

The Towner Times

The Friends of The Towner

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**FRIENDS
OF THE TOWNER**
Supporting the Arts in Eastbourne



The New Towner alongside the Congress Theatre

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Editorial

Things are now starting to come into place, with the opening of the new gallery about to become a reality. The official opening is being planned for the last week of November, with a Friends Opening Event to be scheduled for that week. In the following week we hope we shall be able to start our programme of events, with an illustrated talk by Anthony Penrose, a very well known figure in the art world, who will be talking about Picasso and Lee Millar, whom he is uniquely qualified to talk about, considering that Lee Millar was his mother. We shall be holding this event in what is intended to become our regular venue in the new Centre, which is Community Room 3. This is an attractive room close to the main Gallery and adjacent to the Café/Bar area. The room has most outstanding views looking out across the town. We are hoping that this Café area will become a popular rendezvous for the public and our members, as this area will be open for a large part of the day and is in the close proximity of the two magnificent galleries and the Art Research Room. I am happy to report that this room will also have our grand piano permanently sited in it. This will enable us to regularly feature musical events, which has always been our intention and which are such an important part of our events programme.

The building has still not been officially handed over to the Council so until this occurs the extensive interior fitting out cannot begin. Some of us were privileged to have a preliminary tour of the building in early July and we were tremendously impressed with it and the facilities which it is going to offer. The main gallery is truly stunning in its design and the Collection Gallery should also be a great attraction for the public, as it exhibits works from the permanent collection, in which there is so much interest. Make no mistake about it, this building should be a tremendous asset to the Town and really put Eastbourne on the map culturally. Like any building it does not in itself assure success, but the potential is there, if the right exhibitions and events are staged in it. The Friends have a very important role to play in this as we intend to launch a very ambitious programme of events, centred around the visual arts, but also featuring music and literature, which we have always believed enhance the cultural experience of those attending the galleries.

We shall be launching a far reaching Membership Drive in the next few months to coincide with the lead up to the opening of the new gallery. The opening of the new gallery will offer us a unique opportunity to expand our membership. We hope to see a rapid increase as people realise what a tremendous lot The Friends, combined with the new gallery, has to offer. With a larger membership we shall be able to put on a wider range of events and generate more finance with which to support the gallery. We need the support of you all if this Membership drive is to be successful. We are hoping that each existing member can enrol at least two new members.

Linked to the Membership Drive we are also going to introduce a system of concessionary prices for events for members. A member will be entitled to one ticket at

a reduced price, or in the case of Joint Members, two. The aim of this is to encourage more people, who attend our events, to become members. Initially we are going to put up our ticket price by £1 but to give £1 off to members, which effectively means that the price will remain the same for them.

The Towner Times is continuing to be very well received but we are being faced with increasing costs for its production and distribution. It has also become more difficult to attract sponsorship and advertising revenue in the present financial climate. We do therefore need help from our members in finding sponsors and advertisers. In connection with this we are publishing our advertising charges in this edition.

We hope that members will find the programme of events, leading up to Christmas, attractive and interesting. Unfortunately we are still not able to give the actual opening date, so members will be mailed with an invitation to this separately, when the date is known.

Why Not Advertise in The Towner Times?

The Towner Times is sent out quarterly to over 500 members in and around the Eastbourne area and as far a field as West Sussex, Kent and London. If you advertise in our quarterly publication you can be guaranteed a wide circulation without any effort. Just provide us with your copy and we do the rest! What could be easier? We also have a website where we can link into your organisation.

Advertisement rates are as follows:	A full page	£100
	Half Page	£ 50
	Quarter Page	£ 25
A link on our website	One Year	£350

For further information please contact: Elizabeth Muir-Lewis (01323) 507337 or email on pridmore789@tiscali.co.uk



David Bomberg – Self portrait – see page 18

The New Towner



Side view

Eastbourne Society's Victorian Festival **27th September – 5th October**

This will be the fifth Victorian Festival and there is an interesting series of events taking place at various venues throughout the town as part of this. The Festival Brochure is available, free of charge, from the Heritage Centre opposite the Winter Garden.

Two events which may be of particular interest to members, both at St. Saviour's and St. Peters Church, South St. are -

The King's Singers Sun.28th Sept. at 5pm Tickets £14

**Emma Johnson M.B.E. The world renowned clarinettist -Thurs 2nd October 7pm.
Tickets £12**

For both these events, tickets are available from the Congress Theatre Box Office, The Tourist Information Office, or the Church on the day of the event.

Art in Education

‘Collection Connections’

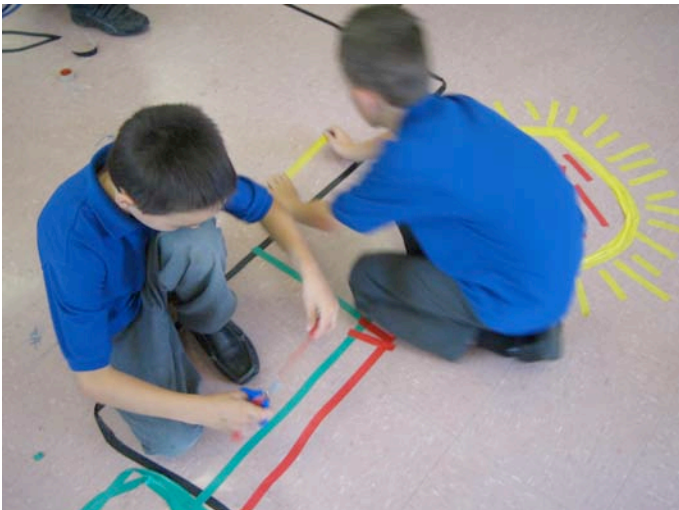
The Towner Art Gallery working with Creative Partnerships (Hastings & East Sussex) took works of art from the Towner Collection out across the county earlier this year. A diverse and exciting selection of works was on display in Lewes Town Hall during April, Phoenix Arts Centre in Hastings during May, and Uckfield Civic Centre in June.

By working in partnership with educational and cultural organisations, the team were able to demonstrate how the Towner Art Collection could be used as a catalyst to support cross-curricular activity and creative learning.

In carrying out this project, the Collection Connections partnership has, at the same time, raised the profile of Towner Art Collection across the county as an intrinsic partner for creative development in schools.

The partnership offered schools the opportunity for an artist to work with classes on their visit to see the collection display, engaging them in a practical session.

Teachers in the area were also offered a continuing professional development session at each venue. This session gave a user friendly introduction to the art work plus practical ideas on making the most of the school visit to the exhibition and when back in the classroom. Teaching resources are currently being developed in conjunction with this project and a complete resource pack will be launched when the new Gallery opens.



Pupils at work

Lost Horizons

Towner Outreach

Lost Horizons will be the opening Outreach exhibition on the ground floor of the New Towner. *Lost Horizons* is commissioning artists to explore, through collaborative creative processes with young people at risk and those most marginalized within East Sussex, ideas of need, utopia, collaboration and social engagement.

It will utilize multi media and incorporate film, sculpture photography, sound and installation. The majority of the work will provide a series of unique interactive opportunities for the visiting public, allowing in some cases for the audience to complete and contribute to the work.

The first phase of the project involved a series of artist led workshops which took place across the county as part of the public consultation phase of the Integrated East Sussex Community Strategy. This involved approx 50 people from over 9 partner organisations.

The project draws its main inspiration from the James Hilton novel written in 1933 bearing the same name, which was subsequently brought to the big screen in 1937 by Frank Kapra. The story is set in the troubled years before World War Two and tells of a community in a lamasery (a monastery for Tibetan lamas), in the lost Tibetan valley of Shangri-La, cut off from the world and from time.

In the increasingly pessimistic 1930s, when Western civilization seemed bent on a path to self-destruction - and when, as Carl Jung put it, 'the smell of burning was in the air' - the story of a kind of earthly paradise had an irresistible appeal and has proven to be an enduring one.

Artists: Samuel Dowd, Hayley Skipper, Hannah Chiswell, Susan Diab, Jane Henderson, Dinah Morgan & Jane Lyster



Young people on outreach work

Interview with a member of the Towner Staff **Sara Cooper - Collections Curator by Frances Line**

Meeting Sara Cooper for the first time is like taking a deep breath of sea air. She is bright, knowledgeable, enthusiastic and keen to get on with the job. I'm delighted to say that she is the new Collection's Curator of the Towner Art Gallery. As such she will be responsible for the display and movement, documentation and care of works in the Towner Collections and she will organise exhibitions involving these works and will also purchase new works to augment the Collection.

Born in Chester, Sara comes to Eastbourne from Norwich where she was, for six years, Collections and Exhibitions Officer at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts at the University of East Anglia. She has also worked on secondment in Kansas ,USA and had work experience in Worthing (where she was educated, pre-University) Kendal (Cumbria) and Tate St. Ives (Cornwall) Sara took her degrees in the UEA in Norwich, gaining an MA in Museology and the History of Visual and Material Culture.

Sara and her husband – a scientist – live in Old Town. At the moment she is based in Grove Road but eventually her working hours will be spent in the new building. In her spare time Sara has recently taken up roller-blading. She also enjoys reading and listening to the Radio – particularly to “The Archers”.



Sara Cooper

Sara and the team are keen to form good relationships with the Friends and she is very much looking forward to meeting the membership. She sees the Friends' role as being strengthened in the future and will be considering inviting Friends with suitable

knowledge to show groups round the Galleries from time to time

Sara is anxious to express the universal appeal of the collections. She feels that it is vitally important “to honour and respect the more traditional aspects” and – while hoping that Friends who profess not to like “modern art” will at least give it a try- it is her intention to give space to the old as well as to the new.

When the new building opens the first Collection exhibition will be a People’s Choice. The people of Eastbourne will be shown a variety of images from the collections and the most popular will be displayed in the main gallery. What would be Sara’s choice from the Collections? Her time at Tate St. Ives has obviously left its mark because she would pick a Ben Nicholson or a Christopher Wood. She also admires Elizabeth Magill, particularly ”Overhead 3” 2002, oil on canvas.

Once the new building is open, you may well see Sara in and around the Galleries. If you do, I urge you to introduce yourself and to wish her well. It’s quite possible that we have a little treasure in our midst!

Friends Future Events

Caroline Tyler Piano Recital at the Hydro Hotel

Tuesday 9th September £10 7.30 pm

We are delighted to welcome the winner of the Norah Sande Award 2007 to perform a piano recital for us. The outline programme for the recital will be as follows –

Schubert. Two Impromptus from D. 899 :

Debussy: Three Preludes:

Liszt: Benediction de Dieu dans la solitude

Interval

Liszt: Two concert Etudes

Debussy: Three etudes

Prokofiev: Sonata No. 2 in d minor

Glyndebourne Lecture

David Pickard

General Director Glyndebourne

Tuesday 21st October

7.30pm

£8

At The Hydro Hotel

Given one of the top jobs in opera David confesses “I still have to pinch myself”. His career journey is impressive. Choral scholar at Cambridge, trained as a musician, then the Royal Opera House, Manager of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment among others. “I’ve worked with some fantastic organisations. I’ve been lucky”.

Such modesty fits this attractive young Director his obvious excitement, commitment and enthusiasm are contagious.

“To work with a company that does such high quality work is something to cherish”

His passion for opera came early, in particular for Wagner, leading him to a pilgrimage to Bayruth when only 17!

When he was appointed as Glyndebourne’s General Director in 2001 he joined one of the youngest management teams in opera...Gus Christie (Chairman) and Vladimir Jurowski (Musical Director) and David, the youngest of the three at just 40.

He concedes that the long Glyndebourne tradition of excellence was a huge responsibility. “An honour but also terrifying, because you have a legacy to look back on full of extraordinary things” He set out not to dwell on the past but to look forward. “That Glyndebourne changes where appropriate, but you never lose sight of those core values” We all know how much more accessible Glyndebourne now is. Tickets from an open box office, cinema screenings, pre opera talks, special illustrated events for schoolchildren, a bit more relaxed over dress (but not too much) but a very long way on from when John Christie (The Founder) sent people away if they were not dressed appropriately!

David is a bit of a risk taker “It’s a risky business” he says “If an opera doesn’t quite fall into place it can sink a whole evening”.

He realises how difficult it is to create wonderful nights at the opera house “but I think Glyndebourne should be happy with it’s track record” The Education Department flourishes, the understudy department grows each year, and David Pickard reigns because he has “An intense love of the art form”.



David Pickard



Glyndebourne Opera House – View from the garden

Jazz Evening

At The Hydro Hotel

Thursday 20th November 7.30 pm

£12

On Thursday 20th November we shall be presenting the six-piece Andy Dickens Band at the Hydro Hotel.

Led by their dynamic trumpeter and vocalist this vibrant group plays accessible and enjoyable jazz in a variety of popular styles that range from New Orleans through swing to jump-jive to bop, Latin and funk. Moving from Duke Ellington via Louis Armstrong to Miles Davis.

The band features several musicians whose reputations are both national and international. Andy himself has performed with a host of American jazzmen and has recently been fulfilling engagements with the Humphrey Lyttleton Band - filling the shoes of the King of British Jazz, who died earlier this year.

The group's wide repertoire, crafted arrangements and enthusiasm are sure to appeal to young and old alike.

Our jazz events invariably sell out rapidly so early booking is essential. The ticket price remains at £12 but this may have to increase in the New Year if only because of the extra fuel costs that have to be borne by the bands travelling to Eastbourne.



Andy Dickens

Art Lecture

At The Gold Room

Tuesday 2nd December

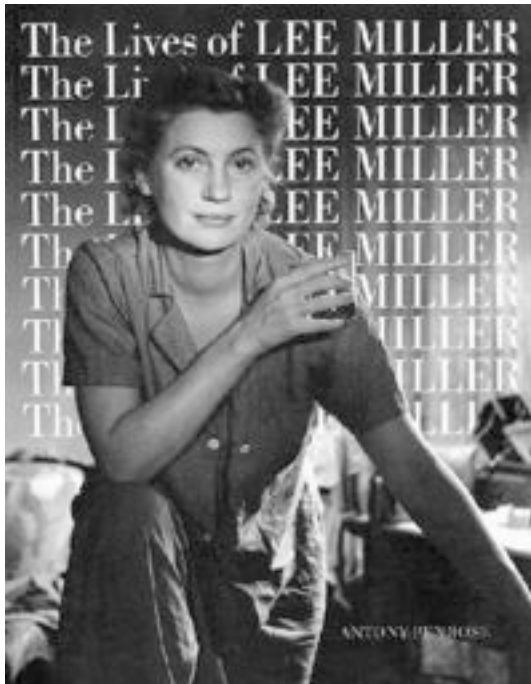
7.30pm - £8

Lee Miller and Picasso by Anthony Penrose

For one of the first art lectures in the new gallery we are fortunate to have with us one of the best known figures in British art – Anthony Penrose. Anthony, a local man has taken a close interest in the Towner Gallery over many years. He is, of course, the son of Sir Roland Penrose and Lee Miller, the distinguished American Photographer. Sir Roland was one of the founders of the Surrealist Movement in Britain and was one of the organisers of the International Surrealist Exhibition staged in London in 1937. He was a friend of the founders of the Surrealist Movement such as Max Ernst, Miro and Picasso. He was a lifelong friend of Pablo Picasso, who used to come and stay with him at Chiddingly and he is the author of, what is considered to be the definitive biography of Picasso – His Life and Work, which was published in 1958. Sir Roland's second wife was Lee Miller and they married in 1947.



Anthony Penrose



Lee Miller

Lee Miller and Picasso

The relationship between Miller and Picasso began during the enchanted summer holiday they shared in the Cote d'Azur in 1937 and lasted until Picasso's death in 1973. Picasso painted 6 portraits of Lee Millar and she photographed him more than 1,000 times. She was a frequent visitor to his home in the post war years accompanying Roland Penrose on his many research trips while he was writing his biography of Pablo Picasso. Later he curated the 1960 Arts Council retrospective of Picasso's work at the Tate, and facilitated many other Picasso projects internationally. Lee Miller was the documenter of these events, in words as well as photographs. The story of her loving and creative friendship with Picasso will be told in this lecture mainly by using Lee Millar's own photographs and many images of works by Picasso. It is prefaced by a brief biography of Lee Millar and Sir Roland Penrose. This lecture is funny and moving and gives a highly informative view of Picasso seen through the eyes of his closest friends and is narrated by Lee Miller and our speaker, Anthony Penrose, who as a child was a frequent visitor to Picasso's homes.

This talk is linked to a series of digital images. It was created for the National Gallery of Scotland at the time of their 2007 exhibition of Picasso's ceramics titles *Fired with Passion*. Please note that there are images of violence and suffering in the war that some people may find disturbing.

Christmas Music and Poetry Event
at the Hydro Hotel
Six Characters In Search Of Entertainment

Tuesday 9th December

£8

7.30 pm

Six well known local people will share with you their pleasure in words and music. There will be song and laughter, rhythm and rhyme to drive away thoughts of fog and cold! Ann Gregory (who has acted in and directed plays and given readings) Robin Gregory who has edited a poetry magazine and presented more than fifty programmes on singers for Radio 2) Elizabeth Muir. Lewis (singer, conductor and an experienced actress) as well as the Duo Shirlene Billinness (Soprano) and Susan Winge (Mezzo), well known in Eastbourne as duettists. Accompanied by David Grundy (Piano)



Shirlene Billinness



Susan Winge



Elizabeth Muir Lewis



Ann Gregory

Christmas Coffee Morning Saturday 13th Dec. at The New Towner

This will be held in the Café area of the new Gallery. It will start at 10.30 am. More details of this will appear in the next edition of the Towner Times but no advance booking is necessary. It will be an opportunity for people to renew their subscriptions and book for future events

Christmas Luncheon - Tuesday 16th December
12.30 for 1.00pm – Chatsworth Hotel - £16

We are again repeating this popular event which has been so successful for the past two years. There will be various toasts and some entertainment following the meal. We shall invite several guests to join us. This year we are asking people to select certain menu options in advance so as to help the Hotel to avoid preparing unnecessary food and so enabling them to offer us a better financial deal. Please make your selections on the Booking Form.



The Chatsworth Hotel
Tuesday 16th December 12.30 for 1 pm
Christmas Lunch Menu

Fanned Honeydew Melon with Exotic Fruits & Raspberry Coulis

Classic Caesar Salad

.oOo.

Roast Sussex Turkey with all the Trimmings

Poached Scottish Salmon Fillet with Hollandaise Sauce

Vegetarian Spinach & Mascarpone Lasagne

All served with a selection of seasonal
Vegetables & Potatoes

.oOo.

Traditional Christmas Pudding with Brandy Sauce

Fresh Fruit Salad & Cream

.oOo.

Coffee & Mints

Please place your drinks order at the Bar before you go in



A Report on a Past Event

The Mosaics of Ravenna

Jane Angellini- a much travelled and gifted speaker came to address the Friends in June and to transport them to Italy to view the Ravenna Mosaics. The city has a colourful history. Now landlocked in the Middle Ages it was a great seaport on the Adriatic. Today it is a place of peace, beauty and culture and is twinned with Chichester. But by far Ravenna's greatest claim to fame is its kaleidoscopic array of glittering wall mosaics, housed in a cluster of 5th and 6th century churches. Mosaics is the art of creating images with small pieces of coloured glass (known as tesserae) sometimes backed with fragments of pottery or semi-precious stones to create a pattern or picture. Ravenna boasts a unique collection of mosaics - breath taking masterpieces of early Christian art.

Jane is an authority on wall mosaics and brought with her a selection from her first rate collection of slides. These captured the vivid colours of the various works and the craftsmanship of their makers, and Jane's commentary was highly informative and absorbing. You could hear a pin drop throughout and given that she was addressing a full house in the Garden Suite at the Hydro Hotel, this said a lot for her skill as a speaker. All in all it was a delightful evening and no doubt a number of her audience will be Ravenna bound in the near future to see the treasures for themselves.



Impossible Changeling – Caroline Wright



Beach Huts with pebble collection inside

This New Towner artwork by artist Caroline Wright was staged at Beach Huts 8 and 10 beneath the Wish Tower slope. It took as its central theme transformation and change and was meant to mirror the move from the old gallery to the new. Caroline was inspired by Eastbourne's beach front with its distinctive pebble and shingle. She became interested in the importance of the individual pebble. She said "On visiting the coast and walking along the beach it is not uncommon to spend time looking for that elusive pebble - perhaps one with a hole through the centre, or one that is a particular colour or shape. Bringing it home into our own personal domain and giving it a status separated from the crowd, the pebble becomes a treasured artefact."

During the exhibition period Caroline placed 142 pebbles along the beach front to represent the number of miles between Eastbourne and Suffolk where she lives. The appearance of each pebble was dramatically changed by the application of a thin layer of gold leaf before making the journey to Eastbourne.

The pebbles' transformation and journey to Eastbourne was meant to mirror the move of the Collection from the old gallery to the new. By coating the pebble in a layer of gold leaf the aim was to enhance the beauty and worth of each pebble beyond its everyday appearance and function. Due to the effect of weathering and time the gold leaf will eventually be removed and each pebble is returned to its former state.

The public were invited to search the beach for their own Changeling pebble and to think about their own individual response to change and location of familiar objects. In Beach Hut 12 there was a limited number of pebbles placed in numbered boxes which had been collected in advance by Towner Exhibition Curator Sanna Moore and Yasmin Canvin, an independent curator.

A Picture from The Towner Collection



David Bomberg *Portrait of Kitty, the artist's sister, 1929*

Oil on canvas 58.2 x 47.3 cm.

Acquired 1988.

David Bomberg (1890 – 1959)

David Bomberg was born in Birmingham, the son of Polish refugees. He attended the Slade School and also Sickert's classes at the Central School. He was initially influenced by the exhibition in London of the works of Manet and the Impressionists but he soon turned his interest to Cubism. He was briefly in Paris in 1914 but in 1915 he enlisted in the army and endured trench warfare until 1918. In 1918 he was

commissioned by the Canadian Army to paint *Sappers at Work* but his first version was rejected because it was Cubist and he repainted it in 1919. After the war his style became more conventional and in 1923 he applied to the Zionist Office to be one of the artists recording the Jewish settlement in Palestine. His work did not however please his employers, who wanted him to portray the efforts of the Jewish settlers but he preferred to feature in his paintings the picturesque Arab landscape, excelling in showing the effect upon it of the light and sun. He gave up this work in 1927 and returned to London until 1929 when he began a peripatetic existence travelling around Spain, Scotland and Russia. He spent a lot of time in Spain until the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War when he returned again to Britain with serious money troubles. On the outbreak of the Second World War he was initially refused employment by the Artists Advisory Committee but he was later accepted and went on to produce some outstanding paintings showing London after the Blitz. In 1948 he resumed his travels around Europe in various teaching posts. He tried to start an art school but this failed ruinously and he returned to England in the late 1950s in poor health where he soon died. He had very little success as a painter during his lifetime but since his death his reputation has steadily risen and his works are now on show in some of the worlds greatest art galleries and he is becoming regarded as one of the outstanding British artists of the 20th century.



In The Hold 1913-1914

The above is one of his most famous paintings is of a style which Bomberg adopted in the years leading up to World War 1. It is a complex geometric composition combining the influences of cubism and futurism. He used a limited range of striking colours sometimes overlaying the whole painting with a strong grid like work. In 1914 he had a solo exhibition at the Chenil Gallery in Chelsea which was widely acclaimed and was probably the highlight of his career.

Bomberg moved to a more conventional style in the 1920's when his work became dominated by portrait and landscape .The work in the Towner Collection is from this period.

A welcome addition to The art scene In Eastbourne The Da Vinci Hotel

The Da Vinci Hotel, situated in Howard Square officially opened in May 2008. It is Eastbourne's first art hotel and is an attempt to bring together art and hospitality under one roof. The restored and renovated Victorian Grade 2 listed building is intended as a venue for art exhibitions by local professional artists. There are four rooms devoted to art and these are complimented by a dining room, a conference room, a conservatory and a fully licensed bar, which is open to non residents. One of the art rooms will be a Community Art room devoted to the work of amateur artists. When complete the hotel will have twenty refurbished and redecorated en suite bedrooms of which there are at present eight in use. In keeping with the art theme of the hotel, each will feature a different artist ranging from Monet to Matisse and Klimt to Kandinsky. The owner of the hotel is Paul Metcalf who is an ardent art lover with an extensive art collection of his own, which he has built up over several years. In this project Paul is working in close collaboration with the well known local artist Mary Beaney. Mary has been an Eastbourne resident for over thirty years and, since 1995, has presented the Art on The River Exhibitions at her studio in Pevensey Bay and at various other local venues. The intention is to open the hotel all year round, with the art exhibitions changing about every two months. The exhibitions are intended to be exciting, colourful and innovative with a mixture of styles, mediums and subjects. There will be paintings, in mixed media, ceramics, jewellery and beads, as well as wildlife photography. Most of the art work is for sale at prices ranging from £5 to £500.

Entry to the art exhibitions is free from 11am to 5pm each day with private viewings by appointment.



Da Vinci Hotel- Howard Square

Some of the work of local artists featured at the Da Vinci Hotel



Elda Abranson – Painter

Julie Snowball - Ceramics



Adam Beaney – Photographer

Ben Ecclestone -Painter





David Armitage - Painter

Peter Snowball - Ceramics

A profile of a local artist Mary Beaney

Mary Beaney has lived in the Eastbourne area for 33 years. She established her Art on The River Exhibitions 14 years ago. Mary has been painting seriously since 1987. She studied for four years part time, for Fine Art Diploma at Eastbourne College of Arts and Technology (now known as Down College) under the auspices of Brighton University. She has investigated various forms of media – oils, printmaking, drawing and ceramics to represent her thoughts and emotions in an art form. At the present time she has settled on the use of acrylics on various surfaces – canvas, card, board, plaster. She tackles a variety of subjects – portraiture, still life, flowers and landscape.

Her work at present evolves from an instinctive response to the Sussex landscape. She makes sketches in situ then works on her paintings in her studio, using acrylic and mixed media, building up with subtle layers, often scraping back and reworking. The resultant textural surface reflects nature as she sees it.



The inspiration for her current work is Pevensey Castle which she lives close to. She is not influenced by any artists in particular but looks to the likes of Tapiés and Rothko for texture and colour.



Mary Beaney



Poppies in a clay pot

Pathway to the rape fields

Friends of the Towner

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