

**FRIENDS
OF THE
GLYNN
VIVIAN**

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GLYNN VIVIAN

Newsletter Spring 2023
Cylchlythyr Gwanwyn 2023

Hello!

Welcome to the Spring issue of the Newsletter. You'll notice that this newsletter is published exclusively online. We're yet to find a suitable treasurer for the role and therefore cannot access the funding we need to print the newsletter. Until we can fill this role, the newsletter will continue to be published online. Waiting for the post to be filled before printing would have led to further delays.

We've taken advantage of this unfortunate change of events by taking liberties with the size of the newsletter, which means more content for you to indulge in!

We apologise for this, and hope to return to printed copies very soon.

Alice Jones
(Editor and Designer)

Cover Photo: Richard Glynn Vivian poses in a Photo Studio in Alexandria, Egypt. Image courtesy of Paul Frecker, Library of Nineteenth Century Photography.

Richard Glynn Vivian and The Orient

John Easton Law

Richard Glynn Vivian was an active traveller and collector. He was following a family tradition, but whereas other Vivians never forgot their industrial and commercial interests, for Richard the purpose of travel seems to have been to 'broaden the mind' in terms of social contact, cultural experience and connoisseurship. This can be gauged from his albums of sketches, watercolours and photographs recording his travels, some in the Gallery. Diaries - more notebooks than diaries - covering 1850 to 1903 - are in Cardiff Central Library (MS1.597). Information on Richard's career as traveller and collector can be found in the Gallery, which has a wide range of material for future research.

When the Gallery reopened, some portraits of its founder were displayed. One, obtained from the Library of Nineteenth-Century Photography, showed Richard in 'oriental' costume, dress associated with Muslim countries bordering the Mediterranean. Orientalism was very much in fashion in Richard's day, but European interest in the region had a long history. It was manifested in pilgrimage to the Holy Land and other places associated with early Christianity; It was expressed politically and territorially, from Crusades to European imperialism. It could be intensified by events like Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798. In more peaceful times, it was stimulated and maintained by European trade and investment in the region. Building of the Suez Canal began in 1859 and finished in 1869, encouraging international commerce.

For the celebrations surrounding the Canal's completion, Giuseppe Verdi composed Aida. Commissioned by the Khedive and set in ancient Egypt, the work's success began with its premier in Cairo on 24 January 1871. This helps illustrate the fact that Orientalism had many dimensions: archaeology; architecture; the fine and applied arts; the customs of oriental societies, including what was perceived as the esoteric and the erotic; male and female dress. European communities were established; travellers were encouraged by improving transport and the increasing accessibility of hotels, guides and guide books. Photographic studios were opened to record the progress of excavations, scenes from 'ordinary life' and the travellers themselves.

A growing number of painters were attracted to the Orient, some of whom adopted Orientalism as a genre. A prominent example was John Frederick Lewis (1805-1876). A less conspicuous but still significant insight into another aspect of interest in the Middle East - and one with a Swansea connection - is provided by the Biblical scholar Charles Bousfield Huleatt (1863-1908). Huleatt was educated at Oxford and family connections may have helped him secure a curacy at St Mary's Swansea in 1888. Concern for his health may have combined with a belief in Protestant mission. He joined the Continental and Colonial Society and served as a chaplain at the Luxor Hotel

in Egypt. From the later nineteenth century, luxury hotels on the Continent and beyond often accommodated chaplaincies to serve ex-patriots and visitors. In 1901, Huleatt moved to Messina, where he helped found a football club - a good example of 'muscular Christianity'! The club survives, but Huleatt and his family died in a devastating earthquake in 1908.

In Egypt Huleatt had made an extremely important 'find'. This consisted of three fragments of papyrus, probably obtained from a dealer rather than from direct excavation. The fragments preserve some identifiable and key words from the Book of Matthew. They possibly date from the first century; they may represent the earliest record of the New Testament to survive. The fragments are now held in the college Huleatt first attended in Oxford, Magdalen.

It is unlikely that Huleatt, a clergyman, would choose to associate himself with the Orient to the extent of adopting Arab dress, but a remarkable number of Europeans did, notably George Gordon, Lord Byron (Thomas Phillips, 1814) and Colonel T.E. Lawrence (Augustus John, 1919). A cheaper and faster method of having this done was to hire a photographer to create a *carte-de-visite*. This was not a visiting card, more a souvenir. Measuring around 4 by 3 inches, printed on albumen treated paper for a sharper image, mounted on card, it could be produced in multiple copies to be kept in an album or sent to friends. Some were of views, 'street scenes' and works of art, but as in the case of Richard Glynn Vivian they could record portraits.

Richard's *carte* was photographed in the studio of Schier and Schoefft in Alexandria. It is undated. The 'craze' for *carte-de-visite* dated from the 1860s and 70s. One of Richard's albums in the Glynn Vivian records a brief visit to Egypt in May 1871. His elder brother, Liberal M.P. for West Cornwall, A. Pendarves Vivian (1834-1926) travelled to Egypt with his wife from November 1871 to April 1872. The 'almost' coincidence could be relevant.

It may also prompt a fuller investigation into Richard's interest in the Orient. One line of enquiry may lie with his association with the eminent painter – and contemporary - Frederic Lord Leighton (1830-1896). Leigh-



Extract from Glynn Vivian's sketchbook: watercolour sketch showing the view from the hotel Richard Glynn Vivian was staying in Tunis during his travels in 1872.

ton travelled to North Africa and the Middle East and created some famous works, for example: *Odalisque* (1862), *Music Lesson* (1873), *Courtyard in Algiers* (1879). He introduced oriental decoration to his Holland Park home, and added an Arab Hall (1877-79). Richard's diaries record visits to Holland Park to attend exhibitions and social events, even after Leighton's death.

That Orientalism was once a vogue may not help its appreciation today. In 1978, Edward Said published *Orientalism* to critical acclaim. For Said, Orientalism was an expression of Western cultural arrogance and imperialism. On-going research has proven to be highly critical of Said's work, but his agenda retains a fashionable influence. Whatever, a reading of Richard Glynn Vivian does not suggest attitudes of condescension, superiority or exploitation towards other cultures. His *carte-de-visite* if posed, holding a staff and taken in clean clothes in the Alexandrian branch of a Paris studio, conveys reflection, appreciation and peace in a different skin.

Further reading: John Pemble, *The Mediterranean Passion* (2009); Edward Said, *Orientalism* (1978); Nicholas Tromans, ed., *The Lure of the East. British Orientalist Painting* (2008). For *cartes-de-visites*, M.A. Pelizzari and S. Wilkins, eds, *The Idea of Italy. Photography*

KARIM

Of The Crop by Alice Jones

In the 1940s, Herbert Hunke coined the term 'beatnik' to describe a generation of young creatives enthralled in the excitement of city life. Flash forward eighty years, and young people continue to search for new ways to describe the excitement of the 'now'. Sapnin is slang for 'what's happening?', and the prescribed name for a budding clothing company founded by Karim Kamil, a mural artist hailing from the quiet suburbs of Sketty Cross.

Born in Swansea to an Iraqi father and a Welsh mother, Kamil started skateboarding at fourteen. This is a sport that attracts outsiders and creatives alike. As a street artist, Kamil has always been surrounded by people with access to video recording equipment, spray paint and print facilities. When Kamil decided to start a clothing brand, he turned to Tidy Mike, a fellow Welsh native and founder of Simple Print Studio, Bristol, who prints on behalf of Sapnin. While Swansea can be an isolating place to grow up in for young creatives, the intrinsic connections of UK skate culture, alongside the fractal nature of social media presence, have given Kamil a platform



Kamil enjoying a game of chess on Swansea's seafront. Courtesy of Karim Kamil.

for selling his garments to a wide audience of like-minded marginals.

Kamil's designs are primarily concerned with humour. Since launching, Kamil has merchandised a successful run of t-shirt collections, including the classic understated 'SAP', the bold 'Welsh Tang' and the vivid blue 'Sapnin'. Aside from humour, Welsh identity is a consistent theme. A casual visitor to the Sapnin website will find images of Welsh

celebrities such as Tom Jones and Rhys Ifans with Kamil's designs superimposed onto their clothing. This audacious act of reappropriation reflects the slanted, unpredictable approach of Kamil as an image-maker. A graffiti artist first and foremost, collaging images comes as second nature.

Swansea's rain-drenched streets provided the backdrop to Kamil's teenage years. The hostility of the adult world, personified by

angry security guards who would chase Kamil and his friends out of multi-story car parks, only added to his sense of alienation. Following the severe cuts of the Cameron Years, funding to Youth Clubs and Sports facilities were at an all-time-low during Kamil's adolescence. These cuts made a dramatic impact on the maintenance and availability of urban sports facilities, especially in existing areas of deprivation. For all this, skateboarding provided a constructive outlet for Kamil's frustrations, supplying opportunities for him to explore creative avenues, culminating in his interest in clothing.

In 2020, in the midst of a pandemic, Kamil launched Sapnin with the assistance of a handful of friends and family who helped him package and ship products, prepare orders and liaise with customers. The brand's ethos immediately resonated with a captive audience of young people from across South Wales, who were keen to exhibit their Welsh identity in an unapologetic manner. A clear line can be drawn between the grit required to start a business during a pandemic and the years Kamil spent cultivating tricks in less-than-ideal settings.

Support Kamil by purchasing directly from his online store:
www.sapnin.co

Follow Sapnin on Instagram: @sapnin_co

Facing Page: Billy Morris modelling the 'Welsh Tang' hoodie by Sapnin. Courtesy of Karim Kamil.



Wakelin Prize 2022: Ingrid Murphy



Ingrid Murphy, 'Hold' 2022. Courtesy of the artist. Medium: Porcelain, lustre, electronics (midi system/processor/speaker), table.

Glynn Vivian Art Gallery is delighted to announce the Wakelin Award recipient for 2022. The annual award is given to an artist living and working in Wales, whose work is purchased for the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery's Permanent Collection, and will be on display at the Gallery in spring 2023.

The recipient for The Wakelin Award 2022 is Ingrid Murphy. Previous award winners include Brendan Stuart Burns, Anthony Shapland, Catrin Webster, Jonathan Anderson, Meri Wells, David Cushway, Helen Sear, Clare Woods, Alexander Duncan, Philip Eglin, Richard Billingham, Cinzia Mutigli and Anya Paintsil.

This year's selector is Swansea based artist and lecturer, Catrin Webster. Catrin has exhibited nationally and internationally. She is a previous winner of the award, selected fourteen years ago. Catrin Webster said:

As a Swansea-based artist and educator, the Glynn Vivian is such an important part of my cultural experience. The combination of contemporary exhibitions and the historic collection is a huge source of inspiration to me and to the many

people, including artists and students in the city and far beyond. I was delighted to be invited to nominate an artist for the Wakelin Award, and also aware of both the opportunity and responsibility to suggest an artist whose work would become part of the collection and the fabric of our contemporary culture and heritage.

There is an historic tradition of ceramics in Wales, which is represented in the Glynn Vivian collection and there is also an amazing contemporary culture in Wales, in which ceramics are employed and re-imagined, embracing materiality and potentiality, taking the medium into an expanded field of cross disciplinary experimentation with extraordinary consequences. Ingrid Murphy, has made a significant contribution to this, both in her teaching at Cardiff Met, and through her exquisite, thought provoking and playful work, which often speaks to the histories of popular ceramics within the Welsh tradition. I have nominated Ingrid, as I believe the significance of her contribution to visual culture in Wales needs to be represented in our national collections.

Ingrid Murphy is a practicing

ceramic artist, whose work focuses on augmenting ceramic artefacts with a range of interactive technologies. Through her work, she exploits and plays with the boundaries of ceramic material to create innovative and playful interactions and experiences for gallery visitors. She uses sound, humour and autobiographical elements, creating engaging ceramic works, which also bring to life the deeper historical and social histories of ceramic objects and their intended uses. Ingrid Murphy was born in Ireland and lives and works in Cardiff. She is currently Principal Lecturer for Transdisciplinarity at Cardiff School of Art & Design, Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Ingrid Murphy said:
I am delighted to be this year's recipient of the Wakelin Award, and feel very honoured that I will be joining the prestigious collective of previous winners. The Wakelin Award enables the museum to develop a growing collection which celebrates the truly diverse artistic practice of Wales and it is wonderful and encouraging to have this form of recognition for my work. As a maker of interactive objects, it is also a joy to know that the work will be displayed for full public engagement at the Glynn Vivian Museum.

My heartfelt thanks to the selector and previous Wakelin winner Catrin Webster, and to the Friends of the Glynn Vivian and the Wakelin family for their continuous support of the award.

The Award is administered and supported by the Friends of the Glynn Vivian and is generously supported by donations in memory of Richard and Rosemary Wakelin and their son Martin, who were themselves artists and active supporters of the arts in Swansea.

Dr Peter Wakelin, said, *Living in Swansea for nearly 40 years, our family really valued the established collection at the Glynn Vivian, as well as the new art that was being created. My parents gave a lot of their time to the Gallery and the Friends. They would be really pleased to see such interesting artists being represented in the collection thanks to this award scheme.*

Jayne Woodman, Chair of the Friends of the Glynn Vivian, said: *The Wakelin award, now in its 22nd year, offers contemporary artists and makers financial recognition and the joy of being part of the Glynn Vivian's permanent collection. The work of Ingrid Murphy, the 2022 winner, is a wonderful addition; it is an honour*

to be able to share this work with the gallery's broad audiences. The Friends of the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery have worked in partnership with Peter Wakelin and his family since 2000 when this important award was launched; enabling continued support for the gallery; its audiences and many artists across Wales.

Karen MacKinnon, Curator, Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, said: *We are delighted to be able to add Ingrid's work to the permanent collection and very grateful to Peter Wakelin and the rest of the Wakelin family and the Friends of the Glynn Vivian for making this possible. The works we are able to purchase explore key strands she returns to in her practice including the interface between ceramics and technology and encouraging a playful engagement with those who experience her works. There is also an autobiographical quality to some of her works, which is in conversation with the broader histories of ceramics. Thank you so much to Ingrid for this wonderful work and to Catrin for being such a thoughtful selector.*

YOUNG GIFTED & WELSH

Interview with Ayesha Hafeez from Demure Duchess by Alice Jones

Where did the original vision for Demure Duchess come from?

Growing up in Manchester and Swansea, I started making my own clothes because I always felt like other people couldn't understand what I wanted. Often for family gatherings, I'd be looking for a traditional Asian Wear outfit with a quirky, 'Western' touch. With nowhere to source this style from, I decided to use my initiative and do it myself. I already had a sewing machine. I went to local fabric shops to get my material. I had no experience of making patterns, so I'd examine existing garments to see how they were put together and spent hours experimenting with different

techniques. I kept it to myself that I wanted to be a 'fashion designer'. Traditionally, in British-Asian families, you're only really taken seriously if you pick a traditional career: doctor, accountant, dentist - the list goes on.

What have been your biggest challenges so far?

I don't have a team behind me, so delegating time, effort and resources effectively is my biggest challenge. I started this business because I love making clothes, but as time goes by, more of my time is spent managing the business than creating the pieces. I'm an accountant by day, which helps me with the business side of things, but it's still

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Demure Duchess is about offering women an alternative set of choices that meets their taste and respects their principles.”



Hafeez's collection at the 2021 Dubai Modest Fashion Week. Images courtesy of Ayesha Hafeez.

difficult to assess what would be the best thing to invest in when you start to consider growing the business - advertising, new fabric, a studio space? It's hard to know which one will reap the greatest return. When you're running a business, it can feel like a constant too-and-fro of problems. As soon as you think you've got one area covered, you realise that there's something else that you've fallen short in. I don't want to build my business on purchasing the cheapest fabric on the market and getting the products produced in a third-world country and then trying to sell as many as possible. I definitely think there's a gap in the market for modest, fashionable garments. The problem is that South Wales isn't an ideal place to be based when you're trying to sell clothing catered specifically to Muslim women. People just

aren't willing to pay the prices that are necessary to cover costs. It would be easier for me to run the business from an area where there's an established community of middle class Muslim women to supply to.

In 2021, your Dubai collection was featured alongside thirty five fashion designers at Modest Fashion Week. What's the story behind landing a show in Dubai? Once they offered me the slot, I had to decide whether or not it would be worth investing time, money and energy into the opportunity. The collection needed to include ten pieces, and I wasn't sure if I'd make it. I signed up, however, and said to myself 'Even if my brand doesn't go anywhere, this is my chance at achieving something that no one in my family would dream of doing. Whatever comes out of it, I'll be happy.' Lots of women in my circle would love to

try their hand at pursuing their passions, but they never have the courage to take the first step in the right direction. The show itself got postponed because of Covid, but it was finally re-scheduled for November 2021. It was the first show I'd participated in. I wanted to make sure my collection reflected my skill set, so I decided to feature a range of different fits, including trousers, dresses and jackets. Established designers have teams of assistants to help them. Demure Duchess is just me, my sewing machine and my kitchen table. When it came down to physically creating the pieces for the show, it was extremely difficult to do it alone.

Why does your clothing resonate with your audience? I understand my demographic from a spiritual as well as a stylistic perspective. A lot

of British Muslim women are looking for bold statement pieces that don't make them feel as though they have to compromise spiritually. For example, if a Muslim woman wants to dress modestly in the summer and she has brought an outfit from the highstreet, she will end up having to wear two layers to compensate for the fact that the clothes aren't designed to line up with their spiritual values. The other option is to purchase a traditional garment that ticks all the boxes in terms of covering up properly, but doesn't have any stylistic features. Demure Duchess is about offering women an alternative set of choices that meets their taste and respects their principles.

Ayesha Hafeez is in the process of developing a new global collection. Follow Demure Duchess on Instagram: @demure_duchess





Esther Ley, Kilvey Cow Creamer, 2023, Swansea Open Exhibition 2023. Image courtesy of Anja Stenina.

I've come across ceramic cow creamers three times in my life. The first was when my friend, artist Esther Ley made one as a gift for my partner. The second time was in a display as part of the Art and Industry exhibition in the Glynn Vivian gallery last year. The third time was in this year's Swansea Open exhibition in the gallery.

I asked Esther to tell me something about her sculpture. Here is what she said:

Swansea pottery Cambrian cow creamers have an obvious connection between form and function. They were designed to be filled with cream, the tail as a handle to pour from and the spout, the cow's mouth.

At the time that Swansea potteries were producing items for the upper and middle classes, Industrialisation in the form of the Copperworks along the lower Swansea Valley was causing

KILVEY COW CREAMER

Anja Stenina Investigates
The Mysterious Ceramic
Cow of The Swansea Open

terrible environmental damage to the surrounding area. These popular ceramic items were ubiquitous; I remember the old family having them on their dressers in pride of place. The cow creamer and other rural depictions such as the cottage butter dish or the chicken egg holder - a hen sitting pretty on its basket of eggs. Precious ornaments reminding people of their rural roots?

We still find names in Wales that give us a clue to that rural past. The word 'Hafod' refers to the seasonal cycle of transhumance - the movement of livestock and people from a lowland winter pasture at the main residence (Welsh hendre) to a higher summer pasture.

Ironically, it was the Hafod Morfa Copperworks that destroyed the livelihoods and farmland on and around Kilvey Hill as the airbound pollution drifted up. A farmer testified that after the enlargement of the Hafod works, the bones of his cattle became brittle and their ribs broke; lumps as big as fists appeared on their knees and leg joints, and their hoofs 'grew wild'. Unable to stand, the cattle fed lying down or on their knees.

This story prompted the skeletal cow creamer. It's a juxtaposition of the opposing ideas of the rural idyll and the reality of exploitation and industrialisation. It's a sad creature which reminds us of our own mortality and fragility.

Anja Stenina is a member of the Friends of The Glynn Vivian Committee and is PhD candidate at Swansea College of Art.



Right: Poland dipping lengths of canvas into a wood-fired cast iron bath filled with botanical dyes. Image courtesy of Sarah Poland.

Silence

Silence - The Messenger And The Metaphor is essentially a painting exhibition. It includes gesso panel, botanical colour, natural dye, 3-d painting, immersive installation, fashion design and text. This exhibition is a departure from my oil painting practice and it's the first time I've exhibited this new way of working. Essentially, this journey started in 2011 when I lived in my Nomadic Studio, a converted Luton box truck, immersed in an ancient oak woodland in West Wales for five years. Wanting to make work literally 'of the woodland', it was here I explored making oak gall ink. Living lightly, in nature, with a growing awareness of sustainability and the wider issues of plastic pollution and climate change I started looking to source sustainable materials for my creative practice. In 2020 I broadened my palette, foraging botanical colours from the environment around me and developing a garden area for growing dye plants. All materials in this exhibition are sustainably and ethically sourced, canvas is GOTS certified (Global Organic Textile Standard), panels use poplar wood.

The presence of landscape has always been a source of inspiration to my work, in particular, the ocean and the magical forest cathedral landscape. Work in this exhibition is about perception and sensation – the abstract expression of sensation, emotion, sound, transformation and beauty. The work is also about breathing, about what we yearn for, and the space created in our head when being caught off guard by something which takes us away from our physical reality for a moment. It's about being immersed in an environment.

My current studio has a large outdoor, wood-fired cast iron bath where I use botanical colour to dye lengths of canvas before painting. Having started working on unstretched canvas in the studio, merging it with the visceral experience of textiles hanging on the washing line, the work evolved into the hanging installation Forest. With the larger work, hoping to engage physically and spatially as well as conceptually, building relationships between the materials and the abstract, Forest is conceived as a piece which can morph in size to fit different exhibition spaces.

Included in the exhibition are extracts from The Notebooks Of Eurydice, a text by Partou Zia. Several years ago painter Richard Cook, in Newlyn, Cornwall, gave me a copy of the manuscript (since part published in a compendium) by his late wife, Persian painter, Partou Zia. It has been a companion, a conversation during the process of creating work. I find it beautiful and profound, of a kind of truth and of human experience. It has helped deepen my understanding of my own work. It has been important that my work maintains it's integrity and to be clear that it is a conversation and not an interpretation. The similarities of approach to practice and the sacred drew me to want to collaborate with it. Zia lived by the sea and it's magic, light and energy come out clearly in the work.

Poland's Exhibition Silence opening 20th May at Elysium Gallery, and will continue from 22nd May - 1st July. Sign-up to Elysium Gallery's newsletter for panel discussion and workshop dates.



Extract from Branwen Jones' animated film
Fireplace, Charcoal animation (video), 2021

OPEN FRIENDS PRIZE WINNER

This year's Swansea Open included a host of wonderful artwork which made our job all the harder in choosing the Friend's Prize. Despite this, it was no surprise that at the top of all our lists was the amazing charcoaled animation by Branwen Jones, which tells the story of a fireplace, from its conception, the acquisition and voyage of its raw materials from abroad, its construction and the subsequent lives that were lived around it and affected by its warmth.

Bronwen's soft yet precise hand adds depth to the charcoal drawings and the sheer number of sketches helps to bring the stop motion animation, so simple in concept, bursting into life.

WIGS, LEOTARDS AND PATENT LEATHER

“I maintained wigs, bought and repaired items of costume such as shoes, leotards, t shirts, and patent leather gloves.”



Stories from Behind the Scenes with Costume Designer Eleni Foundoukis

Ever since a young age I'd always had an interest in fashion, at home we had a trunk full of costumes including a pink satin dress, a giant red lace bra (!) and Native American moccasins and head-dress, which I remember vividly. This bridged into costume after seeing my Greek grandmother dressed in her mourning clothes: black tailored skirts, blouses and headscarves. I thought she looked so dramatic and beautiful. Whilst at school I attended youth theatre and acted in several local plays.

In 2013 after I graduated with a BA in Fine Art from Central St Martins in London, I studied costume design and set design at the same University. Initially I decided to study Fine Art as I wanted to go into a multi-disciplinary field, as I've always had an interest in all areas of art, including painting and 2D. After I finished studying I took a few internships in Wales and London, including working with welsh designer Jayne Pierson at London fashion week.

My first theatre job was in 2019, dressing for the National Theatre. From then on I managed to get some gigs on fast-paced musicals such as Priscilla Queen of the Desert. Then the pandemic hit which was a disaster for the theatre world. However, I saw this as an opportunity to use the time to acquire extra skills in sewing, costume design and making, and managed to move into Wardrobe management. I've been so fortunate to work on such a variety of both plays

and musicals, including Tony the Rock Opera directed by Harry Hill, which was constant laughter and heaps of fun, and Cages, with still more responsibilities. I maintained wigs, bought and repaired items of costume like shoes, leotards, t-shirts, and patent leather gloves.

Cages was an interesting venture and unlike any show I had worked on. The show consisted of live performances, holograms and technology which is rare for musicals. The costumes consisted of contemporary and period dress combined, with accents such as corsetry and lacing. The shirts and dresses were cut in such a way to reveal a cage underneath in the torso. The musical juxtaposed these historical elements with modern technology, which had been eight years in development, creating a beautiful show in terms of the design. The whole set was a black box into which the technology was built. Tony the Rock Opera was quite contrasting in that women wore men's workwear suits, all in the colours of the British flag. The use of gimmicky wigs was fitting to the absurdity of the show.

I often get back into making art in my free time to re-train my eye around colour and composition. Costume and art are very much interlinked for me.

Image: Allison Harvard in a production of 'Cages' at Riverside Studios, Hammersmith. London 2022.

Y Ffotograffydd Cymreig

Bernard Mitchell

Seren Willicombe



Kyffin Williams yn ei stiwdio © Bernard Mitchell

Mae llawer o bobl yn adnabod Bernard Mitchell fel ffotograffydd Cymreig dylanwadol sy'n creu portreadau unigryw ac ysbrydoledig o artistiaid eraill o Gymru yn eu stiwdio, boed yn stiwdio peintio neu stiwdio ysgrifennu. Mae ei archif enfawr o ffotograffau o arlunwyr Cymreig, yn cynnwys Kyffin Williams (Ffugir1), un o arlunwyr enwocaf Cymru.

Er mwyn dal ei archif enfawrac i wneud hyn yn hygyrch i eraill, mae Mitchell wedi cynhyrchu llyfr hynod ddiddorol o'i bortreadau *Pieces of a Jigsaw: Portraits of Artists and Writers of Wales* (2017) ac i mi wrth astudio ffotograffeg ac sydd â diddordeb eang mewn celf a ffotograffiaeth Gymreig, byddaf yn cyfeirio'n aml at y llyfr hwn yn fy astudiaethau. Nid wyf erioed wedi gweld ffotograffydd ag archif mor helaeth. Gyda ffotograffau o A i Y, ac o A i Z mae Mitchell wedi cymryd ffotograffau o artistiaid Cymru ar gyfer pob llythyren o'r wyddor Gymraeg a Saesneg.

Mae hefyd yn gefnogwr enfawr o artistiaid ifanc a newydd ac yn hapus i helpu'r artistiaid yma pan fo modd. Mae Mitchell yn rhywun sydd wedi helpu fi i dyfu fel ffotograffydd ifanc ac mae wedi cael dylanwad ar fy arfer.

Mae Bernard Mitchell yn byw drws nesaf i fi ac rwyf wedi byw drws nesaf iddo am ran fwyaf o fy mywyd, doeddwn i byth yn gwybod yn iawn am ei dalent a'i gyflawniadau anhygoel nes yn fy arddegau, datblygodd a thyfodd fy niddordeb mewn ffotograffiaeth. Pan ddarganfu Bernard Mitchell fy mod ar fin astudio ffotograffiaeth yng Ngholeg Celf Abertawe, rhoddodd gopi wedi'i lofnodi i mi o un o'i lyfrau a chynigiodd fy helpu gydag unrhyw beth yn ymwneud â'm cwrs. Ar yr adeg hon, darganfyddais ei fod yn hoff iawn o semioteg, sef un o'r pynciau cyntaf imi ymchwilio iddo yn y coleg. Rwyf wedi bod yn ddigon ffodus i gael nifer o sgysiaid gydag ef am ei arfer, a chefais rywfaint o gamerâu yr wyf yn ei ddefnyddio bron yn ddyddiol. Nid yw ei gefnogaeth wedi mynd heb sylwi.

Gallwn i dreulio oriau yn gwrandao ar ei straeon amdano a'i ymarfer. Rwy'n cofio unwaith iddo ddweud stori ddiddorol iawn wrthyf, ei fod wedi benthyca camera ffilm wrth un o'r siopau camerâu yn Abertawe a mynd ag ef i lawr i'r dociau i'w brofi cyn ei brynu. Yn sydyn, wnaeth un o'r ffatrioedd ffrwydro gan achosi anhrefn, ac roedd Mitchell yn ddigon ffodus i dynnu llun o'r digwyddiadau. Soniodd hefyd am dwyllo'r gwarchodwyr diogelwch gan esbonio ei fod gyda'r wasg er mwyn iddo allu mynd yn agosach at y digwyddiad a chael lluniau da o'r digwyddiad.

Mae Mitchell wedi dod ar draws llawer o arlunwyr Cymreig h'n a brofiadol ac artistiaid ifanc a newydd o Gymru. Mae wedi gweld sut mae Celf yng Nghymru wedi datblygu yn ystod ei yrfa a gweld sut mae technoleg a diwylliant cymdeithasol wedi newid yn aruthrol gwelir hyn trwy ei bortreadau.

Ar gyfer fy nhraethawd hir yn fy mlwyddyn olaf Roeddwn i eisiau canolbwyntio ar artistiaid Cymreig, y berthynas â thirwedd a'u dylanwad ar gelf ac yn benodol celf Gymreig. Felly yn naturiol y man cychwyn oedd yr arlunydd a ffotograffydd adnabyddus, fy nghymydog Bernard Mitchell. Mae ffotograffau Mitchell yn dylanwadu'n fawr ar gelfyddyd a diwylliant Cymru a thrwy ei ffotograffau mae'n darparu dogfennaeth o gelf Gymreig dros amser gan iddo dynnu lluniau cymaint o artistiaid Cymreig o'r rhai sy'n cychwyn ar eu gyrfa i'r ymarferwyr mwy adnabyddus. Mae'r ffotograffau hyn yn aml wedi eu tynnu yn stiwdio'r artist neu'r lle maen nhw'n hoffi ei greu.

Mae ei archif a'i wefan wedi fy ngalluogi i allu ymchwilio cymaint o artistiaid Cymreig hebddo rhain mae'n debyg na fyddwn wedi dod o hyd i gymaint o wybodaeth mor rhwydd. Yn ogystal â gwneud gwaith mae gan Mitchell hefyd archif o lyfrau am bob math o artistiaid a ffotograffwyr, a'r cyfan wedi'u trefnu yn ôl pwnc. Mae cyfran helaeth o'i silff lyfrau wedi'i neilltuo i gelf ac artistiaid Cymreig, rhywbeth rwy'n ei edmygu fel rhywun sydd wrth fy modd yn casglu ymchwil.

Mae Mitchell a'i waith wedi bod yn fuddiol ac yn ddefnyddiol i lawer o'm prosiectau dros y tair blynedd diwethaf. Heb astudio Bernard

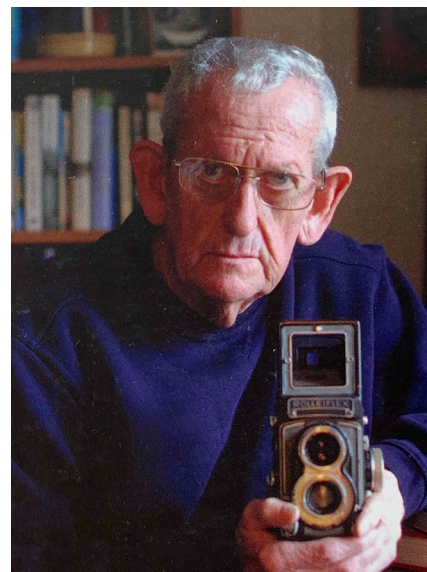
Mitchell, ei arfer a'n trafodaethau niferus ni fyddai gennyf y cyfoeth o wybodaeth am artistiaid Cymreig sydd gennyf heddiw, dangosir hyn yr effaith a'r dylanwad enfawr parhaus sydd ganddo ar gelf ac artistiaid Cymreig ac wrth gwrs arnaf i. Gwelir yng ngwaith Bernard Mitchell cip o hanes celfyddyd gyfoes Cymru.

Mae Seren Willicombe, o Abertawe, yn fyfyrwraig ffotograffiaeth trydedd flwyddyn yng Ngholeg Celf Abertawe ac mae ganddi ddiddordeb mewn astudio celf yng Nghymru yn ogystal ag archwilio tirwedd yn ei ffotograffau.

Atgynhyrchir y ffotograff gyda chaniatâd Bernard Mitchell.

An English translation of this article can be found on the Friends website:

friendsoftheglynnvivian.com/newsletters



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