

The Pendulum of Tides, Holy Island, Ruth Bond



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# Friends of the Hatton

## Spring Bulletin 2026

**President: Baroness Joyce Quin**

[www.friendsofthehatton.org.uk](http://www.friendsofthehatton.org.uk)

The Friends of the Hatton is a registered charity No. 1089739

 **Hatton Friends**

## Dear Friends

Welcome to our Spring Bulletin.

Welcome to the Spring Bulletin, we hope you will enjoy these articles, the workshops and visit the current exhibition: **HAPPY** at the Hatton.

**'I can't draw, I've never painted...'** How many times have I heard these phrases when I taught art. And sadly still do from visitors to an exhibition or casually from adults in conversation.

The human race has been making marks, drawing and painting since time immemorial. The ability to create an image, make a statement, represent beauty or tragedy, an event, a figure, a landscape, a mood or feeling... is a vital skill our society should value and nurture. We need all creative arts but art and design cannot be underrated; it benefits our health, our economy - our lives.

*'Every child is an artist; the problem is to remain an artist as we grow up.'* **Picasso**

*'Drawing is not what one sees but what one can make others see.'* **Edgar Degas**

*'Remember 'Drawing is putting a line (a)round an idea.'* **Henri Matisse**

The current exhibition **HAPPY!** was developed with the Jerwood Collection and curated by the gallery's young people group **L-INK**. It concerns how artists 'become' artists and the joy of making art. The Jerwood collection is a private collection, which is lent to emphasise 'a broader understanding, interpretation and enjoyment of modern and contemporary British art'. This exhibition also references Victor Pasmore's 1957 'Art Education' exhibition at the Hatton.

Children from 3 schools were inspired by the Jerwood collection. They may or may not go on to study art, but their interest and enthusiasm here reflects the **joy** they have obtained through this.

This year we are celebrating the naming of the Hatton gallery after Professor Hatton; this reminds us of his great contribution both as an artist and an art educator. We're delighted that Dr Melanie Stephenson has agreed to contribute a series of articles to our bulletins this year to celebrate the centenary of Richard George Hatton's death and the naming of the gallery.

We all enjoy, respond to, question, are inspired by art. Some visitors may now even rethink their own art education and revisit their ability to draw and paint, to express their own ideas! **Search for your inner child, but most of all be HAPPY!**

Why not join one of our workshops! And **ENJOY!**

**Geraldine Morris-Dowling**

**Chair of Friends of the Hatton**

## This bulletin contains contributions by:

Ruth Bond, Maggie Bassendine, Josephine Cousin, Jess Dare, Jo Duncan, Vinita Gurjar, Vivien Jackson, Julie Louhi, Keith Merrin, Geraldine Morris-Dowling, Roger Newbrook and Dr Melanie Stephenson. The bulletin is printed by YPD Creative, 67 Howard St, North Shields NE30 1AF

## Congratulations to Zoe Allen and the L-INK team...

on the wonderfully curated exhibition HAPPY! The preview on 13th February was very well attended with lots of excited children. It's an amazing mixture of established artists and budding ones!

**Members of the Friends of the Hatton Committee**

## A note from the head of North East Museums

It has been a busy start to 2026 for the wider North East Museums Team with a whole host of new exhibitions opening and welcoming thousands of visitors already.

It is not often that a masterpiece by one of the world's most famous artists comes to South Tyneside so we were delighted to open **Monet: In the Presence of Nature** at South Shields Museum and Art Gallery. It is the first year of a new partnership between North East Museums and The National Gallery which will see other masterpieces from their collections visit the town. The exhibition (in the museum until 25 March 2026) of Monet's *The Petit Bras of the Seine at Argenteuil* is complemented by some other stunning landscapes from our collections at South Shields, The Laing and Shipley Art Gallery as well as responses by young people from the town.

At Woodhorn we have opened the **North East's largest Open Exhibition** bringing together the work of over 280 professional and amateur artists in the Workshop Galleries at the Ashington museum. The exhibition runs to 10 May and is sure to attract lots of visitors to the site which also includes permanent exhibitions of work by the Pitmen Painters and Mik Critchlow.

Obviously at the Hatton itself we are pleased to have opened **Happy!**, curated from the Jerwood Collection of modern British art by young people from North East England. The exhibition runs to 9 May and promises to be joyful and fun.

Later in the Spring we will have a new show at Great North Museum: Hancock called **Treasure** which will tell the story of some of the amazing archaeological finds from the region and over at Segedunum in Wallsend we have an exhibition of Roman Diplomas in **Follow The Eagle!** Keep an eye out for details.

I hope to see you at one of our museums over the what is sure to be a busy few months.

**Keith Merrin**

## Friends' AGM 2026 and upcoming exhibition

We are currently trying to finalise dates for both our AGM and our upcoming exhibition. Details of both should be in our next bulletin which is due out in May.

## Fine Art lecture programme

The Department of Fine Art's visiting speaker programme hosts a weekly lecture at 12 noon every Wednesday in the Fine Art Lecture Theatre. You can view the programme at the link below:

<https://blogs.ncl.ac.uk/fineartcommunityboard/visiting-speaker-programme/>

## New workshop online workshop ticket type

Over the last few years we have had an increasing number of non-members attending our workshops. This is great, BUT it would be even better if these non-members signed up to be fully fledged Friends.

So, in a bid to encourage non-members to take out a proper membership we have introduced a new ticket type on our WeGotTickets page. A non-member can now pay a fee of £40 (+ booking fee) which includes a ticket to the workshop at the Member rate AND a year's membership of the Friends of the Hatton. [wegottickets.com/FriendsoftheHatton](http://wegottickets.com/FriendsoftheHatton)

## My experience as a third-year fine art student

Third year has appeared as one of the most intense and formative chapters of my academic journey so far. The shift in expectations is palpable: the dissertation demands sustained critical engagement, rigorous research, and conceptual clarity, while studio practice requires equal commitment to experimentation, refinement, and articulation of ideas. Navigating both simultaneously has meant learning to manage time with precision and to think more deeply about the intellectual and material foundations of my work. The process is challenging, but it feels purposeful - as though each long day is contributing to a more defined sense of direction.

Alongside these core academic responsibilities, I have continued to involve myself in co-curricular activities, striving to support an active and visible presence within the wider university environment. Engaging beyond the studio has allowed me to develop leadership, communication, and organisational skills that are just as crucial as technical or conceptual ability. Balancing these commitments has needed resilience, but it has also strengthened my confidence in operating within professional and collaborative settings.

In addition, I am currently interning at Vane Art Gallery as a Gallery Assistant Intern. This experience has been invaluable in bridging theory and practice. Working within a functioning contemporary gallery has provided insight into exhibition planning, installation processes, audience engagement, and the subtle dynamics between artists, curators, and institutions. Being immersed in this environment has affirmed my desire to position my practice within broader cultural conversations.

Looking ahead, I am particularly energised by being selected as a Fellow for the 2026 Venice Biennale. The opportunity to contribute to such a prestigious international platform is both an honour and a responsibility. Preparing for this role, alongside my academic commitments, has intensified my schedule - yet it also reinforces the sense that this demanding period is shaping me into a more focused, ambitious, and self-assured practitioner.

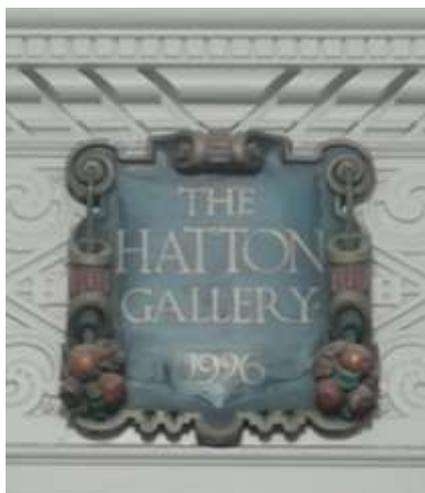
**Vinita Gurjar**

# Richard George Hatton, "a great little man"

**Dr Melanie Stephenson**

In 2015 I was very fortunate to start a PhD at Newcastle University, in collaboration with the University's Hatton Gallery, researching aspects of the Hatton Gallery Collection.

My focus was on a significant collection of old master and contemporary artworks acquired by Professor Lawrence Gowing (1918-1991) for the Fine Art School in the 1950s that were intended to be hung on permanent display in the Hatton Gallery. In order to understand the environment that enabled Gowing to undertake such an endeavour I looked back at the Art School's earlier history, from its origins in the formation of an art class in 1837 and its evolution through the Government's Branch Schools of Design system, into the university Fine Art Department of Armstrong College and subsequently King's College, Durham; which by the mid-1920s had become the first in England to be granted degree awarding status for its courses in fine art practice.



© Dr Melanie Stephenson

The person who guided the Art School through the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, its move into its current, purpose-built King Edward VII building and the establishment of its fine art degree courses, was Richard George Hatton, Durham University's first Professor of Fine Art.

Hatton's name is memorialised with a plaque bearing the date 1926, hanging above what, at that time, was the entrance to the classical-columned one room gallery. As I began to learn more about Hatton's role in the Art School's development, I was intrigued that, a century later, despite his presence in the name of the Hatton Gallery, there seemed to be little other acknowledgement of his achievements or his life. This prompted me to continue my research on Hatton once I had completed my PhD, starting at the point of Hatton's death a century ago, in February 1926.

It seemed fitting that on the centenary of his death aspects of Richard Hatton's life and work should be recognised over the course of this year's Friends of the Hatton bulletins. This first article sets out some of what I have learned of the person who a former student, writing an appreciation of him in the *Newcastle Daily Journal* of 24 February 1926, described as "a great little man".

Hatton's death on 19 February 1926, aged 61, at his home Betley, in Elmfield Road, Gosforth was announced by the *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* the following day. It reported that the Art School had closed for the day, and the annual upcoming Art Ball had been cancelled. On 24 February the *Daily Journal* reported on Hatton's funeral the previous day, stating that Armstrong College closed "as an outward sign of the great sorrow which had been cast over it by the death of Professor Richard George Hatton (Master of Arts, Dunelm), Honorary Associate of the Royal College of Art, highly esteemed Professor of Fine Art and Director of King Edward VII School of Art". The funeral at St Andrews Cemetery, Jesmond, was attended "by the entire staff of professors and lecturers, dressed in their academic robes" together with students, alongside a long list of representatives from the region's art institutions, educational bodies, clubs, societies, dioceses and trades, including the Laing Art Gallery, the Pen and Palette Club, the Bewick Society and the Society of Antiquaries.

Richard Hatton however began his life in Birmingham, born there in 1864. He went on to study at the Birmingham Art School, where, according to his *Daily Chronicle* obituary, he was a “keen and industrious student”. At seventeen, in the 1881 census he was described as an “Artist Painter of Figures”, living with his parents in Edgbaston. In 1885, aged around twenty-one, he became a member of staff of the recently opened building for Birmingham's Municipal School of Art. He taught elementary modelling at its Central School but in the following two years he also became head of two of the city's branch schools. In 1888 he successfully asked for an assistant in response to a marked increase in student numbers at one of the schools, possibly indicating the popularity of his classes and teaching methods. Under the management of the Birmingham City Fathers who were keen advocates of design and craft education and with William Morris as its president, the Birmingham Art School was gaining an increasing reputation as one of the country's most progressive schools and was being held in regard as the centre of the Arts and Crafts Movement in England.

Hatton's *Daily Chronicle* obituary explained that, as an art master at the Birmingham Art School, he “made rapid strides and was intimately associated with Rosetti, William Morris and Burne Jones”. These men were all closely associated with the Pre- Raphaelite Brotherhood and the Arts and Crafts Movement; they also had connections with Newcastle's cultural life through their association with William Bell Scott (1811-1890), who had been the Newcastle Branch School of Design's first Headmaster in the 1840s through to his retirement in 1864. Hatton, by his mid-twenties was, therefore, clearly moving in the same circles as the movers and shakers of the contemporary art world and had gained a considerable reputation as a teacher at the Birmingham School, all of which was to have an important influence on his future career. Birmingham Art School may have also played a significant role in Hatton's personal life, as it is probably where he met his future wife Gertrude Helen Young (also born in 1864), who, at the age of 27, in 1891, was living in Handsworth and was a “teacher of drawing”.

Meanwhile, in Newcastle, by the 1880s the Art School had already undergone several transitions, from its beginnings as the art class of The North of England Society for the Promotion of the Fine Arts, through both a Government Branch School of Design and a provincial school of art under William Bell Scott. In 1864 Scott was succeeded by William Cosens Way (1833-1905) at a time when the art school was operating from rooms in Westgate Road, behind the Literary and Philosophical Society.

By 1890 the Art School had become part of the College of Science of Durham University, based in temporary accommodation in its grounds, somewhere on the current Newcastle University campus. The Art School Committee tasked Cosens Way to recommend someone to fill the vacancy of second master and in July 1890 Hatton was introduced to them and showed his work. He was offered the appointment at his requested stipend of £150 per year (possibly now around £24,000), with efforts made to find an extra amount to add to this sum. The Art Committee chairman at this time was James Leathart (1820-1895), a patron of the Pre-Raphaelites encouraged in his collecting by the Art School's former art master William Bell Scott. Another committee member was the shipbuilder and art patron Dr Charles Mitchell (1820-1895) who had commissioned the building of St George's Church, Jesmond in the Arts and Crafts style, another factor that may have contributed favourably to Hatton's appointment. And so, in 1890, from the Arts and Crafts environment of the Birmingham Municipal Art School, Hatton, aged twenty-seven, made his way to a new life in Newcastle. In 1891 he was boarding at 18, St Thomas' Crescent, just a short walk from where he was teaching, and in the following year he married Gertude.

The Fine Art Department that Hatton joined offered lessons in drawing and painting from life, figure modelling from the antique and from life, and in ornamental, decorative, figure and architectural design. Cosens Way delivered the lectures in anatomy, geometry and perspective and Hatton delivered them in all the design disciplines. The range of lectures and the topics he covered, from figure drawing to the design of rain spouts indicates Hatton's breadth of knowledge and, it would seem, his stamina in acquiring it and delivering it to his students, who were examined for college certificates. If the students conformed to the required standards of the National Course of Instruction, they would submit their work for the national Department of Science and Art examinations and medals, for which the School earned payment by results, another pressure under which Hatton, his fellow teachers and his students would have operated.

In 1893 the College of Science provided its Art Department with its first purpose-designed, more spacious accommodation in its newly completed South West Wing (now the part of Newcastle University's Armstrong Building which faces its Bedson Building). This move coincided with or prompted its reorganisation on the recommendations of the College's Principal, Dr William Garnett (1850-1932), whose aim was to create the best university college in the country. It was fortunate for the Art Department that although Garnett's own specialisms were physics and mechanics, he had the vision to regard art education as an integral part of that ambition. Possibly encouraged by Hatton's own experience of the Birmingham Art School system, it was put forward as a potential model. Following a visit there in 1894 by Dr Charles Mitchell, now the Art Committee chairman, and subsequent recommendations by Birmingham's headmaster, the Art Department's 1894-1895 prospectus was published under the heading, "Fine Art, Decorative Art and Art Technology".

On William Cosens Way's retirement in 1895, Hatton was appointed Art Master, initially for a year, but it seems no surprise that, with his obvious dedication to the Art School and art education, Hatton was re-appointed the following year, with an increased salary. By this time, too, an assistant teacher, Ralph Bullock (1867-1949), had been appointed.

On the death of Dr Mitchell his son, Charles William Mitchell (1854-1903), a Parisian-trained artist whose painting, *Hypatia*, is in the Laing Art Gallery, became the Art Committee's new chairman. He had a passionate interest in supporting the fine arts and crafts and so with Mitchell as the Art Committee's chairman and Hatton as its head master, the Art School moved towards the twentieth century with a distinctly Arts and Crafts character.

Hatton, meanwhile was also, evidently, giving a great deal of thought to his lectures and his teaching methods, being aware of the limitations dictated by a national examination system that meant more time was allocated to design theory delivered through lectures than was allowed for the students to develop their practice. Hatton's solution was to produce a *Text-Book of Elementary Design*, published in 1894, intended to replace the students' weekly lectures so that all their time could be dedicated to their practice, with relevant assistance given when needed. This textbook seems to have soon been widely adopted around the country as one copy was presented to a student at Hereford School of Science, Art and Technical Instruction soon after it was published. Another, in 1896, originally belonged to "Elizabeth Davies, Jarrow" of the "School of Art, Durham College of Science". Davies was a prizewinning student who went on to teach at the Art School and played a significant role in Newcastle's artistic culture. She and her two other gifted artist sisters, Louise and Barbara, went on to run a Fine Art Studio in Claremont Buildings, Barras Bridge, into the 1930s.

By the end of the following year Hatton had not only produced his next textbook *Figure Drawing and Composition*, he had also produced *A Guide to the Establishment and Equipment of Art Classes and*

*Schools of Art*, which set out his suggested minimum requirements for an art school, indicating that he had either been significantly involved in planning the new facilities in the College of Science or was writing from his own experience of the drawbacks in its provision. In the list of apparatus, for example, he included a new “Horizontal Ruler” that he had invented to attach to a blackboard to replace the inadequacy of the “ordinary T-Square”.

Hatton was also building links with local manufacturers such as the pottery company C T Maling to promote the Art Department’s courses as sources of training to improve the skills of the local workforce and his students’ prospects as potential employees. Both he and Charles Mitchell were also aware of the lack of space available for students to develop their practical craft skills and the lack of opportunities for them to earn a livelihood from their limited training. As a result, in 1899, Mitchell founded and funded the Handicrafts Company and, by special agreement with the Art Committee, appointed Hatton to spend half of his college time managing it for three years, extended beyond Mitchell’s early death in 1903, for a further three years. Hatton and Mitchell were also involved in setting up the county-wide Northumberland Handicraft Guild. By providing craftsmen and women in the North East with the opportunity to regularly exhibit their work and earn an income from sales and commissions these were important endeavours in supporting the development of the Arts and Crafts Movement in the region.

The first decade of the twentieth century was an extremely busy time for Hatton. He was overseeing the expanding Art Department of the College of Science, which in 1904 became Armstrong College, University of Durham. He was also running the Handicrafts Company, designing and making work for its commissions, publishing more books and travelling around the country’s art schools to produce a report for the Art Committee on arts and crafts and design education. Nevertheless, Hatton may have felt that he needed new challenges, for in 1908 he applied to be the first principal of the newly formed Edinburgh College of Art. It may have been a considerable relief to the Art Committee that he was unsuccessful, but it may have set them thinking about his status within the University, fearful of any other opportunities which might draw him away from Newcastle.

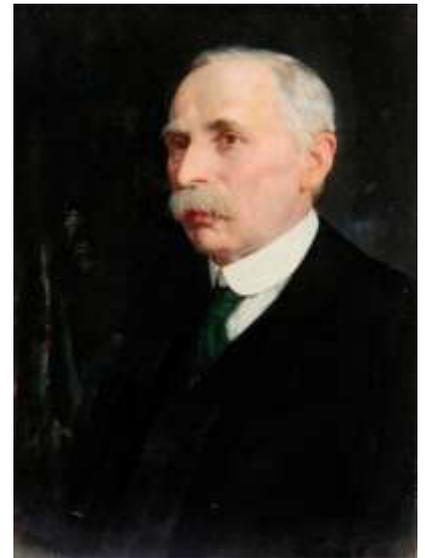
In 1911 Hatton’s contribution to art education was recognised nationally when he was appointed to the Board of Education’s Standing Committee of Advice for Education through Art. He would have also been planning and overseeing yet another move of the Art Department, into the larger, purpose-built accommodation of the King Edward VII School of Art, made possible by the generous donation of the mining engineer, John Bell Simpson.

By the time that the foundation stone of the new building was laid in April 1911, the Art Committee had decided that the Art Department’s headmaster should have the status of director. The Committee and Hatton were also drawing up plans for a three-year course for Diplomas in Fine Art and in Handicraft that required passing an entrance examination in English and a modern foreign language, a level of academic attainment not needed for its part-time and certificate-level classes. And so, when the King Edward VII School of Art opened in 1912, in its prominent position on the college campus, it was a university art department with its own Director, art gallery and library, teaching classes in painting, crafts, engraving, sculpture and architecture and offering students the opportunity to gain entry to full-time diploma level studies. The Art Department had hardly, however, settled in its new building when it had to move out again to make way for the 1<sup>st</sup> Northern General Hospital at the onset of the 1914-1918 War. Hatton had to manage the move and provision of its classes again, to temporary locations scattered around Newcastle, as staff and students went into war service.

After the war and back in its new building, the Art Department continued to establish itself as a university department with its advanced courses in Fine Art, Design and Architecture. In 1917 the Durham University authorities set up the Chair in Fine Art and appointed Hatton as its holder and its first Professor of Fine Art, one of only a few people at that time to have held the post of Professor of Fine Art in an English university in a role which oversaw the teaching of painting, sculpture and design-related subjects, the others being the Slade Professors at University College London.

By this time Hatton and the Art Committee had also set their sights on their students having access to the university's Bachelor of Arts degrees courses and after the end of the wartime disruption they could again focus on developing the curriculum to meet the standards required for degree-awarding status. All Hatton's hard work and planning came to fruition in 1923, when the University Senate adopted Fine Art - Painting, Sculpture, Engraving, Architecture and Crafts and Manufactures, as a subject on the Bachelor of Arts pass degree course and Fine Art and Architecture as major subjects in the Honours Bachelor of Arts course, so that they were now acknowledged as disciplines supported by levels of research and scholarship worthy of degree status.

Sadly, with his death in February 1926, Hatton did not live to celebrate the results of his labours when the award of Durham University's first Fine Art Honours Degree was made, in 1927, to Ethel Urquhart - that milestone was to be experienced by his successor, Edward O'Rorke Dickey (1894-1977).



Hatton Gallery, Newcastle University

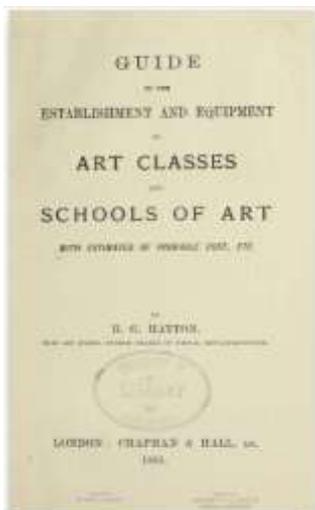
In the ensuing months of 1926, the Art Committee decided to rename the Art Department's gallery the Hatton Gallery, commemorate it with a plaque and commission his portrait. However, over time, as Fine Art has become an established and accepted discipline in higher education and successive professors have directed the course of the Fine Art Department and made their own mark, Hatton's achievements somewhat faded into obscurity, as did any evidence of a portrait. However, it was the work of Hatton, with the support of the enlightened Art Committee that, at the turn of the twentieth century, created the environment for development and innovation in art education and practice that laid the groundwork for the Fine Art Department's success in future years.

Over the course of following issues of this bulletin, I will explore some of Richard Hatton's work as an artist, his contributions to the development of the Hatton Gallery Collection and the rediscovery of the portrait that accompanies this article.

#### Further reading

**Richard Hatton's publications.** -Many of Hatton's textbooks can be found on the internet and copies are held in Newcastle University Library. His *Guide on the Equipment of Art Schools* can be viewed on the internet - [Hathi Trust](http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uiuo.ark:/13960/t7pp44c3c), <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uiuo.ark:/13960/t7pp44c3c>

**Hatton and The Handicrafts Company** - Peart, Tony and Moat, Neil (1993), *The lost art workers of Tyneside: Richard George Hatton and the (Newcastle) Handicrafts Company*. The Journal of The Decorative Arts Society 1850 to the Present, 17, pp. 13-22.



## Featured Artist - Ruth Bond

Born in Zambia, raised there and in Northumberland, Ruth trained in fashion before founding an award-winning interior design business in Newcastle. Her deep love of colour, texture, and form found a natural evolution in painting, and today she works primarily in oils—always painting from life, memory, and lived experience.

Having travelled and worked across the globe, Ruth draws inspiration from the diverse cultures and stunning landscapes she has encountered. But it is the natural beauty of the places closest to her heart—the Northumbrian coast, Scotland, Italy, and the uniquely atmospheric Outer Hebrides—that continually call her back to the canvas.

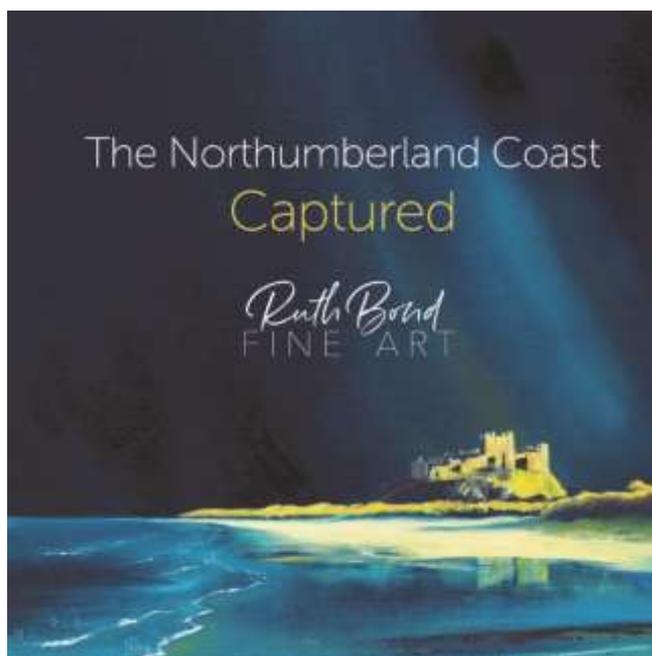
Ruth's work in the Outer Hebrides has attracted significant attention. During the pandemic, she collaborated with poet Peter Rees to produce *The Outer Hebrides Captured*—a sell-out book that beautifully paired her evocative paintings with his poetry. She has exhibited on the Isle of Harris multiple times and she will be exhibiting this collection in Edinburgh in Dec26.

Closer to home, Ruth has also built a devoted following for her paintings of the Northumberland coast. A lifelong walker of its beaches and cliffs, she finds endless inspiration in the changing moods of sky, sea, and sand. These walks—through storm, calm, sunshine, and snow—are the heart of her current collection.

Her newest book, *Northumberland Captured*, accompanies this collection. It offers a lasting memento of Ruth's vision and affection for the North East's majestic shoreline—a gift for fellow Northumbrians, and all who love wild, unspoiled places.



*Ruahd Shoulder Hushinish*



*Skyfall Bamburgh*



*Bold and Beautiful Bamburgh*



*Annapurna*

Ruth's original works can currently be found at the following galleries: Nucasa in Jesmond, Fika in Morpeth, Jane and Harry in Alnmouth, Carnabys in Bamburgh, Newcastle Arts Centre, Gallery North West in Brampton and Prints at Brightwater Gallery in Alnwick

Ruth works from her studio in Newcastle Arts Centre on Westgate Road. Her work has been published in newspapers, books and magazines and she has appeared on both radio and television talking about her work. She has exhibited widely, takes commissions and runs workshops.

Ruth will be leading a Water Based Oils workshop on 7 March on the theme Impressionistic Mountain Landscapes. Further details and how to book a place can be found later on in this bulletin.



*Torridon*

Ruth's Website [www.ruthbond.com/](http://www.ruthbond.com/) and Instagram: [instagram.com/ruthbondart](https://www.instagram.com/ruthbondart)

## Spotlight on: Woodhorn Museum

Woodhorn Museum is located in what was once the largest pit village in the world, the former colliery now welcomes thousands of people each year, telling the story of what daily life was really like for Northumberland's mining communities.

The museum houses an impressive banner collection, chronicles the life of the Ashington coal mining community and showcases the iconic Ashington Group Collection of artworks. It hosts a programme of temporary exhibitions including the popular annual Northumberland Open Exhibition.

**The museum is open Wednesday to Sundays, 10am – 4pm.**

Admission: £10 for adults, £9 concessions, and children under 18 are free. Tickets are an Annual Pass (unlimited visits for the next 12 months). Find out more: [www.northeastmuseums.org.uk/woodhorn](http://www.northeastmuseums.org.uk/woodhorn)

### 2026 Northumberland Open Exhibition sets new record



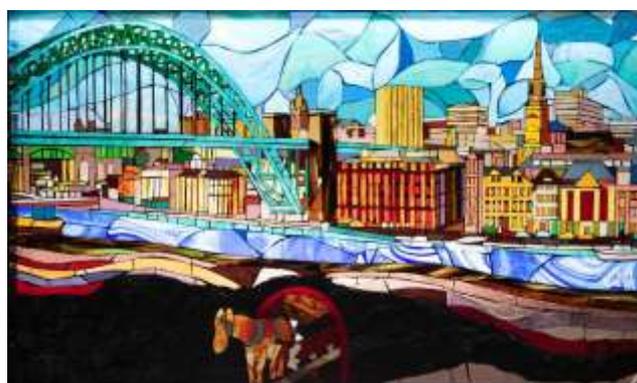
Winner of 2025's Open: Robert Newton - *English Pastoral*

This year's Northumberland Open, has set a new record with 687 submissions, making 2026 its most competitive year to date. More than 280 amateur and professional artists from across Northumberland and the North East entered their creations for consideration.

The largest exhibition of its kind in the region, the Northumberland Open Exhibition celebrates the area's creative talent, showcasing both amateur and professional artists across a wide variety of media. The exhibition runs to 14 May.

This year's submissions have been carefully reviewed by a panel of experienced local artists and cultural professionals, including Wendy Scott, Cultural Development Manager at Northumberland County Council; Narbi Price, artist, painter, curator and lecturer; and Liz Ritson, Programme & Engagement Manager for North East Museums.

Many of the artworks on display are available for sale, offering visitors a unique opportunity to acquire a new piece and support the region's artists. Visitors can also vote for their favourite piece in the **People's Choice Award**. The winner is announced **at the end of the exhibition in May**. [northeastmuseums.org.uk/woodhorn/whats-on/the-northumberland-open-exhibition-2026](http://northeastmuseums.org.uk/woodhorn/whats-on/the-northumberland-open-exhibition-2026)



People's choice winner 2025's:  
*Tyne and Time Wait for No Man* by Lyndon Rutherford

# Spring Workshops and demonstrations

**Workshops and demonstrations** are £20 for members, £30 for non-members.

**Workshops and demonstrations are held in the Learning Room at the gallery** unless stated otherwise. If you are interested in attending these workshops, you can book online [wegottickets.com/FriendsoftheHatton](https://wegottickets.com/FriendsoftheHatton) or contact [josephinecousin@googlemail.com](mailto:josephinecousin@googlemail.com).

## **Workshop: Impressionistic Mountain Landscapes in Water Based Oils paints with this issue's featured artist, Ruth Bond**

**7 March 2026. 11am-3pm** - book online at [wegottickets.com/event/692004/](https://wegottickets.com/event/692004/)

11-12pm Demonstration, 12-3pm Workshop and demo continues



Ruth trained in fashion before founding an award-winning interior design business in Newcastle. Her deep love of colour, texture, and form found a natural evolution in painting, and today she works primarily in oils—always painting from life, memory, and lived experience.

Having travelled and worked across the globe, Ruth draws inspiration from the diverse cultures and stunning landscapes she has encountered. A recent trekking adventure in Nepal, among the Annapurna range of the Himalayan mountains, has inspired her recent paintings .

Ruth will start the workshop with a demonstration, lasting approximately one hour, she will take questions as we go. You are then welcome to try painting the same image, or a different one of your choice. (Ruth will try to let attendees know which landscape she'll be painting in advance so that you can prepare your canvas boards or pre-stretched acrylic/oil paper with the same colour if you prefer.

### **Message to Attendees from Ruth**

A study of the impressionist style, using quick, expressive palette knife and brushstrokes to capture the essence of a mountain scene, focusing on colour and light rather than details.

This workshop is perfect for those with some painting experience who are eager to explore their creativity. Focusing on the joy of painting, it encourages experimentation and personal expression. Throughout the session, we'll cover a variety of themes, including texture, rocks, shadow and light, clouds and skies, allowing participants to immerse themselves in different artistic atmospheres.

**To make the most of the experience, please bring along** clothing protection, primed or pre-colour-washed canvas boards or stretched canvases, a selection of paintbrushes (including 2" and 3" large soft decorating brushes), and photographs or images that inspire your work.

**Please Note: Materials are NOT provided.** Please bring your own water-mixable oil paints (available at both Blackwells and Details Art Materials). There are brushes available in the Learning Room but you may want to bring your own.

## An Introduction to ribbon embroidery with Vivien Jackson

Saturday 28 March 2026, 11 - 3pm - book online [wegottickets.com/event/692001/](https://wegottickets.com/event/692001/)



Ribbon embroidery is a three-dimensional needlework technique that uses narrow, flexible ribbons instead of traditional thread to create textured, raised designs. It is frequently used to create floral motifs, and embellishments on clothing, quilts, and home decor.

In this workshop you will complete a small embroidered picture of anemones, irises and foxgloves. Vivien will give step by step instructions how to stitch anemones and demonstrate how to make additional flowers during the workshop. The finished picture will be suitable to mount in a small box frame. Any additional flowers could be mounted onto a greeting card.

A sewing kit be provided and will include everything you need to complete the picture (this includes a chenille needle). **Please bring a small embroidery hoop, & small scissors.**

Although she spent her working life in banking, Vivien has had a keen interest in textiles and embroidery from a very early age. She was a founding member of the Embroider's Guild in Ponteland where she took on the role of treasurer. The Guild held monthly meetings and would host visiting speakers and demonstrations which informed aspects of their own work. When the Embroider's Guild disbanded a group known as Ponteland Friendly Stitchers began meeting and arranging workshops on various embroidery techniques. Vivien has recently resigned from her post as Chairman of the group "to ensure the group stays fresh with different ideas being explored".

## "In the moment" a workshop in 3 parts: Mood Boards, Sashiko stitching and Yoga and Meditation with Jo Cousin, Jo Duncan and Sophie Cousin

Saturday 18 April, 11-3pm - book online [wegottickets.com/event/692383](https://wegottickets.com/event/692383)

This workshop will be divided into three parts.

**Part 1 - 11:30 - 12:30: Mood Boards- (Jo Cousin)**

**Part 2 - 12:30-14:30: Sashiko stitching- (Jo Duncan)**

**Part 3 - 14:30-15:00: Yoga and Meditation (Sophie Cousin)**

### Part 1: Mood Boards

This part of the workshop we will make a Mood Board. This consists of using a variety of materials to create a Board that reflects on what perhaps you want to achieve in this particular workshop and perhaps exploring quiet, stillness or perhaps your own personal feelings.

Elements that could be included:

**Imagery:** Photos, illustrations

**Colour palette:** Specific colours or colour schemes that set the tone

**Textiles and materials.** Swatches of fabric, patterns, wood, natural materials.

Please bring anything that you think you might need for your Mood Board. We will supply glue, scissors, paper, pictures, magazines.



### Part 2: Sashiko stitching

Sashiko is a deceptively simple - and rather addictive embroidery technique, creating complex geometric patterns with just a basic running stitch.

Traditionally used in Japan to reinforce clothing and household textiles by adding decorative patches, Sashiko has become very popular in recent years with embroiderers and quilters, partly because of its strong visual impact and partly because of its simplicity - the act of hand-stitching and concentration can have a calming and relaxing effect on the mind - a kind of 'active meditation' practice!

In this workshop, we'll cover the basics you need to get going with Sashiko: transferring patterns, starting to stitch, and changing stitch direction. We'll then make a wall

hanging sampler framed in an embroidery hoop using two or more patterns in the traditional 'white on navy' style. **All materials will be provided** and there'll some 'take-away' ideas as well!

### Part 3: Yoga and meditation

The workshop ends with some nourishing yoga movement - **all from the comfort of our chairs!**

Everything will be suitable for everyone, **no need for any equipment or special clothing, just come as you are.** We will combine gentle movement with our breath and build towards a short meditation. This is an opportunity to fully appreciate and enjoy the present moment and so deepen relaxation in the body and mind. A wonderful chance to let the nourishment of our creativity and time together settle into our bodies, sending us forward with a spring in our step!

## Happy! An exhibition curated from the Jerwood Collection by the Hatton's young people's group, L-INK

The Jerwood Collection ([jerwood.org/Jerwoodcollection/](http://jerwood.org/Jerwoodcollection/)) is a preeminent collection of modern British art, offering the group an unparalleled opportunity to work with a range of major artworks by British artists. Unlike most other professions or vocations every artist becomes an artist in different ways and at different times in their life. Some artists are art-makers all the time; others have relationships to the creative process which vary in their intensity, incidence and fluidity.

L-INK were curious to understand the turning points and pivotal moments in the lives of artists that were transformational, specifically, the ways in which artists have progressed their practices through pathways they have taken, in both formal and informal education and their own lived experiences.

HAPPY! also celebrates the works of young artists at different stages of their arts development, in homage to Victor Pasmore's 1957 Art Education Exhibition at the Hatton Gallery. As part of this project, one class from three different North East schools has worked with the Hatton on an in-depth exploration of selected artworks from the Jerwood Collection. Artworks made by pupils are also displayed as part of the exhibition.

# Review of a recent workshops

## **Festive Folk Art by Kath Price**

On the 6th December I attended a workshop held by Kath Price on Festive Folk Art using vintage fabrics. Kath provided pre-cut designs of festive trees, angel wings, Dala Horses and wild stars.

We were invited to rummage in her stock of bits and bobs to find beads, button, charms etc to decorate the Christmas ornaments. We were also provided with templates and fabric to make a second ornament. She demonstrated how to make a Suffolk Puff (a tightly gathered circle of fabric), to be used as decoration on a drawstring bag.



There was a good attendance of mixed abilities and ages which allowed a good flow of ideas between the participants. I thoroughly enjoyed the event with good company.

**Vivien Jackson**

## **Reinvigorate your crafting WIPs and UFOs with Louise Underwood**

*When you thought January was never going to end, looking forward to a friends of Hatton workshop is so important for your mental wellbeing and Louise delivered on making the session an uplifting experience! Throughout the year we start projects, are introduced to new skills and share our ideas but one thing you can be guilty of is not finishing things off, well I definitely am. Therefore to have the opportunity to work on our own projects with the help of Louise was so rewarding. She supported us with our unfinished bits and bobs while we all had time to chatter to one and other about many subjects. I left the session feeling uplifted and ready for February.*

**Julie Louhi**



# What's on at the Hatton Gallery

**Hatton Gallery Opening Times:** Monday to Saturday, 10am to 5pm

**HAPPY!**

**until Saturday 9 May 2026**

The exhibition is curated by the Hatton Gallery's young people's group, [L-INK](#) with pieces from the Jerwood Collection.



*Works made by Y4 pupils taking part in the exhibition project*

**L-INK** is a group of young people, aged 16 - 24, who work with the Laing Art Gallery and Hatton Gallery to create artworks, co-curate, collaborate, produce events and work with

artists. The Jerwood Collection of Modern and Contemporary art has been acquired during the last 30 years by **Jerwood Foundation**, a charity dedicated to supporting the arts in the U.K.

## Kurt Schwitters' Merz Barn Wall



The Merz Barn Wall is part of a construction created by German artist Kurt Schwitters in a Lake District barn in 1947-8. It was based on the idea of collage, in which found items are incorporated into an artwork.

**On permanent display - Free**

# What's on locally

Some other highlights from galleries and interesting independent outlets across the region...

Events: [northeastmuseums.org.uk/whats-on](http://northeastmuseums.org.uk/whats-on)

## The Alnwick Playhouse

*Alnwick NE66 1PQ*

**Luke McTaggart, Between Dusk & Waking** until 8 March. McTaggart is a painter from Amble, Northumberland. These paintings are predominantly reflections on the end of summer. Each is formed out of a series of revisions, alterations and erasures - thin veils of paint layered in alternating fashions, gradually revealing the structure of the image.

## Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art

*Shore Road, Gateshead Quays [baltic.art/](http://baltic.art/)*

## For All At Last Return until 7 June 2026

This major group exhibition explores different marine ecosystems, from near-shore and intertidal zones to coral reefs, the open ocean and the deep sea. It considers our relationship with these fragile environments and their dependent communities.

## Saodat Ismailova- As We Fade until 7 June

Saodat Ismailova (artist and filmmaker) is a leading voice in Central Asian art. The exhibition presents the world premiere of *Swan Lake 2025*, alongside works from her two decade-long career.

## Saelia Aparicio. A Joyful Parasite. until 8

March. Sculpture and murals weave together

narrative, science fiction and ecological speculation to explore entanglements between bodies, environments and systems of care.

### **The Biscuit Factory**

16 Stoddard Street NE1 1AN - 10 till 5 pm each day. FREE [thebiscuitfactory.com/](http://thebiscuitfactory.com/)

**Hester Berry** - 7 March - 3 May

'Where The Light Falls' is a new collection of expressive landscape oil paintings by Hester Berry, rooted in reverence and close observation of the rural environments she knows best. At its heart, this exhibition is both a celebration of the natural world and a gentle reminder to cherish and protect it - an invitation to slow down and notice the changing seasons and subtle shifts of light. Each work seeks to accurately represent a moment, distilled to its essentials through bold, economical mark-making. Squinting, bleary-eyed, against the sun. A brief moment of joy and clarity. A heightened awareness of place.

### **Bureau of Dreams**

St. Mary's Chare, Hexham, NE 46 1NQ  
Open Thurs to Sat 10-4pm. [rachelhope.co.uk/](http://rachelhope.co.uk/)

**Rachel Hope** paintings and collages, influenced by Surrealism and inspired by a sense of magic.

### **Castle Fine Arts**

61-67 Grey Street, Newcastle upon Tyne  
Open Mon to Sat 10-6pm Sun 11-5pm.

Featured artists include: Billy Connolly, Bob Dylan, Johnny Depp, Boy George

### **Jim Edwards Studio**

57 Lime Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 2PQ  
Tues-Fri 10 till 4 pm. Saturday by appointment.  
[jimwardspaintings.com/](http://jimwardspaintings.com/)

### **The Find. Vintage and Artisan Goods**

59 Lime Street. Ouseburn Valley  
Open Wednesday - Sunday 10 to 5 pm

### **Forth Lane Urban Gallery**

Is in the lane between Westgate Rd and the Forth Hotel. It is the brainchild of Creative Central NCL, a five year project funded by Newcastle City Council and North East Combined Authority. It that aims to make Newcastle City Centre a vibrant hub of creativity and culture in which artists and businesses can thrive.

Artists include **Chris Fleming, Glen Malpass, Laura Sheldon, Jed Buttress, Rebecca Purnell** and **Tallulah Lines**. [fabulousnorth.com/forth-lane-gallery/](http://fabulousnorth.com/forth-lane-gallery/)

### **Gateshead Central Library**

Prince Consort Road, Gateshead

**Re-Visits: Our Story - An exhibition by Helix Arts** - until 18 April. Free

This exhibition co-curated with young people from Youth Focus North East, explores the legacy of Helix Arts work in Gateshead. For over 40 years Helix Arts have been supporting communities and artists across the North East to work together to confront social issues and bring about meaningful change. This exhibition asks how shared culture and creativity can continue to renew and strengthen our sense of community.

### **The Glamorous Owl,**

2 and 5 Old George Yard, High Bridge,  
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1 EZ

Jewellery, Gifts and Art.

[theglamorousowl@gmail.com](mailto:theglamorousowl@gmail.com)

### **Globe Gallery**

97 Howard Street, North Shields, NE30 1NA.  
[globegallery.org/](http://globegallery.org/)

### **Hanji 16**

St. Mary's Chare, Hexham, NE461NQ.  
Origami Maps, Bookbinding kits, Original art. Yvetteja.com, [hello@yvetteja.com](mailto:hello@yvetteja.com)

## **Sarah Hickey Jewellery**

6A Beaumont Street, Hexham, NE46 3LZ  
Jewellery with soul, each piece is designed and handcrafted in their Northumberland studio by Sarah and her team of Production Artists.  
[sarahhickey.co.uk](http://sarahhickey.co.uk)

## **The Hut on the Green**

Gosforth Central Park. Church Road, Rothwell Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 1TX

Classes and courses: Life Drawing, painting, ceramics, basket weaving, children's art club.  
Email: [nick@mushroomworks.com](mailto:nick@mushroomworks.com) for info

## **Inspired Pots**

6 Eastgate Hexham, Northumberland NE46 1BH  
[inspiredpots.co.uk/](http://inspiredpots.co.uk/)

### **Potter Painting Sessions in Hexham.**

Inspired Pots welcomes all ages and skill levels to create a one of a kind piece made by you.

## **Laing Art Gallery**

New Bridge Street, Newcastle upon Tyne.

## **Lollamac**

St. Mary's Chare, Hexham, Northumberland.  
Metalworking tools and techniques transform unassuming pieces of metal into wearable art.  
[lollamac.co.uk/](http://lollamac.co.uk/)

## **Links Art Gallery**

Dukes Walk, Whitley Bay, NE26 1TP  
Open each day 9-5pm. A wide range of art and craft mostly by North East Artists.  
[linksgallery.org/](http://linksgallery.org/)

## **Newcastle's Independent Handmade Market**

Grainger Market 9 to 5 pm  
First Saturday of the month.

## **Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art**

National Glass Centre, Liberty Way, Sunderland  
Sun-Sat 10 am to 5 pm

### **Smoke and Mirrors: Landscapes from the Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art**

**Collection.** Until 26th May. Free.

Smoke and Mirrors draws on artworks from Northern Gallery for Contemporary Arts Collection in a group show exploring contemporary Landscapes through photography, painting, sculpture, film, digitally generated artwork and drawing. This exhibition features artwork by 15 contemporary artists and photographers.

## **Old Lowlight Heritage Centre**

Clifford's Fort, North Shields Fish Quay.  
Tue-Sat, 10am-3pm [oldlowlight.co.uk/](http://oldlowlight.co.uk/)

### **Harvest from the Deep by Pete Robinson**

Café, until 31 March 2026. Pete Robinson has recorded the working and home lives of local fishermen for the last 10 years.

**Textile Map of North Shields. Until 28 March 2026** A stunning textile map of North Shields (a legacy of the town's 800th year) created by around 60 local people is now on display in the café at the Old Low Light Heritage Centre.

The project, led by artist Gaynor Devaney, involved community events, with participants sharing ideas about what should be included and drawing, painting and stitching.

## **The Old School Gallery**

Foxton Road, Alnmouth, NE66 3NH.  
Open 10 to 4 pm

### **Kate Sampson - 3 April to 4 May, 2026**

Kate's ceramic work focuses on traditional wheel thrown forms which are brought to life with intricate hand illustrated decoration. She throws stoneware, earthenware or porcelain using an array of decorative materials: coloured slips, ceramic pencils and glazes.

### **Tabby Booth - 3 April to 4 May, 2026**

Tabby is a Cornwall based artist known for her bold signature silhouettes that bridge the gap between illustration and traditional folk art

With a passion for interiors, each piece is designed with this in mind with themes such as beasts, folklore, the sea, and outsider art.

## Queens Hall Arts Centre

Beaumont Street, Hexham, NE46 3LS  
[queenshall.co.uk/](http://queenshall.co.uk/)

**Steve Pardue Art.** An artist and designer living and working in Northumberland combines a love of walking and nature with art. "I fill my notebooks with poetic, immersive responses to nature and the world around me"

## Shipley Art Gallery winter events

Prince Consort Road, Gateshead, NE8 4JB

### Springtime events

**Acrylic Pouring course**, 28 March, 9 May

**Watercolour Daises class**, 28 March

**Fused Glass Lightcatcher class**, 25 April

**Spring Craft Market**, 25 April (FREE)

**Watercolours for Wellbeing**, 16 May

[northeastmuseums.org.uk/shipley](http://northeastmuseums.org.uk/shipley) for details.

## South Shields Museum & Art Gallery

Ocean Road, South Shields. Mon-Fri 10 till 5pm.  
Sat 11 till 4 pm.

**Permanent: Tales of South Tyneside.** See how South Tyneside has changed over 150 years.

## St.Art Shop and Gallery

3 West Tower Street, Carlisle CA3 8QT  
[startopenstudios.org](http://startopenstudios.org) the new shop provides a platform for emerging and established artists.  
It has 6 working art studio places

## Sunderland Museum & Winter Gardens

Burdon Road, Sunderland, SR1 1PP  
Saturday 10 to 4 pm. Mon-Fri 9.30 to 5pm

## Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery

Castle Street, Carlisle, CA3 8TP. Mon to Sat  
10am to 4 pm Sunday 11 am to 4 pm.  
[tullie.org.uk/](http://tullie.org.uk/)

## Wild and Free Gallery

3A Ilfracombe Gardens, Whitley Bay, NE26 3ND  
[instagram.com/wildandfreegallery/](https://www.instagram.com/wildandfreegallery/)

## Joanne Wishart Gallery

6 St. George's Road, Cullercoats, NE30 3JY  
Open Weds to Sat 10-5 pm. Colourful local coastal and seaside picture.  
[joannewishart.co.uk/](http://joannewishart.co.uk/)

## Woodhorn Museum

Queen Elizabeth II Country Park, Ashington,  
Weds - Sun: 10am - 4pm

## Northumberland Open Exhibition

until 10 May  
Northumberland biggest Open Exhibition celebrating and showcasing North East art. See page 12 for further details.

## Call for bulletin contributions

If you would like to write an article for us for use in a future bulletin; maybe a review of a workshop, talk or an exhibition you have visited/seen, please email us at [FotHChair@gmail.com](mailto:FotHChair@gmail.com), or drop us a line of our Facebook page: [facebook.com/friendsofthehatton](https://www.facebook.com/friendsofthehatton).

## And finally... are your email details up to date?

I hope you received your email invitation to the private view of "HAPPY!" a few of weeks ago. We will be sending out invitations to future previews via email. A couple of the invitations bounced back so they must be out of date. If you are a member and **didn't** receive the "HAPPY!" invitation please email [FotHChair@gmail.com](mailto:FotHChair@gmail.com) from your current email address and we will update our records so you miss out on and preview invitations in the future.