

HERALD SOCIETY
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AWARD 2015

KOESTLER AWARDS
GRAPHIC
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SCOTTISH MAGAZINE
CHAIRMAN'S
AWARD
AWARDS 2017

KOESTLER AWARDS
MAGAZINE
JOURNALISM
PLATINUM

STR

ISSUE SIX



Simply the most exciting and engaging magazine being produced by prisoners, at the moment, anywhere in the U.K. Superb!

Tim Robertson Chief Executive of The Koestler Trust

Welcome to Issue Six of STIR, the only creative arts magazine in Scotland, produced by prisoners, for prisoners.

As well as thanking Tim Robertson for the above comments, we need to acknowledge the variety and quality of submissions received for this issue. The central theme for this issue is 'environment' and you took this idea and produced a wide range of pieces that reflect many concepts of the definition. We have incorporated a cross section of these and tried to include one or two new examples – such as the origami on pages 9, 10 and 11.

On 20th November 2013, your STIR magazine was voted the best Education Initiative 2013 at the Herald Society Awards. STIR belongs to you and your contributions give it life; the pictured award is a direct result of all your hard work and creative talent and we hope that you are proud to be part of a winning team!

Every issue features a selection of work by emerging artists; encouraging new talent will always be one of our core principles. Joining them in this issue is a selection of work from re-emerging artists. Taking up the brush after many years is a daunting prospect and we sought to highlight this. You can see their work on page 13.

The last issue of STIR contained two pieces of artwork attributed to the wrong prison, we want to put our hands up and apologise to the relevant parties: Peter produced a stencil entitled 'Darren' which should have been recorded as coming from Greenock Prison. Carrieann sent us an example of nail art, which should have also been tagged Greenock. Humble apologies from the STIR team.

We thought it might be nice to have an international section and collaborate across boundaries. With that in mind, preliminary contact has been established with a couple of overseas prisons and we will work toward introducing something in the New Year. Before then, Issue 7 will be looking for submissions, with Sport & Art having been chosen as the next theme. Inspiration may spring from any of the mainstream sports, the Olympics or even less well reported activities like chess. Work should be submitted through your Learning Centres and we look forward to receiving your representation of the theme.

Edited by Alex, Benno, Dean, Gareth, Iain, Jeff and Jok Shotts



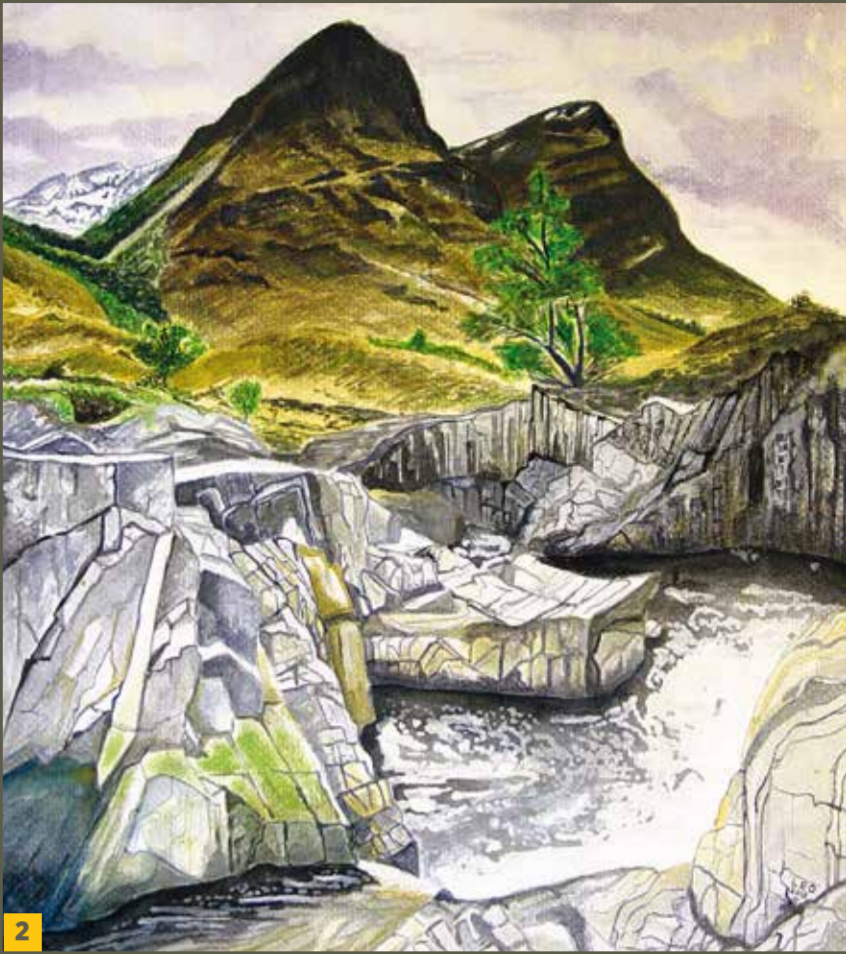
VILLAGE LIFE

Some people lose their hearts to city life,
But the village I am from is so much more beautiful.
There is something magical you can only find in the village
That you cannot find in any city.

In the village there is beauty,
In the village there are rivers, streams and spectacular sunsets to see.
In the village drums beat, cymbals chime, bangles tinkle, anklets jangle and ears ring.
In the village every day is a festival.
In the village are my people, my ties.
In the village there is a simplicity, modesty and shyness.
In the village there is happiness, people's hearts are golden.

One day soon I'll be away from this pollution and these fast cars.
One day soon I'll be away from the noisy clubs, pubs and bars.
I swear all of this noise is making me feel ill,
One day soon I'll be going back home, where I can be still.

Shazad Low Moss



1 FLIGHT OF FANCY

Amit Glenochil

Mixed media on paper

2 GLENCOE

Colin Dumfries

Watercolour on paper



WINNING ARTWORKS

VISUAL

Ian Greenock Phoenix

Ian's stencil of a Phoenix, representing a new beginning, was a clear winner with us.

WRITTEN

Andrew Glenochil You by Me

Andrew's story of his future self writing a letter to the younger Andrew was a great mixture of poignancy and humour.

STIR ISSUE NUMBER SIX



WHAT WAS I THINKING

I was inspired to paint this by the original Ugandan woodblock print.

MASK

Zeeshan Dumfries

Acrylic on paper



WINNING ARTWORKS



Very impressed with the design of Stir Issue 5, the content is fantastic, some hilarious, some touching, and some very thought provoking.



It's a pleasure to read about and get such brilliant responses from others.



The arts set us free, give us hope, keeps us alive despite the pressure of doing Stir!



It's alright, not really into art much but the front cover caught my attention.

TURNER PRIZE: WTF?

"The annual farce of the Turner Prize is as inevitable as is the pantomime at Christmas", "Cold mechanical, conceptual bullshit", "Mind the Crap", "If this is the best British artists can produce then British art is lost", "Is this art?" These are a few negative comments made about the Turner Prize that I've plucked from a sea of hostile responses to this annual art prize.

You probably won't be surprised to hear that I could actually fill an edition of STIR with all the negative responses made; it seems the default position for most people, including the tabloid press, to dismiss the prize, the artists and the work nominated. However, we've all heard of the prize and inevitably end up discussing contemporary British art! That can't be a bad thing, can it? It makes me wonder what the purpose of the Turner Prize actually is?

The prize, named after the painter J.M.W Turner, was first established in 1984 and is awarded in honour of the achievements of an 'outstanding artist', living and working in Britain, who is under the age of 50. The four shortlisted artists are chosen based on a showing of their work from the previous year. These exhibitions are brought together and shown at the venue for that year's prize, which alternates between the Tate in London and various locations around the U.K; Glasgow will host the 2015 prize at the Tramway in the Southside, Interestingly the prize isn't awarded based on the Turner exhibition but rather on its impact, and relevance, in its original form from the previous year.

It's impossible to argue against the fact that the Turner Prize has become one of the great cultural highlights of the year. From drawing up the initial shortlist to the announcement of the winner, modern art is put under an intense critical spotlight. The work is often outrageous, difficult to grasp, in your face and controversial but it is always thought provoking. There has been a bias towards 'innovative' media and conceptual art throughout the prize's history, although painters have been nominated and won, and this could be part of the reason for the negativity.

Conceptual art is undoubtedly difficult to comprehend and appreciate. Countless books have been written on the subject and it still remains a mystery to many people. Not all of it is good art, which can be said of all art forms, but conceptual art always seems to suffer from a touch of 'The Emperor's New Clothes' paradigm. However, when it is done well it can be incredibly powerful and culturally relevant.

The Turner Prize can make an artist's career. Artists like Damien Hirst, Tracey Emin, Chris Ofill, Grayson Perry, Simon Starling and Spartacus Chetwynd have had their profiles launched into the stratosphere thanks to their involvement with the prize. For 2013, I imagine the results will be the same.

Laure Prouvost is an artist who works with installation, collage and film. In her work 'wantee' she creates a film of a tea party describing a fictional relationship between her grandfather and the artist Kurt Schwitters.

Tino Sehgal creates 'constructed situations', often involving dance. He refuses to allow his work to be documented through picture or film, meaning it only exists in the memory of those who have seen it.

David Shrigley, who is based in Glasgow, creates sarcastically humorous cartoons that have the air of 'outsider art' about them. He depicts a flat view of the unimportant, bizarre, violent or disquieting in a purposely inept manner.

Lynette Yiadom-Boakye is a painter whose work is predominantly figurative. She uses expressive mark making and raw, dull colours to create imagined portraits. Her subjects exist only in her mind and make you consider the tradition of portraiture within art history.

SO what is the purpose of the Turner Prize and should we care about it? Well, considering the new audiences that flood to view the exhibition each year, I think it is clear there is an appetite for it. Perhaps this is what the prize is for; I can't think of any other event that draws the public attention to contemporary art. It shocks, provokes, excites, horrifies and amazes. Of course all the work isn't to everyone's taste, but that's the beauty of art, there's something for everyone. The Turner Prize moves with the times, sometimes faster, leaving us to run and catch up. It never stagnates. In my opinion we need a little chaos in our lives; to evolve and move forward. If we play it safe and keep to the tried and trusted ideas, creativity will die. There is enough room in the art world for all types of artist, it doesn't matter what methods they employ as long as they move forward and take those leaps of faith that lead to fresh thinking. Perhaps we all need to think more like Turner Prize winners.

Benno Shotts



PACHA MAMA

Cool breeze and golden sandy beaches,
Crystal clear blue oceans, with rolling white waves.
Sharks, whales and seagulls,
Natural beauty of mother earth.

How kind you are to us Pacha Mama,
Our thirst you quench, with water, milk and juices.
Rivers and water reservoirs deep in your bosom,
And water wells in the middle of deserts.

Lush green vegetation and rainforests,
Provide habitat for the species.
Antelopes, chimpanzees, and elephants,
Birds, insects, and bacteria.

Scorching hot sandy deserts and,
Icy cold frozen arctic and polar.
Thank you Pacha Mama, mother earth,
For sustaining our lives.

Mugo Dumfries

OZONE

Ozone layer
Government scares
High fuel costs
All's not lost

Wind farms
Electric cars
What about life on Mars?
Spaceships, rockets,
Governments fuelling great
big pockets

Asteriods meteroid
Will it happen?
Millions of years in time
Will I live to see this happen?
If they do crash down on earth
All we know is there will be death...

Ian Barlinnie

WHAT WE WERE THINKING

Group work from Barlinnie.
Each letter represents a different view
on the environment.

LETTERS

Steven, Kevin, Keiran,
Darren, Scott, William,
Chris, Bong Barlinnie

Mixed media on paper

THE SYCAMORE LEAF

Where is my mamma?
I see her from far away
I see my friends stand and sway,
Why oh why did I fall this way?

Nathan Dumfries



FALCON

Paul Dumfries

Watercolour on paper

WHAT WAS I THINKING

This reminds me of a time
when I was free and relaxed,
without a care in the world.



1 HOMAGE TO ROSEANN

Paul Barlinnie

Pastels on paper



2 MOONGATE

Nathan Dumfries

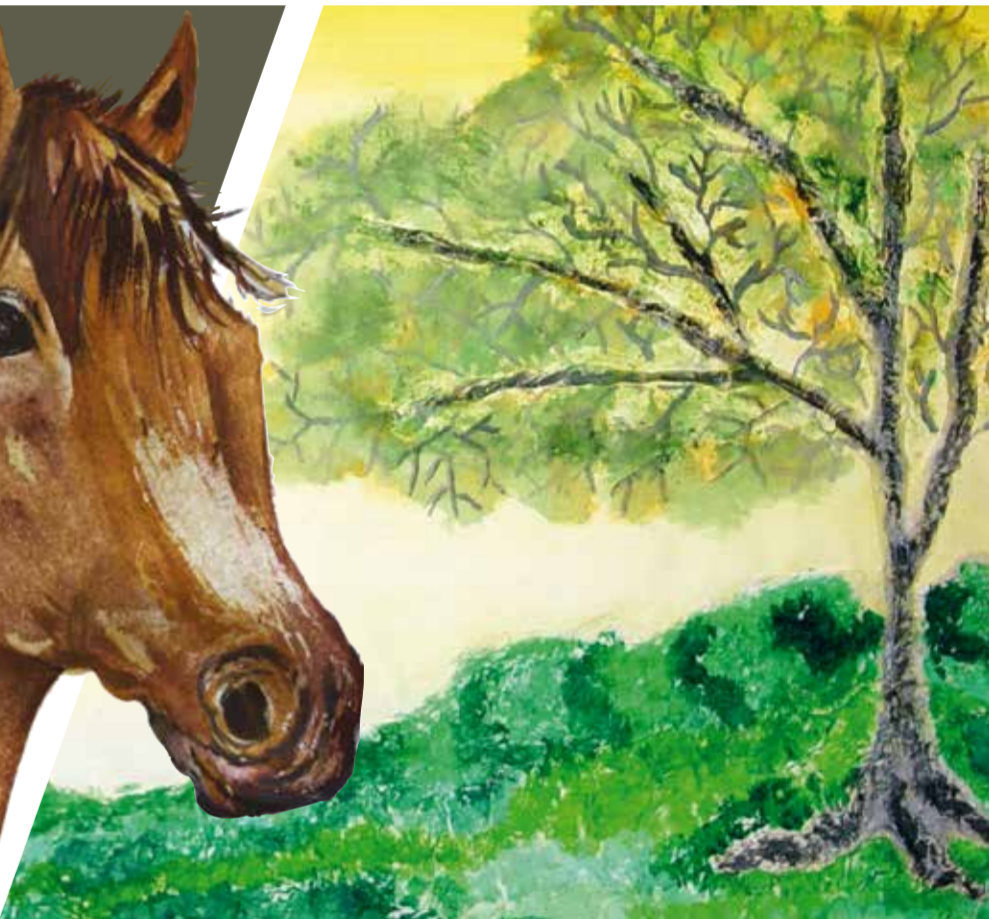
Watercolour on paper



3 TIGER

Liam Low Moss

Coloured pencils on paper



4 HORSE

Lesley Cornton Vale

Watercolour on paper

5 BACK FIELD

Mohammed Dumfries

Oil on canvas

ENVIRONMENT OF THE MIND

Ian Greenock

Oil on canvas

WHAT WAS I THINKING

The mind gives us a choice,
to believe we can achieve
anything or that we are
worthless.

CYCLE OF LIFE

Saplings take hold in fertile soil,
Shoot, newborn, grapple to uncoil,
Inclement weather tries to spoil,
Green canopy,
Barren landscape, a welcome foil,
Leafy panoply.
Surging upwards, awakening,
Long-limbed, gravity defying,
Earth rooted, forever climbing,
Red wood beauty,
A legacy of life spreading,
Vitality.
Branches expand, roots grow stronger,
Mature, heavy boughs reach further,
Titan of nurturing shelter,
Arboreal,
Altering hues herald winter,
Autumnal squall.
Skeletal frame filtering light,
Frost covered blanket adheres tight,
Declining ebb of sylvan might,
Steadfast leader,
Eventide mistral portents night,
Ashen elder.

Creative Writing Class Low Moss

MY FAVOURITE PLACE

Senses overwhelmed
with all I call to my mind,
surrounded by their presence,
the things I left behind.
not so much the big things
the little things instead,
where I rest my head at night ,
when I go to bed.
heart and mind hold on to it,
keep it fresh and clear,
keep it safe and warm with me,
I hold it so dear.
I know you'll do the same,
of this I'm sure,
keep my favourite place alive,
safe and secure.

Mags Cornton Vale

HEY GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN

I never knew that when I released you into the world that you would be back in contact.
I often wondered what became of you. Had you survived and were you strong and flourishing?
I merely let you go out to wander the abyss and find your own place to settle. I hoped you
would grow strong and release your own young into the world and I see you have.

Many years ago, so many I cannot remember,
I was released into this world to travel and
colonise my own rock. I travelled here on
my epic journey, 3000 miles across a hostile
ocean, evading and defying great leviathans and
dangerous storms to arrive on this shore. Wearily
I clung to this rock, growing stronger by the day,
laying down my foundation and reaching for the light.
I struggled and toiled against dangers from the surf
and the creatures that attacked me daily. I never kept in
touch with my parents, I never knew any of my siblings
even though there must be trillions of us. I have no way of
keeping in touch with my family.

My travels brought me from southern tip of Asia across the
southern Pacific Ocean following the warm current southward
and past the shores of Malaysia to this spot here. Alone and
free I grew with the food supply so abundant and the predators
so few I colonised this region. I was not alone for too long, for
many others had followed me to this paradise and soon we
were jostling for the light and cooling waters full of food.
I survived to spawn millions, but I never thought any would
keep in touch, but you have, you make me feel so proud!
When I released you into this cold unforgiving world I never for
a moment expected you to stay in touch, nor did I ever expect
you contact me, I never dreamt that I would see you grow and
expand, filling a niche that only you could fill. You stayed so
close and as you grew your fronds encroached upon my space,
limbs so rigid and strong, full of soft tissues, pressing in and
interweaving with my fronds, becoming ever closer that we

merge as one. As I see your fiery red scaly skeleton with the
smooth white patches where we make contact, I am filled
with such pride. As we jostle in the waves, catching and
fighting for the food, struggling to reach up to the light
together we are stronger together than if we were alone.
We struggle against the elements, the predators that now
score this region and against mankind we stand.

We live in harmony together, going on our long
journey through time we grow and fight for space,
melding into one impenetrable barrier, broken by
storms, smashed by ships hulls, dredged by man
machines we stand together resiliently colonising
this rock.

Now I am not alone, many of my progeny have
colonised this rock, we are now many, keeping
contact and forming a strong bond, a virtual
wall to any invader. We have become one
by just keeping in touch. But our cycle
is ending; parts of us are failing, falling,
crumbling under the pressure, not the
weight of the sea but the poisons, the
pesticides and the relentless actions
of man. It was good for us to keep in
touch. And as long as we live let us
hope we can keep in touch!

Jack Glenochil

ENVIRONMENT

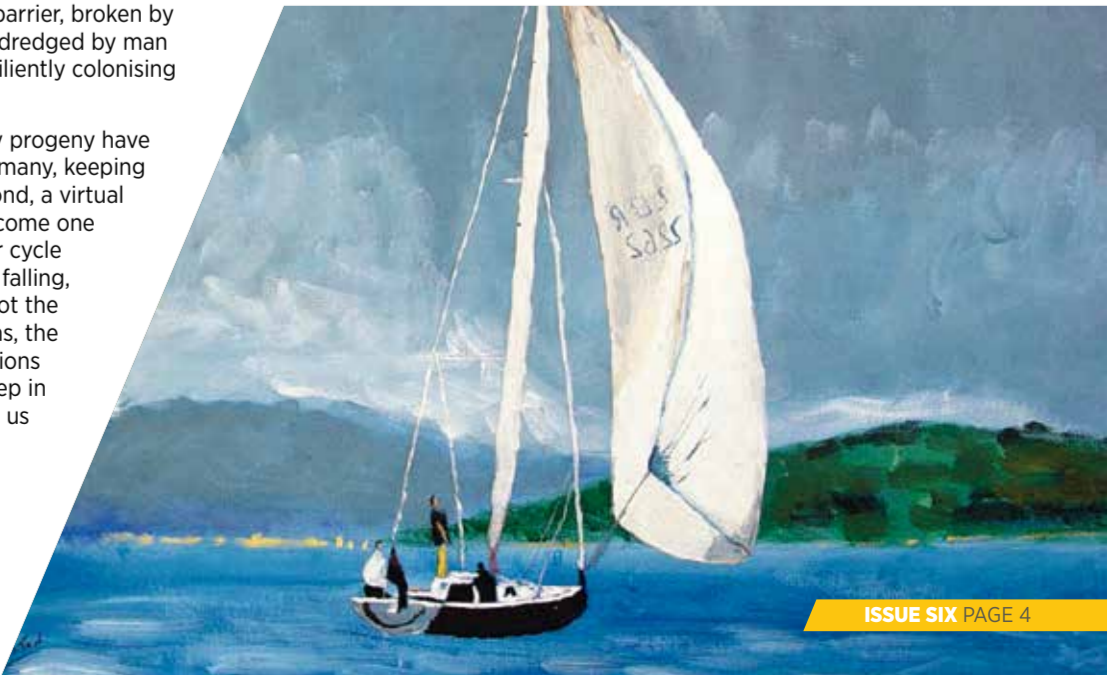
When will we realise it's all gone wrong?
The ice caps are melting
Our oceans and seas are rising
Rain forests are shrinking
The ozone layer is weakening
What does all this mean?
Our society should be more green
Polluted seas, smog-filled cities
Our society should have more pity
Power stations and their reactors
Our society should have acted faster
World peace or the nuclear bomb
When will we realise it's all gone wrong?

Ian Barlinnie

WINDPOWER

David Dumfries

Acrylic on canvas



A MEMORY FROM MY YOUTH

There are memories I have from my childhood, where I'm still undecided whether they are memories of events that actually happened, or memories of really vivid dreams I'd had.

There is one in particular, a memory of almost defying gravity. I have this recollection of jumping/ gliding down full flights of stairs in the tenement building I lived in. I would jump from the top of the flight and land softly on top of someone's doormat, even the last flight in the close, which has the most steps and is the steepest. It's that bottom set of steps that puzzles me and makes me have reservations about my so-called memory. Is it a memory, was it a recurring dream or am I just deluded?

I mean, now if I were to try and jump down that flight of stairs I would almost certainly break a leg, collar bone or neck, that's if I made it to the bottom without hitting off the ceiling mid flight and collapsing in a heap on the stairs!

I think it was this memory when I was young, that led me to believe that I had some kind of magical power inside of me and that I was

destined for greatness. All I had to do was, unearth my talent and utilize my power, and then I could reap the benefits of my significance and my days of mediocrity would be over. Life would be so much simpler having supernatural vigour, being able to alter circumstances to our advantage.

With age, perceptions change. It would seem completely preposterous to consider such ideas as remotely possible. Yet I enjoy entertaining these thoughts at times, albeit a tongue-in-cheek thought, remembering back to a time when almost anything seemed possible, an ambitious time, an idealistic time, a delusional time!

Stephen Greenock

WHAT WAS I THINKING

I painted this to show my disagreement with modern technology and the harm it does to the natural environment

1



ROACH

I can't for the life of me tell you that I am good. Nor can I admit that I am evil. So you will have to judge me for yourself. But this is my beginning. All that I am and was.

I was walking around the kitchen trying to find a meal. No luck. I don't eat much and can't reach very far so I walked about the old wooden antique table and stupid slippery black and white tiled floor. Nothing in the room matched. Not the yellow fridge or the dark green cabinets. I mean who in the hell doesn't match their stuff up these days? Then the owner walked in and caught me hairy handed or footed, or whatever the phrase is. He was an old guy with a beard, dressed in pyjamas and he didn't like the look of me from the start. He walked back out the kitchen. I had no idea where he was going. I headed to the back door ready to leave, I mean I didn't want to be an inconvenience to anyone, but the whole time I couldn't help feeling that something wasn't right. Then he came bursting back in, wearing muddy old worn boots, dungarees with the straps hanging to his ankles and still wearing his pyjama top - looking like he was in some American psycho film! And he was holding a gun! A very big gun!

I know I'm big but this gun looked gigantic and staring into those two barrels made me nearly pass out. I thought I was done for, but my body has the survival instinct and as I heard the gun go off I shuffled to the side. The old man's lips tightened, even more angry that he missed. He started to reload. I ran up the inside of his dungarees, down his pyjama sleeve and bit him on the hand. He yelled, the gun dropped, going off has it hit the ground. His antique wooden table, his yellow fridge, his green cabinets and his white and black floor that never matched up looked even weirder now they were speckled red and purple. I ran as fast as my six legs would have me, under the table, down the enormous wooden staircase, out the crack at bottom of the back door, across the treacherous gravel path, through the grass jungle and into the field of high crops, until my legs gave out in the safety of a discarded burger box, well from the old man's place. And as I chewed on the remnants of a 2 week old Big Mac, I watched the sun rise over the farm.

James Shotts



2

ME, ME, ME

Come look at me,
I'm hard to see;
Because what you see is not me,
is it me you see?
Or something else?
I don't know, because it doesn't show.
I feel your eyes, I feel your stare,
how I don't know, cause I'm not really there.
So beware when you look at what you might see, and remember,
You can't touch because it isn't free,
But feel all you want because it isn't real.
Your heart and your soul aren't there on view,
So maybe that's why no one loves you.
So with a smile and a sigh I'll say goodbye,
As I'm beginning to feel I'm living a lie

Robert Glenochil

1 TECHNOLOGY

Anthony Shotts
Oil on canvas

2 NATURAL OIL DISASTER

Allan Low Moss
Mixed media on paper

3 SEA HARVESTER

Brian Greenock
Acrylic and watercolour
on paper

NOTHING'S
NORMAL
NOWADAYS

Nature needs nurture.
November's naked
neon new moon,
notices numbats,
new nuisance nestlings.

Nine nutritious
nuts, now nuzzled,
nocturnal noises,
never-ending,
numbing nasty nightmares,

Nothing's normal nowadays,
nothing, no-one, nowhere

Susan Cornton Vale



5



6

WHAT WAS I THINKING

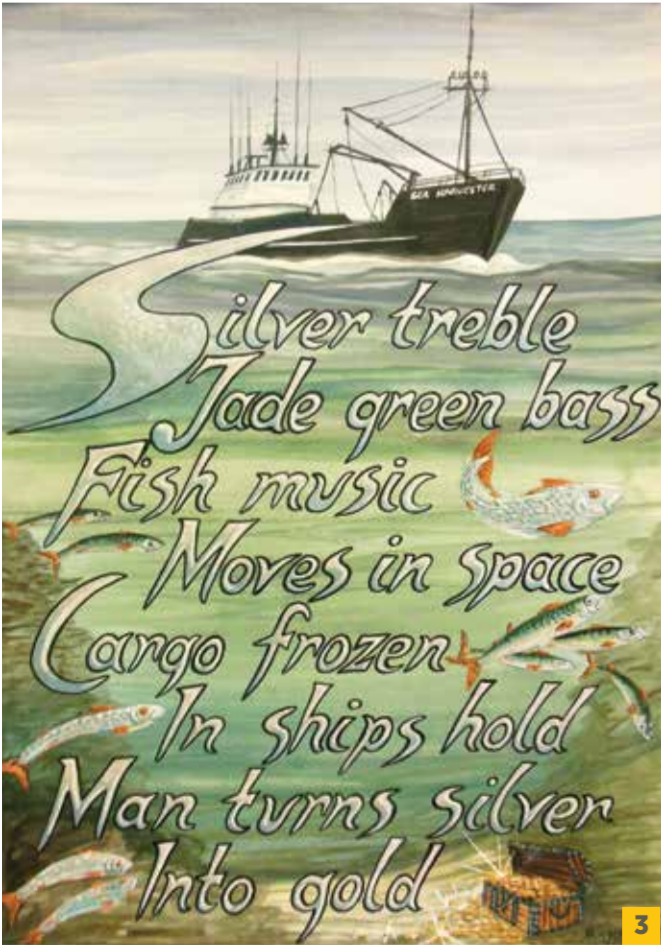
The pace at which trees are being cut down in comparison to planting them is not good for our environment, for us. So stop cutting down the trees to get a healthy fresh and green environment.

5 LONDON LIGHTS

Michael Glenochil
Acrylic on paper

6 SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT

Amit Glenochil
Mixed media on paper



3

HOOKED

Fishing is a complex thing
Casting a rod and not catching anything
Pay attention they keep telling me
Tying knots to a line is all new to me

A promise has been made
To take me to a special place
If I stay away from drugs and alcohol
It could be my saving grace
To open my mind and think in different ways
As I count the years months and days

That special place seems far away
A debt to society I have to pay
With determination and good thoughts in my head
Prison's not for me, I'm going fishing instead...

Martin Barlinnie

LONELINESS !!

Lonely is the sky, without the sun
Lonely is this land, without the rain
Lonely is the mother, without her child
Lonely the child, without it's mother
Lonely am I, far away from home
Lonely do I feel, far from my own
Lonely am I, sitting in my cell
With nowhere to walk and no one to tell
That lonely is this place, that lonely is this life
That loneliness is the only part left of me alive.

Amit Glenochil

MORNING

When I wake up in the sun-lit morning and gaze out at the sea, I could be anywhere in the Med. The sea is a beautiful azure blue with white sandy beaches. I get up and light a smoke, stand on the balcony and let the hussle and bustle of the city percolate through my senses.

There is a knock at the door. Diane and Farouk storm in and pull me out of my daydream with some strong coffee and a bit of breakfast. Diane throws the morning papers onto the small coffee table. "Have you seen this?" She almost yells her rhetorical question and before I have time to answer: "Twenty seven dead, five of them children. One mother lost her entire family those bastards," she yells. This is daily life on the Gaza Strip.

Scott Barlinnie

David Low Moss

THE
BARREN
TREE

The leaves have fallen
From the tree
Upon the ground
You can see

Coloured brown and rustic red
Upon the grass they lay dead
As the winter wind starts to blow
The rain begins to turn to snow

The barren tree now laid bare
No more leaves left to wear
Until the spring comes around
Then once again they are found.



7

7 DEPLETED RAINFOREST

Frank Shotts
Acrylic on canvas

8 LIFE IS A BEACH

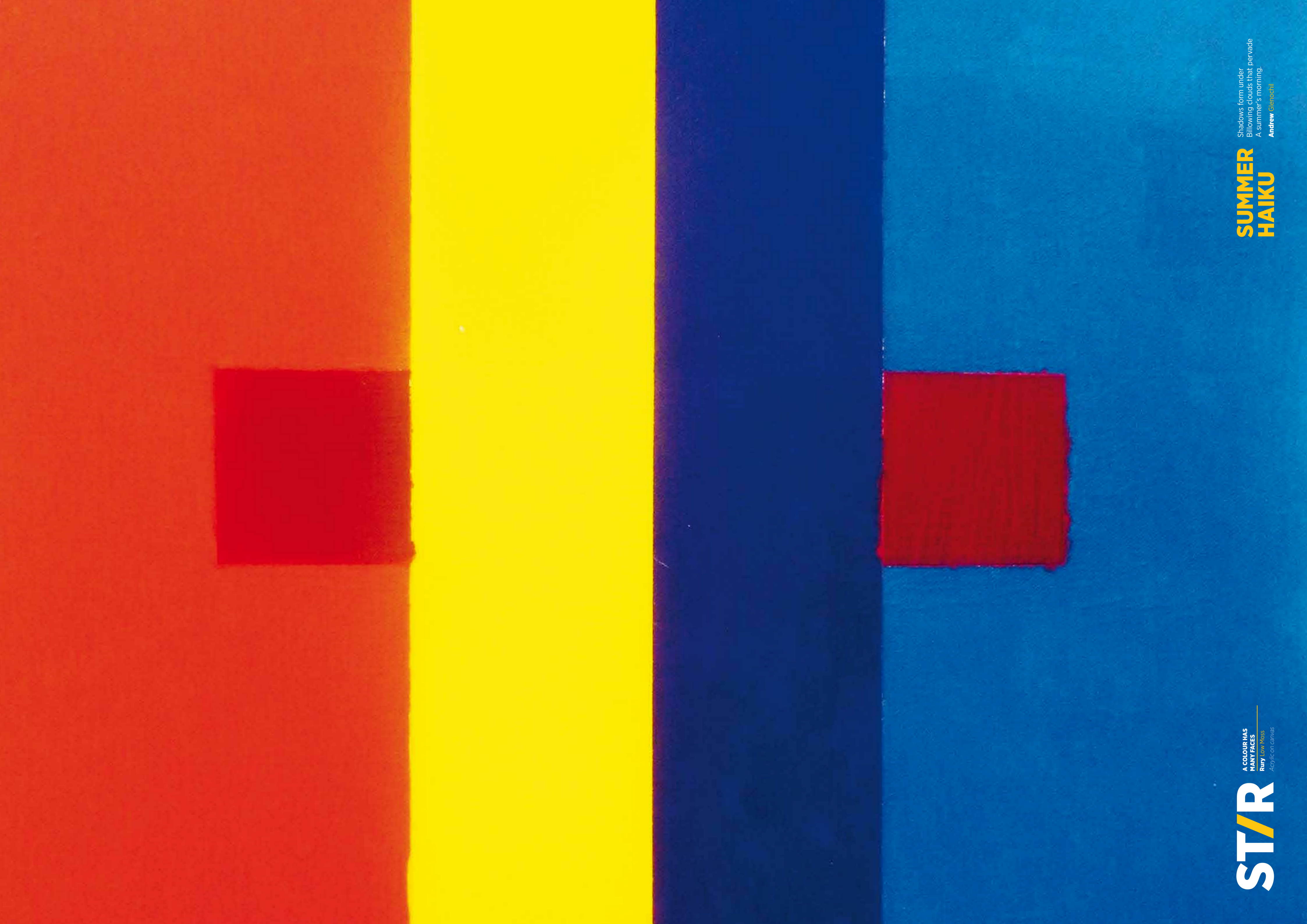
Sean Dumfries
Mixed media on canvas



8

WHAT WAS I THINKING

The deterioration of our beaches, I added hand painted plaster flowers etc to mix up the media types



CHRISTOPHER BROOKMYRE

Christopher Brookmyre is a very successful Scots author. He writes crime fiction with an element of fantasy. His books have sold over one million copies worldwide. During a recent visit to Shotts Prison, we asked him the following questions:

What prompted you to become a writer?

As soon as I could write, I was writing stories, from the age of about six or seven. I can't think back to a time when I didn't want to be a writer, I've always been driven to it.

Your story lines take seemingly normal situations and twist them into being abnormal and humorous, what motivates you to do this?

If you create a larger than life world and put larger than life characters in it then one cancels out the other. You need the ordinary person's perspective on strange events because that's what makes it more exciting for the reader.

In some of your novels you have reoccurring main characters. Do you bring them back because you feel you haven't completed their story, or do you become attached to certain characters more than others?

I wrote 'The Sacred Art of Stealing' and it featured a relationship between a policewoman and a bank robber. I kind of left it open-ended because I knew that I would come back to these two characters. I waited six years before I brought them back, so that enough time had passed for things to have changed in their lives. I've written three Jasmine Sharp books and came up with an idea for a new one. When I took a step back I realised it would work better if I made it a Jack Parlabane book. There's an exclusive for you because my publishers have not yet officially announced that my next book is a Jack Parlabane novel.



Do you feel that you are in company with the characters as they are going through experiences?

That does actually happen, or you can start getting obsessed with the characters. The strange thing is that when I've spent all day quite intensely with a bunch of people who don't exist and you can't share their experiences.

Do you have a specific routine when writing or do you write whenever you can?

When I'm working on a book I do tend to write during office hours, nine until six. I'm not one for burning the midnight oil. I'm quite obsessive once I've started so I will write at the weekend. It feels really important to capture the story and get it down before it gets away. There is always the fear that an idea if you don't quite grasp it, you will forget about it.

Do you break a book down into manageable parts like a chapter at a time, or is it all in your head?

Sometimes I don't quite know how I'm going to tell the story until I start telling it, so it's a bit like solving the world's most complicated puzzle. So on a daily basis you might solve a wee bit and feel good, but the whole thing is still a huge puzzle. So it's a very lonely process in that respect because it's not like someone can help you with it, you really do have to do it all yourself.

What advice would you give to any budding creative writers?

The big cliché is people always say write what you know, but I say write what you love. Write what you've got a real passion and enthusiasm to be writing about because that will come out in the writing. In my case that extended to write what you love to hate, because that can be exciting too. So a lot of my early books were driven by political anger, and that gave them a passion and energy. Always write about something that excites you, that's the best advice I can give anyone.

To think that you've touched so many people with your ideas and possibly shaped some of their ideas is amazing.

Yes it's mind boggling stuff. I remember being introduced to an investigative journalist, you see his stuff quite a lot, a guy called Ed Howker. He said that he had become inspired to be an investigative journalist after reading some of my early books. And you feel like a total fraud at that point because you've just made it up and here is someone really doing it.

It is great though. There must be a million different stories from your readers which you haven't heard and you must have had an effect on every one of them, even in a tiny way. It's very special.

Every so often I will get an email from someone, maybe they've spent a while in hospital or something like that and reading the books kind of got them through it, you know provided a distraction. And you think that's good to have made a difference to someone's life.

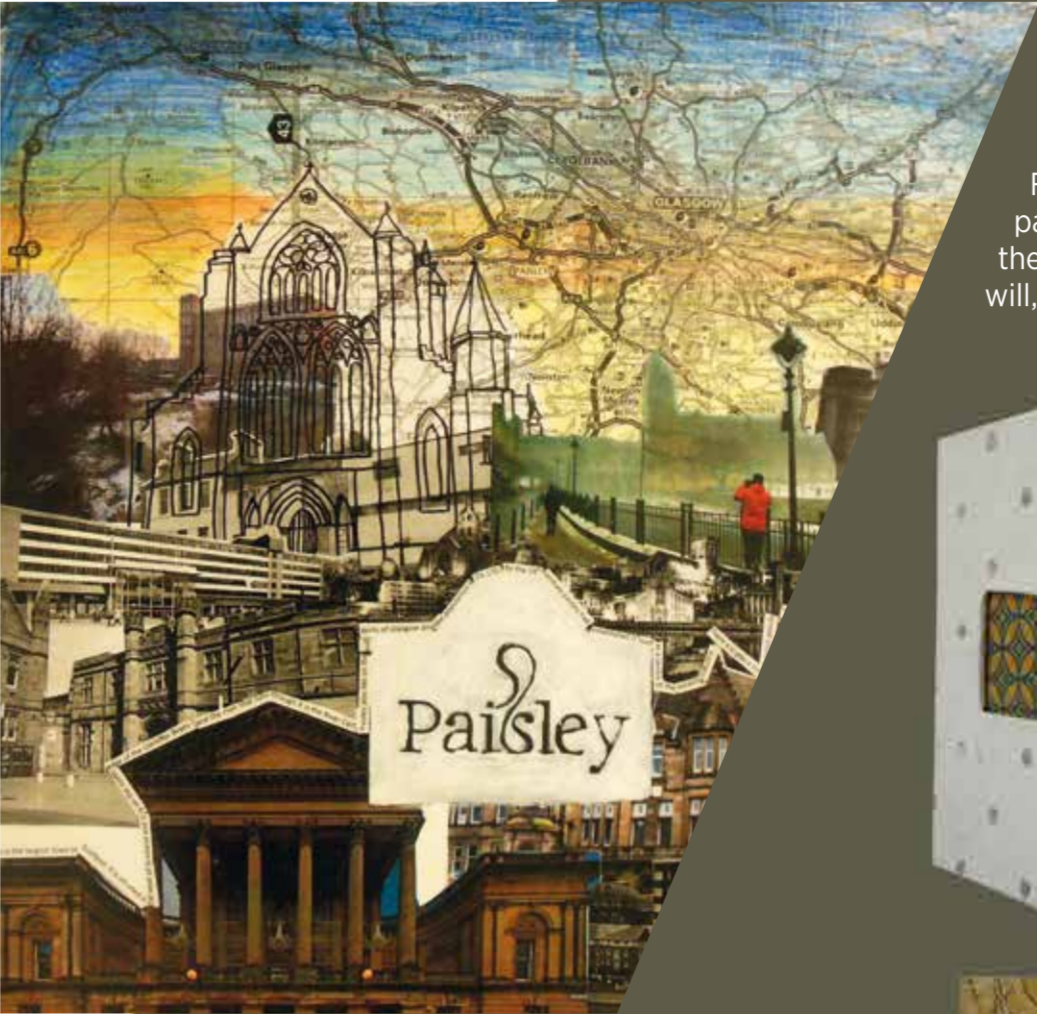
Thanks Christopher.

Jok Shotts

PAISLEY

Kevin Greenock

Collage, watercolour and pen



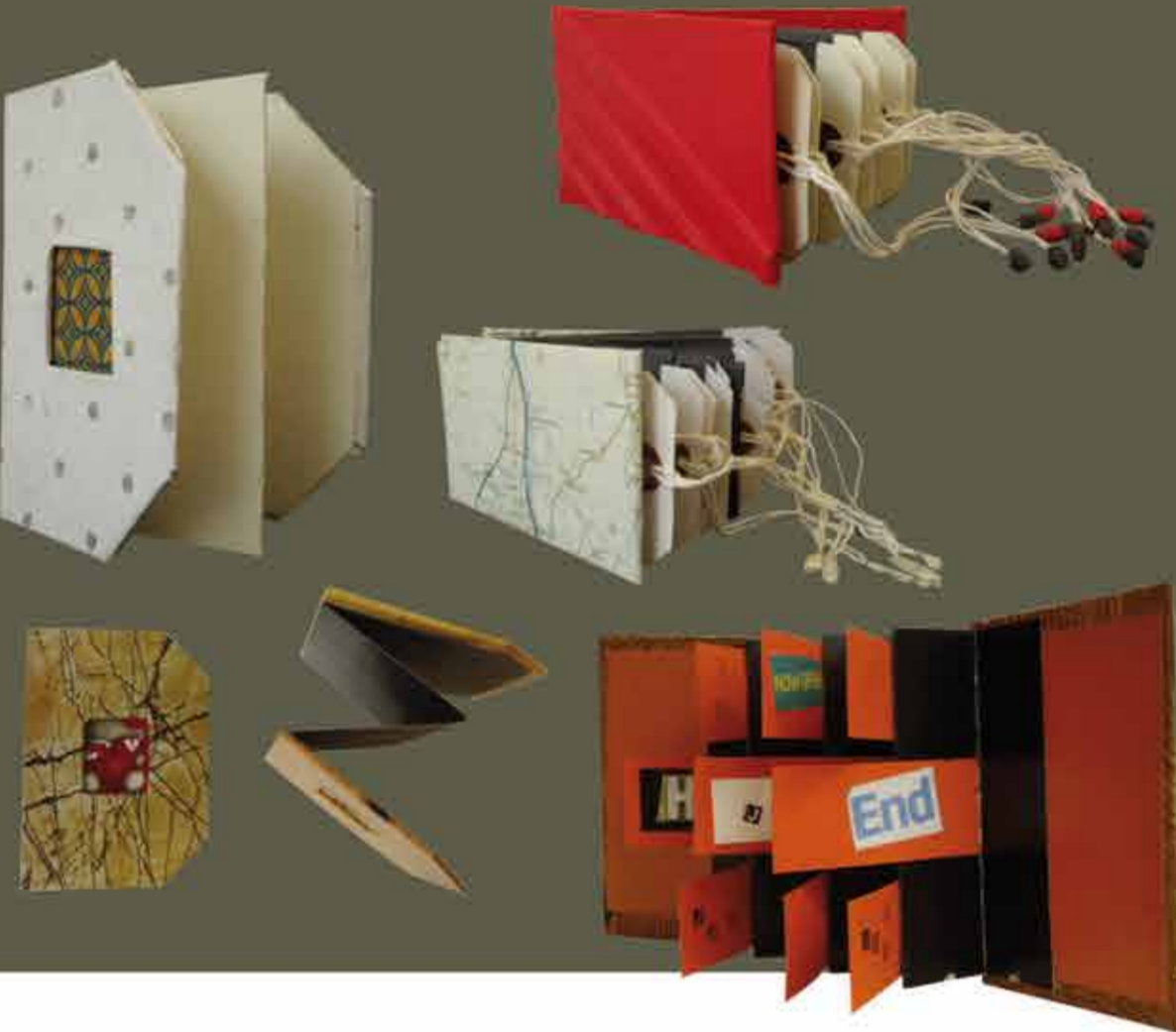
BOOKS

Various Artists Cornton Vale

Mixed media

FIONA NEALON WORKSHOP

The books below were produced during a two week workshop with artist, Fiona Nealon. Various bookmaking techniques were explored, using found paper such as maps, luggage labels and text from magazines. Everyone enjoyed the project so much that further sessions are planned with Artlink Central. This will, no doubt, inspire a new wave of submissions!



WHAT WAS I THINKING

I grew up in Paisley and it has changed a great deal over the years. I made the piece of artwork to show the best of the city.

WHAT WAS I THINKING

I wanted to make a giant 3D model of a housefly. I was inspired by nature.



JEFF

Darren Barlinnie

3D Sculptural model

CITIZEN

Should have shouted something
Should have intervened
Should have made a stand
Should have made a scene
Now chalk outlines haunt my dreams

Richard Glenochil

1 BOX OF EMOTIONS

Scott & Darren Barlinnie

3D Sculpture

2 BANGLES

Bethanie, Margaret, Rita, Diane Cornton Vale

Mixed Media



MY ONLY FRIEND

It is my only friend
I used it to write scripts to old Dirty Den

Its black is always runny,
But the colour of its body is colourful and sunny.
I click it sometimes when I'm engaged in reading.

But today I clicked it and the spring sprung out.
I shook my head, hissed my teeth,
Is this a joke? I asked myself.

Oh my poor old mystery friend.

The funny thing is, it was my only pen.

Andrew Low Moss



SWAN

Anon Glenochil

Origami with STIR magazines



After the ceremony, Fiona took the time to meet and chat with people who had submitted work and was genuinely interested in their thoughts and stories. It seemed like the perfect opportunity to ask for an interview, on behalf of your STIR magazine, and we wasted no time. Fiona graciously accepted and we whipped out our list of pre-written questions.

We wanted to know how and why Fiona had first become involved with the Koestler Trust and what her current role was. She explained that she had begun working for the Trust in 2009 and prior to joining had worked in a London gallery, organising exhibitions for Asian art. Meeting the entrants and witnessing the impact the arts have on them is an important part of Fiona's work and one she enjoys, "I also enjoy meeting the people behind pieces of work that I love," she told us.

The awards have become increasingly popular both in and outside the prison walls; we asked Fiona what she attributed this to. She explained that she believed, "people will always find a way to be creative, write and make art." She described the success the Trust has had, in encouraging new people to try sharing their work for the first time, partly because of awards for first-time entrants and the annual themed category. The new exhibitions were cited as opportunities for people to get their work seen by their friends and families and the public. Fiona praised the quality of work received from Scotland, with a selection on display at the Tramway exhibition.

We asked Fiona what, in her opinion, was the benefit of the awards for prisoners. She thought it gave them (us) a voice, one that was heard and that the feedback and participation certificate gives recognition and appreciation of a person's work. "The possibility of work being displayed is also a boost to self esteem," she explained.

Fiona felt this year's exhibitions were particularly successful with "our most ambitious exhibition design yet. The Scotland exhibition at Tramway really built upon the previous shows and I think was the best yet, with a great new written work display, audio for the first time and amazing artwork."

The topic changed from the present to the future and how Fiona saw the future of the awards. Fiona expressed the hope that more high profile Scottish artists would get involved, joining names such as David Shrigley, who was involved last year. One of Fiona's and the Trust's key aims for the future is how better to support and communicate with each individual, throughout prison and after release. She explained to us that the Koestler Trust is able to offer mentoring in England and Wales, not Scotland unfortunately. "These relationships look at ways that people can keep going with the arts or creative industries after release – whether it's a hobby, study or work. We also try and get previous entrants involved in events, where they have opportunities to network with people in their sector, such as public poetry events, music events and seminars." This was obviously an important area for Fiona and the people at Koestler.

She expressed great enjoyment of both the artwork and creative writing contained within STIR. We were pleasantly surprised to be told that the latest copy is always well received and available in the Koestler office. There was just time to thank Fiona for her time and wish her a safe journey south; along with our additional appreciation for everyone involved at The Koestler Trust.

Gareth Shotts

BOOK REVIEW

THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME

BY MARK HADDON

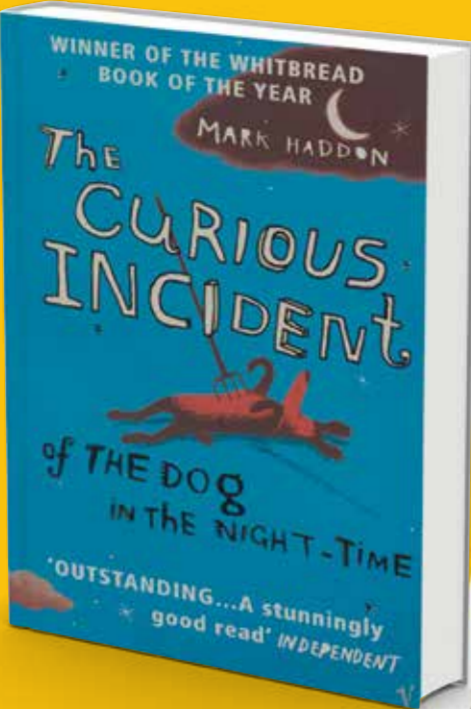
At first glance you could be forgiven for mistaking this as a children's book. The title, font and cover illustration all suggest as much. This may have something to do with this book being the first ever to be published in two editions (2003), one for adults and one for children. This is the adult version, in its original and unabridged text.

The narrator of this story is Christopher Boone, who lives with his father in Swindon. He is 15 years 3 months and 2 days old and has Asperger's Syndrome. Upon the discovery of a murdered dog, Christopher determines to solve the mystery and uncover the killer. We are granted a unique insight into his mind as he pursues this quest, from the trials of his day to day life to a chance discovery that will shatter his world and set in motion a very different type of adventure.

Although Christopher has issues with everyday things others may take for granted, he is a Maths prodigy. This is illustrated (often literally) throughout the book and even after reading I still found myself puzzling over 'The Monty Hall Problem', which though explained by and simple for Christopher, is far less so for us mere mortals.

A heart warming story that doesn't shy away from real life issues, complete with an unusual Index that includes an explanation of the Asperger's condition. Anyone who enjoyed Dustin Hoffman's performance in 'Rainman' will soon find themselves engrossed in this classic.

Gareth Shotts



1 PEN FRIEND

Ian Greenock

Pastel on paper

2 CHINESE WATER BIRDS

Qin Cornton Vale

Origami with STIR magazines

3 THREE THOUGHTS ON NATURE

Sean Barlinnie

Acrylic on paper

FILM REVIEW

SOMMERSBY (PG)

Set in America's Southern States, after the American Civil War. It tells the story of Jack Sommersby (Richard Gere), who returns from war after a six-year absence, much to his wife's dismay. He finds that his family and friends have given him up for dead and his wife Laurel (Jodie Foster) is getting ready to marry another man.



The local people are much poorer since the war, but they gather to give Jack a hero's welcome home. I particularly liked this scene because it shows the people doing their best to make a celebration when they do not have much left, wearing their best outfits, saved from before the war, rather than the rough work clothes most of them now wear. They have not had much to be happy about for a long time and there is a real feeling of relief and happiness as they eat, drink and dance together. But even at this early stage, we can sense tension in Laurel, as if she is pretending to be happy.

Jack's identity starts to be in question as the film unfolds. He seems to be a much nicer man than the one who left six years before. At the welcome party, he surprises his old friends by speaking politely to a black employee. Although the slaves have been freed by the war, many people will not treat them as equals. Jack's friends obviously think Jack is behaving strangely.

Also, Jack does not seem to be much of a drinker and it becomes clear that he used to disappear on drinking binges for days on end. He passes this off by saying that he has not had whisky for so long that he can't take much anymore.

As time goes on, Jack resumes his place and helps the community to become self-sufficient again by cultivating tobacco. He and Laurel develop a loving marriage and have a baby daughter, but all of this is endangered when a lawman from another county challenges Jack's identity and charges him with a murder. In the courtroom, Laurel reveals that she has known all along that 'Jack' is not her husband because, "I never loved him the way I love you". The ending is a surprise and one which stays in the mind for a long time.

I enjoyed this film very much. It is different and keeps you interested all along. The performances, particularly Jodie Foster's, are really moving and the attention to detail in the setting makes the film very convincing. The old house suggests a wealthier past and the price people pay in a long and terrible war. The courtroom scenes, where the truth comes out, keep you guessing till the end and leave you thinking about right and wrong and how sometimes people just can't have what they want.

Jeannette Cornton Vale

THREE SEA HAIKUS



A rippled mirror
Reflecting dazzling sunlight
Waves caress and fade



Undulating wet
Sliding curls gather and fall
Waves lap melt away



Clouds low and leaden
Ozone scented salt spray wind
Waves beat and fade

James Barlinnie

KITCHEN SCHOOL

Aged eight, I ate my twelve times table, spooning forgotten soup, watching coloured felt tip numbers recited by wide eyes. And now the test, the tables turned, what have I learned? Hands on trembly knees. I see your purple hands; a wooden spoon, your knuckles white. Seven eights are fifty six. Eleven times would cloud my mind and break the rhyme. The spoon would speak, "whack" it went and once again. I'd turn, not cry, sometimes. And learn.

Gareth Shotts

WAR STORY SONNET

My mind is weak and body is sore, Grenade is thrown, shaking me to the core. The sky opens up and down the rain pours, Trudging through the mud, a relentless chore.

The sun has gone down but the sky stays bright, With the fire of cannons all through the night, Far in the distance my enemy stares, Who will he kill first? I don't think he cares.

I hear the sound of pain, turn to my friend, His time in the war has come to an end, The telegram's posted, his wife will learn, He's not coming home, news spreads like a germ.

If there's a heaven, then this must be hell, If I survive this, war's story I'll tell.

Scott Low Moss

WHAT WAS I THINKING

The lady washing the front doorstep reminds me of my grandmother cleaning the solicitor's staircase



4

WHAT WAS I THINKING

A response to a project on the topic of role models.



5



WHAT WAS I THINKING

All the hustle and bustle of rush hour reminds me of freedom.

RUSH HOUR

Danny Dumfries

Gouache



WAR CHILD

Sean Dumfries

Plaster

MY PRISON CELL

My prison cell is cramped and tight
Dull and grey and there's not much light
The window's view is mesh and wire
Which in the wind creates a choir
That plays a song of strife and plight

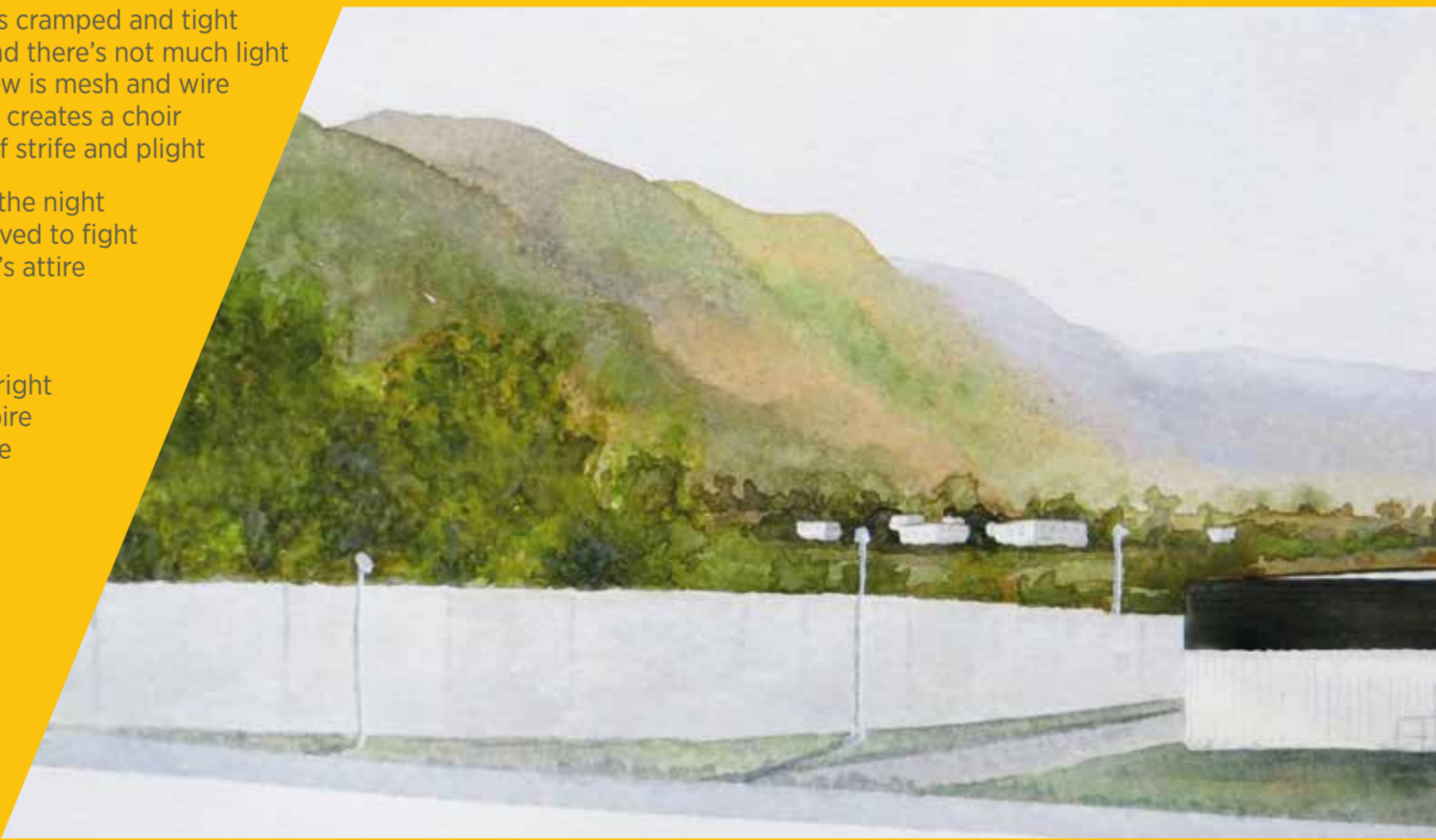
I listen and dream in the night
Once I lived free and lived to fight
Now I'm clad in convict's attire
My prison cell

Liberty is within my sight
Another chance to make it right
To be with those whom I aspire
A thought of which I never tire
As I gaze up to the starlight
My prison cell

Brian Low Moss

WHAT WAS I THINKING

The view from my cell. Within the walls the colours are artificial, outside, the hills are natural.



4 SCRUBBER

James Shotts

Oil on canvas

5 FOLLOW ME

Keith Barlinnie

Oil on canvas

OCHIL HILLS FROM CELL

James Glenochil

Watercolour on paper

IT'S MADE FROM RECYCLED PAPER

"It's made from recycled paper", I hear them say
But what should I submit to Stir today?
Will it get in? Probably not
"Another disclaimer? Stick it with that lot"

"All submissions must be digital...
We're being environmental, see"
But stock up on toner and load another tree
Because they want a hard copy as well!

And when your words don't make the mag
Environmentalists, don't lose the rag
There really is no need to fret
Stir offsets this carbon debt

Take heart next time, unsuccessful writers
For your story hasn't gone
The paper it was printed on
Was recycled to form this issue!

Michael Glenochil

EMERGING ARTISTS



FEATHER

A lone feather floats from the sky
No longer uniform, it's destined to fly
Once part of a structure that defied gravity
Now all alone, a nothing in singularity.
As part of a unit, it helped its host fly
Now all alone, brings a tear to my eye.

Tony Dumfries

WHAT WAS I THINKING

*I decided to draw this owl
to ease myself back into art
after not drawing anything
for many years.*



1

CAN YOU SEE?

Can you see the world outside?
The sea the ocean vast and wide,
The boats that sail on the sea,
Under the water the fish swim free.

Can you see the world outside?
The tree that's by the water side,
Children with the rope they bring,
On the branch build a swing.

Can you see the world outside?
You can look at it with pride,
All the things I want to see.
When I am out and set free.

David Low Moss

NIGHT OWL

Margaret Cornton Vale
White pencil on black paper

1 LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

Michael Glenochil
Acrylic on paper

2 ARUM LILIES

Henrietta Cornton Vale
Watercolour on paper

3 FISH MONTAGE

Group Work Low Moss
Mixed media on board

4 WINE AND ROSES

Lesley Cornton Vale
Acrylic on paper



2



3



4

WHAT WAS I THINKING

*I am starting to get back into art again,
after 20 years and I decided to give my
father this picture for his wall.*

WHAT WAS I THINKING

*It was my first time painting since
high school and this piece reminded
me of those times.*

SPAN THE SCOTTISH PRISON ARTS NETWORK

DAY AT THE TRAMWAY

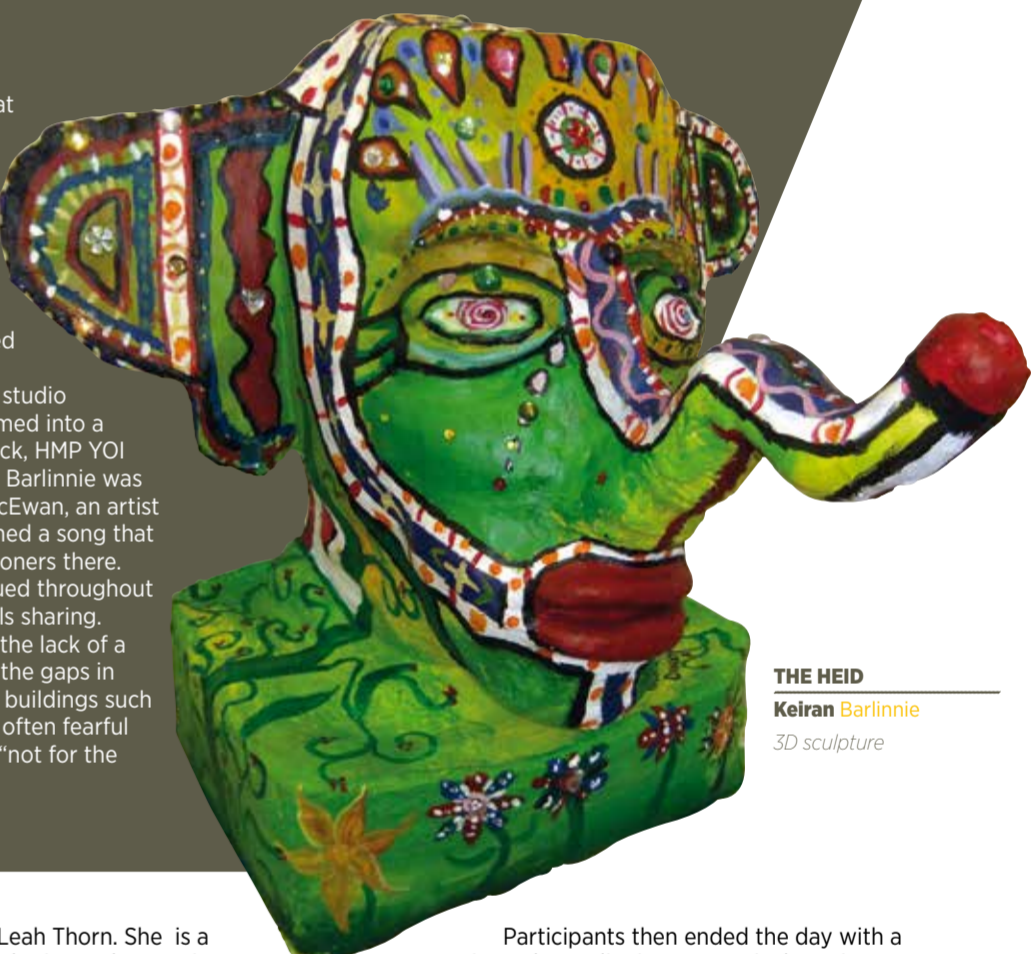
SPAN (The Scottish Prison Arts Network) is a focus group of artists and organisations working in criminal justice settings. It aims to bring practitioners together with the collective goal of delivering high quality creative projects in prisons and communities across Scotland. It seeks to develop clear and sustainable relationships with organisations and individuals involved in the criminal justice system, in order to enable greater access to the arts for offenders and those being released from prison.

The Tramway provided the venue for SPAN's Skills Share Day. Artists gathered together from Scotland and beyond with an interest in working in prisons. The day concentrated on Female Creativity in the Criminal Justice System with speakers addressing the issue from a radical perspective. Wendy Miller, Creative Projects Coordinator at HMP Barlinnie, read from her work and addressed the issue of working in a male prison from a female point of view. Lorna Callery, Learning and Skills Manager for New College Lanarkshire interspersed her talk with poetry and recognised the work Artlink Central is doing in HMP YOI Cornton Vale. Both speakers identified the positive outcomes produced from the impact of the arts in Scottish Prisons recognising the need for further development in this area.

Eve MacDougall is a published author, self-taught artist, poet, playwright, director, producer and tutor. Eve is also a public speaker and curator for Together Our Space Gallery in London. Her performance at the SPAN Skills Share day was emotive and powerful. She talked directly to her audience about her personal experience having been sent to prison at the age of fifteen for committing a petty crime. This had a lasting impact on her mental health and the rape and battery she suffered at the hands of her partner exacerbated her circumstances. Eve spoke about the help and inspiration she received from Lady Martha Bruce, the first Governor at HMP YOI Cornton Vale.

Lady Martha gave Eve the belief that she could break out of the patterns of abuse she found herself in. Her influence still stretches into Eve's life now as the strong connection has been maintained. Eve read a short extract from her book. She had her audience in rapt attention.

The artists who attended were asked to bring examples of their work to display in a Pop-Up Exhibition. The studio space at the Tramway was transformed into a gallery as work from HMP Kilmarnock, HMP YOI Cornton Vale, HMP Shotts and HMP Barlinnie was viewed by the participants. Colin McEwan, an artist working in HMP Edinburgh, performed a song that had been written by one of the prisoners there. Conversations and dialogue continued throughout the day as artists engaged with skills sharing. One element of the discussion was the lack of a mentoring scheme in Scotland and the gaps in throughcare. It was said that public buildings such as Art Galleries and Museums were often fearful places to enter. These places were, "not for the likes of us."



THE HEID
Keiran Barlinnie
3D sculpture



SPAN's guest in the afternoon was Leah Thorn. She is a spoken word poet, featured in anthologies and magazines in England and the United States. She tackles harsh realities with warmth, passion and compassion and at the heart of her poetry is the autobiographical exploration of culture and identity.

An experienced workshop facilitator, Leah promotes poetry as a tool for self-exploration, self-expression and empowerment. Her workshops are a fusion of spoken word poetry, autobiographical writing, listening exercises and performance skills. Leah leads workshops across the UK prison estate for the organizations Women in Prison and the Anne Frank Trust.

Leah introduced her work to us through the film A Beautiful Sentence: Suzanne Cohen's documentary about Leah's work and the power of poetry in a prison setting. She also presented a clip from Girls on the Wall, depicting scenes from the life of young women involved in musical theatre in a prison setting in the USA. Leah finished by building a group poem which each participant contributed to entitled "Female Incarceration Is."

The day ended with discussions amongst the artists on the future of SPAN and a quick look at the new website. Questions for debate included the role of SPAN in articulating its voice and listening as a representative body for artists, the key ingredients of a mentoring scheme, and the future of continuing professional development for artists.

SOYA MILK

Paul Barlinnie
Pastel on cartridge paper

Participants then ended the day with a trip to the Barlinnie Arts Festival to witness two performances devised, written and performed by prisoners. We were welcomed to HMP Barlinnie by the Governor Derek McGill. He impressed on his guests the importance of art, music and drama in prison to change lives. The first production by Theatre Nemo characterized a social history of Barlinnie and the second production by Citizens Theatre was called Man Up and told the story of the seven ages of man through the eyes of the prisoners.

The Scottish Prison Arts Network is a growing organization. The day at the Tramway and at the Barlinnie Arts Festival consolidated its position as a voice for artists on the Scottish cultural scene. The next step is to promote SPAN as a nationwide organization representing artists from the Shetlands to the Scottish Borders.

CREATE A STIR

THIS ISSUE'S COVER



JUNGLE

Paulo Shotts

Acrylic on Canvas

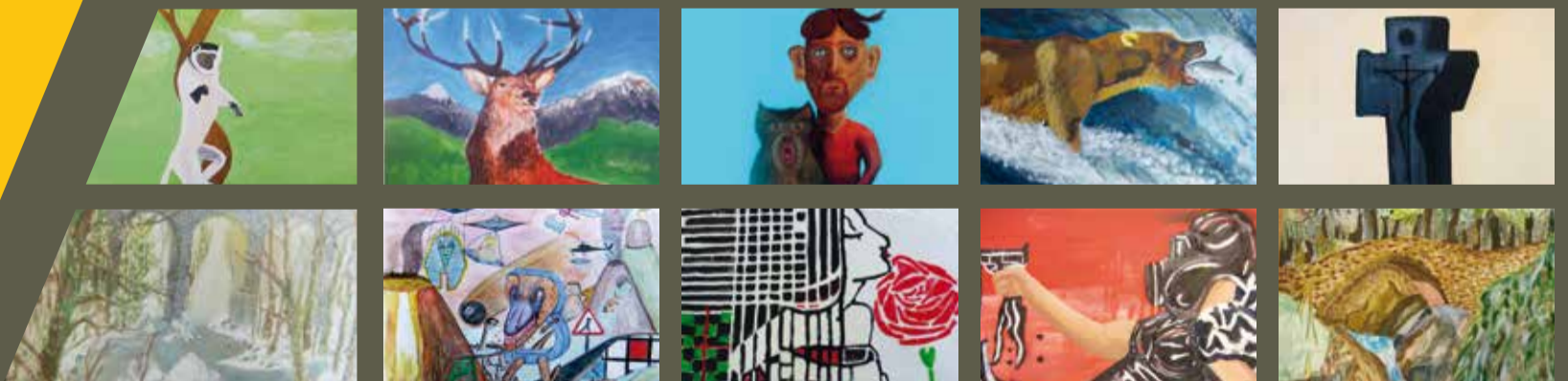
CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR ISSUE SEVEN

Issue Seven will focus on Sport & Art as the main theme.
We are looking for any artwork or writing inspired by this theme,
but also welcome other work from you, unrelated to the theme.

Check in with your learning centre for the latest updates in the
STIR newsletter.

As ever we want you to send us visual art, short stories (max 1500 words),
poetry and life writing.

£20 each will be awarded to the creator of the best picture and the best written work.



We can't feature every piece of artwork we receive but here's a selection of what we got for this issue.

CONTACT

Hand in your work to your New College Lanarkshire Learning Centre through the following contacts

WENDY MILLER
HMP Barlinnie

ELAINE GORMAN
LORNA CALLERY
HMP YO1
Cornton Vale

ANTHEA SUMMERS
EM STRANG
HMP Dumfries

RACHEL CLIVE
HMP Glenochil

TESSA DUNLOP
JACCI STOYLE
HMP Greenock

ANNA MACKENZIE
HMP Low Moss

IÑIGO GARRIDO
HMP Shotts



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