



Gallery Newsletter March 2017 Hello!

In this issue

- Summer Season Exhibition
- Interview with Jill Holmes
- Spotlight on Lynn Bennett Mackenzie



Summer Season Exhibition

“ Wild for Colour ! ” May – August 2017

We look forward to hosting new work from our broad range of artists during the coming season. Submission forms are available from Torridon as well as the Centre's website. With the support of our fantastic pool of artists, we are being able to run some solo exhibitions again, beginning with Jill Holmes, whose work will be on show upstairs through April & May. The following interview with Jill, explores some of her journey in art.

Interview with Jill Holmes - Printmaker & Artist

Can you tell us a little bit about yourself ?

For as long as I can remember I've always painted or drawn.

When my sister and I were just knee high to grasshoppers, my Mum would roll out leftover wallpaper for us to play painting on! A love of creating with colour was well and truly instilled from a very young age.

Huge decisions at 17 changed the course of my life ...did I take my confirmed place at Nursing College or take a leap of faith onto an Art Foundation Course. The best decision I ever made was the leap of faith onto the Foundation Course. The chance to explore and experiment with so many new and exciting mediums and learn new techniques opened up a world that I



happily stepped into. Next step was heading to Leicester to complete my Honours Degree in Fine Art. There I flew, developing my love of life drawing, printmaking and photography. During my teaching years, I still managed to maintain a regular presence in the exhibiting world of Manchester and the North West. Not only did this keep me sane! but it kept me in touch with developments and movements in the Art world, plus it always proved a positive benefit with my students by being active as a working artist.

Constantly exploring and challenging my printmaking skills, I was lucky enough to have access



to the open print workshop at the old Preston Polytechnic and a meeting with printmaker Jane Campey was inspirational.

My work moved to a different level, more exhibitions followed including being selected for the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition. Now that was an experience I will never forget.

Moving to Scotland with my husband in 1999 was an epic journey, not just in miles but lifestyle. We have built up a successful business running boat cruises on Sealife Glass Bottom Boat from Gairloch Harbour, but after 8 years, even though I always worked, albeit designing on a computer rather than on paper, the urge to paint and create on a more permanent basis again has meant that I have moved away from the boat...(hubby is still running the cruises though!)

I'm having the best time ever rediscovering new techniques, directions and people from all walks of art.

Where are you based ?

Today looking out on snow topped mountains bathed in sunshine and blue skies I must live in one of the most beautiful part of the Highlands. Inverasdale is a small crofting township on the shores of Loch Ewe. No wonder so many visitors are drawn to this area, its stunning.

My studio overlooks the Loch, mountains and Inverewe Garden with the village of Poolewe in the distance. How I ever get work done always surprises me, the light changes every second.

Even though my studio isn't visitor friendly (too much stuff and not enough space to display!) Potential buyers are always welcome to view pieces at their leisure in the house or I am happy to take pieces to clients...time and miles allowing!

Or our local Tuesday market in Poolewe is a great place to touch base with me. As I write I'm in the process of creating a website which will showcase all of my work.

Inspirations ?

Most recently, inspiration has come from three different sources and they are all fellow artists who have woken me up to trying new

techniques. Sheila Bates who introduced me to felt making, Lynne Bennett Mackenzie for encouragement and my sister in law Julie for being dogged in her determination for me to push boundaries

Feeling a bit down in 2016, my sister in law sent through the post a bit of pewter to cheer me up, she felt that my style of working would lend itself to being challenged by a different medium. How right she was, I couldn't believe how inspired I was by this bit of silver metal. Hooked was an understatement, the more I did the more I learnt.

The nature of hand drawing on pewter, a metal which is very pliable and prone to stretching as you work, the imagery and design process has to be really thought through in order to maximise the detailed images. Medieval tapestries have been my main source of research, looking at the simplicity of leaf shapes, hunting scenes with conventional animals and the more mystical unicorns.

However as you will probably see my main passion are fish; glinting koi carp, shimmering salmon, silver mackerel shoals....absolutely no idea where the fish evolved from but in virtually every print or painting I have ever done there is a fish!!



Processes you enjoy most ?

This is a tough question.... all of them!

From the inception of the design in my head, to translating it onto paper, re - working each area to suit the medium of pewter. The thrill of the final design ready to be traced onto the pewter. I love the research of finding out how to work out what I see in my head to translate onto the image...to create iridescent colour on certain pieces sent me all over the internet until I chanced on a great guy who talked me through the process of working with gold leaf on metal.

The completed drawn piece is completely blackened with a patina, polishing that back with Brasso is so exciting as the composition slowly emerges from the dark for work with colour to begin. Colour is integral to my work as is pattern, seeing jewelled sheets of gold leaf laid out to apply to accentuate areas is just the biggest buzz, as is painting with gilding waxes to further create depth and movement, each individual finishing element keeps opening up the piece until I finally make the decision that I've finished.....a very hard moment.

What are you working on at the moment ?

Well at the moment with The Torridon Gallery exhibition beginning in April I'm working on a larger piece than usual as my central piece. It's incorporating all the elements I love, fish, medieval imagery, birds, foliage and patterned borders. It has been a real rollercoaster of a journey so far. The piece is larger than I normally work on, flipping it to work on both sides is to say the least a bit of an epic! I want to really encapsulate all the elements that make my work with pewter unique. Colour, particularly gold leaf will be key to enhancing selected areas.

But as usual my sketchbook and head are whirring with new ideas, a tryptic of golden fishes is already at the sketch stage along with a variety of owl and unicorn ideas that are just crying out to be given the pewter moment!

Contact Jill - email jhpewterart@gmail.com web jaholmes.com

'Spotlight On' Lynn Bennett Mackenzie ~ Mixed media Artist

Lynn is an established artist living and working in Gairloch, NW Scotland. She was brought up in remote rural areas of the Highlands of Scotland, and studied at Gray's School of Art, Aberdeen, graduating in 1990.

She enjoys creating in a variety of media and exploring new methods of working. Lynn has exhibited widely and taken part in several community and international projects including The Big Picture, Wild Wood, Landfill art, Global Nomadic art project and co-founded of Ceangal, a series of international artist residencies in the NW Highlands. She has also travelled and worked in India, S Korea & Russia.



Living in a remote rural area, Lynn has learned to adapt and create opportunities for herself and the area she lives in. She is open to new ideas and is always looking to expand her boundaries in her field of interest of people and place. She connects with the issues of people and place globally and enjoys interacting with people and developing and understanding cultures around the world and her travels in recent years reflect this.



2017 will be a busy year as Lynn has been invited to be the 1st artist in residence at the world renowned Inverewe Garden managed by NTS. The theme of this residency will be the Art of Nature: Nature Art – a year in the garden and estate at Inverewe. She will have two solo exhibitions there, March/Apr & Sept/Oct as well as working with the team at the garden, running workshops, working in and around the estate and keeping a blog about the process through which she hopes to engage the public to interact and react – this work will form the later show. This is an exciting development for Lynn & the garden and she is very much looking forward to being inspired by what is a very special space.

Lynn will also have a solo exhibition at the Ceilidh Place in Ullapool in July. Her work can also be found here in the Gallery, at the Whistlestop Café, Kinlochewe and Lael Crafts Gallery near Ullapool. She also runs a successful picture framing business and hosts B&B guests. In her “spare time” she enjoys reading, gardening, walking her dogs and spinning wool.

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Summer

Easter - October

Monday to Saturday

10am – 4pm

Closed Sunday

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Winter Opening November – Easter

Mon, Wed, Fri 11am – 3pm Closed Sunday.