



Anne Griffiths – Contemporary Textile Art – January Newsletter

Dear All,

The January snow did its best, but did not prevent the European Sculpture Network's New Year's Brunch going ahead on 20th January at the New Greenham Arts Centre.

This event is the network's annual celebration of Contemporary Sculpture and is held in 39 locations in 12 countries simultaneously. Eleven of us gave brief presentations about our work and I was very honoured as the only non sculptor to have been invited to speak.

The network is open to anyone involved with or interested in sculpture and three-dimensional art and it is well worth checking the [website](#).

Many thanks to the sculpture [Johannes Von Stumm](#) for organising such an interesting event. An example of his work is shown above.



I am very happy to say that my [Distance Learning Machine Embroidery](#) course is running well. One of my students has almost finished her first unit and I am very hopeful that next month I will be posting images of her work.

To enhance this course I have been busily filming some video examples. I cannot say what a time consuming exercise it is, particularly when working at home with a small digital camera! Finally, the first two video's are now available on [Pocketmousechannel](#). They

go with Unit One and cover [“Setting Up the Machine”](#) and [“Starting to Stitch”](#). They should be useful to anyone who is beginning machine embroidery whether taking my course or not - more to come on cable stitch, couching, wing and twin needles soon.

[Denman college](#) have just asked me to run the City & Guilds Machine Embroidery courses for them in Oxfordshire. The first level that I will teach is the C&G 7722 which runs over two sessions each three days, residential at the college. When I taught this in college, it was taught either over a week as a summer school or as a 10 week evening class of 2 hour sessions, both a total of 30 teaching hours. Over the two weekends at Denman students will actually get 33 teaching hours so there is more time to complete the work plus some time at home in between.



Like all City & Guilds craft courses, it is composed of a design element and an embroidery unit where you learn machine embroidery techniques. Denman have sewing machines available so if you don't have your own machine you could use theirs and see how you get on and then go before investing in your own. For more information either [contact me](#) or the college.



I will also be running a Corded bags workshop on 12th March and Illuminated Letters and Metallics workshop on Wednesday 13 March 2013 - Friday 15 March 2013 at Denman College.

In the Corded bags class you will use wools and yarns to create your own fabric which will be the background material for a small bag or purse.

In the Illuminated Letters class you will use old wooden printing blocks together with a range of metallic

materials to create a letter in the style of a Medieval manuscript. Hand or machine stitch can be used to embellish your letter and the course is suitable for complete beginners.

Due to the snow, the "[Fabric Pocketbooks](#)" workshop was cancelled but I have rescheduled it for 21st March, the first day of spring! The syllabus is the same, stencilling with paint and markal as well as stitching. There are places available.

The "Beach" course in Cornwall is just a few weeks away. I have put some [sketchbook](#) pages on the website. After the course I will be publishing the ideas, techniques and exercises we did during the week as a Distance Learning option.



My other residential course "[Gardens](#)", will be held 18th-25th October near The Lost Gardens of Heligan in Cornwall. You can see all the information together with images of work completed last March on the link above.

For more information on any of the above please [contact me](#).

In January, I have visited two exhibitions, both at the Royal Academy, which couldn't be more different.



[Mariko Mori: Rebirth](#) is an exhibition by New York based Japanese artist Mariko Mori

The first piece is a towering white translucent monolith with pulsing light linked in real time to the explosions resulting from a star's death. Other pieces are manipulated photographs of stars in large round frames.

Other themes explore the winter solstice, sculptures half prehistoric stone circles, half Japanese tea garden are lit with the colours informed by the movement of the planets.

Personally, I enjoyed the themes of this exhibition very much, but I felt that the pieces lacked the power to do justice to the subject matter.

[Constable, Gainsborough, Turner - The Making of Landscape](#) features works by these masters, as well as explaining the development and change in the attitude to landscape painting due to the popularity of prints during 18th and 19th centuries. The image shown here is Constable's 6' high painting "Leaping Horse".



Before the mid 18th century, landscapes had been considered by the Royal Academy at least, a lowly subject who regarded history painting as the more worthy subject.

The Grand Tourists however, brought home numerous prints of the landscape paintings by European masters of the 17th century such as Nicolas Poussin and Claude Lorraine, many of which are shown in the exhibition.



The picture considered to be the origin of the change in attitude was Richard Wilson's "The Destruction of Niobe and her Children" and the print after it by William Woollett. The painting caused a sensation at the Royal Academy when it was shown in 1760, for the first time the British landscape was as important as the figures in it.

Each artist took a different attitude towards their painting and the prints that advertised them so well.

Gainsborough experimented himself with prints but did not see them as a marketable commodity. Turner and Constable, on the other hand, took them very seriously and learnt the skill of printmaking and mezzotinting plates themselves.

This is a fascinating exhibition where so much can be learned about the development of landscape painting and the importance of print to the marketing of the artists' works.

So until my next newsletter, when I hope spring will be on it's way, all the best,

Best,

Anne