

STIR



Issue Number Twelve

ART AND PROTEST

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ST/R

*The only arts magazine made by
prisoners for prisoners in Scotland*

ART AND PROTEST

Editorial

First of all I would like to thank all our readers for the great feedback we received for our last issue. Everybody seems to really like our new format. The theme for this issue, Art and Protest, brought in some great work from all seven prisons, and set the editorial team a hard task of selecting the artwork and writing.

If your submission was not selected in this issue please keep sending in your work, as we now have a digital archive, which gives us access to all submissions that have previously been sent to us. We can now potentially select unpublished work for future issues.

We would also like to congratulate the winners of Koestler Awards this year. Scottish prisons came out on top and won the most awards ever! This prompted the Koestler Trust to commission STIR to select some of the best writing for their Scottish Awards ceremony in Edinburgh this November. This pullout, titled *Home Of The Soul*, can also be found inside this edition of STIR.

Our reviews feature singer-songwriter Henry Maybury and artist Rachel Maclean, who both use film to communicate their message, producing distinctive videos which make important social and satirical points respectively.

We also took delivery recently of a new Mac Pro to help us improve the production of STIR. This has been funded by external commissions, which the STIR team have designed, raising the money to buy new equipment to keep us right up to date technologically.

We also have to mention that our lecturer Iñigo Garrido was presented with an award from the Prisoners Education Trust for his work and commitment to STIR, so a big congratulations to Iñigo!

Our next edition's theme, Comedy and Humour, looks like being a cracker. We are hoping to have some input from a top Glasgow comedian and we look forward to receiving your submissions on this easily accessible theme.

Lastly we would like to wish Gareth all the best as he leaves us for pastures new. He will be sadly missed by all the editorial team. We hope he will carry on with his excellent writing as 'The English Poet'.

Edited by Craig, David, Dennis, Eddie, Jas, John, Jok, Neil, Shy and Stuart

*The views expressed in STIR are not those
of the Scottish Prison Service.*

Cover Art

COLLAGE 3

**James, Mark and Andrew
Shotts**

Mixed Media Collage



Nawal El-Saadawi

They took away my freedom
As my voice caused them fear,
The work I do empowers others
To stand up for what is dear.

There are many around the world
So afraid of a woman's voice,
They will inflict violence on those with the courage
To speak out and rejoice
In other women's thoughts and views,
In all of womankind,
Because to them, a mere woman
Can't possibly have her own mind

But women of the world,
We can all prove them wrong
By standing side by side,
We can show them we are strong,
And just as capable as any man
Of running our own lives,
Of making decisions for ourselves,
We are Women, not just wives.

I hope and pray that the day will come
When all the world will see
Women as humans, equal to men
And violence will be
The exception, not the rule
Around this world of ours
When women and children never fear
To be behind closed doors

But I fear that day might never come
Without more women giving their lives
Because nothing is more perilous
Than the truth in a world of lies

Robin Glenochil

I'm a Woman
Phenomenally
Phenomenal
that's me



BOYCOTT
TABLOIDS
FOR THE TRUTH
READ
STIR

YOU
FORM A LINE
TO
FORMALIZE
THE
FORMER LIES
SO LETS
BREAK THE CHAIN
AND THE FAIRIES

LABOUR
UKIP
LIES
DONS
SNP
DONT
VOTE AS
THEY
ALL TALK SHIT



ART AND
PROTEST



1
**I'M A WOMAN
PHENOMENALLY
PHENOMENAL THATS ME**
Fern Cornton Vale
Wall Mural

2
DON'T VOTE!
Francis Greenock
Screenprint

3
CITY SLICKERS
David Dumfries
Pen on Paper

4
TINNED DOLPHIN
Craig Barlinnie
Mixed Media

5
BOYCOTT TABLOIDS
John Dumfries
Pencil on Paper

6
BREAK THE CHAIN
Craig Barlinnie
Mixed Media

7
LOS INTERNACIONALES
Duncan Low Moss
Acrylic on Paper

8
COLA BEAR ON ICE
Craig Barlinnie
Pastel on Paper

9
MARTIN LUTHER KING
Danny Dumfries
Pencil on Paper

Fight the State

They say the people are free
But that's not what I see
They had black people in chains
Then this treaty was blown
Now through time all races
are fuelling a perfect storm
people living homeless
or strung out on drugs
question the suppression
they throw salt on the slug

Fight the state create and debate for ourselves
Kill racism, fear, negativity and hate
Put power back in the people's hands
'cause the freedom's slipping through like grains of sand
Whatever happened to the free slave treaty?
There are still slaves and masters
We still cannot make our decisions freely

Jamie Barlinnie

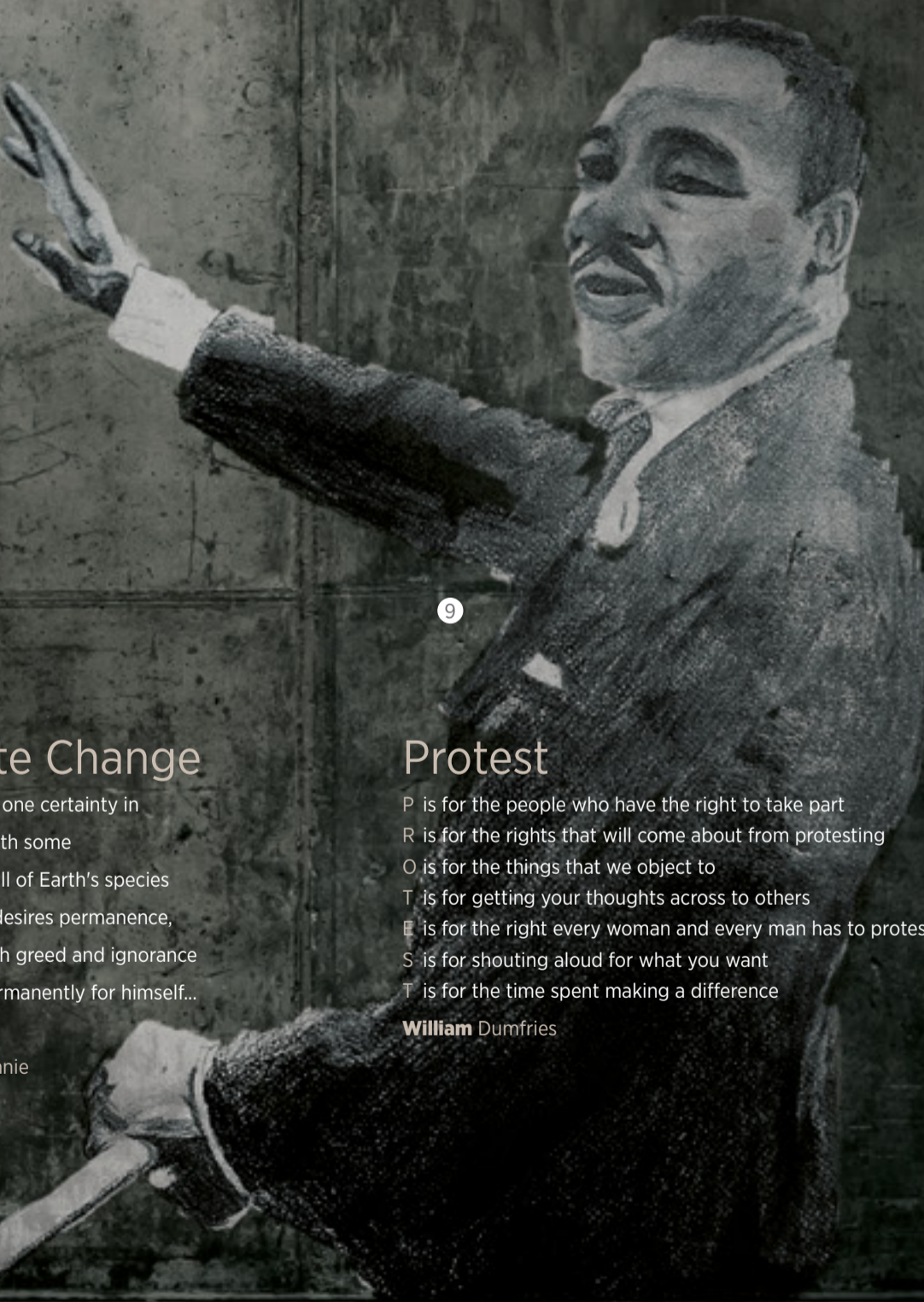
Climate Change

Change is the one certainty in
Life, so it is with some
Irony that of all of Earth's species
Man, who so desires permanence,
Allows through greed and ignorance
To destroy permanently for himself...
Earth,
Michael Barlinnie

Protest

P is for the people who have the right to take part
R is for the rights that will come about from protesting
O is for the things that we object to
T is for getting your thoughts across to others
E is for the right every woman and every man has to protest
S is for shouting aloud for what you want
T is for the time spent making a difference

William Dumfries





1



2



3

1

SEA OF DESPAIR**Amit** Glenochil

Acrylic on Canvas

I drew this to highlight the current situation concerning refugees fleeing from war-torn countries to escape their suffering. In my view the world powers could do more to help and stop these human beings suffering.

2

POPULATION EXPLOSION**Amit** Glenochil

Pencil on Paper

3

WHY**David** Glenochill

Mixed Media



4

4

GUERNICA**Group** Shotts

Mixed Media

5

JE' SUIS CHUCKY**Keith** Barlinnie

Oil on Canvas

6

PUTIN: PLAY SAFE**Craig** Shotts

Acrylic on Canvas

I painted this when Russia was hosting the Winter Olympics at Sochi 2014, in protest against Russia and its stance against homosexuality. Putin stands proudly - in his sailor's uniform - in front of the rainbow flag, in his pocket you can see condoms (safety first) in the colours of the Olympic flag.

In the Name of Your God

Religion is the root of many wars 'My God is true and yours is false' they claim man's lack of tolerance is the real cause of bombs that drop and injure, kill and maim corrupted views of faith all fuel the hate that's felt across the world from West to East religious arguments add to the weight of ignorance - pious zealots need cease two thousand years we've suffered this disease extremist opinions will always fail to bring about the peace we seek, so please learn what your prejudiced loathing entails to kill for your beliefs is always lame the real truth is that we all bleed the same.

Andrew Barlinnie

THE ART OF PROTEST



5



6

Sort Our Situation

Living in such shocking conditions Me as a campaigner fighting these politicians Raising rent with no permission So let's come together and take down the opposition Who are these enforcers? Are they on commission? Now get them away, we will have no repetition Stand strong and we will crush this dominion. Let's be loud, let them hear our opinion - "Clean our street before you raise our rent Start answering the letters that we've sent Stop this torment! Get your act in order! We want you to fix this disaster and disorder"

Sean Low Moss

Environmental Art

The Filth and the Fury: The Rise of Environmental Graffiti

Reverse graffiti is a new form of street art which is bent on protest against the environmental costs of pollution and goes to war on the dirt and grime that clings to our streets. These new street artists 'etch' designs and slogans on to filthy walls, tunnels and underpasses. While other street artists use spray cans, these artists' tools of trade are detergents, wire brushes and elbow grease, selectively cleaning away dirt to form intricate and temporary patterns.

Britain's Paul Curtis, better known as Moose, is one of reverse graffiti's trailblazers. Perhaps Moose's most ambitious work (which is also quoted as being his favourite piece) was in the Broadway Tunnel in San Francisco, which was filmed for the Reverse Graffiti Project. In this film, Moose insists that he is not vandalising public landscapes and buildings instead he is stripping away layers of grime and pollution that have built up over the years. He states that he has "replaced the criminal element of graffiti with a positive process... cleaning or restoring a surface rather than spraying or damaging it."

Industry has started to catch on to the possibilities of this art-form and its positive environmental message. In October 2014, the car manufacturer Nissan joined forces with Moose at the launch of its new electric vehicle to highlight London's battle with air quality. Most of the city's dirt is caused by particulate matter from vehicle exhausts, the level of which often exceeds guidelines and limits in busy areas of London. Therefore, Nissan commissioned Moose to create a mass-scale mural to clean the dirt off the wall, leaving a striking design which promoted their new electric car.

"I used the same equipment as the street cleaners, so they would have to arrest them too."

In an interview, Moose explained the ethos behind this pioneering art form:

"Highlighting the amount of pollution we endure daily, using a very positive harmless method, never fails to ask questions about what we accept and what we shouldn't accept in our environment."

And so, environmental graffiti, it seems, is a new form of artistic protest hitting the streets. One that is unexpectedly focusing on urban and environmental regeneration rather than vandalism and destruction, which graffiti is usually charged with.

When asked the questions, "street art vs. graffiti. What's the difference? Where does your style fall between the two?" Moose answers frankly, saying, "...I'm not sure if I fit in. I'm half street cleaner and half street artist. I'm as much a prankster as I am an artist. I'm really not a very good artist so I enjoy playing with ideas."

To take this to the extreme, environmental graffiti now truly is going green. New technology and trends in street art mean that – surprisingly – there are many different forms of environmental graffiti. A new spray paint 'Moss,' is sprouting up in cities across Europe and the US.

This living spray paint is hell bent on reintroducing green' to the sprawling concrete jungles of our major cities.

However, not everyone is as appreciative of this new art form as you might think. In Moose's hometown of Leeds, the council did not support his contribution to the arts and he is quoted as saying, "I'm not really getting much support here. Most of my work is destroyed by council cleaners..." Moose has even been arrested, a couple of times, for his works of protest, even though his graffiti is non-destructive. However, he couldn't be charged as he points out, "I used the same equipment as the street cleaners, so they would have to arrest them too." For me, this clever take on graffiti art is a sensible response to our increasingly unclean urban environment. This artistic expression of protest is a welcome relief from the grime and dirt that becomes part of our every-day landscape, and a timely reminder of the damage we are doing to the environment.

As a nation, we should be leading from the front; celebrating reverse graffiti artists like Moose and the work they do. At the very least, we should be opening our eyes and tuning in our ears to listen to their message.

Kelly Cornton Vale

The project also enabled students of all ages to undertake a common goal, that, as you can see, benefitted all those within the prison environment.



The Knit and Natter project at Cornton Vale.

Knit and Natter

The use of various colours has been a common feature for many protests from the Ukrainian Orange Revolution in 2004, to Thailand's Red Shirt protests in September 2006. During last winter, students from the Learning Centre at Cornton Vale undertook their own 'Colour Protest', by setting up a collaborative environmental art installation within the grounds of the prison. Determined to change the dark and colourless environment of a bleak winter, the women joined in a 'Knit and Natter' project. Using wool donated to the prison, students, civilian staff and prison officers started producing small, multi-coloured squares of wool. As the project developed, it became clear to those looking out of the windows that something was clearly happening.

Students learnt new techniques such as French knitting, a simple form of knitting without tools, and weaving just using straws.

André Matraux, the French art critic, once said, 'L'art est un anti-destin' [Art is a revolt against fate]. As small sections of colourful wool squares started to be joined together, the lifeless tress within the prison ground undertook a colourful transformation not unlike a caterpillar into a butterfly. Whatever fate had offered those looking out onto the bland winter landscape, this wonderful project highlighted what a small group could achieve for the greater good.

The 'Knit and Natter' project also enabled students of all ages to undertake a common goal that would, as you can see, benefit all those within the prison environment. It is hard to think how one could not smile when looking out of the window onto such a wintry scene, one's view having been transformed by the bright, multi-coloured trees!

Dennis Shotts

The editorial team at Shotts thought this was a beautiful and clever form of protest, in its own right, against the sterile conditions of prison through an innovative use of materials.

The Reverse Graffiti Project by Paul Curtis, a dirty wall sprayed clean.

WOMEN'S DAY

A POEM FOR
INTERNATIONAL

Everything happens for a reason
There is a reason for everything
Woman

Masterfully-minded
Powerful motherhood reborn
Into generations
Phenomenally sexy.

Your heart is free
Have courage to follow it
From dark into light
As an honest independent fighter
for freedom.

We should be heard
Every minute
Every day
Headstrong feminist.
Courageous with love.

The whispered silence vanished
Polite screams fade.
Freedom.

Group Project Cornton Vale

ENGLISH PEN

PEN ISN'T A LUXURY, IT'S A NECESSITY

The creative writing class had a visit from the Author Meg Rosoff and Irene Garrow from English PEN. The visit was to provide a writing workshop for the prisoners who had submitted and won awards in the recent English PEN competition. English PEN were delighted at the number of entries it had received from Shotts. In fact, Shotts won more awards than any other prison which had entered, and our Gareth won first and second place in the poetry section, and English PEN used his poem, Parallel Universe, as the title of the booklet that was produced for distribution to all entrants.

English PEN are a great organisation and their slogan is (Freedom to Write – Freedom to Read). English PEN defends the right to freedom of expression in the UK and internationally and also gives young people and prisoners and refugees the opportunity to discover their own creative abilities.

All over the world, writers, journalists, publishers, translators and bloggers are censored, prosecuted, jailed and murdered for speaking out. English PEN strives to protect their freedom to write and safeguard free speech for us all. And we thank them for that.

RE VIEWS

Book

There is no Dog

Meg Rosoff

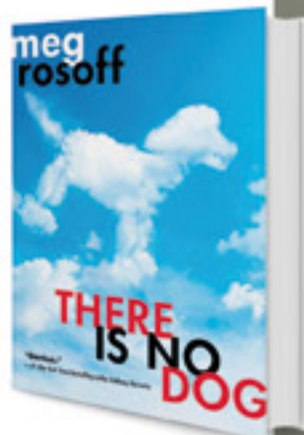
With news that the Author Meg Rosoff was coming to visit Shotts, I thought it only polite that I should read her latest book (There is no Dog). To be fair, it's not the usual type of book I would read, as it comes under the YA fiction genre. But, being a very young-headed 58 year old, I thought what harm could it do. I found the book to be very funny and easy to read.

It starts with the job of God being advertised, but with only a few candidates having applied. The preferred candidate, upon being interviewed, was found to be unexciting and he failed to generate any enthusiasm. So the job is put up as a prize in a not very good poker game, which Bob's mother wins and promptly passes the job on to her son. Bob (God) was to form a coalition with a very grumpy Mr. B, who would act as his personal assistant. In the beginning, Bob created the heavens and the earth and the beasts of the field and the creatures of the sea, and twenty five million other species (including lots of gorgeous girls). But mostly he prefers eating junk food and leaving his dirty clothes in a heap at the side of his bed.

Every time he falls in love, earth erupts in natural disasters and it only gets worse when he runs into a completely beautiful and irresistible girl called Lucy. I found the storyline about his pet Eck (an extinct species and the last of his kind) absolutely hilarious.

So if you're looking for a pleasant change in the type of book you read, then I would highly recommend this novel to you. I'm already on the lookout for more of Meg Rosoff's books.

Eddie Shotts



Film

V for Vendetta

Andy Weir

Who is the man behind the mask? Hero or villain?

Who is V and who will join him in his daring plot to destroy the totalitarian regime that has his nation on its knees?

V FOR VENDETTA is a political thriller. It is also an action film which has borrowed from Orwell's 1984, but also makes a comparison with our own government and media. The film pulls no punches against authoritarianism. Even today, governments, in so-called civilised countries, are becoming more oppressive, moving against gay rights, religious freedoms, and outsiders.

V is an uncompromising character, he wants to fulfill his agenda and get back at the people who have harmed him and society. A complex man, who has been imprisoned and tortured, abused mentally and physically, he emerges from a prison fire as a vengeful angel.

The society V lives in has become a one party fascist state, a police state. It is a world where ethnic minorities are disenfranchised and not just marginalised, but used as experimental material. Society is ruled by Government, rather than the government being a voice of the people.

V takes over the 'Government's' public broadcasting channel to address the people. He unveils his plan to blow up parliament one year from that day - on the 5th November. He makes his statement to the nation:

"While the truncheon may be used in lieu of conversation, words will always retain their power. Words offer the means to meaning and, for those who will listen, the enunciation of truth. And the truth is... there is something terribly wrong with this country... isn't there?" V

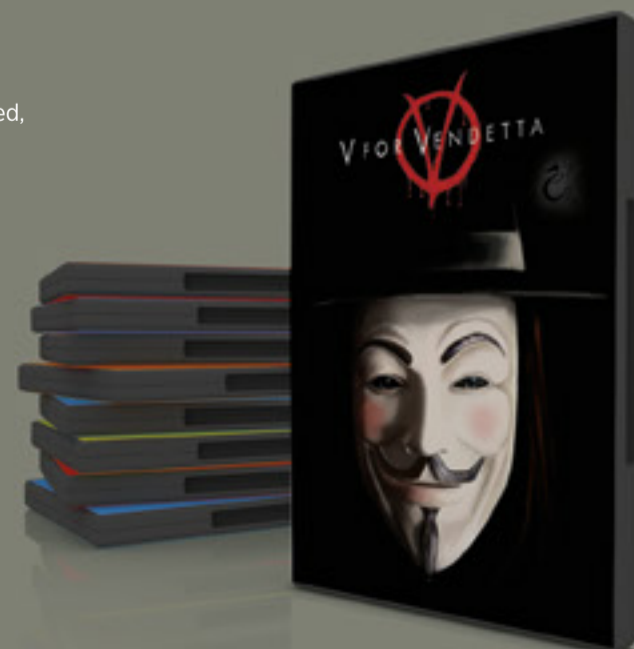
So what is the message for today's society? Most people haven't got a clue, they sit around waiting on the next voice to tell them what to do, or for the next trend to follow.

Heroes choose freedom over oppression, but films with such characters have disappeared from mainstream cinema for some years. It's good to have one back with us in V for Vendetta.

Don't sit waiting. The answer you seek lies within you.

Which side are you on?

Neil Shotts



Music

Henry Maybury

Henry Maybury is a singer songwriter and successful you-tuber – he recently toured to Shotts and other prisons – who use film to convey and emphasise the message of his music. His music videos are traditionally shot and uses catchy, pop-style music to promote serious issues via simple, yet memorable, lyrics.

Henry released his debut song 'Lost Days' in September 2014, which was nominated for best music video at the 2014 London Independent Film Festival. 'Lost Days' was inspired by the death of his brother Tom, who died of alcohol abuse in 2013. Intended to raise awareness about the impact of addiction on a family, this personal song was the key to Henry's decision to tour schools telling the younger generation about the effects of alcohol abuse and addiction. This motive also led to his prison tour.

The video for 'Lost Days' depicts the deterioration of a man seen through the eyes of his family, and shows their attempts to help him. It is an incredibly honest and strong film, which reminds the viewer that alcoholism does not just affect one person. Henry wants to make it clear that alcoholism is not a choice but an addiction.

'You're Beautiful', another of his music videos, which features familiar faces such as John Chalice ('Boysie' from Only Fools and Horses) and Simon Weston OBE, uses a catchy soundtrack that avoids the pop-clichés of current love songs to focus on insecurities around self-confidence and self-esteem. Basically he reassures us that we all look different and shouldn't judge others. The first step towards this is accepting ourselves, which isn't always the easiest thing to do.

Currently, Henry has been working on his new song 'Don't Let Me Go', inspired by his prison tour. The song is really powerful as it connects imprisoned people with those on the outside, highlighting that those who face release – although hopeful – can be scared of how they will be perceived by the outside world. Henry wants his song to inspire us, to turn negative perceptions positive and make people think they really should support these guys in our community. This counters the image of prisoners depicted in the media, instead showing that imprisoned people have real feelings and concerns and a conscience.

Henry is using music and film to stand up for what he believes in, and to protest against what he thinks is wrong, and beautifully so.

www.henry-maybury.com

Craig Shotts



Rachel Maclean

Artist and Filmmaker

Contemporary Scottish artist, Rachel Maclean visited Shotts prison to showcase several of her films, including 'A Whole New World', and 'The Lion and the Unicorn', and to do a Q&A. The films generated much debate within the group, with questions asked about the importance of the green screen in her work and the meanings behind her films.



The Lion and the Unicorn, 2013 (Film Still)



Over the Rainbow, 2013 (Film Still)

We quickly learned that Rachel preferred a green screen method – filming against a neutral background to allow the cutting and pasting together of different bits of film – compared to other filming methods. This gives her more opportunity to play with ideas by manipulating and animating her props and costumes. She also explained that the screen used as a backdrop is green, because there is no green in human skin, nor in anyone's eye colour, "the green screen means anything can happen."

We were curious why she was the only actor in her films, and discovered that she is focused on the idea of identity, using it as a slightly absurd way of exploring character itself: "I guess quite a lot of characters I create aren't what you would imagine in a film, the ones that are consistent the entire way through. Mine are more empty than that. They are almost totally defined by the way they look and they can switch between different voices and characteristics."

By using herself as an actress she creates an identity that is absurd in its own right, but in doing so it allows her to: "create these worlds, which can't otherwise exist, which I quite like in the sense that they are totally digital, that you can never recreate them as they are entirely illusionary."

We raised the controversial issue of the use of stereotypes in Rachel's films, in particular the juxtaposition of Glasgow and football. However, living in Glasgow herself, Rachel explained: "I'm interested in playing with these icons... things that are visible stereotypes. I create characters so they are always in some ways misidentified, stereotypical characters... but with depth. I think there's something in exploring the idea of a stereotype of Glasgow that you can break down and question."

She also mines stereotypes from across the world to create satire and humor that the audience can relate to. This is why she enjoyed comedies, such as The League of Gentlemen, when growing up, because they were about the "grotesque and absurd characters", which "question the idea of a stereotype." Is Rachel trying to influence people by making a statement or social comment? The answer is, no. She wants to remain neutral. Even so, her films could be seen as a form of protest because of their subject matter, for example, the Referendum was central to her film 'The Lion and the Unicorn' (see image above). She turns this subject onto its head via satire, portraying Cameron and Salmond as the heraldic beasts depicted on the royal coat of arms. They go on to eat a cake in the shape of Great Britain.

She also told us that choosing to make a short or a long film can make a significant impact on the audience. A longer film gives "more opportunity to develop characters doing things that don't really occur in real life, and the viewer becomes more absorbed into that world."

Rachel's next film, again using her 'green screen' technique that "is almost like painting in a way... where you actually get to the stage you get to put in a background and you've got that whole creative space." In the meantime she'll be working on more music videos, using songs as a basis to fix images to.

When asked what her most successful piece was, she simply didn't know; believing that if you make something that you think is the best you have done, then anything made after it, won't be as good. Even so, we're convinced that the appearance of her innovative and questioning films in the British Art Show in February 2016, at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh, will prove she actually is pretty good already.

Craig Shotts

Mountain of Time

About twenty stairs lead up before me, black plastic with raised polka dots for grip. I took them two at a time, even though I wanted to climb them, as much as the ancients wanted to cross the River Styx. In the myth, a giant stone hovered permanently over the ferryman's head, giving the sense of looming disaster. At that moment, I felt in its shadow. For it was not a ferryman who accompanied me, but a henchman from G4S taking me into court.

When I entered it was empty, apart from my lawyer and a clerk of court. Nobody in the public gallery, I was glad of that. I sat down heavily with the feeling of a tombstone for a stomach, and started to look around.

The walls were clad in an ominous dark wood. The electronic clock on the large table that separates me from the judge was switched off. It was the white coat of arms on the wall above the judge's seat that captured most of my attention. It contained images of a lion, flags of the Union, a Latin inscription, and a unicorn. What on earth, I wondered, is a mythical figure doing in a court of law that is supposed to deal with facts? Then I noticed a collar and chain around its neck. With sympathy, I wondered, if it was meant to represent the curtailing of my dreams for life.

Taking deep breaths, I tried to relax before it was time for the judge to enter, and give his sentence; the time I would serve. The clock came on and my anxiety rose, tingling my every nerve. He started by telling me I was to receive a twenty percent discount, which was a little comfort. Then he went on to twitter on about the seriousness of my crime and my nerves began dancing again, rightly so.

From his monologue, the two words that mattered were, Four Years. It was not so much I heard them, but more that they hit me as a sonic boom. My skin felt the shock first and despair blasted inwards through my body, ending in the sensation of my spine collapsing like a Twin Tower. F*ck! I had been hammered.

The disappointment and anguish was blown away in a breath. It was swept away by anger, cutting through me, like the Clyde cuts Glasgow, flowing out in spite towards the judge.

I stood poker faced, not wanting to reveal my emotions which were like waves crashing on rocks. The clock blinked first, turning over one minute of the mountain of time fate had dealt me to be incarcerated. Then my ferryman whispered: "I have to put these on," as he held out handcuffs to chain me to him. They felt like an anchor, not to weather the storm, but to drag me down, back down those stairs.

Ritchie Barlinnie

CREATIVE WRITING

Sanity

I've always been different. A strange kid. A freak. Teachers and therapists usually giving up on me with: "I don't know what to do with you."

"What do you see in the picture?"

"It's a black ink smudge."

"Yes, it is. But what do you see when you look at it? What do you think of?"

"I think of a black ink smudge. This is dumb – what do you see in that? How is this a psychiatric assessment? I might pretend to be sane and I might pretend to be mentally ill – you'll never know. You can't take a blood test to see whether someone is sane or not. Psychiatrists are the clowns of medical science."

"That's quite inappropriate, don't you think?"

"I wouldn't know."

Lux Cornton Vale



BURBERRY MAN

Benno Shotts

Watercolour

West Highland Line

It was a gloriously sunny Saturday morning and we had just finished having our breakfast. I really wanted to do something different this weekend. I said to my girlfriend Rachael, "Do you fancy a wee trip to Mallaig?" My question was answered with an unintelligible grunt. "Where's that, then?", relenting to speak in her Devonian accent. Rachael was a 'Janner', which for those of you not familiar with the term, is slang for a native of Plymouth. "It's a wee fishing town further up the West Coast, near to Skye."

"You look like you're still hungover and I don't feel like driving."

"Who said anything about driving; I've heard it's a real nice train ride." She squealed with delight,

"Yippee, I'm ready if you are!"

Impulsiveness was a trait we both shared. We sat down again to plan our strategy for an expeditious getaway. We quickly packed a weekend bag and drove into town. I enquired about train times and purchased train tickets for our journey. Rachael went to purchase wine and I had to place a bet, we arranged to rendezvous at the Station Bar. Approximately half an hour later I was sat in the pub awaiting my sweetheart's return. She turned up clutching several carrier bags some of which chinked with the unmistakeable sound of glass. We had a quick drink and I phoned a taxi to collect us at the pub.

The owner of the pub had graciously allowed us to chill our white wine in their fridge until we were ready to leave. We said our goodbyes and went outside to await our cab. It took the taxi driver less than three minutes to convey us to our town's upper station which served destinations on the West Highland line. I paid the cab fare and tipped him generously. We waited less than ten minutes before the serpentine form of our train, pulled by a diesel locomotive, came slowly into view and drew alongside the platform. We hopped aboard and chose to sit on the left hand side of the middle of the carriage. We could have chosen to sit anywhere we liked that late morning as there were not many fellow travellers. Sometimes Rachael would sit on the right hand side of the train to witness the scenery from that particular perspective. The conductor/ticket inspector was very friendly and I took the first available opportunity to ask him if it was alright to consume the wine which we ourselves had brought on board.

He assured us that it was and declined a glass himself which I had offered him. His name was Sandy and a nicer man in a uniform I've yet to meet. He gave us a booklet about the West Highland rail network which was full of interesting facts and photos. We could easily be forgiven for thinking that we were travelling first class because of the expanse of the carriage; the roominess was unlike most trains where passenger space was at a premium. Rachael sat by my side holding my hand in her left and a glass of chilled Viognier in her right.

Everything inside the train was just perfect, and outside, where the main event was taking place, was mind-blowingly beautiful. The myriad of colours took one's breath away; it looked like God had taken out his paint box. The sky was cerulean and the yellows, browns, reds, orange, golds and greens gave the passing countryside the appearance of a giant mosaic. The colours of the hills, glens, moors, and lochans took on an extra vibrancy in the glorious sunshine. I was giving Rachael a running commentary, "That body of water that you see out the right hand window is Loch Lomond, which is fresh water," five minutes later I could be heard to say, "and that down there is Loch Long, which is a sea loch", in my best David Attenborough impersonation. Most of the stations we journeyed through were pretty nondescript. Crianlarich, Tyndrum, Rannoch, Spean Bridge were all pretty ordinary, but quaint looking. The wine and the scenery and the fact I was in love, gave much of the journey an altogether timeless ethereal quality. When the train came to cross the 'Glenfinnan Viaduct', I could be heard to say (as no doubt many have done before me) "This is the viaduct Harry Potter's train crossed."

When we alighted from our train we soon discovered that there was not a lot to do in Mallaig, either in or out of season, and this was the latter. We acquired hotel accommodation easily enough and enjoyed our weekend sojourn immensely. Our journey home had a more subdued atmosphere. There was no wine or sunshine this time, but that did not detract in the slightest from this most special of train journeys.

Andrew Low Moss

Live On

Heaviness
Rapid flickers
Soporific travel

Truth surges through me.
Multiple binary clouds
At the estuary of life
Cast shadows in the variable

In an instant
No pain or suffering
Just a charged stillness
That envelopes everything

Epicene souls glide along
The occasional glance revealing all,
In fleeting glimpses,
En passant

Stroboscopic spheres entice
Ethereal orbs that guide me,
To material lost in time

Drifting,
Comfortable in silence

Iain Barlinnie

No Roots

I go to bed
Without a mother's kiss
I fall asleep
Unblessed and fatherless

Where I'm coming from
That is hard to know
I don't have roots
I've always been alone

If there's no one to guide
And protect from harm
How does one learn?
How does an orphan grow?

I grow without roots
Exit before enter
I run away a lot
I don't know any better

Where am I heading
That is hard to know
I don't pity myself
I take each low blow

Brave and tough
But nevertheless
Lacking roots
Orphaned and fatherless

Lux Cornton Vale



DUNOON PIER

Paul Barlinnie

Pencil on Paper

Rendezvous

sittin in the hoose / bored oot ma head / telly's snide/ might go back tae bed / then the dug starts tae whimper n geez me that stare / get yer arse in gear daddy or ah'll shite oan yer flair / so ah jump tae ma feet n pull oan ma strides / the dug starts tae bark n doon the loaby he slides / we're headin oot fur a walk / grab a slice a toast / mak oor way along speirshall close / suns splittin the sky / the taps ur aff / cut oan tae the cycle path /the auld drinkers ur there under dyke road pass / lazily bakin oan the grass /the doo flyers ur oot, cluckin n coo!n oan the ridge / just when we approach the kingsway bridge / the dugs affs the leash / he bolts fur the doos / bangs intae the drinkers n knocks oor their booze /stroll past the bookies oan dumbarton road /the toothless approach n try to lighten ma pocket load / arrive at the rendezvous lounge n bar / plant oor weary aises n order a jar

John Shotts

The Midsummer Villanelle

Midsummer night's heat
Dancing on my mind
Up all night, that summer beat
On the beach, sand under feet
Leave troubles behind
Midsummer night's heat
Festival weather good times ahead still chicks to meet
Love this time of year adventures to find
Up all night that summer beat

Everybody buzzin, right up ma street
Wimbledon coming up champagne on ice
Midsummer night's heat

Sun's out everybody in the sea
Summer's mine
Up all night that summer beat

Now kick back relax, recline your seat

It's time to unwind
Midsummer night's heat
Up all night that summer beat

Mark Glenochil

EMERGING ARTISTS

1
UNDERSKIN ERODING
WOMAN HAND TATTOO
Robbie Barlinnie
Pencil on Paper

Injustice

I thought I was in love
Now I am not so sure
Just when I was getting a handle on it
Under the bus I went
So what do I do now?
Time is a healer
I have to do things differently next time
Come on, you can do it
Everlasting love is what I crave to heal my soul

John Barlinnie

The Question Is? Mary Queen of Scots

My life in Scotland was so irate
Crown and power were off the plate.
I fled from Scotland to be free
But my cousin Elizabeth imprisoned me.
Queen Elizabeth saw me as a threat
Which wasn't true, it was refuge I sought.
It was religion that gave me strength and power
Though my life was getting shorter by the hour.
As I was led up to the tower
And I knew it was near the final hour
And only my faith stood with me
I prayed to be free
I prayed to be set free
From this place of oppression,
despair and misery.

Peter Glenochil

Reflection

Ahm next to the river
watching it drift
downstream
like the hardcore worries you have in life.
Let go of them, coz it's hard to hold water in your hands.
It drains away.

I wish it was real and easy.
If it could be channeled the right way –
But it's me
and the way I dream is mine.
I love my mind.
For that reason, I can do anything.

Seal Cornton Vale

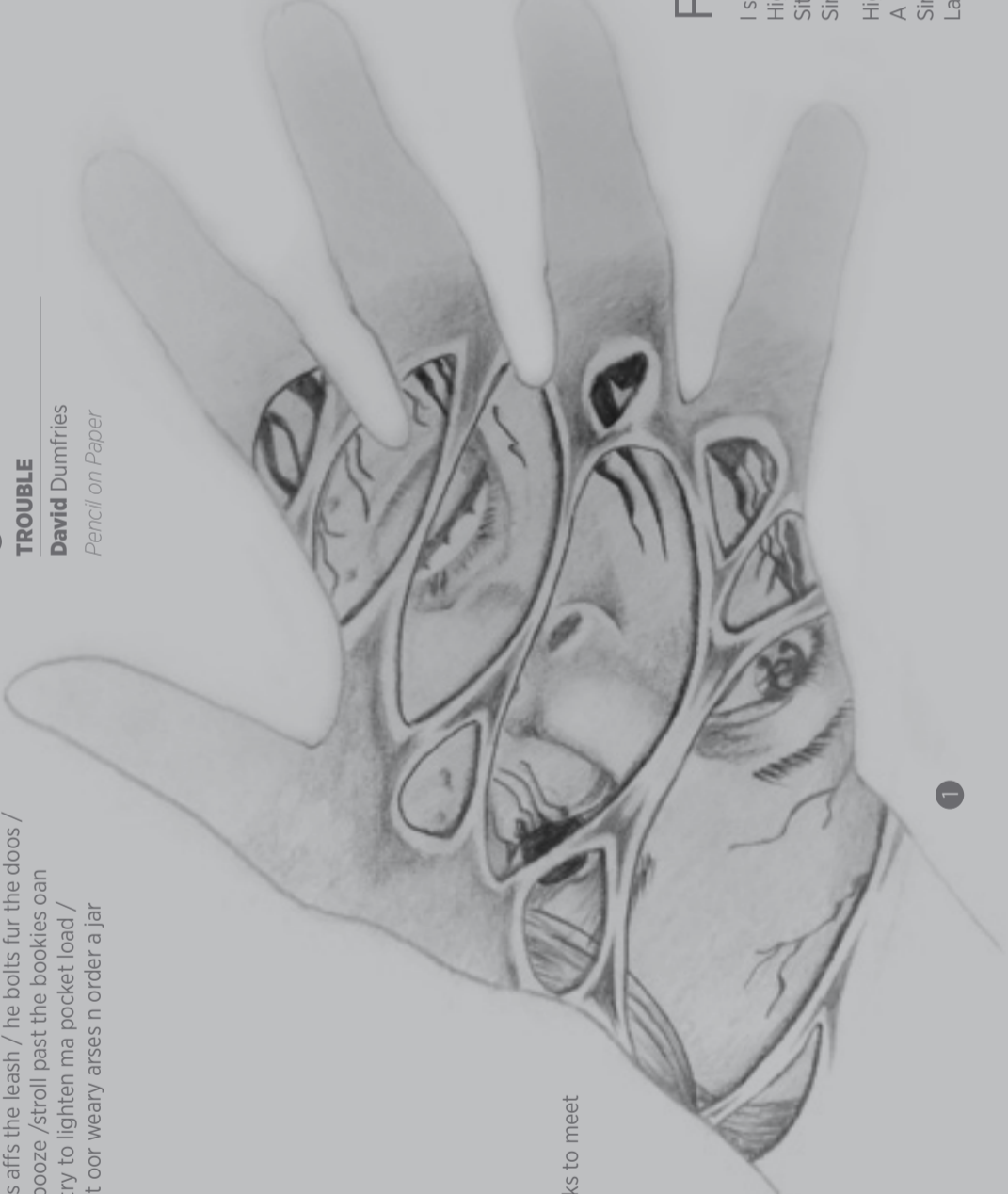
The Domino Effect

why must we create this problem
the effect is started by us
think of our children we'll rob them
do we really deserve their trust
of course we know what we're doing
common sense surely not science
what on earth could this be proving
what disillusioned defiance
waiting for the end with no cure
shameless truth your will be done
paradox when actions make sure
that this battle cannot be won
only the damning inevitable
punishment for being so cruel

Gareth Barlinnie

2
FLYING THE FLAG
George Dumfries
Pencil on Paper

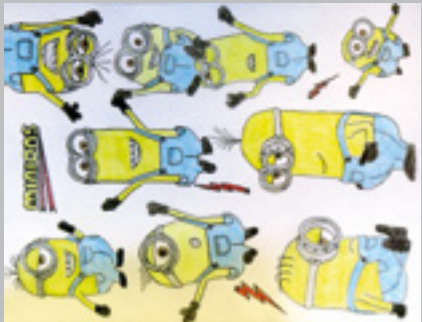
4
TROUBLE
David Dumfries
Pencil on Paper



2



3



4

Fishing

I should be out fishing
High as a kite all day long
Sitting next to the river waiting wishing
Singing along to the same old song

High as a kite all day long
A bottle of wine maybe some cans
Singing along to the same old song
Laying on the bank not got no plans

A bottle of wine maybe some cans
Down at the river, a peaceful day
Laying on the bank not got no plans
My float has disappeared but in the right way

Down at the river, a peaceful day
Sitting next to the river waiting wishing
My floats disappeared but in the right way
I should be out fishing

Stephen Glenochil

Protest

Prove a point
Repair society and problems
Offer jobs and housing
Trauma in hospitals, war and conflict
Education for schools, offenders and society
Support poverty, nations and the young
Technology, cameras and privacy

Dean Low Moss

Together

We can't be together
If you steal the thunder from me storm
causing anguish wherever you go snow
lies sometimes lighting strikes twice
and thunder cracks
But when we're together
we make light where it's dark

Craig Barlinnie

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Seal Cornton Vale

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Gareth Barlinnie

I Remember Also

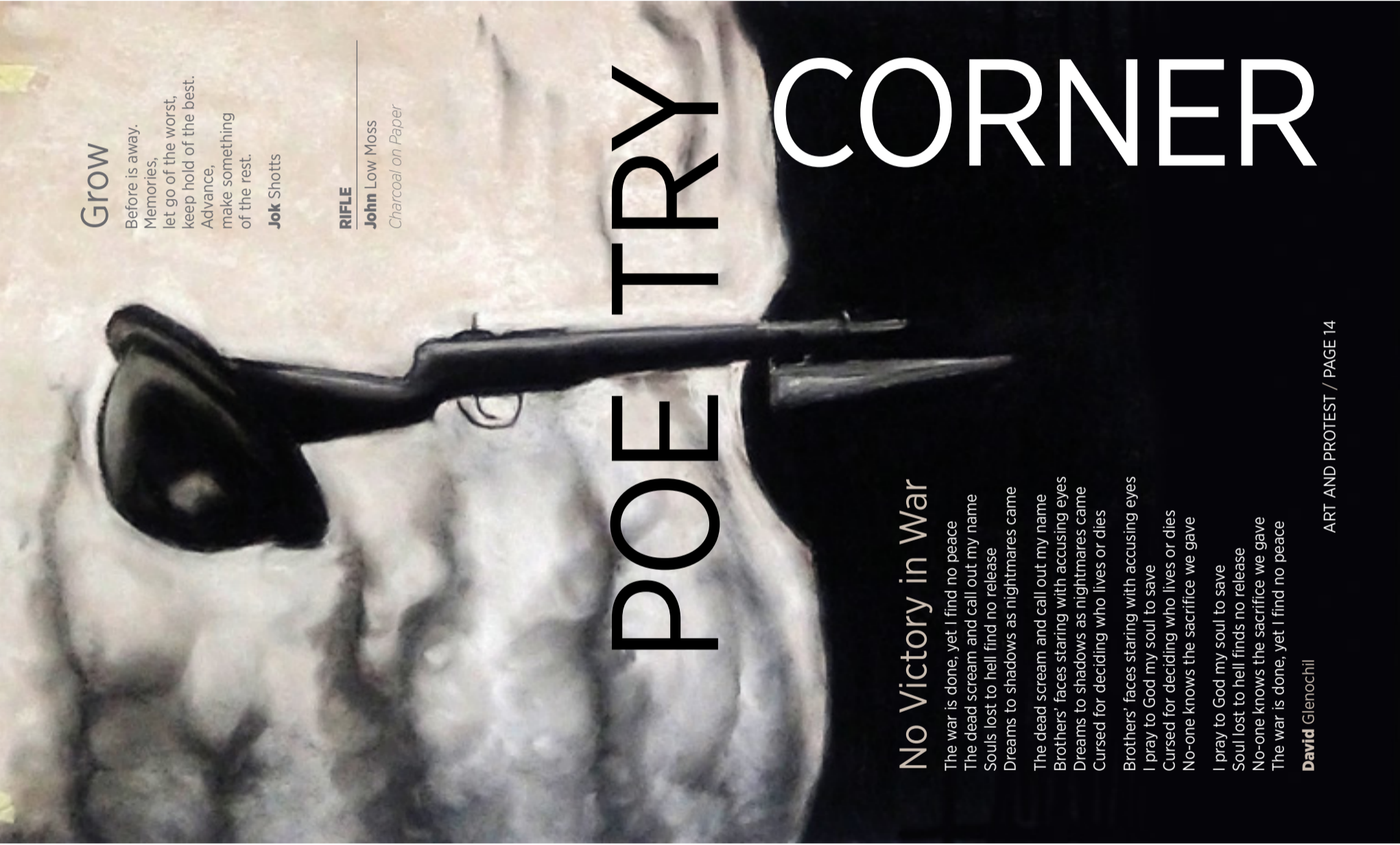
Rain showers, refreshing
small pond
surface creatures, skating
lone frog, croaking
stillness
broken, reverberating
wide open spaces, enjoying
the smells
freshly mown grass, drifting
gentle breezes, blowing
small birds
dart and dive, mesmerising
majestic trees, swaying
bluebells
streaks of light, penetrating
dampness underfoot, releasing
fragrance of age
decaying leaves, dissolving.

Iain Barlinnie

Aesthetics of Hate

You held my heart
In your hand
But as I began to fall
Inside this black hole
I felt my soul being extinguished
Like a flame
And I was consumed by darkness
The aesthetics of hate had begun
As rage and jealousy exploded from my lips
Disbelief and sadness filled your face
Love is crystal clear
At the beginning of the end
At the beginning of the end
Love is crystal clear
Disbelief and sadness filled your face
As rage and jealousy exploded from my lips
The aesthetics of hate had begun
And I was consumed by darkness
Like a flame
I felt my soul being extinguished
Inside this black hole
But as I began to fall
In your hand
You held my heart

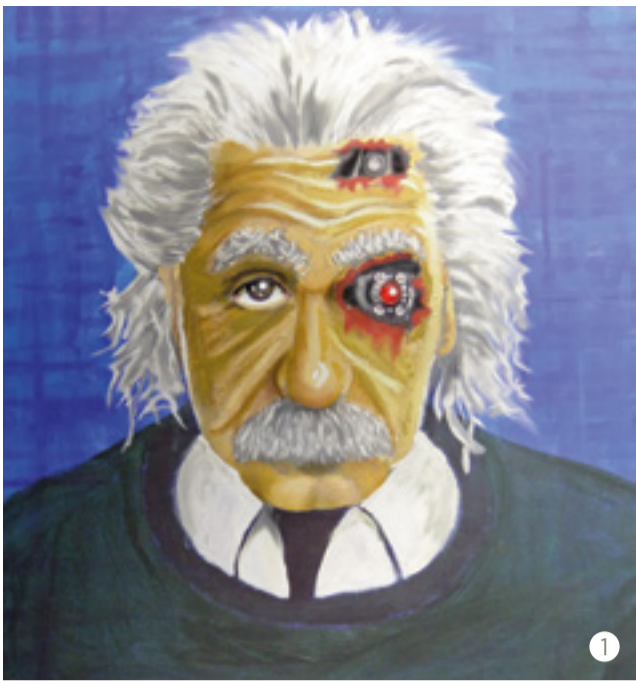
Stuart Shotts



No Victory in War

The war is done, yet I find no peace
The dead scream and call out my name
Souls lost to hell find no release
Dreams to shadows as nightmares came
The dead scream and call out my name
Brothers' faces staring with accusing eyes
Dreams to shadows as nightmares came
Cursed for deciding who lives or dies
Brothers' faces staring with accusing eyes
I pray to God my soul to save
Cursed for deciding who lives or dies
No-one knows the sacrifice we gave
I pray to God my soul to save
Soul lost to hell finds no release
No-one knows the sacrifice we gave
The war is done, yet I find no peace

David Glenochil



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12

Comment Cards

The new cover flaps were an innovative concept that worked well, as did the cartoon strips!

The magazine gave me ideas on writing which other people have wrote ahead which is very funny and will inspire other folk to write and explore their own worth.

While I understand that STIR is primarily an arts magazine, a few more general interest articles would be welcome.

I would like to see more inspirational messages to prisoners – art is a form of spiritual meditation and poetry enhances the soul.

Winning Artwork for Issue Eleven

Visual Art

Ian Greenock - *An Alternative World*

In our search for this issue's winning artwork, Ian's 'An alternative World' quickly stood out to the editorial team. It reminded us of the etchings of Piranesi; Ian put in a lot of thought and patience into his work and created something spectacular.

Written

Rita Cornton Vale - *The Journey to Luna*
'Journey to Luna' was an engaging story that combined science fiction and a traditional love story. Although fiction, Rita touches on realistic and plausible futuristic scenarios.

In the Gallery

<p>1 E=T100 Peter Barlinnie <i>Acrylic on Canvas</i></p>	<p>7 CHANGE Johnathan Shotts <i>Pencil on Paper</i></p>
<p>2 CCTV Philip Glenochil <i>Pencil on Paper</i></p>	<p>8 FUR ENOUGH Margaret Cornton Vale <i>Collage</i></p>
<p>3 PROTEST AGAINST THE CONVENTIONS OF ART David Dumfries <i>Mixed Media</i></p>	<p>9 COFFEE JAR Paul Barlinnie <i>Pencil on Paper</i></p>
<p>4 MALCOLM X Danny Dumfries <i>Pencil on Paper</i></p>	<p>10 OLD BRIDGE Derek Shotts <i>Acrylic on Canvas</i></p>
<p>5 PROTEST Peter Glenochil <i>Collage</i></p>	<p>11 MY ONE AND ONLY Andrew Shotts <i>Watercolour</i></p>
<p>6 AMY Paul Glenochil <i>Pastels on Paper</i></p>	<p>12 TITAN & TRIDENT David Low Moss <i>Pencil on Paper</i></p>

ST/R

In a decaying society, art, if it is truthful, must also reflect decay. And unless it wants to break faith with its social function, art must show the world as changeable. And help to change it.

Ernst Fischer

Call for submissions for Issue Fourteen

Issue Fourteen is based on the theme of myths and fairytales, so we're calling it, **The Brothers Grimm Special**.

So please send us your tales, stories, poems and works of art that explore this magical world by **11 March 2016**.

CONTACT

Submit your work to your New College Lanarkshire Learning Centre through the following contacts:

WENDY MILLER

ROSEANN

MCNAMARA

HMP Barlinnie

MARISA FARRELL

HMP YOI

Cornton Vale

EM STRANG

JOHN OATES

HMP Dumfries

RACHEL CLIVE

HMP Glenochil

TESSA DUNLOP

JACCI STOYLE

HMP Greenock

SARAH MCKEE

HMP Low Moss

IÑIGO GARRIDO

HMP Shotts



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