen to exhibit in the Museum and the Queen's Theatre.

At the meeting Kate Rowley was first off the mark, explaining the two strands of her work - the textile design side very much her job, demands a more ridged approach, whereas her paintings are able to be freer and it doesn't matter how many colours are used. Kate also talked about the selection process involved in this exhibition the and improvements that could made for the next show - firstly creating a greater lead-in time, enabling a good body of work to be produced and, secondly to set a date early on for a private view, giving artists time to draw up their lists of invitees and to arrange the event.

Of course selection for some, means rejection for others! A few 'rejected' artists were at the meeting and spoke of their feelings, jokingly calling themselves failures, but quickly stating that they were realistic enough to know that their work could not suit all - some saying that often their rejected work sold quicker than accepted pieces, reassuring themselves (and others of us in the audience) that they were on the right track!

A rather good debate followed on this theme, with various people joining in with their ideas and also offering suggestions for gaining publicity for shows. Ros Osbourn saying she actually went in to the Journal asking if they could manage to include a piece on the Winter Shows before they ended! (Ros had already taken the photos and written the article, so the work needed was *minimal*). She also warned us the Journal now need at least two weeks notice, should you be thinking about promoting your event.

All in all a lively and informative evening, thanks to all those that spoke and to those that joined in the discussions, it really helps those just embarking on a career in the arts.

Stella

EXHIBITION

NDA April Exhibition at The Plough

Preview 7th April at 7.00pm. Show continues until 29th April.

So far over thirty members have entered work for this exhibition - a first for NDA at The Plough. It was always the idea to cover the Torridge area as well as North Devon, as many members reside there - in fact we even held one of our meetings at the Plough, going back a few years. Unfortunately we didn't have a good turn out, so decided to keep the meetings at Broomhill. Lets hope this exhibition will help develop our standing in Torridge, seeing it become a regular annual event. The Plough Gallery space is lovely, with lots of daylight, plus plenty of people coming and going most of the time (good food as well!)

Please tell all your friends, clients, neighbours etc. Lets hope for a good turn out in Torrington this time!

ARTISTS' OPPORTUNITY

**Art Trek
Open Studios
16th - 19th June**

Final chance to be in this North Devon Open Studios event!

The leaflet will be going to print very shortly - get your applications in now.
Can you afford not to be in it!

Contact stella.levy@virgin.net ASAP.

Being held as part of the **North Devon Festival** www.northdevonfestival.org

WRITERS' OPPORTUNITY

BeachRead

North Devon is blessed with a surfeit of creative talent and is known as a favourite place to which established creative people gravitate.

The visual Arts and Drama are well supported within this area; however, there are fewer opportunities for writers and poets.

BeachRead's aim is to collate and publish an anthology of poems and short stories inspired by the diversity of North Devon, its people, landscapes and way of life.

The book will be finished to the highest standards, with emphasis on quality, professionalism and value.

To submit a short story or poem, please visit the website; www.BeachRead.com to register your interest.

If we get enough support from North Devon Arts members this project could become a reality. Come on you writers, lets get this project off the ground - it could be the first step you take towards a literary career!

COMPETITION

KEN SPRAGUE - INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL CARTOON COMPETITION STILL TIME TO ENTER!

The competition is open to cartoonists from all nations.

The stipulation is that no more than two cartoons are submitted by each artist, and must have been previously published in some form (evidence of this will be required). Cartoons may be executed in black and white or colour.

First prize £500. Second prize £300. Third prize £200

Awarded for cartoons on a political or social theme that, in the opinion of the judges, best promote the ideas of peace, social justice, equality and humanitarian values. The jury, made up of leading cartoonists and well-known personalities, will be looking for clarity of message, cartooning skill and satirical humour.

In the first instance, the cartoon may be submitted in any form (originals, faxes, photocopies or electronically - as PDFs or JPEGs), although an original would be preferred. Those artists whose cartoons win prizes or are short-listed for exhibition will be notified by the organisers, after which they must submit the original.

Each entry must be signed by the artist and accompanied by an address and contact details.

Entries to reach the organisers by June 1st 2006

email: competition@kenspraguefund.org

The results of the competition will be announced on July 1st 2006.

An exhibition of the best of the submissions will be organised in London and the prize-winning cartoons will be published in the *Morning Star* newspaper and other progressive journals.

Unless the submitting cartoonist stipulates otherwise, the cartoons, after publication/exhibition, will be offered for sale. Any proceeds, less a small commission and transfer fees, will be paid to the originating artist.

The organisers will retain the right to publish or exhibit any of the cartoons submitted, but undertake to give due credit to the artists and ensure they receive royalties/payments that may accrue as a result.

The first ten cartoons will be displayed on our website at: www.kenspraguefund.org for a period of 12 months and later will become part of the page's competition archive, accessible to visitors.

Artists submitting cartoons will automatically agree to abide by the above rules.

Sponsored by the Morning Star and The Political Cartoon Gallery (London, UK).

'A Walk in the Woods' Please note the change of venue !**Emily Garnham Wright will be creating a large temporary textile in Pickwell Manor woods**

Emily will be working with Georgeham Schoolchildren and in the woodland site, during the last two weeks of May. The public, other artists and NDA members are also invited to join her to help 'sew' this temporary textile installation.

The happening is taking place as part of North Devon Festival, continuing the long and good association NDA has with this annual event. Please see the NDA and Festival websites in May, to see the daily up dates on the progress of Emily's installation; www.northdevonfestival.org or northdevonarts.co.uk

Dates & Times for 'A Walk in the Woods' project**10th May 2006, 8pm -**

Talk at North Devon Arts at Broomhill

14th May 2006, 11am - 4pm -

Public Day (especially NDA members) at Pickwell Manor woods

15th May 2006, 9am -

Assembly talk at Georgeham Primary School

15th, 16th and 17th May 2006, 9.45 - 11.45am & 1.45 - 2.45pm -

Georgeham School at Pickwell Manor woods.

23rd, 24th and 25th May 2006, 9.45 - 11.45am and 1.45 - 2.45pm -

Georgeham School at Pickwell Manor woods, follow up and display at Georgeham Primary School to be arranged.

28th May 2006, 12am - 5pm -

Public at Pickwell Manor woods.

29th May 2006, 11am - 4pm -

Public at Pickwell Manor woods.

31st May 2006, from 7.30pm -

Invited guests at Pickwell Manor woods, to be arranged.

11th June 2006 -

Public day at Pickwell Manor woods, giving a review/video diary of the project - (to be arranged).

Wanted - NDA stewards to talk to the public; showing them where to go, take their booking numbers and to ensure Emily is not on her own in the wood, plus generally promote the NDA and its members.

Wanted - Artists who would like to respond creatively to the surroundings of the woods and Emily's installation.

This could take a variety of forms; photography, drawing and painting, sound recording and music making, writing etc: as long as it doesn't disturb the wildlife!

Ros Osbourn has offered her ceramic fishes to hang from the trees and **Tim Saunders** would like to paint in the woods during the project, but I'm sure there are other members who feel this could be a great opportunity to be involved in an innovative, high profile project. (A little time or a lot - all would help to make this an 'art event' of note).

Emily would be delighted if any members or other artists out there, could join her to make this creation in the woods.

A video diary of the process will be made - volunteers proficient with a 'movie camera' please come forward.

NDA SUMMER EXHIBITION***'The Small (Square) Picture Show'* Held as part of the North Devon Festival**

Now is the time to start thinking about producing work for this exhibition, once again hosted by Broomhill Art Hotel.

The show will run throughout June and is highlighted in the North Devon Festival brochure and on their website;

www.northdevonfestival.org More details and entry forms on page 6 & 7.

As you saw from the feedback Peter sent round, most work sold for under £150! So, prompted by this, the committee decided to set this year's top price at **£150** - to see if it will make any difference in sales made.

No comments came back from members when asked about setting this price in the last newsletter, so it is assumed you all agree.

To make sure you have a presence in the NDA Portfolio, the two Artist Profile pages you need to fill in, can be downloaded from; www.pagemonger.com/profile.doc

The Portfolio/s will be on show at any NDA exhibitions, Broomhill, The Plough and other venues around the area.

Also if NDA are asked to find artists for commissions etc: the book will be the first contact point, so you can see, it's important to be in it!

Self publicity is an art form and not a science; there are no strict rules and no definite routes to success!

Each type of media and each type of journalist is different and all have different 'interest' criteria, however, if one bites, there is a better possibility of a feeding frenzy - the piranhas will strip all the flesh off the bone.

During late 1999 and early 2000 a friend and I came up with a business idea which attracted a media whirl on both sides of the Atlantic with TV and Radio coverage. The idea was simple and is still on going. (see: <http://www.inmemoryof.co.uk>)

In Memory Of Launched in Feb 2000 and received massive publicity as the UK's 1st Virtual Cemetery.

Devised and created by Mark Wakefield and myself, this site was featured on BBC TV, Sky News, in the Financial Times, Daily Mail, the Telegraph, the Guardian, the Sun the Daily Mirror, Radio 1, Radio 4, Radio 5, BBC On-Line, Local Radio, Birmingham Post and Mail etc. etc.

All of this started from one faxed press release to the business editor of 'The Birmingham Post'. The reason we selected 'The Post' was because we knew they were 'feeders' for the rest of the daily newspapers. (see <http://www.tributesontv.com/imus2.htm>)

A Guide?

The first thing to do is decide whether you can offer the journalist 'something different' if you can then create a 'fantastic' press release – not a boring (everybody has done that sort of thing) e.g. 'I'm having an exhibition...' that immediately gets dumped into the trash can. Something like 'Want to see me naked...' (A bit extreme but I think you get the picture). When you've written it email it/fax it - the best blanket publicity time is in the morning, daily papers are looking for little bits to fill in the gaps.

Some publications usually need several months to get organised, some magazines even work up to six months in advance, others don't want to see your announcement until the event is up and running and most don't even want to be bothered. The important thing to remember is timing; yesterday's news is yesterday's news, so always try to hit the press on a slow news day. I prefer to send stuff out on Tuesdays. Monday's papers usually contain stories that have happened over the weekend so on Tuesday morning there is a good chance to find a gap as they are frantically looking for 'fillers'.

The Internet is a good place to get publicity – there are lots of associated interest sites for artists. The last 'push' I made was in July 2005 which got me coverage in an 'Allergy' magazine. My latest press release can be found on <http://www.peterbright.org/press.html>.

Peter Bright

Anyone with stories of how to successfully gain publicity, please let me know so I can pass on the insights to our members. stella.levy@virgin.net

Judi Morton and Stella Levy - Showing their work at Beaford Arts

Exhibition continues at Greenwarren House, Beaford, until end of April

Talking about self-publicity - Judi and I were invited to show our work as the first in a series of exhibitions planned at the Art Centre.

Judi's wonderfully bold landscape paintings look arresting in this listed building, begging for space as your eye wants to see them from afar, then after taking in the whole picture, wanting to come in close to see the process involved. I believe Judi has now discarded brushes, using palette knives, fingers - anything to push the oil paint around!

I am showing black and white photographs of 'South Molton Sheep Fair Field', a project I and writer colleague, Mary Stephenson embarked on in 1997. It involved many interviews, sound recordings of the annual sheep fair, various events, people, animals and machinery, plus of course my photos. Mary then proceeded to write in response to the photos, creating poems and mini-stories, some of which are on display at Beaford alongside my photos.

At the moment Mary and I are in the process of obtaining funding to publish a book of, what has come to be viewed, a contemporary archive for a fast disappearing way of life - I will claim more self-publicity when/if we get the funding!

Stella

making space ::: taking space

Weighty, lengthy conference reports take up space on shelves, and cost money (and trees) to produce. Instead, Zannah Doan and Pippa Warin have summarised the day in 20 statements, which we hope says everything that could be said in 20 pages. **If you were in attendance, and you think something important is missing, please [email](#) us.**

Devon Arts Conference 2006: 20 Statements

There was a real buzz and energy around the conference at Dartington, with nearly 200 delegates attending; half individuals, the others representing organisations. This was a shift of the balance of delegates towards individuals since the last conference and illustrates the power and increasing confidence of individuals in the arts.

The theme of the day was 'Space' – in all its different interpretations.

Challenges and statements from Speakers

1. From Keynote Speaker, Sue Kay : society is experiencing change at an incredible rate ... how can we ensure that arts/culture are central to this change?
2. From Vaughan Lindsay in his welcome on behalf of The Dartington Hall Trust : "we have a supportive arts community in Devon"
3. Challenge – how did the Cornish Male Voice Choir get money from Europe?
4. Stephen Pettet-Smith of Exeter Health Care Arts : "I am unique but there are other people doing similar things!"
5. "Culture springs from the community as a whole and it should return to it." UNESCO
6. "It's not what we do, it's the way that we do it" anon

Issues and Statements From Discussion Sessions

7. **Creating Space** – both physical and virtual spaces are involved and must be treated with flexibility
8. **Work Space** – requires passion, play, hard work and benefits from collaboration
9. **Digital Space** – there is a potential new territory ahead of artist, technologist and business person working together.
10. **Knowledge Space** – there is lots of incredibly useful knowledge and services to tap into. Putting faces to names to strategies and services is very helpful and gives us greater confidence to approaching individuals and service providers.
11. **Public Space** – include the public and "communicate with the people perceived to get in the way". Planners can and may be creative people too. We have more clout than we think
12. **Art Space** – art in hospitals humanises the environment and ways of being.
13. **Rural Space** – focus on arts physical relationship with landscape.
14. **Future Space** – "think big".
15. **Devon Space** - What is it about Devon that makes it special place for artists to live and work in ? and in what ways do artists contribute to Devon's distinctiveness ? – Discuss !

Observations

16. Is the language that we use to discuss our work accessible enough?
17. A common factor for delegates was the experience of working on a knife edge of uncertainty, change and relative isolation.
18. The conference illustrated the huge desire for and benefits of networking within the Devon arts community. There are obvious benefits for collaborative practice - creative, economic and social, but also highly valued opportunities to critique each others' work.

Facts

19. At the end of the day 99% of the delegates had made new friends/contacts or found inspiration at the conference.
 20. Devon Council Council has adopted culture as a fifth strategic option. There are no cuts to the arts budget for 06/07. There can be another Devon Arts Conference next year, and the vast majority felt this was desired.
- Action** : Delegates will be asked to give a little information about their practice so that this can be circulated with contact details. This will be actioned via e-mail in early April.

Postscript from a satisfied customer: "I thought the conference on Friday was fantastic - both the organisation and the content - probably the best one day conference I've been to."

South West Open Studios Day **Held on Monday 27th March at the Brewhouse, Taunton**

Response from Sally Burke (*Sally is a participant in Art Trek Open Studios 06*)

I had to write and thank you, for an excellent day at Brewhouse Taunton, I met some lovely interesting people lots of like minds etc. and learnt a lot of interesting things, although it was meant for people who organise, there were plenty of artists like myself who were there to pick up tips and pick brains.

The day started with Hellos coffee and Welcome

Karen Smith, development Management for South West Open Studios, told us all about the day and Bill Crumblehome (*on the management committee*) carried on, with lots of interesting information, then we had case studies;

Sue Lion from Bristol, Director of Encounters Festivals gave us lots of invaluable information on how to control our open studio events.

A jewellery designer Sally Simpson gave us detailed information on how she and other artists have set up work shops together, and do wonderful open studio days.

Then a lady Jackie Donaldson Director of Dorset Art Weeks gave us the importance of data, how to get it and what to not bother with. and info on budgeting, very interesting.

After an excellent lunch, Bryony Leatherbarrow gave us a great insight into marketing, what a lady, she certainly knows her stuff. (She also owns a Damien Hirst painting).

I really enjoyed talking to other artists too about all sorts of things and I am visiting a couple with a view to helping each other, they were from all over the South West and I picked up a few very good tips.

Response from Stella Levy

Having already been involved with 'nine days of art' open studios, over the last few years, this event confirmed some of the things that can help make for a successful Open Studio.

1. Each participating artist needs to 'market' their own situation/work/venue.
2. Invites need to be sent out to friends, clients, neighbours, the press and local parish mags etc:
3. Good photos, either showing you working or with your work, need to be sent to the press/mags (and to the organisers of the event) in the lead up to the event. The press will only use interesting, quality photos, so get professional shots! Its better to invest in this than never have any publicity due to poor quality photos!
4. Good quality photos of your work for the leaflet/brochure - this is the one hit you get to reach a wide audience, make sure the small image is reflecting what you are about. Again it may be worth getting to gether with a few artists to commission a professional photographer for a day.
5. As Sally said, collect data - its important to know who came/bought so you can develop a relationship - people are scared so once they have visited invite them back when you are showing/exhibiting new work.
6. Don't treat an open studio event as a selling time - many will not sell during the event but contacts will have been made for the future and your standing as a professional artist will have increased. Very important as people always want to buy into what they perceive as success!

These days are great for meeting others in the same situation, passing on ideas and information and to sometimes even confirm that you are doing the right things.