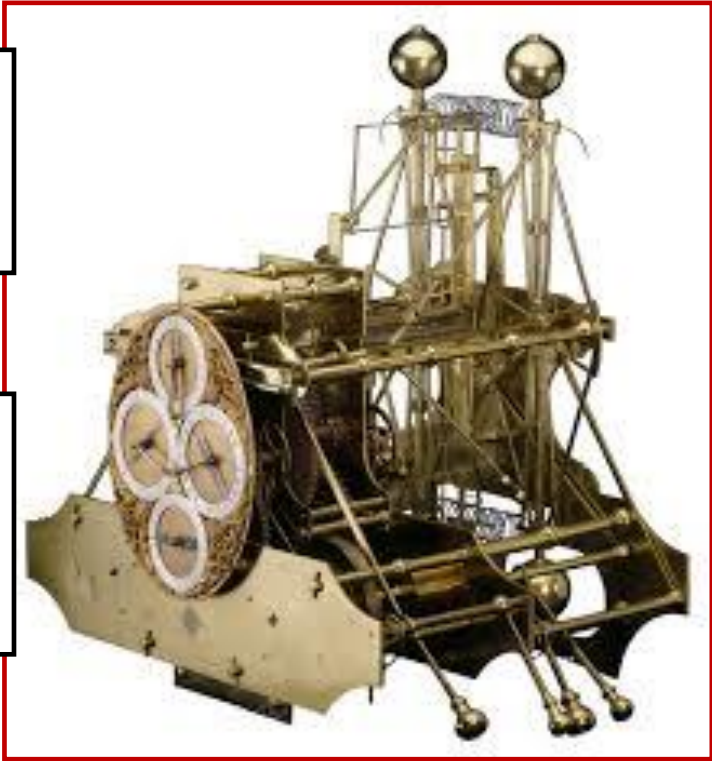




HANDMADE
A Multidisciplinary Project
by U3A Members

Organised and Presented
By Josephine Cutts
(assisted by Terry Mayhew)



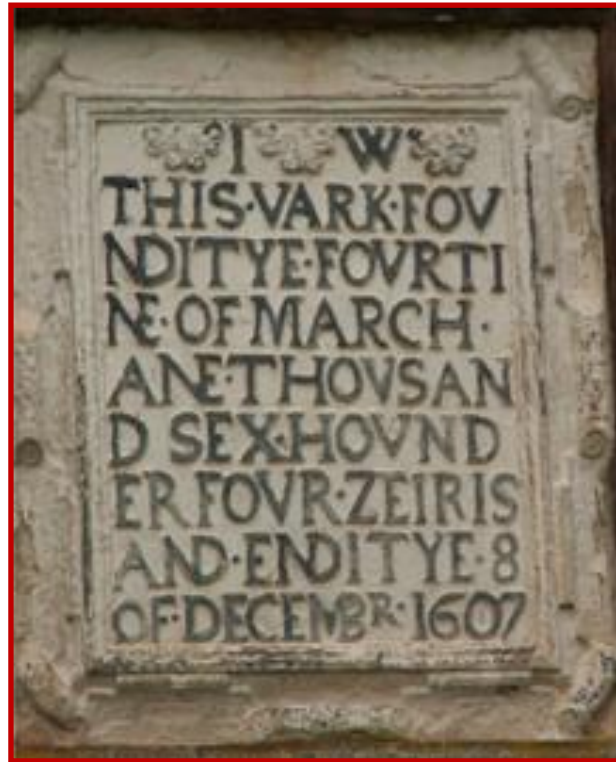
A Quotation (Josephine Cutts)

He who works with his hands
and his head and his heart is
an artist.

By Francis of Assisi

Foundation Stone – Craigston Castle

(Paul Hudson)



The stone reads: “I W (possibly J W) This work founded the fourteenth of March one thousand six hundred four years and ended 8th of December 1607”

Craigston Castle is in Aberdeenshire and has been home to the Urguhart family since 1604. It is built of local Turriff sandstone

Venus/Aphrodite (Terry Mayhew)



Facts:

Venus (Roman) or Aphrodite (Greek) is the classical Goddess of Love and Beauty. The original of this statue must have been an outstanding example in the fine tradition of classical Graeco-Roman sculpture. Initially, it was attributed to the sculptor Praxiteles, but based on an inscription that was on its plinth, the statue is now thought to be the work of Alexandros of Antioch.

It was made sometime between 130 and 100 BC, sculpted out of a block of marble and slightly larger than life size (203 cm or 6 ft 8 in high). Part of an arm and the original plinth were lost following the statue's discovery. It is currently on permanent display at the Louvre Museum in Paris. The statue was named by the French after Venus (hence 'Venus de Milo') although Aphrodite would be more appropriate because it was discovered on the Greek island of Milos in the Aegean.

Alternatively:

In about 1957, Chuck Berry wrote

“Milo Venus was a beautiful lass

She had the World in the palm of her hand

But she lost both her arms in a wrestling match

To win a brown-eyed handsome man.

She fought and won herself a brown-eyed handsome man”

A Question (Christopher Claxton)

How did ancient Egyptians carve immensely hard rocks (black diorite, granite, etc) into perfectly symmetrical and highly polished figures, often weighing many tons weight? At the time, 4500 years ago, they had no tools other than other rocks and bronze that was softer.

Many of the objects were huge columns, all perfectly identical, and others carved with intricate hieroglyphs. Others still portrayed identical animalistic figures. How were they done?

Modern commentaries speak of a lost technology. In the case of block work, it is so precise that you cannot get a hair between adjoining blocks, as in the innermost parts of the Great Pyramid.

No one knows.

(Christopher is the brother of Jo Cutts)

Standing Figure (Josephine Cutts)



Painting of Bacchus at Clifton Hall

(Diana Gamble)



This 19th C hand-carved statue of Bacchus stands in front of a glimpse of Clifton Hall, which is perched on a steep cliff over the River Trent. Mentioned in the Domesday Book, it was originally a defensive tower. John Carr of York redesigned much of the original house in the 1780s and 1790s; with many elegant State rooms. Lived in by the same Clifton family for around 700 years, it was sold in 1958 when it became a Grammar School for Girls and then part of Trent Polytechnic.

In 2003 it was sold to a private developer and 14 houses were built in row on an unseen side of the garden. He restored the house very elegantly and it is now part of a gated community. Sold again in 2008, the most recent owner of Clifton Hall left the house after claiming it was haunted. It has now been on the market for some time, at £2,700,000.

Maori Woodcarvings (Paul Hudson)



Christchurch Museum, New Zealand

National Arboretum (Paul Hudson)



Inside the chapel at the National Arboretum is a staircase with figures around. These represent 'The Storyteller' who is telling the listeners (and non-listeners alike) that The Past is the Key to the Future

The detail panel gives information about the carvers and the materials used.

A Grandad, a Table and a Grindstone (Terry Mayhew)

In our hallway, there is a table. In our shed, a grindstone. Both were made by my father's father whom I met only once. The following extract is from a piece I wrote in 2018 for our 'Writing for Fun' Group.

"Dear Grandad,

Long ago, we met for the first and only time. I was nearly 4 years old and my father took me down to Oulton Broad to visit you and grandma in 1950. Near the start of our journey, I recall the huge bus terminus at Woodside, Birkenhead and the ramp leading from it into the ferry building. For a moment, I lost hold of Dad's hand and had to walk alone through a forest of adults' legs before finding Dad again. We took the ferry across the Mersey and then walked to Liverpool Lime Street Station to catch the train. I recollect nothing else of the outgoing or return journeys which is astonishing given the fact that it must have been my first trip away from home.

I have fragmented memories of your house on Sycamore Avenue. I recall getting wound up in the bedsheets one night and not being able to free my legs. Also, I remember looking inside the large matt grey wooden chest which you had made and finding it full of clothes. It stood beneath your bedroom window. You made up a story that the clothes were parts of a soldier's uniform and you and grandma sang multiple verses of "*Oh, soldier, soldier, won't you marry me with your musket, pipe and drum?*". I have never forgotten the tune or lyrics. I remember, too, your very long back garden full of assorted greenery including vegetable plots and fruit trees and, at the bottom, a latched wooden gate opening onto the loke. And, of course, your home-made garden shed where you were making a mahogany-topped occasional table with a beautifully-curved top and legs and toys for neighbours' children. The shed was full of assorted tools for gardening, building, shoemaking and carpentry and when I picked them up and asked you what they were for, you patiently explained to me their purposes.

I know now that, at that time, you were 68 years old and suffered from partial deafness. You were about 5ft 6in in height, of slim build, and seemed always to be wearing a clean white shirt with sleeves rolled up to the elbows, an unbuttoned waistcoat and a flat cap. By then, you must have retired from the building trade.

Grandad, I know that you were a caring person. Your love for your sons is attested by postcards which you sent home whilst you served in part of the Middlesex Regiment in WWI. I have the originals. I know that your ear problems rendered you unfit for active service. However, you volunteered to serve in the Labour Corps and you did your bit by being involved in building works serving the troops. After the armistice, you would have 'tidied up' battlefields by recovering damaged equipment, dismantling buildings, emptying abandoned ammunition dumps, filling in

A Grandad, a Table and a Grindstone (Terry Mayhew)

trenches and removing wire entanglements, etc.

What I did not know during my visit was that you would soon be admitted to Lowestoft & North Suffolk Hospital where you would pass away in February 1951 following heart problems and prostate cancer. You were buried at Lowestoft cemetery after a service at Oulton Broad Congregational Church attended by your wife and surviving sons and their spouses as well as other family, friends and neighbours.

Many years after your death, I made a camping trip to Norfolk with my wife and my son who was less than 1 year old. Whilst there, we travelled down to Suffolk in order to visit Oulton Broad, see again the house where you lived and locate your grave. At that time, the lodge inside the main gate of Lowestoft cemetery was attended by staff who provided information and maps which allowed visitors to find individual plots. I was dismayed to find an unmarked grave. No headstone, no flowers and no inscription. I stood on the slightly raised mound of soil above you and wept for both our losses.

Personal memories of you are vague and fragmentary, so I am grateful that, apart from the postcards and some photographs, other tangible reminders of you still exist. The 'soldier's chest' passed to my father and stood near the window in my childhood bedroom. A hand-operated grindstone you made lies in my shed. I rescued it when my father died and repaired it so that the water-bath no longer leaks and the handle operates properly. Now and then, I use it to sharpen my chisels. And each day I can touch the rich-red mahogany top of your table which I sanded and bees-waxed 40 years ago and which now stands in my hallway. It, too, bears witness to the effects of fleetly passing Time."



A Grandad



A Table



A Grindstone

Violin (Anna Binns)



I made this violin about 7 years ago. The working process is fascinating and I documented it over the two years I took to make it.

Works (Maura Roache)



Four Seasons Wall Hanging

A Japanese-inspired wall hanging measuring 27 inches square. The plum blossoms represent Spring, the iris, flowing stream and butterfly represent Summer. The chrysanthemum flowers and red leaves represent Autumn and the bamboo leaves Winter.

There are 4 decorative fans with knotted red cords in the corners and the borders are quilted in a Sashiko design using a variegated red embroidery thread



Unicorn Quilted Cushion Cover

A 24" square cushion cover made for my granddaughter.

The white areas of the unicorn and the black background are heavily quilted with a random pattern.

Handmade Articles (Edwina Hillyard)



An example of Mexican blackstrap weaving,
A piece of my raised white work (maybe Irish technique),
A hat I made with triangular pieces of silk, fastened down with fly stitch,
Examples of patchwork

Patchwork (Sheila Golledge)



Stamps Featuring Handicrafts (Stan Darling)



Pottery



Wood Sculpture

Ivory Sculpture



Weaving



Hz27

www.delcampe.net

This is a modest selection of stamps issued by The Ivory Coast on 27th March 1965 showing a Potter, a Wood Carver, an Ivory Sculptor and a Weaver. Handicrafts has been a fairly commonly-used theme for images on stamps over the years and one used by a number of African Countries illustrating Rural Life in the middle of the 20th Century. Perhaps now, they would choose to show a more sophisticated society. Of course, quite rightly, carving ivory would not be tolerated today.

Painting – The Ugly House

(Chris Shaw)



The Snowdonia Society owns Tŷ Hyll (The Ugly House) which is located on the A5 between Betws-y-Coed and Capel Curig. The house is reputed to be a 'tŷ unnos', i.e. it was built overnight in order to establish legal ownership. Tŷ Hyll and its gardens and woodland are open to the public.

A Handmade Christmas (Barry Coulby)



One day many winters ago, Jenny and I were facing our first 'State Occasion' in charge of Christmas Day. Would we cope? Well of course we would! After all, we knew a thing or two about parties. Just order up more food and drink than could ever be consumed, follow the usual format for now, best not to rock the boat just yet, and then any fine tuning can be left for the coming years. For example, Christmas crackers are hardly likely to excite our 4 teenagers who will have done crackers for the last 10 years or so and it's boring! So, there must surely be a better way to start the proceedings, something new and exciting but, quite rightly, tradition dictates that it should be cracker based. Just needs a bit of careful thought or divine intervention. At the Boxing Day debrief, it was agreed that the day had gone as well as could be expected, forgetting to serve the sprouts had gone down a storm, maybe the two new supremoes might just be human after all!

Well, what of the future? The team sheet will change over the years. There's bound to be an influx of boyfriends, girlfriends, husbands, wives and babies (but not always in the same order), so we will just need to stay calm and be innovative, And then came the EUREKA moment: We don't need a load of rubbish crackers we just need one, a special one, a mega cracker. Dare I say 'I've cracked it'.

The Mega Cracker. Simple really, just take the cardboard roll out from a roll of carpet, reconfigure it by cutting it in half, put a sleeve in so that it can be pulled apart and add cracker end pieces. Next, decorate with festive scenes, fill it with pressies and concealed party poppers and then suspend it from the beams in the Living Room. A great talking point. It will be around two metres long, a real showstopper or, hopefully, a show starter. Now, mum (or perhaps even granny) selects 2 teams to pull the cracker which is lowered to a convenient height. Then 1-2-3, the teams do their work and the room is full of exploding poppers, streamers all over everything and a pile of goodies in the middle of it all! The day is up and running for sure.

A Handmade Christmas (Barry Coulby)

The Mega Cracker (MC) had arrived and was hailed a success and Bridgford's own Barnes Wallis received a pat on the head. It had never happened before and never since – Senior Management was clearly impressed. There is always a BUT to spoil things as I had to admit that setting up the MC was extremely stressful and excessively time consuming and then there was the cost of therapy to consider. The inside of the cracker was just like looking under the bonnet of an original Mini and so a couple of years or so later it was announced that the MC was to be grounded. Uproar and dismay were expected but instead it was optimism. What will Grumps come up with next? No pressure there then.

Was it desperation or fear but I eventually came up with an idea. We could have a sort of house sitting on top of two boxes set apart to form a sleigh port with a secret trap door under the house to allow presents to be dropped into the sleigh port as soon as the reindeer, sleigh and reindeer poo (tiny pieces of dry burning peat, inert and perfectly safe to handle!) had been removed from the area. After intense questioning, Senior Management approved the scheme and construction of The Christmas House commenced.

The Christmas House. The House was an instant success as it was a simple progression from what had gone before and the trapdoor would not open till all poppers were pulled at the same time. Needless to say, numerous test runs were necessary to ensure compliance. Clearing away the reindeer poo was a highlight and everyone loved the little people who lived in the house and it was clear that The House was set to run and run. But nothing is forever and, after a few more years, we decided to retire and pass Christmas Day to the next generation. We would just turn up and make our escape before the washing up and, in order that they had a clear run to do it their way, we announced that, after a private ceremony, we would dismantle the house to allow disposal at the Rugby Road Dechetterie. Protests and petitions followed and after much discussion it was transported to its new home in Keyworth to enable the tradition to continue under new guardianship.



A Handmade Christmas (Barry Coulby)

To Be Continued

I have now become one of Santa's little helpers and can be found on the floor beside The House, late on Christmas Eve, making sure that everything is in working order in readiness for the big day.

Like all handmade old listed buildings, The House needs routine maintenance and such works were recently carried out by the original building contractors along with some minor structural works to ensure that it remains fit for purpose for the enjoyment of future generations.



Embroidery (Jean Earnshaw)

Full View



Detail



Still Life (Anita Price)



Painting of a Still Life made from driftwood, seaweed and pebbles from the beach

Sand Art (Joan Mayhew)



Mascots (Frances Todd)



Etsy, the online phenomenon

I am pretty certain that there is no one in our U3A who has not heard of the online marketplace Ebay. But, I very much doubt that any of you have ever heard of Etsy and, to be honest, if my daughter and future daughter-in-law did not run small craft businesses from home using the Etsy website, then I would be none the wiser. Laura makes and sells baby clothes and Amy makes and sells baby mobiles made from felt.

Etsy is an American-owned e-commerce website focused on handmade or vintage items and craft supplies. Launched in 2005, it has grown fantastically quickly to a turnover of over \$600 million. The largest Etsy turnover comes, not surprisingly, from the USA but the UK is second, followed by Canada, Australia and France. If you are looking to buy handmade items which are not available from the High Street, then the place to look is www.etsy.com

There is a huge range of products available to purchase from the Etsy website. It includes jewellery, bags, clothing, home décor and furniture, toys, art and, lastly, craft supplies and tools. To give you an idea of how big the Etsy website has grown, there were 60 million items for sale in December 2018 and the online marketplace for handmade and vintage goods connected 2 million sellers with 40 million buyers.

If you want the perfect birthday or Christmas present, you now know where to look!

Knitted Doll (Chris Farmer)



Rag Doll Lucy (Jean Earnshaw)



Lucy is 50 years old and was made by a grandmother for her granddaughter who played with her for several years. 25 years later, her daughters also liked Lucy and included her in their games. One day, she was in a pretend A&E with a broken arm!

Lucy's Lace Skirt (Jean Earnshaw)



The detail in all the clothes bears very close inspection. There are frills, pin tucks, braiding and lace, etc, all put together with the tiniest of stitches. It must have taken many, many hours to make with an enormous amount of love in it!

Shakespeare Quote (Len Arrowsmith)

Taming of The Shrew Act 4, Scene 3. (About Katherina's new gown)

Petruchio

Thy gown? Why, ay. Come, tailor, let us see't.
O mercy, God, what masquing stuff is here?
What's this? A sleeve? 'Tis like a demi-cannon.

What, up and down carv'd like an apple-tart?
Here's snip and nip and cut and slish and slash,

Like to a censer in a barber's shop.

Why, what a' devil's name, tailor, call'st thou this?

Dressing Gown (Patricia Gammons)

This handmade dressing gown was started in 1984 and completed in 1985. It is made of Chinese Shantung and the front panel is lined in a similar silk. The dragon was drawn on paper and then traced. The design was then tacked in small stitches on to cotton to give the outline for embroidering. Most of the embroidery was done on this and applied on to the blue background. Some embroidery was done straight on to the gown. The scales on the body were worked in Anchor silk thread in buttonhole stitch and then some were couched with gold thread. Stem stitch was used for certain parts of the design and the face was embroidered in my own peculiar form of long and short stitch. Many times I was asked how long it had taken me to do the body and I could not give an answer as I picked it up and did a bit now and again when I had the time.

I resolved to clock myself in and out every time I worked on the face alone. It totalled 14½ hours. Calculating the minimum wage for the labour of that part only, you can appreciate why handmade and embroidered articles cost so much. People are not willing to pay the price. The back of the front had to be lined so that the stitches from the applique could not be seen. The dragon was an Emperor's dragon because it had five toes on the feet.

It was a labour of love as many handmade items are.



Folk Art Embroidery

(Sheila Golledge)



Baby Clothes (Patricia Brunger)



I do a lot of knitting for an organisation, based in Newcastle, which specialises in providing garments for premature and stillborn babies. It is called 'Needles, Hooks, Angels and Preemies'. The garments are then sent to around 200 hospitals, maternity units, etc. If anyone is interested in knitting, crochet, sewing, etc and wants to contribute, the organisation has a Facebook page and a website. Alternatively, people can make cash donations which are used to fund postage.

A Collection of Handmade Items

(Patricia Gammons)



Cross Stitch Greetings Card

(Chris Shaw)



Hand Skills (Stan Darling)

HAND SKILLS OF A DELICATE NATURE

My father served an apprenticeship as a fitter and turner in the shipyard at Barrow in Furness. I often watched him working with tools at home and in his workshop on a fighter squadron of the Royal Air Force in the early 1950s. Later starting secondary school I was given a project to make a toothbrush rack from two pieces of half inch timber joining them together with a dovetail joint and making a notch that could accommodate a single toothbrush. I was not particularly proud of this modest achievement and I'm not sure that my parents were thrilled either; I had some way still to go!

Later I was fortunate to be accepted into medical school. Five or six years later I had learnt sufficient to pass the requisite examinations and become a practising doctor. My first job was as a House Surgeon, the lowest rung on the medical ladder, at a large General Hospital in Birmingham long since demolished and absorbed into the enormous and prestigious Queen Elizabeth Hospital. My boss at Selly Oak Hospital was a general surgeon not given to theatrical outbursts when operating but a steady and sound man of wisdom who taught me a great deal. I spent six months under his tutelage assisting in a variety of straightforward operations and being instructed in some simple procedures. One night after I had clerked yet another patient admitted with acute appendicitis my registrar said that he thought I was ready to do my first solo operation and left me in the operating theatre while he went off for a cup of coffee. I'm sure it took me ages to complete the removal of the offending organ and I remember vividly sweating buckets before I was finally able to close the wound in the patient's abdomen with the final sutures. Next morning on our ward round, as the team stood at the foot of her bed, my patient was told that I was the surgeon who had performed the operation. Then they also told her that it was the first such operation I had ever performed entirely by myself. I gradually became quicker and more confident so that before the six months post came to its end I must have carried out a further dozen appendectomies before moving to work on a medical ward as a House Physician.

That however is not quite the end of the story because perhaps twenty years later my late wife was shopping one day in the Solihull branch of Marks & Spencer. In those days cheques were still the way to pay so she went to the cashier and wrote it out. After glancing at our names of the bank account the shop assistant asked if her husband had ever work at Selly Oak Hospital in 1969 and when the answer confirmed that I had been there she revealed "It was your husband who removed my appendix and I was told afterwards that it had been his first ever solo operation" Anxious to ensure that everything had gone well my wife enquired if she had healed satisfactorily. "Yes indeed" she answered with a smile "The scar is very small and it has almost completely faded away"

Perhaps I had it in me to be a surgeon after all.

Stan Darling October 2020

Nail Art (Joan Mayhew)



The History of Nail Art

Originating in China, nail polish was made from a mix of beeswax, egg white, gelatine, vegetable dyes and gum. The Chinese applied this and left it to sit for several hours. The result - a pink finish on the nails. This was the beginning of nail art and the earliest records.

Historians suggest that nail art was popularly practiced in India as well as the Americas by some Native American tribes like the Inca. Modern nail art and design has its roots in 19thC Europe. To begin with, painted nails were exclusively an expression of social status. Then, from the middle of the 19thC – coincidentally, the beginning of modern art – it became more of a personal fashion statement. The first modern manicures came into vogue around 1830 and, subsequently, nail shops began to sprout up.

Eiderdown (Dave and Jean Earnshaw)



The eiderdown was made by David's mother in 1957 for part of our wedding present. It was made using all the best materials: satin, down, down proofing and thread. The decoration design was printed on to a backing layer behind the satin with running tiny stitches along the lines. These formed tramlines which then had padding threaded through them bringing the design into relief. The various pieces with the down proofing and backing were then all stitched together (in this case using a treadle machine) and the bags formed were filled with down.

The eiderdown was made extra large for a 4ft 6in bed which meant that, when we bought a 5ft one, it was still big enough. However, eventually, the arrival of 2 zipped together 4ft beds saw its retirement! During its useful life, it was the fashion to have it covered with a bedspread which prevented it from damage due to sunlight but that means that it is still almost like new.

Jewelry (Anna Binns)

The copper jewelry was a commission by the Djanogly Gallery, Archaeology Department, to make entry pocket-priced jewelry items based on a museum piece from their collection. I chose a brooch pin and a child's bracelet from the Iron Age as my inspiration and these are some of the pieces that were sold in the craft cabinets over a year or more.



Anna's wire edged ring

Working with Glass and Enamelling

(Sheila Golledge)

I joined the U3A Craft Group soon after it was formed. Two of the most exciting things I have had the opportunity to do were working with glass and enamelling. It was scary to begin with, using the kiln when enamelling, and breaking glass as if it was a piece of chocolate.



Plum Jam, Painting
(Josephine Cutts)



Shakespeare Quote (Len Arrowsmith)

Macbeth Act 4, Scene 1.

Second Witch

Fillet of a fenny snake,

In the cauldron boil and bake;

Eye of newt and toe of frog,

Wool of bat and tongue of dog,

Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,

Lizard's leg and howlet's wing,

For a charm of pow'rful trouble,

Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

Ceramics (Anna Binns)

I make hand-crafted pieces from a variety of earthenware clays using a press-moulded process. I design using coloured slips mostly applied by masking, brushing on and building up in many layers using the slip rather like paint and the pot like a canvas.



Graffiti (Josephine Cutts)



Graffiti under the railway bridge arches near Stamford-on-Soar

Pavement Art in Nottingham City Centre

(Paul Hudson)

