



Anne Griffiths – Contemporary Textile Art – May 2014 Newsletter

Dear All,

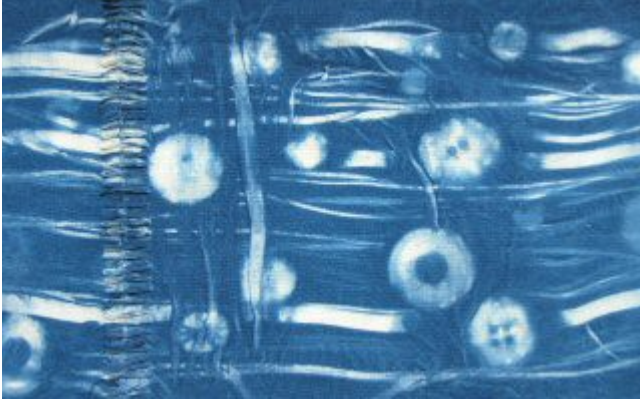
As summer is fast approaching, the first thing to mention are a couple of summer schools.

This year I will be teaching [Beachcombing](#) in Oxford on 28th July- 2nd August this will include indigo dyeing, printing and stencilling together with hand or machine stitch all on the theme of Beaches. A chance to prepare a sketchbook and projects to take away for the holiday or incorporate some of the ephemera that you have collected on previous holidays. I am so pleased to be teaching here, I remember some years ago attending as a student and making friends that I still see today, it is a stimulating yet relaxed environment to create work in and I am told that the weather is always perfect for this week. You can see the programme (the days are not the same, but the content will be) together with my samples and work from previous courses by following the links on my [website](#).

The second is a new summer school entirely, and is running at [Buckingham](#) from 4th-8th August (ignore the dates on the Buckingham website which say it is running on just Monday and Tuesday! The subject is [Gardens](#) which will focus mainly on machine embroidery and text. We will use lots of different metallics together with fabric paints and you could easily use this theme to consider creating some pieces based on illuminated manuscripts. There will also be lots of samples from my Alice in Wonderland exhibition and if you are more comfortable with hand stitch, please still feel very welcome to come, just let me know in advance.



Both courses are suitable for all levels of experience, 'Gardens' is a perfect way of learning machine embroidery. You will need to book both these courses through the summer schools, but don't hesitate to get in touch if you need any more information on the content.



If you are unable to come to a summer school, sometimes a week is too much to manage away from other commitments, I have managed to book another day at the [Courthill Centre](#) in Wantage for 17th July. For those who have been before this is a beautiful location on the Ridgeway with a coffee shop for lunch. As we are promised a hot summer, I thought this would be a good opportunity to set up an

indigo vat and do some dyeing. Hopefully we will also be able to get fabrics dried. Indigo is a fabulous dye but it is a bit of a pain to set up and so much easier to manage with more people. We can look at clamping and wrapping techniques as well as tie and dye and using stitch as a resist. There are lots of my own samples as well as other peoples results from the various Beach courses to give you ideas if you want to follow the previous links. If you would like to come and meet some like minded people and do some stitching, there will of course be a clean area and you are very welcome, just give me a ring and we can sort something out – have a look at the other workshops on the Beach course for some alternative ideas. The cost of this course will be £30 which will include the cost of the dye.

Dates for the next residential courses in Cornwall will be October 31st – November 7th which will be a repeat of the ["Trees"](#) course, the season will be completely different though and I am very excited about seeing Heligan in the autumn. You can see [my samples](#) and those from students on the [spring course](#) on my facebook page (you don't need a facebook account). If you are interested in focusing more on the ['Gardens'](#), then let me know, I am sure it can be accommodated.



By popular demand I will be repeating the [Beachcombing](#) course again from March 13th - 20th 2015 but for those who have come before, and some of you are already booked, this will be combined with a new week on handmade books, where we will look at one or two different book structures every day. If you are happier, spending more of the time on textiles it is certainly possible to combine the Books with either the theme of Beach or Trees and I am very happy to do a combination of the subjects. As the numbers are always limited to twelve, I think there will be plenty of time to cover all the topics and you are welcome to pick and choose as you please. I will be working on Book samples over the summer,

but there are certainly examples of previous ideas in my different albums and I will set up a new one solely for 'Books' before the next newsletter.

I know that many of you have followed the samples from Irene Donovan during the Distance Learning course, and she has now finished the final unit and the most beautiful quilted double sided child's playmat for her second assessment piece which you can see together with her [final samples](#). This one shows a flower made from scrim rouleau loops, a really imaginative idea for using this technique and one that could be taken further by adding some toning buttons perhaps. Irene began the course in April 2013, just over a year to finish which is about right, if you read her fabulous [blog](#) though you will see that she does so much more!



Before I begin on the exhibitions that I have visited recently, I wanted to remind you that all the colleges and universities will be holding their end of year exhibitions around this time and there will certainly be some great work to be seen. The one that I will certainly be visiting is the [Winchester School of Art BA](#) show, I have done a small machine embroidery onto a knitted cotton for [Lauren Bates](#) who is completing her degree in woven textiles. It will be really interesting to see how this interpretation of one of her designs fits with her woven and printed fabrics.

As well as textiles, other courses exhibiting will include Fine Art and Graphics.

So now onto exhibitions! I returned for a second visit to the [Richard Hamilton](#) at Tate Modern which is on until 26th May. This is a huge retrospective of Hamilton's work and it feels like you are walking through time, paintings, prints, polaroids, exhibition designs, installations and interiors pieces from the 1950's to those he was still working on when he died in 2011.

It will continue to be debated whether Hamilton was really the father of Pop Art, but he was certainly hugely influential. For me, his history paintings were of most interest. Hamilton injected a sense of humour and a cynical take on politics and current affairs in his iconic works such as '[Swingeing London 67](#)' and '[Kent State](#)' (1970). In 'Kent State', Hamilton photographed television images of the tragic events at the anti war demonstration at the Kent State University. These were reproduced as screen prints on paper and available in larger quantities than was usually produced. The 'frame' was rounded and the image blurred so that there

was no doubt where the print had originated. The aim though was to not to comment on the event but to relate the brief flicker of the image on a television screen to seminal moments in politics, also transient and lasting for only as long as it takes for the next story to come along. What is 'today's news is tomorrow's fish and chip paper'!

Hamilton continued with his political references throughout his life and in one of his later works 'Shock and Awe' (2007) he shows Tony Blair in full cowboy outfit in front of a smouldering landscape. A reference back to Warhol's pop art silkscreen print of Elvis - I think not - this is questioning the role of the ultimate US cowboy, George W. Bush and his influence on our part in the Iraq war – not bad for a man of 85!

Another event I attended this month which may be of interest, was a talk by painter, sculptor and photographer [Vic Muniz](#).

Growing up in Brazil under the military dictatorship of the 60's and 70's before moving to New York in 1985, Muniz was influenced by both his native surroundings as well as Pop Art. In his early work 'Sugar Children' he photographed the families of sugar workers and redrew them by sprinkling sugar onto black paper, these 'drawings' were then rephotographed for exhibition.

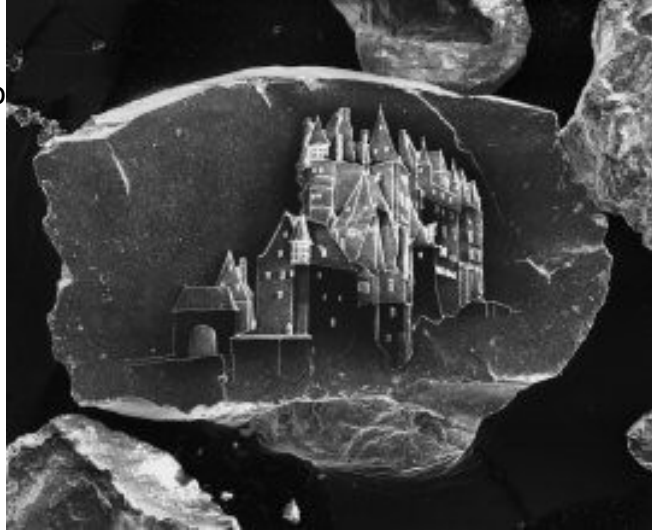


These works developed, and Muniz began appropriating historical images and reworking them in chocolate syrup, rubbish, caviare and even diamonds. I remember seeing this Warhol image of Marilyn Monroe made in chocolate syrup at Baltic Gallery Gateshead at his 'Pictures of People' exhibition in 2007.

As his interest in photography grew, he began experimenting with how this medium could be used distort our perception of scale and he made giant earthworks of everyday objects etched into the surface of iron, copper, and manganese mines which were then photographed from a helicopter.

The size of these works compares to the Nazca drawings in Peru or perhaps crop circles, both of which can also only be appreciated from above.

In his latest work, the scale of Muniz' images has swung to the other extreme working on the nano scale. He has collaborated with [Marcelo Coelho](#) spending over four years working on '[Etching Sand Castles On A Single Grain Of Sand](#)' where sandcastles drawn with use of a camera lucida have then been etched onto single grains of sand using a focused ion beam and scanning electron microscope. These works which have been photographed and printed on a large scale are so beautiful in part because the inherent imperfections in the sand grains seem to fit so perfectly into the drawings giving additional detail not originally intended. Do watch the video link it is amazing.



I am not sure how these things tend to link themselves together but I seem to have been struck by so many references to Pop Art this last few weeks. It may be too late to watch the fantastic Culture Show programme on Iplayer 'Pop Go the Women', but in case you missed it, check out the work of soft sculptor Jan Harworth and the man who is better known for the artform Claus Oldenburg.

Till next time the fabulous 'The Story of Women and Art' is still on Iplayer for a couple of weeks!

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a large initial 'A' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'e'.