



Olivia Clifton-Bligh



Jenny Ford



Rob Whelpton

Wylde Valley ART trail 2015

'The largest visual arts festival in Wiltshire'

The Wylde Valley Art Trail is a vibrant festival of visual arts and crafts; following a meandering trail through some of the south west's most beautiful landscapes, country lanes and market towns, including: Hindon, Mere, Tisbury, Warminster, Westbury and villages in between. It takes place for 9 days, from Saturday 23 - Sunday 31 May. There are 75 venues in a 10-mile radius from the centre of the Wylde Valley, South Wiltshire. You don't have to go far between them and there are no entry charges!

This is the 15th anniversary of the founding of the Wylde Valley Art Trail and it is now the largest and most diverse visual arts festival in Wiltshire, attracting many local artists, craftspeople and groups and bringing large numbers of visitors into the area.

Over 300 artists and craftspeople open the doors of their studios and workshops to visitors. Or show their work in galleries and exciting group exhibitions. The artists taking part range from regionally and nationally acclaimed figures, to those who are making names for themselves locally, to some who are just discovering their talents as students or members of groups. Each have a unique vision, a particular way of making art, and contribute to the exciting cultural profile of this part of the county.

Artists are often fairly reclusive creatures. The Wylde Valley Art Trail offers a rare opportunity to meet and talk to them about their ideas, inspirations and techniques. A wide range of high-quality visual arts is represented, including painting, sculpture, printmaking, furniture making, jewellery, installation art, digital art, ceramics, photography, glass and textiles. Much of the work on show is for sale. Many of the artists will be demonstrating their work, and you may also get the chance to have a go and get your hands dirty in the 'take pArt' sessions!

Colourful and attractive brochures are available free from Tourist Information Centres, Arts Centres, and many other locations. These provide listings of the various venues, a map of the art trail area, show images of work which can be seen and give directions and opening times.

The website: www.wvat.co.uk has all the information that can be seen in the brochure. In addition, there are links to artists' own websites, enlarged images of artwork and links to the Wylde Valley Art Trail facebook page with lots more images.

Wylde Valley Art Trail is an artist-led, non-profit project, organised by an enthusiastic team of volunteers.

For further information / artists' details or hi-res images contact:
Laura Rich (co-ordinator) t: 07910 736563 / info@wvat.co.uk



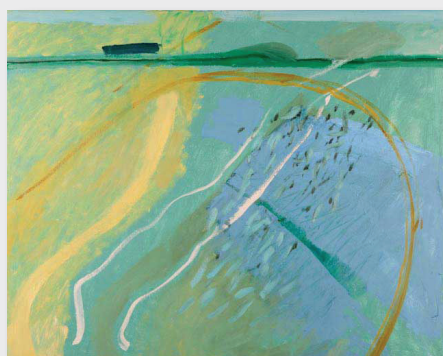
Richard Howell



Matthew Burt



David O'Connor



Sally McLaren



Ruth Dresman

Trail Artists Include:

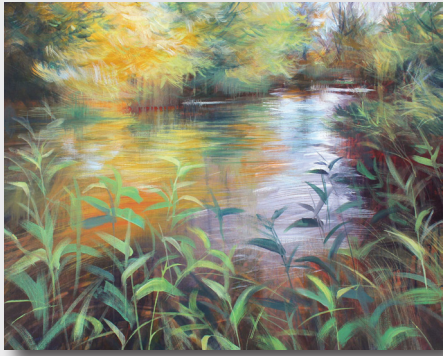
David O'Connor is a polymath: painter, sculptor and photographer. He considers himself a landscape artist, and the quiet serenity and stillness of the Wiltshire countryside can be discerned in his somewhat austere, highly abstracted pieces. As he says: "(my) work is not directly representational in the traditional sense. The world is an infinitely beautiful place but I believe it is beyond representation. What we do as artists is remind people of this by alluding to the sublime nature of our existence. The work is poetry not prose".

Sally McLaren's paintings, drawings and prints are highly abstracted, yet, like the work of David O'Connor, retain a strong link to the landscape they represent. As she says: "Landscape in all its facets preoccupies me. The air, the elements, the geological make-up. The life that springs in landscape, the spirit of it, the growth and organisms of centuries, the effects of wind and rain and sun, and the marks left by man from past to present. In my work - painting, drawing, etching - I seek to convey these elements, the energy and the spirit and rhythm that surrounds us."

Richard Howell's work is not easy to define. Mostly sculptural, but with some relief work, his pieces are intricately crafted using a variety of materials, some found and others made or altered, often tied or sewn together with copper wire. He is currently involved with creating a series of reliquaries, small wire vessels containing strange but pertinent objects; his first one houses a simple cross tied to a medal band from the Crimean war, made to honour the soldier to whom the medal band had belonged.

Ruth Dresman creates exquisitely decorated glass vessels, delicately etching through coloured layers of the material. Her medium is not only glass, but light: she designs the way light travels through her pieces, achieving great depth of colour and piercing highlights of pure transparency.

The company **Matthew Burt**, a small team of designers, makers and managers led by Matthew and Celia Burt, create beautiful and functional furniture, from individual pieces to room sets and even the furniture for an entire house. Clean-lined and pure, these pieces have a contemporary yet classic feel to them.



Nick Andrew



Laura Rich



Joanna Still



Anthony Connolly

The style of the potter **Joanna Still** has evolved considerably since she started exhibiting on the Wylde Valley Arts Trail. Her earlier work was colourful and gorgeously decorative domestic earthenware: plates that you would use and admire every day. Gradually her work has evolved into pots that are more art than utilitarian: beautiful, spare and rather elemental, reflecting the way they are made - the fired pots are wrapped in various dry plant materials and buried in a kiln chamber where they are coloured by smoke from a slow burning fire.

Anthony Connolly, former winner of the Wiltshire Life Artist of the Year award, is one of the country's best portrait painters. One of his paintings, a portrait of the Cambridge don Dr Victoria Bateman, was featured in the Times, Guardian and Daily Mail newspapers last year; Dr Bateman had elected to be painted nude. Anthony Connolly does not restrict himself to portraits, and paints exquisite and unusual still lives: real jewels.

Nick Andrew, the founder of the Wylde Valley Arts Trail, is a landscape painter particularly inspired by the Wylde River and its environs. He aims to portray the freshness and vitality of the ever-changing vista around the banks of the river. Widely collected, his work can be found in such illustrious collections as those of the Houses of Parliament, Sainsburys PLC, Shell UK and Weetabix.

Laura Rich was recently commissioned to paint 64 large paintings for the new P&O cruise ship 'Britannia'. Although trained as an illustrator, Laura works predominantly now as a landscape painter. Her work is an attempt to explain the emotional connection to the Wiltshire and Dorset landscape; though she does not try to represent the landscape figuratively, she always starts from her sketchbook and her memory of the place, trying to connect with how she felt at the time of sketching. Though abstracted, there is a strong connection to reality, reinforced with such gorgeous titles as 'When the boys were fossil hunting', 'Red wellies out' and 'Wonderful was your love for us'.

Also exhibiting is the award-winning sculptor and printmaker, **Olivia Clifton-Bligh**, the pastel landscapist **Joanna Sims**, the printmakers **Jenny Ford** and **Jennie Gilling**, the potters **Rob Whelpton**, **Jenny Gilbert** and **Russell Coates**, and so many more.

www.wvat.co.uk



Joanna Sims