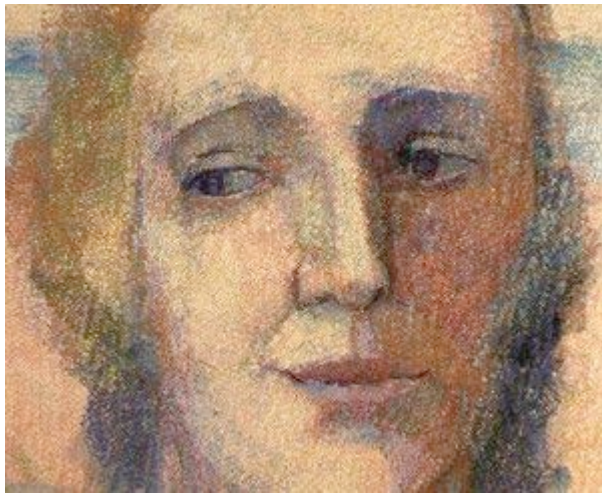


Information Pack

## **Rendezvous Goldsmiths**

A Celebration of Goldsmiths College – Textile Department 1975-88



## **Rendezvous Goldsmiths** **A celebration of Goldsmiths Textile Department 1975-88**

*'There I worked a long day discovering many things: material and abstract.'*  
Rozanne Hawksley

2013 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of Audrey Walker's retirement as Head of Textiles at Goldsmiths College after thirteen years in post. This exhibition is a celebration of the impact her period of tenure exerted on staff and students alike and of the enduring influence on UK textile practice of the approach they pursued. *Rendezvous Goldsmiths* is not a rigorous study of the educational development of textiles as an expressive medium during those years – that subject awaits further investigation. Rather, the exhibition aims to mark the work of a group of influential, creative individuals who share the heritage of that moment in time at Goldsmiths.

When Audrey Walker took up her appointment in 1975, Goldsmiths was on the cusp of change. Already established as a significant education centre with a supportive ethos, the textile department was about to institute a degree course. The opportunity was firmly grasped by Audrey. There is a sense of positive confluence in all this – a marrying of people, time, vision and creative ambition which resulted in the making of an innovative and energetic department in which 'students developed their own independent areas of research, exhuming and re-activating older techniques.'<sup>1</sup>

Based in the Millard Building, the textile department abutted the fine art faculty. That physical proximity had a profound effect. 'To have both a textile and fine art department within the same space was certainly unusual. Inevitably there was a great deal of interaction and discussion between our respective cultures, an identification of shared concerns and objectives. Above all in a largely pluralistic era, there was a fascination with *difference* which united or separated our respective enquiries.'<sup>2</sup>

Freedom, space, the lack of boundaries, the merging of disciplines, the encouragement of individuality: these are qualities which are referenced time and again by those who passed through the department. Rigor is another: the excellence of the workshop facilities, the skill of the technical staff, the stimulus of visiting lecturers, the challenge of tutorials. This was no place to sit on any laurels. 'Christine Risley wanted to throw me out at the end of the 1st year - I never understood that, but it gave me some fire to prove her wrong: I remember drawing until I wore through the paper.'<sup>3</sup>

Tensions there will have been, yet one of the defining characteristics of the department was the sense of mutuality: the awareness that this was a place where staff and students explored their discipline together. Creative

---

<sup>1</sup> Michael Brennand-Wood exhibition notes August 2013

<sup>2</sup> Op cit

<sup>3</sup> Dionne Swift exhibition notes February 2013

friendships made there have endured the years.

That this was a special period for those who experienced it was evident the moment we shared the idea of the exhibition. People were eager to participate. Memories and recollections were not solicited, yet sent by return.

*Rendezvous Goldsmiths* tries to capture something of this spirit. Most of the exhibits are new or recent: indicative of lifetimes spent as practitioners. The diversity of these works exemplifies the breadth and innovation promoted by the department: stitch, print, felt, weave, ceramics, glass, mixed media, collage, drawing and sculptural forms are all represented. Subjects and approaches differ from still life, the narrative and figurative to pattern and abstraction.

Several exhibits were specifically requested, perceived as works integral to the department's ethos of supportive, creative relationships: *Primmy's Dog* (Eirian Short/ Primmy Chorley), *The Odyssey* (Alice Kettle/Audrey Walker). *Beach Woman* (Audrey Walker/Michael Brennand-Wood).

Further education is intended to be something that trains, equips and inspires you for the rest of your years; something which enables you to both be yourself and to positively engage with others. This is the story of *Rendezvous Goldsmiths*.

June Hill, Curator

### **Audrey Walker, Head of Textiles Department, Goldsmiths College 1975-88**

1975 (the year I succeeded Constance Howard) was the year when the Dip A.D was being replaced by the BA (Hons) qualification. There was an interesting possibility – there would no longer be any need to specify 'main' or 'subsidiary' elements in the students work. This seemed to be wholly positive since I felt that students should be able to choose ways of working that best suited their ideas, and to combine any techniques if appropriate. With support from Jon Thompson (Dean of the School of Art) I was able to increase the studio and workshop spaces and to recruit more students – from a previous total of 26 I pushed the intake up to 36 each year.

We attracted some very talented and interesting students and we were able to offer them each a designated personal studio space, the freedom to choose their own line of research and the challenges and support of a strong tutorial system.

Each student had a personal tutor and a 'year' tutor and they were also seen and their progress reviewed by me once a year. Unlike most courses we did not provide 'projects' – the students set their own lines of research – and their tutors responded and challenged them.

## Jeanette Appleton

I was a student on the post-graduate diploma course at Goldsmiths. The time there validated my work as a professional textile artist and led to international exhibitions, teaching and travel opportunities. As students, we were given excellent tutor and technician support and were encouraged to pursue issues and concepts of personal concern as we sought to find our internal individual mark. The course created valuable time and space to explore. The fully equipped studios were a wonderful resource and enabled me to interact across disciplines, using various materials and techniques for new approaches within textile art.



## **Imogen Aust 1979-82**

I am often reminded of the value of my art education at Goldsmiths in the early 80s. It was a very exciting time and my career has required a particular approach which I recognize came from my experience there. My work in this exhibition *Instruction-Response-Action* is about transferring skill, which is what I have been doing since graduating. I first started lecturing as a specialist in textiles and extended my own knowledge of art, textiles and particularly craft through teaching the subject in higher education. Current work is produced in ceramics and textiles and explores ideas of instruction; the transfer of craft skills and tacit knowledge.

## Louise Baldwin

It's been interesting thinking about how my current practice relates to that produced at college 30 years ago. In many ways the ideas and ways of building images are very similar, they have just taken a shift in emphasis. Goldsmiths at that time celebrated the use of anything in textiles and encouraged us to push at any preconceived boundaries (not that there seemed to be any in the college). I used brown paper, paint, stitch, salt, bitumen, to create large scale wall pieces that were reminiscent of animal skins and landscape. Within them a human form would be embedded and natural forms like leaves would be stitched to float across the surface.

Today there is often a head that looks out, probably female, but no one person in particular and images of plant forms layer up - from stylised patterns to cell-like structures and outline drawings. The ground on which this is stitched is made from found/rescued, very rarely bought fabrics. The good the bad and the ugly are gathered, patched and embellished together to make something new. An earlier piece was called *Everything together, moving* and I suppose that's what it's about. Never quite knowing the world we live in. Oddly, having spent 25 years stitching through paper then cardboard I have just discovered the joy of working with cloth! Maybe that says something about the type of course that was being run at Goldsmiths in those days.



## **Caroline Bartlett**

Having come from a background in textile design and working for a commission printer, I found my time at Goldsmiths to be enormously broadening providing space in which to bring together concept and ideas, materials and processes through sustained development, exploration and hands on approaches. I learnt the importance of challenging my comfort zone as a means of moving forward.

### *At Rest, 2012*

Woollen cloth and other fabrics. Stitched, printed and embellished. Researching the costume collection at Platt Hall, I was drawn by the storage areas behind the scenes. Here, items once intimately worn and reflecting individual identity become largely anonymous. Folded, layered, submerged in tissue, boxed together according to type, gender and period, I imagine them as becoming fused with their protective resting place.



## **Heather Belcher** *1980-83 BA Hons, 1992-95 MA*

The experience of studying at Goldsmiths is very precious to me and remains a major influence on my life and career as a textile artist and educator.

I studied there as an undergraduate from 1980 – 83 and returned in 1992 completing my MA in Textiles in 1995. I remember most distinctly the open structure of the course, it taught you to find an individual response to study and research. There was an emphasis on mutual support and discovering a very personal approach to developing ideas through the medium of textiles. Many of my peers then, are still supportive friends and colleagues today.

At Goldsmiths I learnt how to uncover a personal language expressed through drawing and, towards the end of my undergraduate programme, to express my ideas through the medium of hand made felt. A pivotal point came when Mary Burkett, an expert in nomadic felts from Central Asia, came and gave a talk at Goldsmiths in my final year. It inspired my life long fascination with felt and answered my then anxious questioning of why was I trying to express ideas through fabric and not any other medium.

Felt is one of the most rudimentary and primal of all fabrics – not even a textile – it sits outside of this classification because it is not formed from a network of threads as are other textiles such as knitted and woven structures. Felt is merely a mass of tangled fibres. I enjoy the space that this fabric occupies on the edge of things, not quite sitting within the conventional boundary. Goldsmiths taught me that being different is VALUABLE.



**Kim Bentley 1975-78**

Goldsmiths College has had a major influence upon my life. Indeed, much of who and what am I am today stems from my three years there. It was a wonderful course, with great lecturers, during which time I acquired the techniques and skills that I use to this day. It is where I met Sally Spens, my partner in Bentley & Spens for so many years, who is now living not far from me in Cornwall, and where another good friend from those happy days, Sue Kinley, also lives. And I met my future husband, Jonathan, through my friends at the college. As you can imagine I have very fond memories of Goldsmiths.

With my current work I try to capture the fun, the charm and the eccentricities of everyday life - be it on a beach in Cornwall, or in a park or heath in London; people and their pets enjoying life.

These tableaus are achieved in three stages: Firstly the scenery, be it an ocean or a city skyline, is painted on to silk taffeta, using fabric ink. Next, the people and animals are drawn on, and finally all of the clothes, sails, kites, and fur, are embroidered, creating a three dimensional effect.

For my degree show, at Goldsmiths University of London, I made embroidered beach scenes not that dissimilar from those I make today, although perhaps more primitive. But it was an area I intended to return to at some point.

I have always enjoyed the freedom of drawing or painting directly on to fabric. It's such a tactile medium. I am also fortunate to be very comfortable with sewing, thereby providing me with the perfect combination of painting and embroidery.

## **Bentley and Spens**

Upon completing my degree Sally Spens and I moved into fashion employing our techniques acquired in painting and batik. We moved from fashion into furnishings - we have pieces in the V&A - and then back to clothing with a range of designs for yukatas (cotton summer kimonos) commissioned by a Japanese corporation.

## **Michael Brennand-Wood 1977** ***Goldsmiths Flashback***

There was a certain architectural symmetry to the Millard building that belied the artistic transgression to be experienced within its walls. The textiles department was positioned to the right hand side, fine art to the left. Above the main entrance, an invisible vertical seam ran upwards, a hazy somewhat indistinct border that separated the two departments. To have both a textile and fine art department within the same space was certainly unusual. Inevitably there was a great deal of interaction and discussion between our respective cultures, an identification of shared concerns and objectives. Above all in a largely pluralistic era, there was a fascination with *difference* that which united or separated our respective enquiries.

I've always believed that it's important to maintain your own autonomy and understand your own history. Certainly as a department we tried to contextualize the experimental within our own traditions. One major difference was the ease with which the average fine art student could contextualize their work; they had access to a well-stocked library packed with images and texts, London was full of exhibitions. In contrast textile students had no clear visible contemporary history, books were invariably technically weighted, exhibitions scarce. This vacuum of visible markers was extremely beneficial in that it created a group-questioning mindset. If you're unclear where your going there's a tendency to wander perhaps by default, into unexpected territories. Students developed their own independent areas of research, exhuming and re-activating older techniques, for example felt and papermaking. You had to work hard at locating what you were engaged with within a broader visual framework; nobody told you what to do. The culture we created, fuelled a multiplicity of outcomes, everywhere you went somebody would be doing something unique, edgy and distinctive. Inevitably we had a great many students who gravitated towards the periphery of textiles, attracted by interdisciplinary practice. All that we asked was that students went through the heart of the department to the outer regions. We expected workshops to be undertaken, techniques considered and if ultimately abandoned, discarded with insight not prejudice.

The Millard was a warren of luxurious space, if you walked along the corridors you'd find students in any number of quirky bespoke studios, 1 and 2 person

rooms, shared, project, seminar spaces. We had square, rectangular, wedge, turret shaped and loft studios all with beautiful oak wooden floors that increasingly carried the imprint of their owner's former activities. Fabric was sewn, woven, burnt, printed, bleached, slashed, glued, stapled and stiffened to within an inch of its life. Threads were sewn, machined, felted; twisted and drawn, colour might be dyed, printed, stencilled, sprayed, stained, pulped and painted, the more invasive the process the happier the student. In addition we had 3 main workshop areas, print, constructed, machine and hand positioned on each level, a nod to the traditional building blocks of textile culture. Every student had to follow a pathway that embraced an introduction to all three at some point in their first year.

There was no visual road map to be followed; instead there was a commitment to the developmental with the emphasis firmly on the idea to be expressed. The Goldsmiths textile department was unique in encouraging students to combine media and techniques in any way or proportion they saw fit. Invariably other courses located students in one specific technical area e.g. print or constructed, affording little opportunity to combine or cross relate ideas. Courses defined by media impose two distinctive restrictions a limitation in technique and associative cultural ideology.

I began teaching at Goldsmiths in 1977 as the first of Audrey Walker's new appointments. It's worth remembering that we were employed as artists. Although a university, Goldsmiths still felt and acted like an art school. I loved being there, during the long summer breaks I couldn't wait to get back to the studios; I missed the camaraderie, the conversations and sheer adventurous energy of the place. It was in reality my second education; I'd walk into the Senior Common Room and see a who's who of the then, current London art scene. I loved art schools: they were a refuge for the dispossessed. A cornerstone of art school practice was Anarchy, the asking of difficult questions at the most inappropriate of times with the expressed purpose of putting yourself into the realm of the unfamiliar.

Prior to our arrival the Millard had been an old teacher training college, there's a certain irony that so many of our students ultimately entered the world of education after their experience at the Goldsmiths. We were collectively on a mission to change the perception of textiles from a functional to an expressive medium. The zeal with which we attacked this premises is I believe evident in the interdisciplinary work that we now accept as normal in our classrooms and university studios.

The first female Punk I ever met was at Goldsmiths, I'd only been there a few days and was asked to visit the second year house to see if anyone wanted a tutorial, so off I went to a small detached house round the corner from the main site. On arrival I entered the main studio to be confronted with several students, in their best and slightly fearsome Roxy Club Punk regalia circa 1977. For a relatively short period of time - 10 to 12 years - the textile course exhibited a strong sense of the 'punk, year zero start again' ethos in its' challenging of the status quo. A visitor once conveyed, via our then slightly nonplussed secretary that 'Audrey Walker should be horse whipped for what's

she's done to this textile department' which I personally feel is as good an endorsement as any that you must be doing something right. Certainly during the late 70s and early 80s we had a long run of fascinating, beautiful and challenging shows that perfectly illustrated the very best of our sweetness and fright textile countercultural tendencies. I was proud to work there and I was captivated by the energy of the students.

From a personal viewpoint I regret the institutionalized nature of textile practice today, there is now a road map, a series of taught courses, concepts and techniques with the same not dissimilar stop off points marked along the way. A trajectory of enquiry you see everywhere, why are we so fearful of that which cannot be controlled; time to tear the road map up and start again?

### **Vicki Brown 1981-84**

My work constantly refer back to the skills I learnt at Goldsmiths; the attitude that you seek out process and skills you need and apply or adapt process to meet your need. I learnt to make felt at the beginning of my second year, and I have continued to use it throughout my artistic career. I have never stopped dyeing the fleece, making felt, drawing, experimenting and looking for new ways to develop the visual language, these I feel are real part of the Goldsmith heritage. Goldsmiths has never left my work. When I was exhibiting in the *Pairings* exhibition in Manchester, Audrey Walker saw my work photographed it and showed Rozanne Hawksley, who then wrote me a fantastic letter, so my tutorials continue for 32 years!

### **Peter Chorley 1977-80**

Life and work was never the same after Goldsmiths. It pushed me into another dimension, another way of seeing and thinking in detail and as a whole, which has been part of me ever since.

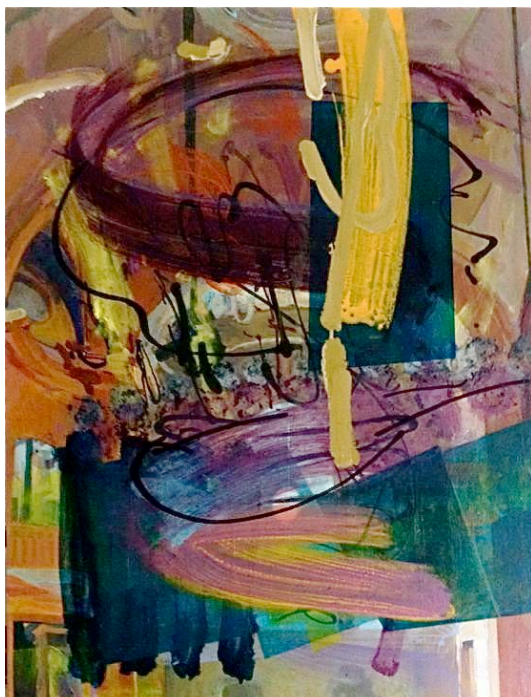
### *Cone House 1980/2013*

The three linen cones are originals from my Degree Show in 1980. They are now placed in a new purpose built house or cabinet, decorated using pencil, emulsion paint and ink. Couched threads on a canvas ground, tapestry weave cone and a strap work cushion also embellish the interior. The cones represent my work and time at Goldsmiths, a presence. The teaching, encouragement and

friendship from Audrey Walker, staff and fellow students in the Department of Textiles has influenced my life and work as an interior designer and decorator. The three year experience moulded and nourished my thinking and creativity. The *Cone House* and its moveable inhabitants and contents is the present and the future. It is life, amusement and history. Inspiration comes from painting, architecture, landscape, baby houses, English country house interiors and textiles, opera and travel. I am now, after many busy and successful years, back in the studio and workshop, tentatively making art. Thanks to Goldsmiths Textile Department.

### **David Cowley**

I had the good fortune to be asked to work as a drawing tutor for the Textile Department in the 1980s when Audrey Walker was the Head of the Department. It seemed to me that she had embedded in the course a shared commitment by staff and students that all ways of working, seeing and thinking in making could be challenged in the search for a personal language. Drawing was only one of the many means used by the Department to aid this process. Working alongside other drawing tutors and the students did much to open eyes, create discussion as well as confront and challenge prejudices on both sides. I found it an enlightening and stimulating period for my work as a teacher and maker and have nothing but praise for Audrey who was able to maintain a calm and supportive presence amongst all of us trying to find a voice. Much work of quality and many long and deep friendships were formed under Audrey's leadership.



## Mary Cozens-Walker

After 20 years, the Postgraduate Diploma course at Goldsmiths Embroidery and Textile Department rescued me from the confines of a narrow fine art education at the Slade. I had access to any methods and materials that would service my creativity and associated with like-minded tutors and fellow students. The support, enthusiasm and friendship of Eirian and Denys Short was inspirational. With Gavin Fry, a fellow student and friend I shared many sources of imagery, textures and inventiveness. It was Gavin who taught me 'Casting In Stitch' (as in *Heads, Lights and Heavy, The Greens*). We continue to collect each others work. I believe that I have brought together the skills gleaned from my two art school experiences. Goldsmiths was a golden opportunity!

### *Mr Benton, Utility 16 (2006)*

The history of domestic textiles led me to utilise vintage antimacassars to carry the image of this sweetshop owner of my childhood.



### *Heads...Light and Heavy, The Greens, 1997*

The principals of casting in stitch were taught to me by Gavin Fry. It has enabled me to get 2 for the price of one and to another way of releasing the stitch from its traditional bonds!

## **Dawn Dupree**

Goldsmiths was an intense and dynamic experience for me where an intimate location, charismatic teaching and unrestricted hours, encouraged experimentation and fostered an energetic exchange of ideas.

Lasting memories that capture this spirit include endless lunchtime sessions spent de-constructing and embellishing polystyrene cups in new and inventive ways, an unusual research trip to Albania and singing country and western songs with 'The good old hometown boys'.

## *Storm 2013*

Whilst my techniques and ideas have evolved enormously since my Goldsmiths days; this work still seems to capture the essence of a way of working I developed there, expressive mark making, layered process and large-scale screen-printed drawings.

## **Britt Frennesson**

When I was initially looking for a BA course I didn't even consider Goldsmiths, assuming 'Embroidery' was all about using traditional techniques in a traditional form. How wrong I was! It was a provocative course challenging conventions. It offered me space, time and encouragement to consider the possibilities of cloth and find ways to move forward using textile processes outside of tradition.

### *Fragments I-VI, 2013*

Mixed Media (stitched fabric collages on pegboard)

These fragments of old clothing and domestic cloth carry meaning and memories – many from my childhood in Sweden.





## **Gavin Fry 1981-85**

It was 1982, in my studio at The Millard Building, when my personal tutor Eirian Short gave me some sound advice: “If you want to make larger work try making smaller elements and piecing them together, it should work for you”.

Very sound advice which took far too long to sink in, Eirian freed me from a life confined to postage stamp expectations. So using my wrecking-ball collage methods (the concept of collage should include the words damage, destroy, deface and transform as Eduardo Paolozzi suggested). I hope to make work that makes the ideal alive and believable, works to console or haunt us.

Goldsmiths taught me to use scissors (an embroiderer's best tool) with purpose, to cut and splice then to build my narratives; my entries for the exhibition demonstrate just this.



## **Margaret Hall-Townley**

1974-2010 (Student under Constance Howard 1966-69)

All of my work is tied up with Goldsmiths as I have been associated with the Textile Department and later with the Constance Howard Collection and Centre as a teacher and curator all my working life. The influences have worked both ways for me.

The transition between the courageous experimental work of Constance Howard within the medium of embroidery and Audrey Walker who opened this into the wider world of textile was an important one. It led to a period of individuality, excitement, freedom of thought and experimentation probably never seen before in the taught medium of textile. Mine has been a remarkable and privileged journey through one of the most adventurous times in this remarkable British art school.

## **Elizabeth Jane Happs**

[Everything] was firmly embedded in the craft of drawing, as a way of building up an individual language that each student carried forward into a tactile response developing a personal theme which concluded in the final degree show. Having said this, we were not really aware of 'a show' - this was not the priority, it was the journey along the way, a developing sense of the visual world and how we could make a unique contribution. We were taught at Surrey Docks by artists who joined us from The Slade. Elma and Harry Thrubron were visiting lecturers, also Betty Swanwick RA taught at Goldsmiths for years and applied a rigour to our work. We worked in the Life Room for a day a week for three years.

There was also a strong emphasis on an exuberant fresh individual response to textiles, in all forms. We had access to the Print Studio run by David Green, also the Weave studios run by Fay Morgan. There were also rooms which housed a large variety of machines, the Cornely, Tufting and Bernina industrial machines were my favourites.

Tutorials were constant, rigorous and given by all members of the Department. I remember one tutorial given by Audrey at the end of my 2nd year who told me to go away and draw all summer - (a drawing a day!) My work developed so much through the discipline I engaged with that summer.

## **Matthew Harris**

Above all I remember a complete sense of freedom. The freedom to explore all kinds of materials, techniques and avenues, both in an attempt to develop a distinctly personal language but also, and perhaps more importantly for me, as a way to discover and establish a rhythm and means of working.

What has stayed with me is that rhythm and cycle of making. The interplay in my work, between drawing, making and materials was established during my time at Goldsmiths and continues to this day.

*'Canto Cloth Tally (and then some) 2004/2013.*

Dyed , cut and hand stitched cloth.

A piece made for my first show in Japan (re-worked for this exhibition). It revisits ideas explored in earlier work to do with the repeating of a simple motif that shifts and evolves as it moves it's way across the surface of the cloth.

The rhythm of the pattern and movement is interrupted at a number of points by the joining of a new piece of cloth.

*'Slab' series No 1 (cartoon for Cloth). 2011*

Mixed media on linen bound Japanese paper.

The 'Slab series' of drawings make reference to a slab of painted Egyptian wall. Seen at a distance I refrained from moving closer, preferring to observe and record it as unrefined, incoherent and unresolved areas of mark and texture. Fragments of an incomplete image held together and made whole; absent areas replaced by floating shapes of smooth white plaster.'

## **Rozanne Hawksley**

### *Captain Coram and Mr Handel, 2011*

Captain Thomas Coram (c 1668-1751) and Mr. George Frederic Handel (1685-1759) were two major supporters and governors of the Foundling Hospital although they never met. This work is a hypothetical meeting between the two men. They reach out to each other across the Atlantic Ocean as if about to meet at the gates of the Foundling.

Captain Thomas Coram, born in Lyme Regis, Dorset, was a merchant and ship builder. He spent some years sailing between the American-British colonies and England. He was constantly horrified by the fate of unwanted and abandoned children in his home country and in London itself. He was determined to set up a hospital where these children could be sheltered and provided for. He spent many years and a great deal of money until he eventually obtained a Royal Charter for what became known as The Foundling Hospital.

Mr. Handel was the eminent musician and composer who had come from his native Halle, in Germany, to settle in London. He too was distressed at the sights of poverty and the fate of unwanted children born in England and was determined to help the Hospital. He wrote the anthem for the official Chapel opening and put on many concerts and performances to raise funds. He became a governor after Captain Coram had, after some dispute, resigned. I have long been fascinated by their histories and great philanthropy. Some years ago I heard a short item on BBC Radio 4 which prompted me to read more and to visit the Foundling Museum.

The illustration was initially presented on the refectory table in the Committee Room of what is now the Foundling Museum. This is an eighteenth century table from the Hospital's dining room which was specially swathed with cream cloth. At either end of the work is a cuffed glove - each denoting its owner. In Handel's case, the cuff is of fine silk and hand embroidered. In Coram's case it is of plain woollen cloth, scuffed and worn a little, with minimal decoration.

By each man's glove are maps of those areas of the American colonies, of England and of Europe pertaining to their birth and work, and the parts of the North Atlantic they shared.

The central motif is a drawing of the main original gate of The Foundling Hospital. In the form of a cartouche, reaching out to this, across a map of some of London's streets, is a skeletal hand. It is adjacent to three balls, representing the lottery for the admission of foundlings after the open-

door policy had to be changed owing to the terrifying numbers of children abandoned at the gates.

I have been moved by the philanthropy of Captain Coram and Mr. Handel. Also closely involved in the foundation and early years of the Hospital was William Hogarth. He had backed the idea of the Hospital, had donated some of his paintings to the cause and was one of the first governors. The three men contacted many wealthy, landed people and The Coram Foundation, as it is called, continues to help needy children and families today. My own small contribution is of my time, work and materials in the hope that I can myself in a small way help the Foundation to continue.

([www.rozannehawksley.com](http://www.rozannehawksley.com))

### **Rozanne Hawksley Four Stages at Goldsmiths**

- 1) Late 1960s – a two week art education course before I took up my post as Lecturer in a College of Education at Roehampton – rather an odd course but there I first met Constance Howard – Head of Embroidery/Textile Department
- 2) Mid 1970s – on a shared examination panel a casual remark & subsequent exchange with Constance Howard:- Recently, as a widow, married to Brian & my son and I so happy made me somehow aware that there was unfulfillment in my work – there was something, somewhere. Constance said “ring David Green at Goldsmiths – he is running a summer school in printed textiles:- he may well be IT.” So I did & he was. New Cross became my road to Damascus. This scruffy, energetic & inspiring man showed me the key to the un-knowable door and I took it. Three weeks that with my husband’s & son’s support, changed my life and was the beginning of a journey. Back at college, I fought for my ‘study-day’ & every week David Green would let me to the back entrance of the print and dye room – set in a building at the far side of the Back Field. There I worked a long day discovering many things: material and abstract – producing some very big prints. It was put to me by him that I should apply for the Advanced Diploma course – my reply being that “I was nowhere good enough”. Constance Howard had left by then & David led me, pushed me, up to the new occupant of her office – Audrey Walker – and I was IN, to

start in October. My Head of Art – Bert Isaac at College gave me his blessing and a sabbatical year.

- 3) That hot summer brought out what was called a break-down & I spent it in a day unit at a local hospital. David Green wrote frequently to assure me my work was safe in his care & my place was open. I made the Goldsmith year, or rather most of it, but was a kind of shadow still receiving support and drawing, drawing, drawing. A vital point of help & recognition came when D.G. reminded me of a print I had made on his short course & “ ‘Roxannee’, what was it you said the old lady (in her chair) was waiting for?’ ...”Death” – No more had to be said. I knew that I had been doing on this year what I thought I should be doing – not what my mind wanted. And so lucky as I was, & after having to have healing time off, I was able to repeat lost time; & various experiences came to emerge in my work. Such support I had. Here, I must emphasise THE large turning point – another vital step. I had read in the London paper & made a print of an elderly gentleman – ‘Mr Sid’ who, with others was about to have his old home in a ‘garden-square’ in South east London knocked down – another so called poor-housing clearance – Where were they all to go? – Where else could they rent? This print was important to me, for two reasons, a) it was away from me & b) the question ‘so what happens now?’ I was rushed to a rubbish skip – no further words. BUT I scavenged old wood & caged in Mr Sid – also with scraps of cigarette paper, dog-ends, detritus of the uncaring streets. That was the recognition to use a third dimension for my responses. David Green left for Australia but encouragement of the individual exploration & support continued & grew stronger throughout the entire department.
- 4) I was offered, after my final diploma year a place on the staff. I loved the place & the students: listening to them, endeavouring to help them listen to themselves, start to become themselves. I wanted to give something of what I had been given, both to them & to the department: to my good colleagues who became and are still, friends. My late husband & son would be pleased to know how their support as well as that of Audrey, Eirian & Denys, Shirley Craven & others, strengthened me & that I’m still trying! – To work with honesty & with commitment that is. How very lucky I’ve been – to know and take part in the immediate post World War 2 gold age of education through to the 1970-80s both as tutor & student. Thank you – to that special part of Goldsmiths.

## **Nicola Henley 1981-84**

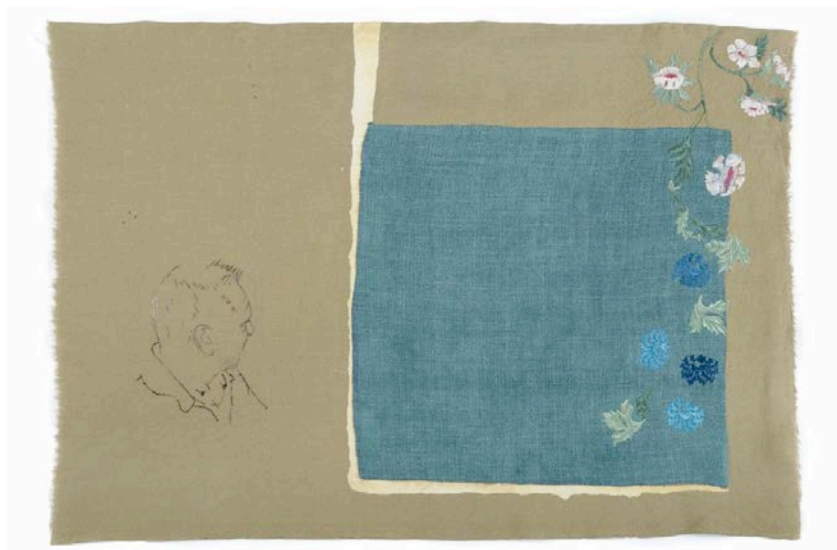
I went onto the Goldsmiths course without really knowing what 'Textiles' meant and came out dedicated to the medium and determined to make it central to my future. It was always challenging, because choosing the freedom to explore one's own self-expression through textiles in its diverse forms meant delving deeper and deeper into oneself. At times it felt like a lonely and intense journey, but the rewards were great after for the struggle to find what was really 'me.' The fact that the course was not project based was very hard at first, but in the end it meant I had to direct myself, which was in fact the best preparation for life after college. I am grateful for the opportunity and freedom the course gave me to really explore my ideas at that time with such excellent facilities. It was a real gift to be able to move between disciplines, even including the Fine Art metal and woodwork departments. It was particularly stimulating sharing the department with Fine Art students and there seemed to be no boundaries in terms of materials that I wanted to try out.

It was very valuable to me to have my own studio room in the final year, it felt like a luxury, and it enabled me to really bury myself in my work, which was very beneficial. It was a really productive time in my life, which taught me the skills to be resourceful, determined and confident. The staff input and professionalism and in particular the visiting tutors were a great help in my finding direction and faith in my own judgment and it inspired me to see there was a world out there after Goldsmiths.

## **James Hunting 1983-86**

My experience of the ethos of the degree course at Goldsmiths now saturates and impregnates my work. The emphasis on the questioning of media and process in order to achieve intentions and outcomes; the persistent challenges to tradition and technique, not in order to deny or refute but in order to advance and develop, and the understanding of the contexts and history of the textile media all influence my creative practice. My most recent work, exhibited here, exemplifies these characteristic traits.

Fabric and thread are my chosen media and hand embroidery is my preferred process, but it is the application of the thread and manipulation of the process, first addressed during my studies, that enables me to produce personal, emotionally charged work. Goldsmiths taught me that in order to produce work of worth, technical ability is not enough, nor is anything less than honest, emotional passion and constant creative challenge.





## Alice Kettle

I arrived at Goldsmiths a bit like a bewildered bird. I didn't really know what Textile Art was. I felt guilty about enjoying it. I had done a degree in Fine Art so I thought I was doing something bad. But good for me. I knew I had to do it my way and I could. It had taken a great deal to get there. I remember my interview with Margaret Hall and Audrey Walker. I had knitted a huge grey cardigan which I had worn every day for weeks with my big blue Perspex necklace from Hitchcocks craft gallery where I worked. My father looked at me and said nothing. I had all paintings and one strange embroidery. I didn't expect to stitch but I was allowed to go in the machine room without a long induction. So I stayed there with the lovely Diana Thornton with visits from Margaret and Christine Risley. I remember a tough group tutorial from Audrey just before Easter. I was very used to those from my degree but I was very shaken. I thought, I'll show you what I can do.

### Audrey Walker on Alice Kettle (extract from *mythscapes*, 2003)

'Firstly, the time and the place – 1985, and my small office in Goldsmiths College where we held interviews for student places on the Postgraduate Diploma Course in Textiles. Alice Kettle (recently graduated from the fine art course at Reading University) came in with her portfolio of work. Even now, 18 years later, I recall the immediate excitement I felt as that portfolio was opened up and one after another a series of small paintings was revealed. The scale was modest but the impact of the colour was huge – here was someone who clearly knew how to handle colour. A closer look showed that these paintings were peopled with small figures and that this engagement with the human presence was the essential core of the work. Our conversations continued about these people, their stories, their apparent containment and Alice's meditations on them. Finally one small, rather rough embroidery came to light – collaged, machined and primitive though it was, it showed that [she] had imbued in her, from childhood, a love of these materials so that they became a perfectly natural resource to give form to imaginative ideas'.

Early Summer 2003 in Alice's studio. Every space is filled with partly completed embroideries, threads are spilling out of every drawer, books of poetry and Greek mythology lie on the work table and beyond all this one large embroidery covers the entire back wall. Unprecedented for Alice, it is in horizontal format...First impression...colour, colour (just as in those tiny paintings in 1985). I am amazed by the fluidity and energy which allows swathes of colour and texture to run across the entire cloth, its sumptuous surface invites me to explore in all directions and leads to the discovery of detail – fine lines describe groups of figures and suggest a narrative. This is a grand narrative, no less than The Odyssey. Through this work Alice is recognising and responding to a universal theme – a life's journey, coming to terms with its complexities, its possibilities, its choices. This is an important juncture in Alice's evolving artistic journey...'

(Audrey Walker *mythscapes* 2003 p11, 13/14)

## **Susan Kinley**

When I applied to Goldsmiths, I had been looking at courses in fine art, but knew that I was drawn to working with textiles and other materials. I felt as though I had found exactly the right course at the right time, and relished the combination of tutorial and technical support with the freedom to develop my ideas as an individual artist. Looking back now, I realize how unique this was. It set a pathway for me that I am still following, of crossing boundaries and media and a refusal to be compartmentalised.

*Channel 1 & 2* are directly related to, and have evolved from my work in those early days at Goldsmiths with Audrey Walker - she may remember my hanging wall and floor paper & fabric pieces in a room I constructed for my BA show!

I am still directly concerned with installation work, layering, light, shadows and transparency, working a range of materials to explore different situations and particular places.

## **Jane McKeating 1980-83**

When I reflect on the time at Goldsmiths, my over-riding sense is one of space. Space to make, space to think and space to look. It's so different from the packed curriculum that students have today. The Millard building had wonderful cavernous rooms with opportunities for constructing, displaying, understanding and processing ideas.

Two residential visits remain as a highlight for me, one to the Pembrokeshire coast where I spent the week drawing rocks with orange pastels, and one to Somerset with Lizzie Cox where we learnt printmaking and drew fields of poppies.

The time without a complex timetable allowed me to roam over London, seeing so many exhibitions and museum collections and to draw and be inspired. I made use of being in London. I have never since had that space to create in quite the same way, but I think the experience set me up and sustained me for a future of making.

## **Christine Mills**

Goldsmiths gave me one of the largest privileges one ever could ever dream of .....the freedom to express in the widest possible way...and there was one difference.....it was a textile course! The influence of this freedom has unconsciously and consciously shaped my way of thinking , and my Welsh background , the land and its culture has been much of my subject matter through a variety of medium and passion for fibre.

### **Craft in order to Survive**

'Craft in order to Survive' is based on true events.

During the mid nineteenth century when things were difficult in the country, the ladies of Bala decided to collect the loose wool from the fields, a rare occasion today. They spun the wool and knitted socks, which later developed to be an industry. Once they had a pile of socks they would go to Rhuthun, sell them and in return would have a bucket of barley for the animals, leading to food for the table.

## **Jennie Moncur**

The Goldsmiths course focused on finding a personal voice and a means of delivering that in an expressive way. For undergraduates, not long out of school, this was a tough ask but equally it drove for development of character and strong sense of being. In parallel a variety of respected figures in the textile world offered comprehensive training in a variety of textile disciplines. This allowed for technical skills to be mastered, thus greatly supported the ability to present ideas through competent experimental practise.

### *Oranges and Lemons, 2009*

Hand woven tapestry. Wool warp with wool and linen coloured weft yarns  
Growing peaches and lemons under glass, the trees blossom very early in the season and certainly before any bees are around to pollinate. Consequently, using rabbit fur strapped to a large stick (somewhat like a huge paint brush), the fur is dabbed from blossom to blossom to pollinate the hundreds of blooms covering the trees. It is a painstakingly slow process and one that highlights how much we rely on bees to fulfil the task of pollinating our fruits and flora from year to year.



## **Diana Mott-Thornton**

I loved being at Goldsmiths so much, I didn't want to leave, so I didn't and have been happily managing the stitch and fabric room for many years.

### **Cleo Mussi 1986-89**

Goldsmiths allowed me time to learn how to develop my ideas freely into my own visual language. This has continued to evolve over the last twenty-eight years. It taught me to have a go and not to be afraid of trying different materials or making mistakes. The teaching staff taught you to think independently and the technicians facilitated the techniques to express your ideas and confidence to try other mediums. The studios and workshop facilities were fantastic and generous and the lack of health and safety refreshing- including the black cat that used to sleep in the studios. The parties were always very entertaining especially the staff when they'd had a few too many. The course fees were paid for, the Halls reasonably priced, I had a grant which I did not have to be repaid and I could sign on for benefit in the summer holidays -all these elements were conduits for creativity. Commercialism, Capitalism, Budgets, Targets weren't a part of our language, that comes later. Halcyon days!

### *Odd Basket Case and Basket*

These pieces were from a show called *Pharma's Market* and are the live stock, bunny workers:

### *'Pharma's Market' - a Live Stock and Produce Show*

Pharma's Market is a visual arts based mosaic installation exploring imagery that contrasts the historical and contemporary icons in farming and agriculture, health and well being. It connects traditional ideas in food and farming and animal husbandry with modern developments in Stem Cell Research and Genetic Modification. The setting is a traditional agricultural fair with a contemporary twist.

We live in an increasingly complex world of information and choices, bombarded by media sound bites and attention grabbing sensationalist news. As a lay person news about medical advancement is often expressed in extreme polar opposites; fear mongering Frankenstein experiments versus life saving, life enhancing developments. The internet brings knowledge and the opportunity to research and discover and allows us on the one hand to feel like we are able to take control, but also unleashes the overwhelming weight and responsibility that knowledge brings. Ignorance can be bliss and the gun ho blindness of youth and its innocence or ignorance is surpassed by cautious and perhaps cynical wisdom.

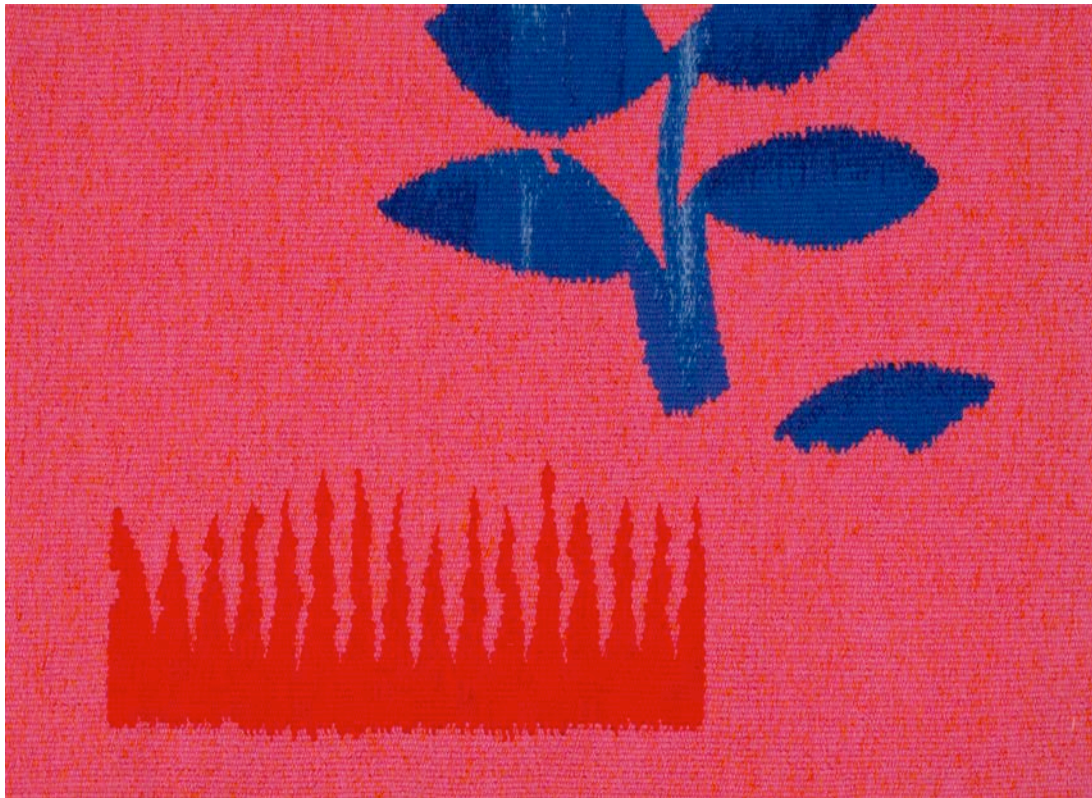
### *Live Stock*

Android anthropomorphic workers and their  
Offspring are programmed to process.  
An antidote to extinction and a global warning  
Harvesting a basket of Earthly delights.  
Extracting the 'Best in Show', recycling  
And regurgitating,  
Perfection.  
A happy accident or a bio-security dilemma

## **Marta Rogoyska**

Goldsmiths in the 80s offered the best textiles course in the UK at that time. It shared its building only with the fine art department: a symbiotic relationship. It was a great place to teach and contribute. Audrey Walker got together a team of gregarious textile artists, all providing different attitudes and skills: she wanted each to add something unique. It followed that Goldsmiths took in the best students, keen to express themselves. The result was stimulating and broadening.

I used to look forward to my teaching days - expecting the unexpected. Cross-disciplinary work was encouraged, as was risk-taking, but skills came first. We discussed current exhibitions and artists' work and everyone was aware of what was going on in the art and craft world. I loved it! It felt as though I was part of something that mattered.



## **Mary Restieaux**

In the early 1980s Goldsmith's Textile Department was a great place to work. There was a generous staff/student ratio, spacious studios and workshops and a wonderful head, Audrey Walker, guiding us all. Not only was this a creative environment for students but it was also a stimulus for my own work.

## **Lynn Settington**

Studying textiles at Goldsmiths was a wonderful experience for me. I came from a small village in Yorkshire with no art in my family to speak of, so being exposed to such a wealth of experience and knowledge from a wide range of tutors was such a privilege. In terms of embroidery alone we had experts with all different skills. I also enjoyed the wonderful eclectic "Wednesday Event", which included performances, films and poetry reading by the likes of Ivor Cutler, Glen Baxter and Mary Kelly, a true eye opener.

Seeing the degree shows there for the first time was amazing. Audrey Walker's philosophy was way ahead of its time and her drive, ambition and passion for textiles continues to this day.

The majority of my work is a celebration of stitching by hand. The early work explores the qualities of thread and cloth that combine to create unique tactile surfaces. Unsung heroes and the overlooked have been common themes through out my thirty years of making along with a celebration of the ordinary.

### *The reverie of objects, 1987*

Cornely machine embroidered cup (cotton threads on cotton)  
This was made when I was still investigating solitary objects and the atmosphere they created. It was done entirely on the cornely machine.

### *Small objects, 1989*

Hand embroidered/quilted (cotton threads on cotton cloth)  
One of my early kantha inspired pieces. Like the above, this piece celebrates the every day objects we take for granted. It is an early

quilted cloth, made not too long after the 'Woven Air' exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery, where I saw my first kantha cloth.

## Eirian Short

(Extract from *Inspired to Stitch*, Diana Springall, A&C Black 2005)

Eirian is a major figure in the world of British embroidery. Her work spans the whole of the second half of the twentieth century and, now in her mid eighties, she continues to produce work of great integrity and visual worth. She was born in Pembrokeshire, to where she returned on her retirement from teaching, to work with even greater dedication.

Her early training as a sculptor can be seen to underpin and link the hugely varied subject matter. What one witnesses today is a huge volume of work which began with a ten year period of flat pieced works. She then progressed to a prolific production of hand stitchery which combined either with soft sculpted areas of fabric or decoratively painted supporting wooden surfaces. She began embroidery in 1951, an era of enormous expansion of original embroidery as a medium for art, and when only a few 'creative' embroiderers existed.

Sources for Eirian's embroidery have always been based on things seen around her – observed and recorded in countless detailed drawings. Selected drawings are meticulously squared up to exact size. Lines are transferred to the ground fabric by means of carbon which in turn are made more permanent with ink. Her thread is always Appleton crewel wool (of which she stocks every colour) and her stitches are limited to French knots and straight stitches. For her these best express a mark or collected marks and are not selected for the sake of the stitch but to create gesture or texture.

She starts by placing a layer of stitches on the ground fabric covering it much as might be done with a wash in watercolour. This is further added to as the work progresses. The stitchery is not as predictably planned as one might think, she confesses to spending the first part of most days unpicking work done the previous day.

Subjects of the 1990s, often in 'series' include crows, doves, bowls of fruit, vases of flowers, landscapes and figures. Frames are often planned as elaborate parts of the picture and other times disappear to reveal a powerful silhouette, as in *Primmy's Dog*. It took eight months to make, working six hours a day. It represents everything that is remarkable about Eirian, for it is a wonderful culmination of art, design and workmanship. It speaks too about her individuality and of her gentle and kind character. She says she has always made what she wanted to in spite of criticism from the establishment. Possibly her fascination with things that relate to folk and peasant art, and of subjects



that may seem hackneyed, were not understood by some people. Nevertheless the results of her independent endeavours in searching for merit in what she sees has yielded a rich body of work that commands admiration, respect and delight.

### **Sally Spens 1975-78**

You definitely needed to like independent learning at Goldsmiths, but there was a rich source of expertise available to you in the making of your work - you just had to ask! I particularly valued the textile printing and dyeing workshops, the alchemy of etching in the printmaking studio, expert lighting advice and enthusiasm from the photography lecturer when I wanted to make a series of white on white photographs, the help from the sculpture technicians in the third year when I needed to combine resin with fabric and glass, challenging tutoring from Ferris Newton and inspiring directed reading when writing my thesis on 'Preservation'.

#### *Moonlit Star Magnolia*

I see this as a pivotal transition piece between my work as a textile designer and my current etchings. At the time I wasn't sure whether to call it a painting or a textile design, and included it in a studio exhibit titled " Somewhere between wallpaper and art....."

Drawing has always been central to my work and working with a Japanese textile company for seven years on designs for summer kimonos has also been a major influence. I feel privileged to have had that contact with the culture of Japan.

I first became interested in etching at Goldsmiths, and returned to it in 2007, when I learnt there was an excellent open access print studio nearby. I have always loved the process of taking a design from a small piece of painted cloth to seeing it in production on a forty metre print table, and there is a similar feeling about intaglio and creating an image on a copper plate and the way that the possibilities of the process can change the image. The two disciplines have much in common.

*Moonlit Star Magnolia* provided the initial image for an early etching - Steel Magnolias. The etchings are a natural progression from years of designing for print, but are informed by my work in textiles, and the experience of collaborative working

## Dionne Swift

Goldsmiths taught me to trust in myself, it showed me how to be independent, how to question my work and not follow trends [I forget these things occasionally but they are in there]. It gave me intensity, purpose and more recently a belonging that I didn't understand at the time.

My Foundation tutor doubted I'd get in. Apparently I was the youngest student they had ever accepted - I remember clear as day being interviewed by Audrey and Michael & him challenging me on a piece - they said I was incredibly organised and prolific [I had 2 enormous portfolios with me that day]

The first day Michael said get a table, a chair & get on with it! What? Well that was the best preparation an Artist could have - the time, space and permission to find out what you wanted to say.

Then Christine Risley wanted to throw me out at the end of the 1st year - I never understood that, but it gave me some fire to prove her wrong: I remember drawing until I wore through the paper. Rozanne Hawksley was the external. She understood, and still understood when she saw the *New Grounds* work over 25 years later [she even remembered - incredible]



## **Elizabeth Tarr**

I was at Goldsmith's from 1983-1986. The strongest memory is one of a complete lack of restriction: I buried paper and stitch shrines in the college grounds, made body prints in mud on cloth, constructed a "Crystal Cabinet" with moving parts and music - my degree show was papier mâché sculptures on bound poles. This freedom was supported with a rigorous and thorough technical training, brilliant technicians in textiles and fine art disciplines and a bunch of insightful and original tutors. Students were treated as individuals - and this ethos maintained and overseen by Audrey's strong hand at the rudder!

## Jane Wildgoose

*Technician (printed textile/dye) 1979-82, Visiting Lecturer 1982-84*

I was appointed as part-time technician in the printed textiles area at Goldsmiths in 1979, not long after graduating from a printed textiles course that focused on training designers for the textile industry. In contrast, the textile department at Goldsmiths under Audrey Walker was quite independent of the commercial textile sector, and it was liberating to find myself attached to a course that placed an emphasis on textiles as an art form, and the materialization of ideas through connecting concepts, materials, and making.

At that time the textiles department was housed with the fine art department in a late Victorian Gothic building (originally St Gabriel's Training College for women teachers, it also served as a military hospital during World War I), in a quiet road opposite a little park called Myatt's Fields, just off Camberwell New Road. From time to time, in keeping with the Gothic architecture, the sound of an organ being played in the chapel next door to the print area would drift in through the adjoining wall. Perhaps appropriately, then, it was in the print room - over a question she came in to ask about printing urns and skulls in black on black fabric - that I first met Rozanne Hawksley. We immediately struck up a long and enthusiastic conversation about Victorian mourning - about memory and mortality, and their place in our lives and our work. Our conversation has continued and developed now for more than 30 years. It remains as vital as it was when we first met, and it will, I hope, continue for many more years to come.

*She Was Dressed in Rich Materials* was made for *Human Nature*, an Arts Council funded artists' residency and exhibition, with visual artist Mary Hooper, at Maidstone Museum in Kent during 2003-04, in which we worked closely with the curators of the museum's Costume and Natural History collections. Taking Miss Havisham - the bride in Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*, who famously stopped all the clocks in her house when she was jilted on her wedding day - as my starting point, I made new pieces that were exhibited alongside selected material from the collections, much of which had not been exhibited in living memory. I also included excerpts from Dickens's descriptions of the material culture of Miss Havisham's dressing and dining rooms (which vividly evoke her loss and the passage of time) spelled out in pins, and inspired by examples of decorative pincushions in the collections. The texts also inflected on ways in which museums attempt to "stop the clock" by preserving and conserving collections in their care.

## **Atsuko Yamamoto 1979-80**

I had learned at Goldsmiths' postgraduate textile & embroidery course in 1978 to 1980, not only technique and texture also learned what is the core, concept.

