

ARTS UPDATE



Remnants, Sue Goldschmidt  
Gallery has second opening night show

THE Cupola Gallery had so many high quality submissions to its 15 Year Anniversary Exhibition that it decided to show them in two parts and that means two opening night previews.

Part Two is launched tonight at the gallery on Middlewood Road with music provided by Rosie Brown, the customary refreshments and a prize-giving by the Lord Mayor, Coun Jackie Drayton, along with the important business of looking at the art.

Both parts of the celebration exhibition are of equal value and feature a mixed selection of work across a wide range of media.

Some of the more eye-catching pieces include an installation piece made out of thousands of tiny circles of paper (the products of a regularly-used hole punch) threaded together with invisible thread, by Pamela Schilderman, a full-size, wall-mounted ceramic dress sculpture by Sue Goldschmidt and Nigel Morpeth's 'painting' constructed from liguorice allsorts and marshmallows.

Artists represented are a mixture of recent graduates and more established artists of international reputation, reflecting the exhibitions policy Cupola has pursued over the years. All works are for sale.

Cupola 15 Year Anniversary Exhibition will run at the gallery in Middlewood Road, Hillsborough, until October 21.

Lighting-up time

SHEFFIELD city centre will sparkle with activity when the first Friday of next month is declared Light Night.

A cultural trail will take in music, lighting installations, street theatre, storytelling, and exhibitions.

Visitors can follow the trail from Tudor Square to Hallam Square and down to the Cultural Industries Quarter and stay for The Designers' Republic event at The Workstation or follow the trail back to the Winter Garden for Greentop's spectacular aerial display. Many venues are staying open late and some are opening their doors especially for the event.

Organisers are encouraging youngsters to dress as their favourite book character, artist, writer or painting and there will be spot prizes for the best of the under-16s.

Light Night, running from 3pm to midnight on Friday, October 6, is the finale of Illuminate, a year-long project in which the cities of Bradford, Leeds, Hull, York and Sheffield have united to create a series of events to spotlight the rich cultural life of Yorkshire.

In addition to Sheffield's trail, other events and projects link the region with games, art, literature and light.

From hundreds of people snipping up pictures of Sharrow to sniping from The Guardian, the city's show won a response, says Ian Soutar

# Sheffield wows the world at Venice Biennale

“WE certainly created a stir,” said Jeremy Till, the man who masterminded Sheffield's presence as representatives of Britain at the Venice Architectural Biennale.

The Long Blondes playing on the steps of the British Pavilion at the launch party saw to that. “They just took the place over and it drew everyone from the jardiniere (the international Biennale site) and we handed out bottles of Pride of Sheffield beer. It was a nice Sheffield moment.”

But Till, Director of Architecture at the University of Sheffield, is more excited at the long-term impact of the project, Echo City.

“The spin-off from the Biennale has raised the profile of the city internationally and nationally,” he said.

“I must have done about 60 media interviews in two days. As a result we have had a huge amount of coverage. If you go to BBC Online you'll see a feature headlined: 'Is Sheffield Britain's most cutting edge city?' The FT was very positive, and a two-page spread in The Times. You couldn't pay for that kind of publicity.

“We've also ruffled a few feathers,” he conceded, citing an article in The Guardian this week which was critical of the Biennale in general and made only a passing reference to

‘It was an amazingly moving experience to have these things from Sharrow and place them in a different context’

Echo City, observing sniffily: “The British pavilion is something to do with everyday life in Sheffield. It involves grown-ups sitting down at school tables and making collages with scissors and paper.”

This refers to the installation by art collective Encounters comprising a room full of found objects in Sharrow, an extension of a project which involved setting up a base in a disused shop where members of the community were asked to contribute their views on the locality in various forms.

Biennale visitors flocked to it and many took up the invitation to make a collage from snapshots scattered across a large wooden table.

“We made interactivity a key part of the room and everyone completely engaged with that,” reported Ruth Ben-Tovim.

“I found it powerful to see Sharrow represented on a table in Venice and the way people responded. They made some beautiful artwork which we could add to the wall.”

Trish O'Shea agreed: “It was an amazingly moving experience to have these things from Sharrow and place them in a different context. I was taken aback by people's response.”

As in Sharrow, the Encounters trio (Jim Prevett completed the team) left small farm animals in the locality with a note inviting the finder to return it. “We put them around the jardiniere and also in Venice itself, in St Mark's Square and other places, and people brought them back to us,” said Ben-Tovim.

“A small personal action which again showed how people engaged with what we were doing.

“Most people we spoke to were positive about Echo City and the whole Biennale,” she continued. “It was encouraging to see the debates and discussions on cities and social dynamics.”

Added O'Shea: “We were very proud of our contribution and very proud of Sheffield.”

Echo City is an ‘urban register’ describing Sheffield at a variety of scales from Encounters' 1:1 upwards. The scale of 1:100 features architectural projects by Sauerbruch Hutton of the new university building on the Jessop hospital site, Studio Egret West and Hawkins Brown's Urban Splash at Park Hill and the new Fox Hill housing development by Dutch firm Mecanoo.

Next is 1:10,000, a literary and photographic journey written in the streets of Sheffield by writer Tim Etchells and photographer Hugo Glendinning, and 1:10,000,000 is Martyn Ware's soundscape projecting Sheffield's relationship with the world at large. The central exhibit is an interactive model developed by Jim Prevett which invites visitors to reconfigure urban elements at a variety of scales from the surrounding rooms.

The Venice Architectural Biennale continues until November 19. So who goes to it? “At the opening it was mostly the great and the good of the architectural world,” explained Till. “We had about 10,000 visitors from all round the world in the first two days and they would mostly have been academics or media. You're not going to get Joe Public walking in.

“There was a huge moment when The Long Blondes arrived and I showed them round. They were the first non-academics and Sheffielders to see it and I thought they might think that it was patronising or elitist. They walked in and the first thing they said was ‘Home!’ because they had been on tour for three months and thought it captured the essence of Sheffield. And that was the nicest compliment of all.

“That's why we are all so keen to bring it back to Sheffield and the UK so people here can see it, but that's all a question of time and energy – and especially money.”



Adults absorbed in creating their collages of Sharrow life



The Long Blondes rock the British Pavilion at the Biennale, a first at the event, inset, the crowd roars its approval; below, an eye-catching image of Park Hill flats

PHOTOGRAPHS: GARETH GARDNER

## Passion is more than bricks and mortar

Simon Ogden experiences first-hand the quirkiness of the British/Sheffield exhibit

treated to a variety of images and facts about Sheffield of widely different “scales”. The huge SoYo-scape collage mural by The Designers Republic hits you as you enter. In a second room you are invited to become immersed in the minutiae of urban life in Sharrow.

In a third a large electronic global map plots seemingly random data on Sheffield, ranging from the Arctic Monkeys' tour schedules through numbers of ‘hits’ on the Sheffield Wednesday website (someone in the Vatican visited some 70 times last year) to exports of Henderson's Relish.

Visitors to the British Pavilion are

In another room the elevations of Park Hill flats are turned into a diaphanous silk hanging, the new building for the University of Sheffield is displayed as a dress pattern, whilst a wooden model, complete with a stuffed sheep, illustrates the new housing for Foxhill.

Martyn Ware's specially commissioned soundscapes permeate the whole space with snatches of industry, traffic, local radio, familiar Sheffield pop, the sounds of industry.

As a contribution to the visitor experience of the Biennale, the British/Sheffield exhibit is interactive, playful,

irreverent and full of quirkiness. Luminous plastic “Je t'aime Park Hill” rings were to be seen everywhere.

The crowd-grabbing opening by The Long Blondes on the steps of the rather stuffy Edwardian Pavilion was the first time a rock band has played at the Biennale.

It's not easy to take away a clear impression of Sheffield and it would be fascinating to know what someone from say, China, makes of it all.

Perhaps that's the point – and at least we are part of the debate and that's worth a lot.

Sheffield itself will be able to gain a greater insight into the event when Jeremy Till talks about the Echo City project and some of the themes it raises at the Site Gallery as part of Urban Design Week at 6pm on October 18.

Venice and Sheffield, incidentally, turn out to have more in common than might at first be apparent.

They were two of John Ruskin's favourite cities, which is why to this day you can buy postcards of the Piazza San Marco in the Millennium Galleries.

●Simon Ogden is Sheffield City Council's Acting Head of City Development.

NAME CHECK

Eve set for Crucible

ONE of the brightest stars of British theatre, **Eve Best** is coming to the Crucible next year to play Rosalind in **Samuel West's** production of *As You Like It*.

She won this year's Olivier Award for Best Actress in Hedda Gabler and is currently co-starring with **Kevin Spacey** in Eugene O'Neill's *A Moon for the Misbegotten* at the Old Vic.

*As You Like It* runs from January 31 to February 24 and then transfers to Stratford as part of the RSC's Complete Works Festival.

Queues to see Alan

DEMAND for tickets for the appearance by **Alan Carr** in the Grin Up North comedy festival next month has been so great that organisers have moved the show from the Memorial Hall to the City Hall's higher-capacity Oval Hall venue.

Since winning the BBC New Comedian Of The Year Award in 2001, his career has gone from strength to strength.

As well as performing stand-up round the country he is a regular on Channel 4's *8 Out of 10 Cats*, *FAQ's*, *Big Brother's Big Mouth* and as a guest on ITV's *Des & Mel*. He is also regular warm-up guy for Friday Night with **Jonathan Ross** and has also warmed up audiences for *Bo Selecta*, *The Keith Barret Show* and *Celebrities Under Pressure*.

Glencie's novel hope

SHEFFIELDER **Glencie Crossland** beat the opposition to win the ASDA Search for a Saga Star competition and earn the chance to have a novel published with Random House. The book, *The Stanford Lassies*, hits the shelves in November. The writer has lived in Sheffield all her life, living now only 100 yards from where she was born.

Rocking with Alex

ROCK guitarist **Alex Oliver** may look like a mad axe man but many frustrated beginners find they can play after all at his classes.

He's running a new series of six workshops at the Burton Street Project starting on Saturday, 10am. The first four examine how far the students have got and where they want to go.

The final two bring in drums and bass to get a ‘band’ feel. Alex realised long ago that he needed to know how to play, not what to play.

He dumped excessive theory and found ways to start sounding good. He applies the same process to students and if they really want to play, it works for them. Places available, call 0114 221 9902 or mobile 07733 291 801.

Key role for Nick

THE chief executive of Sheffield Galleries & Museums Trust, **Nick Dodd**, has become a member of the Museums Libraries and Archives Council in an appointment announced by the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport, **Tessa Jowell**.

The MLA is the national development agency working on behalf of museums and libraries and advising government on policy and priorities in the area.

Steve's legal comedy

BOOZERS, Balloons and Bail, the first in the comic legal series by Rotherham solicitor **Steve Smith**, has been rewritten and redesigned to go on release nationally for the first time.

To spread the word beyond Yorkshire the criminal lawyer is booked to appear on Radio 4's *Midweek* on Wednesday. But he is not neglecting his heartland and is undertaking a Yorkshire promotional tour which includes Sheffield on October 6 and 7.

