

THE SHELTER MUSEUM

Return to Sender

RETURN TO SENDER

This installation forms part of the Shelter project, which centres on a small stone hut built originally as an anonymous, unofficial artwork in 2002 on the northern shore of Lindisfarne. Over the years, the shelter's interior has been embellished in increasingly elaborate and imaginative ways by its builders and large numbers of visitors using found and manufactured items. Many of the results have been salvaged and archived, including after the shelter's destruction in 2009 and last December when a tidal surge partially demolished it, and again following a fire there in August of this year.

The pieces displayed in *Return to Sender* include items created from a beach combing and litter picking event held on Lindisfarne in July. Linked to Berwick Film Festival's theme of 'Border Crossings', the exhibition's title refers to the fact that much of the flotsam and jetsam washed up on the shores of the island is carried there by tidal currents from various places to the north, including Berwick and the Scottish Borders. The installation thus returns some of this material from whence it came, exhibited as transformed items including sculpture, assemblage, video, film, photography, film props, writing and recorded events. Also on display is the costume from the film *Granfer*, shot on location on Lindisfarne for Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival and showing at Coxon's Tower on the town's mediaeval ramparts from 18th to 21st September. Artworks are on display by collaborating artists as well as artefacts generated from a postal art project, where packages containing beach items were sent to, transformed by, and received back from a range of recipients, including visual artists, children, designers, scientists, writers, musicians and others. An intervention in Berwick Museum's Burrell Collection is also part of the installation.

The gathering of materials used in making the work on show could represent a kind of lowbrow archaeological excavation of objects which might normally be considered merely the detritus of consumer society, for example, such that many would not expect it to form the basis of either a museum display or media for artistic manipulation. Likewise, the richness and variety of the shelter's internal decor resulted from types of activity which even many of those responsible may not necessarily have interpreted as creative, let alone as 'art'. Return to Sender and the Shelter project therefore raise many questions, such as: What is judged to be of 'value' or to have 'worth'? Who is deemed capable of engaging in transformative practices and pronouncing on the outcomes? Which enterprises enter the public realm, official discourses and the historical record as significant, important and meaningful events? Finally, who benefits or profits, and how, from such endeavours?

Sally Madge - September 2014

LIST OF WORKS

Burrell Collection

1. Ashley
Untitled
School workshop
Materials: assembled beach objects.
2. Jaques Kerchache, art dealer, collecting sacred Vodun [Voodoo] objects in Benin.
Late 1960s.

Exhibition Room 1

3. Charles Danby and Rob Smith
CDRS1 LIME KILN (2014)

A postcard that presents two colour separated and meshed images taken by the artists of disused and disintegrating lime kilns on the northern side of Lindisfarne. The kilns are partially buried monuments to an intensive industrial working site that is far removed from the current Trust and Heritage narrative that attracts both residents and visitors to the island.

- Reparation Rocks #1-2 (2014),
Lindisfarne Limestone

Limestone rocks that were once part of the material landmass of Lindisfarne. Dispersed and separated from their source through quarrying and processes of erosion these fragments have themselves become fractured, cracked, broken and split. Using limestone from the dormant Lindisfarne quarry and the industrial process of smelting, the artists have manufactured lime mortar and used this to restore and repair the rocks to full complete forms. The reparation rocks while complete through their meticulous repair can only ever be speculations that testify to an idea of an original form.

4. Sally Madge
Untitled
Thumb pots made from Lindisfarne clay deposits and raku fired in a driftwood kiln.

5. Sally Madge and Ditte Goard
Untitled
Collage constructed from fabrics collected from Lindisfarne's north shores.

6. Sally Madge
Untitled
Puppet constructed from drift wood collected on Lindisfarne's north shores.

7. Michael Davies
Fathom
Postal art project
Item sent: broken plastic buoy.
Materials: scrimshaw on deep sea trawling float fixed to basket tilted new broom.

8. Judy Thomas

Untitled

Polaroid image (enlarged). Shelter with stacked driftwood ready for roofing (2014).

9. Una Rivaz

The Lindisfarne Shelter

Book

10. Sally Madge and Ditte Goard

Untitled

Puppets made from assorted animal bones found on Lindisfarne Nature Reserve.

11. Kukri knife found in Shelter.

12. Driftwood found in Shelter.

13. Book: Geology of Northumberland and the Borders.

14. Gideon's Bible subjected to earth, water, wind and fire.

15. 'Cabinet of Curiosities'. Assorted flotsam and jetsam collected from the shores of Lindisfarne and from the Shelter archive.

16. Meadow Pipit's nest built into the driftwood roof of the Shelter and lined with sheep's wool from an artist's installation there in 2013.

17. 'Pick up arms' used for litter pick at Coves Haven and Back Skerres, Lindisfarne, July (2014).

18. Pirri pirri burr mask.

19. Dee Rivaz

The Mother, The Daughter and the Holy Thread

Postal art project

Item sent: 'tumbleweed' (nylon fishing line and dried grass formed into a ball).

Materials: grasses, reeds and Welsh poppy heads, taken from domestic and wild locations in North Wales.

Constructed on the shores of Llyn Brenig, where women have been feeding, clothing and sheltering their families for thousands of years (they have carbon-dated charcoal from their fires to 5700 BC). As I gathered the materials and began altering and adding to the Lindisfarne 'tumbleweed', I thought of these women, my own women folk and how we love to make and talk together; and watched my husband fishing.

20. Daniel

Untitled

School workshop

Materials: assembled beach objects.

21. Daniel

Untitled

School workshop

Materials: assembled beach objects.

22. Donald Gunn

Littoral Zone

Postal art project

Item sent: hob-nailed boot heel.

Materials: crab claws, crab shell, fishing weight and other assorted organic matter.

The littoral zone is subject to a wide range of environmental political conditions, including high-energy wave action and intermittent periods of flooding and drying along with the associated fluctuations in exposure to solar radiation and extremes of temperature religion.

23. Billy Hooper

The Mad Scientist's Muscle Inflator

Postal art project

Item sent: Adjustable head band from hard hat.

Materials: tin foil, assorted electric flex, scart plug.

It makes you really really strong. Your muscles bulge out but you're still in full control of your mind and body, but if you take it off, you'll die.

24. Adam

Untitled

School workshop

Materials: assembled beach objects.

25. Nancy Hooper

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: Plastic dog's head.

Materials: Multicoloured glitter.

The dog was messing around in a magic factory and fell into a teleporter. Then he landed in a world full of sparkles. Then he made a house out of sparkles and then made lots of furniture out of sparkles like a bed and food and lots of things like that.

26. Lucy Madge

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: broken plastic dolls-house chair.

Material: loom bands

27. Natalie Gale

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: plastic shoe heel.

Material: gesso.

28. Amy Lowe

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: plastic lidded display box.

Materials: wire found on the beach in Hastings and antique beads - including coral from my great grandmother's necklace.

29. Sol Jennings

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: circuit board.

Materials: origami and assorted organic items.

30. Judy Thomas

Eriphorum Angustifolium

Postal Art Project

Item sent: blue plastic doll.

Materials: acrylic paint, nail varnish, Icelandic cotton grass.

31. Wendy Kirkup and Simon Murray

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: plastic shoe heel.

Wendy Kirkup and Simon Murray who spent many years living and working on Tyneside, had this object partially 'heeled' by employees of Timpson, near their home in Glasgow. James Timpson, chair of the Employers' Forum for Reducing Re-Offending and a member of the Working Prison Advisory Group, has helped establish Timpson as the largest employer of ex-offenders in the UK. He was educated at Durham and Northumbria Universities.

32. Carole Luby

I Burned My Fingers

Postal art project

Sent: plastic doll's leg.

Material: plastic doll.

33. David Foggo

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: decorator's brush with dried paint.

Materials: artists' brushes.

It was most appropriate that you posted me an old paint brush, as I used to work as a painter and decorator back in the late 1980s. I am returning the object transformed - albeit minimally - into a paintbrush cross of sorts, using both decorators' and artists' brushes. The merging of the two reflect my working past and creative present. The cross-like form, of course, also references the religious location of the sent object.

34. Carved cockerel left in shelter.

35. Kate Penrice

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: charred wood.

Material: handwritten text (anon).

36. Rachael McArthur

The Shell of Our Hands [Future]

Postal art project

Item sent: fragment of rubber flipper.

Materials: acrylic paint and ink on various papers, plasticine, cardboard.

37. Liz Herbert

Fabric of my Being

Postal art project

Item sent: coil of nylon strands.

Material: wool.

I tried to spin it and I tried to knit it, I then decided to mix it and fix it into the wool. The piece represents the sea, sky and sand and the marginal strip on which the flotsam washes up and becomes woven into the landscape, until the tide comes in once more. The wool is hand spun to give it texture, hand knitted to give an organic feel and the nylon strands are blended in and around the wool in the same way that the flotsam brought in by the tide is bound up in the landscape.

38. David Mackintosh

Mask

Postal art project

Item sent: plastic cone and remains of a tennis ball.

Item returned: mask.

39. Rosie Caldecott

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: broken bottle top.

Material: oil paint.

40. Debbie Bowers

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: woven yellow plastic.

I went to Poundland for inspiration and after trawling the aisles I found the little rubber loom bands. Perfect!

41. Ysanne Holt and Sara Braithwaite

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: chewed rubber ball.

Materials: Cumbrian collie dog hair, Newton by the Sea beach grasses.

It's a Borderlands nest with an odd ball egg washed down from the Tweed.

42. Aidan and Leon Jennings

Polly's

Postal art project

Item sent: paint brush handle with barnacles.

Materials: assorted feathers.

43. Harry Adams

Gull's Skull

Postal art project

Item sent: gull's skull.

Materials: oil and beeswax encaustic on cotton covered board.

44. Billy Woodhouse

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: circuit board.

Materials: paper, felt tip.

45. Becky Woodhouse

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: Paint brush handle.

Materials: painting and brush.

I loved the colours on the faded paintbrush handle so I remade it into a paintbrush concentrating on the colours of each object. I placed the remade paintbrush onto one of my paintings as I liked the way the redundant colours operated together.

46. Tony Wiles

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: flat plastic fragment with circular holes.

Material: auto body filler.

47. Assorted animal teeth collected on Lindisfarne Nature Reserve.

48. Drawing on driftwood found in the Shelter.

49. Claire Morris

Cow's Tooth

Postal Art Project

Item sent: cow's tooth

Two poems

50. Joe Woodhouse

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: part of electric fence post

Materials: copper, steel, photograph.

51. Doll found in the Shelter.

52. Sally Madge

Puppets made from assorted animal bones collected on Lindisfarne National Nature Reserve.

53. Bonnie Woodhouse

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: rusted badge.

Materials: glass jar, lavender.

54. Sarah Bowker Jones

For Sally

Postal art project

Item sent: blue plastic netting.

Materials: jesmonite, fibre glass, spray paint, graphite, fabric net and foam.

55. Ditte Goard

Baba Yaga with pestle and mortar

Postal art project

Item sent: wooden pestle.

Materials: wood, fabric cotton wool, tealights, paint brushes, wax, bowl.

In Slavic folklore Baba Yaga is a supernatural being who travels the forests in a mortar, wielding a pestle as an oar. Particular emphasis is placed on the repulsiveness of her large nose which she uses to sniff out the 'Russian scent'. Baba Yaga may appear as the donor, the villain or may be altogether ambiguous.

56. Lee Hassall

Endgame

Postal art project

Item sent: cardboard cone and broken glasses.

Materials: gloss paint, hemp, red dots.

Beckett's Endgame, is an interesting play to relate to Lindisfarne, an island, which looks onto ecological uncertainties and annihilation. Endgame and Holy Island relate to each other by endurance and a similar grey/blue horizon.

57. Christopher Goard

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: blue plastic cleat.

I re-imagined this piece of flotsam in several ways. I liked the idea of using it as a candle holder but in the end I have applied it as a door or drawer handle. I like the contrast of the materials – blue nylon complete with barnacles and the hard regular shapes of the steel bolts.

58. Faye Jennings

Untitled

Postal art project

Items sent: fishing lures.

Materials: sea coal, drift wood, shells.

59. Joel

Untitled

School workshop

Materials: assembled found beach objects.

60. Tape measure burned in the fire at the Shelter, August 2014

61. Emily Lowe

Nightmare

Postal art project

Item sent: spiky rubber ball.

Materials: fabric, crochet, loom bands, match sticks, matchbox.

62. Sam Hooper

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: cloth-covered soft-toy squeaker.

Materials used: cloth, string.

63. Assorted balls collected from the north shores of Lindisfarne.

64. Ann Tucker and Sally Madge

Untitled

Postal art project

Item sent: paint brush handle

Material: hair locks

Exhibition Room 2

64. Visitors' comments and drawings in notebooks left in a waterproof container in the Shelter from 2002 - 2014.

65. Ditte Goard, Michael Davies, Sally Madge

Costume used in a 16mm film, Granfer, shot on Lindisfarne and shown at Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival, 18th - 21st September 2014.

Projector

67. Matt Seattle playing his composition 'Lindisfarne' on the border pipes.

2mins 15secs

68. Footage of shelter being rebuilt after tidal surge.

1mins 04secs

69. Email invite to screening of 'Cul De Sac'.

2mins 01 secs

70. Adam Phillips

Walking in a straight line from shelter to shoreline (and back)

3mins 49secs

71. Return to Sender litter pick and beach combing event

2mins 05secs

72. Video invite to a gathering on Lindisfarne

2mins 37secs

73. David Mackintosh

Woman in Mask

0mins 22secs (Looped x3)

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Return to Sender

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